

TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIST POLITICAL THOUGHT
IN TURKEY FROM THE EMPIRE TO THE EARLY REPUBLIC (1908-1960): NECİP
FAZIL KISAKÜREK'S POLITICAL IDEAS

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January, 2001

I certify that I have read this thesis and in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and Public Administration.

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis aims at situating the transformation of Turkish Islamist thought from the Ottoman empire to the early Republic as a case study within the contemporary analyses of Islamism. Islamist thought in Turkey contains new elements, but it also has deep roots in the tradition of Islamic political thought. As such by devotion to the traditional renewal (tajdid), it reflects a continuing dimension of Islamic political theory. It is also important to understand the specific intellectual settings within which Turkish Islamism has evolved. Islamist depictions of state and democracy whether in the Empire through Islamist identification of shura with constitutional regime or in the Republican period through Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's totalitarian Başyücelik State, seem to be influenced by the political ideologies of their times such as liberal constitutionalism (in the Empire), and totalitarian aspects of communism, fascism, and Kemalism (in the Republic). Hence, Islamists of the second constitutional period perceived Islam a "soft ideology" whereas Islam became a kind of "hard ideology" in Kısakürek's formulation, determining every aspect of political, societal and individual life. These analyses are also related to another argument that the tradition of Islamic political thought is open to different Islamist readings, both as authoritarian/totalitarian formulations and as democratic openings.

This study also argues that Islamist intellectuals have a tendency of mixing modern notions such as progress and ideology with traditional material/grammar to face the challenge of western modernity. In order to reach an Islamic modernity, the concept of Islamic civilization constitutes a platform for the transformation and interaction of the elements of continuity (traditional grammar) and change (progress and ideology). This dissertation also suggests that Islamists are basically keen to see democracy as the limitation of an arbitrary/despotic rule and as the establishment of the rule of law, implying a rather Schumpeterian conceptualization of democracy: a type of government and procedure in electing those who rule people. The question of whether Islam is compatible with democratic values should be reworded in the way that whether Islamist interpretations/reconstructions of Islamic tradition were/are compatible with democratic values or not. This thesis also tries to give an insight about the Islamist stance towards Kemalist ideology and the impact of Kemalism on Islamism.

Keywords: Islamism, Civilization, State, Democracy, Kemalism.

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE’DE İSLAMCI SİYASAL DÜŞÜNCENİN DÖNÜŞÜMÜ İMPARATORLUKTAN ERKEN CUMHURİYETE (1908-1960): NECİP FAZIL KISAKÜREK’İN SİYASAL DÜŞÜNCELERİ

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Bu tez, Türkiye’deki İslamcı düşüncenin Osmanlı imparatorluğundan Erken Cumhuriyete geçirdiği dönüşümü, bir örnek olarak ele alıp, çağdaş İslamcılık analiz çerçevesine oturtmayı hedeflemektedir. Türkiye’deki İslamcı düşünce yeni unsurlar taşımakla beraber İslami siyasi düşünce geleneğinde derin köklere sahiptir. Bu itibarla, geleneksel yenilenme (teccid) nosyonuna olan bağlılık, İslami siyasi teorinin süreklilik unsurunu yansıtır. Türk İslamcılığının evrildiği spesifik entelektüel ortamları anlamak ta önemlidir. Gerek imparatorluk döneminde, şurayı meşrutiyetle aynileştirirken, gerekse Cumhuriyet döneminde Necip Fazıl Kısakürek’in totaliter Başyücelik Devleti’ni sunarken, İslamcı devlet ve demokrasi kavramlaştırmaları kendi zamanlarının liberal anayasacılık, ve komünizm, faşizm gibi ideolojilerin totaliter yanlarından ve Kemalizmden etkilenmektedirler. Böylece, İslam, ikinci meşrutiyet dönemindeki “yumuşak ideoloji” konumundan Kısakürek’in formülasyonunda siyasi, toplumsal ve bireysel hayatından herbir yönünü belirleyen “sert ideoloji” olmaya dönüşmektedir. Bu analizler diğer bir argümana da ilintilendirilmiştir: İslami siyasi düşünce geleneği hem otoriter/totaliter hem de demokratik açılımlı farklı İslamcı okumalara açıktır.

Bu çalışma, İslamcı aydınların Batı modernliği ile yüzleşmek için, terakki ve ideoloji gibi modern nosyonları geleneksel materyal/gramer ile birleştirme eğiliminde olduklarını iddia etmektedir. İslami bir modernliğe ulaşabilme hedefinde, İslam medeniyeti kavramı, süreklilik (geleneksel gramer) ve değişim unsurlarının (terakki ve ideoloji) dönüşüm ve etkileşim platformu olma özelliğini taşımaktadır. Bu tez İslamcılarının temel olarak demokrasiyi despot iktidarın sınırlandırılması, ve hukuk devletinin kurulması olarak görmeye yatkın olduklarını tartışmaktadır ki bu Schumpeteryan bir demokrais anlayışına karşılık gelir: halkı yönetecek olanları seçmede bir hükümet tarzı ve prosedür olarak demokrasi. İslamın demokratik değerlerle uyumlu olup olmadığı sorusu İslamcılarının geleneği yorumlarının/kurgulamalarının demokratik değerlerle uyumlu olup olmadığı şeklinde yeniden formüle edilmelidir. Bu tez, İslamcı duruşun Kemalist ideolojiye bakışını ve Kemalist ideolojinin onun üzerindeki etkilerini aydınlatmaya çalışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslamcılık, Medeniyet, Devlet, Demokrasi, Kemalizm.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANNALS, AAPSS	The Annals of the American Academy Political Science Studies
BD	Büyük Doğu
BH	Beyanü'l Hak
İSAM	İslam Ansiklopedisi Merkezi
SM	Sırat-ı Mustakim
SR	Sebilür Reşad
TCTA	Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Türkiye Ansiklopedisi
TDV	Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı
TM	Tearif-i Müslimin
TTK	Türk Tarih Kurumu
ISSJ	International Social Science Journal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZET	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER I: ISLAMIST CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF DEMOCRACY AND STATE.....	21
1.1 A Note on Islamism(s): Ideology and Intellectual	22
1.1.1 A Quest for An Islamic Modernity: Islamist Intellectual and “Civilization”.....	30
1.2 The Idea of State in Islamic(ist) Political Thought	35
1.2.1 Islamist Adaptation to the Modern Nation-State: An Islamic State.....	40
1.3 Islam and Democracy: Islamizing Democracy or Democratizing Islamism	46
1.3.1 An Analysis of the Islamist Discussion on the (in)compatibility between Islam and Democracy	47
1.3.2 Views of Observers: The Continuation of the Same Discussion on (In)compatibility	54
1.3.3 Elitist Democracy: A Schumpeterian or An Islamist Conceptualization?	58
1.3.4 What is Beyond: Contextualizing the Islamist Argumentation on Democracy.....	64

CHAPTER II: ISLAMISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1908-1918) I:	
A QUEST FOR ISLAMIC MODERNİTY.....	70
2.1 Organizing Ideas of Ottoman-Turkish Political Modernization on the “Decline”.....	70
2.2 The Decline of the Ulema and the Emergence of Intellectuals: Early Islamist Ideas in the Ottoman Empire.....	75
2.3 Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period.....	79
2.4 Symptoms: The Reasons for the Decline and Tanzimat.....	82
2.5 An Islamist Quest for Modernity: Positioning the West and Reinventing Islamic Civilization.....	89
2.6 Reconstructing the Understanding of True Islam.....	101
2.7 Political Power and Islamists.....	107
2.7.1 Why Did The Islamists Join the Opposition Against The Hamidian Regime?.....	108
2.7.2 Points of Tension Between the Young Turks and the Islamists.....	111
CHAPTER III: ISLAMISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1908-1918) II:	
POLITICAL IDEAS.....	117
3.1 Islamizing Democracy: Islamists and The Meşrutiyet.....	117
3.1.1 From Meşveret To Constitutional Regime: Hürriyet and Kanun-i Esasi.....	119
3.1.2 The Views on Parliament: Elitism and Limited Legislation.....	128
3.1.3 Difficulties on the Concepts of Political Opposition and Political Party.....	132
3.2 Disarming the Caliph and the Early Emergence of the Idea of Islamic State.....	135
3.3 The Rule of Sharia Conceived as Framework of Democracy.....	143
3.4 Islamist Ideal: İttihad-ı İslam As a Social and Religious Unity.....	146

3.5 From İttihad-ı İslam to the Acceptence of Nationalism as the Vision of Political Community	151
3.6 At the Crossroads: How the Islamists Interpreted the National Struggle?	161
3.6.1 How to Reconcile the Abolition of the Caliphate with Islamist Ideas.....	167
CHAPTER IV: KEMALISM AND THE REEMERGENCE OF ISLAMISM IN	
THE REPUBLIC (1943-1960): AN ISLAMIST INTELLECTUAL	172
4.1 Kemalism: Participating in a Modern “Civilization”	173
4.2 Kemalism, Intellectuals and Islam.....	180
4.3 What Happened to Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period?.....	185
4.4 The Revival of Islamism in the Republic.....	190
4.5 The Intellectual Under the Shadow of the State.....	192
4.6 A New Genre of Islamist intellectuals As Critiques of Kemalism and In Quest of an Islamic Ideology	197
4.7 Formation of an Islamist Intellectual: Necip Fazıl’s Political and Intellectual Biography.....	203
4.8 The Relevance of Sufism and Nakshibendi Order as the Spiritual Sources of Islamist Intellectuals.....	215
CHAPTER V: FROM PROGRESS TO IDEOLOGY: ISLAM AS A HARD	
IDEOLOGY IN KISAKÜREK’S POLITICAL IDEAS	220
5.1 Formation of A critical Discourse around the Decline.....	220
5.2 A Story of Further Decline: Turkish Modernization Process From Tanzimat to the Republic	224
5.3 The Republic: Its Last Stage of the Decline	230
5.4 His Ideology: The Ideal of Great East (Büyük Doğu).....	239

5.5 The Anaysis of His Expected Islamic Revolution (İnkilab)	249
5.5.1 Islamist Reproduction of the Kemalist Political Mind	254
5.6 Rejection of Religious Modernism and Reformism	257
CHAPTER VI: DEMOCRACY, STATE AND NATIONALISM FROM NECİP	
FAZIL KISAKÜREK’S ISLAMIST PERSPECTIVE.....	263
6.1 Introduction: Transition to Multi-Party Politics (1946-1950).....	263
6.2 The RPP and İnönü as the Counterpart of Sultan Abdulhamid.....	265
6.3 Islamist Effort to Manipulate the Political Power (1950-1960): Adnan Menderes and Kısakürek.....	270
6.4 Kısakürek’s Concept of Democracy: A Schumpeterian or An Islamic View?	275
6. 4.1 Expecting An Ideological Party : The Party of Right (Hak Partisi).....	286
6.4.2 Militarism and the Role of Military in Turkey.....	289
6.5 Kısakürek’s Conceptualization of State	294
6.5.1 Islam and State: The Hidden Supremacy of Sharia.....	296
6.5.2 Nine Principles: Ideological Framework of an Ideal State	301
6.5.3 Başyücelik Devleti as an Islamic Nation-State	305
6.6 Turkish Nationalism and Turkishness in the Service of Islam	310
CONCLUSION.....	319
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	339

INTRODUCTION

I passed through the lands of the infidels, I saw cities and mansions;
I wandered in the realm of Islam, I saw nothing but ruins.

Ziya Paşa

Since the nineteenth century, political thought has been the most lively area of intellectual life in the Islamic world.¹ The development of Islamic intellectual activity can be accounted for firstly by the encounter of the Muslim community with the superiority of Western civilization in every aspect of life and by the consequent position taken against it. The dominance of the West, whether perceived as Christian or as secular, has served to revive the Muslim interest in Qur'an and Hadith, the Islamic fundamentals, in order to work out the relevance of Islam for Muslims in the modern age. Secondly, this intellectual vivacity is also related to the political nature of the religion of Islam. Since there is an interdependence between religion and politics in Islam, any proposed political reform or any political movement have felt the urgent need of situating themselves in relation to the intellectual-political heritage of Islam. But it is significant that this vivacity in Islamic political thought, in one way, signified the deeply rooted crisis in Islamic intellectual mind. The causes of this crisis or decline have been perceived not only as being external but also as internal to the extent that attempts of reconstruction or rediscovery often have led to a critique the reform proposals. Expectedly, Islamist discourses have maintained an

¹ Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of Shii and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century* (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1982),1.

important place in Western imperialist discourses on the decline of the Islamic civilization. But this has not prevented Islamist intellectuals' desire to learn from the West in various areas ranging from politics to military. Perhaps, another paradoxical conclusion about the West has been the discovery of a "West" which is different from the secular modern conceptions. Islamist reconstruction of the West, in contrast to a secularist one, has underlined a moral decadence of the West while adopting the good aspects of the western civilization. The perception of a spiritual crisis within the western civilization has produced an Islamist expectation of an inevitable end for the West.

Muslim thinkers, with the aim to keep their civilization from total destruction, have underlined the concepts of *tajdid* (renewal) and *islah* (reform) to "reconstruct"² political, social and even religious life of the Muslim community. This attempt at reconstruction, as the main intellectual issue of the modern Islamic political thought, has raised the following questions: how can modernity be reconciled with Islamic civilization? How can the same process of reconciliation work between the Western institutions of science and technology and the Islamic values? How could (western) democratic ideas and institutions such as the parliament and constitution be made compatible with Islamic political principles and institutions such as caliphate and shura.

The Islamist intellectuals of the second constitutional period, on the whole, came to the conclusion that the idea of the sovereignty of the people, and the resulting institutions, i.e. parliament and constitution, which formed the real sources of the West's superiority did not conflict with those values. Prompted by the desire to find Islamic equivalents of

² Mohammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1974).

Western democratic institutions and values in the traditional Islamic political “theory,”³ Young Ottomans, Islamist intellectuals of the 1860s, Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, Mohammad Abduh, Rashid Rida conducted a “twofold campaign to bring out all the progressive tenets of Islam to prove that it is in essence a religion of freedom, justice and prosperity for mankind”⁴; while on the other hand, reevaluating Muslims’ historical performance in this respect. The transformation of modern Islamic thought is shaped by a combination of the two major processes: the need of reviving an Islamic principle of renewal (tajdid) to get a true Islamic life and the urgency of facing the challenge of the western supremacy.

Despite such a long history of theoretical attempts of reconciling Islamic values with Western democratic institutions, only a handful of Muslim countries have succeeded in making substantial moves in establishing democratic systems like Turkey. But still even the Turkish experience has not been easy and bright in incorporating Islamist movements into her political system at the very beginning of the twenty first century.⁵ The governments of Muslim countries, including Turkey’s, have come to see revivalist Islamic movements as simply paying lip service to democratic ideals. For sure, the very fact that “attempts at Westernization are undertaken and effectively realized through authoritarian regimes”⁶ has contributed to the weakening of a yet-to-develop tradition of Islamist

³ It is hard to speak of an Islamic political theory, similar to that of modern political thought Aziz al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities* (London: Verso, 1993), 89 and Enayat, *Modern*. 2. But still here we will try to delineate some basic lines of the classical political thinking in order to present a framework which situate Islamism in relation to the classical corpus.

⁴ Enayat, *Modern*. 15.

⁵ For an optimistic view on the interactive relationship between Islam and democracy in Turkey see Metin Heper, “Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Reconciliation?” *Middle East Journal*. 51:1 (Winter 1997): 32-45.

⁶ Nilüfer Göle, “Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey,” in *Civil Society in the Middle East* ed. A. Richard Norton (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 19.

political thought. At the same time, the attempts of Westernization have influenced the Islamist theorizing of politics to a certain extent. The reemergence of Islamism as a parallel development to the transition to democracy in Turkey necessitates an analysis of not only the authoritarian nature of the Kemalist regime but also the authoritarian/totalitarian tendencies within Islamism. An examination of Islamist political thought regarding state and society in the Second Constitutional Period and Early Republican times, which is the main objective of this study, would, among others, also contribute to the understanding of the difficulties in consolidating a democratic regime in Turkey. The exposition of an **interactive** relationship between two sets of certainties or totalities as Kemalism and Islamism would also illuminate the nature of the current conflicts between Islamists and secularists.

The development and emergence of Islamist ideas in the Ottoman intellectual life can be traced to the Young Ottomans.⁷ By the period of Second Constitutional Monarchy (1908-18), Islamism had established itself as “the strongest of the three schools of thought.”⁸ Yet the Westernization project interrupted its natural evolution. The present dissertation is aimed to study Islamism before and after the Kemalist project, in an attempt to assess the impacts of that project on the transformation of Islamic political thought.

Ottoman intellectuals during the Second Constitutional Period directed their energies to the question of “how to save the state.” This elicited three major answers or competing reform proposals: Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism.⁹ An important contribution to the

⁷ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *İslamcılık Cereyanı* [Current of Islamism] (İstanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1962); İsmail Kara, *İslamcuların Siyasi Görüşleri* [Political Ideas of Islamists] (İstanbul: İz, 1994); Mümtaz’er Türköne, *Siyasi İdeoloji Olarak İslamcılığın Doğuşu* [The Birth of Islamism as A Political Ideology] (İstanbul: İletişim, 1994).

⁸ Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 31.

⁹ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 338; Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London :

development of democracy in Turkey was made by the ideological debates, in the relatively liberal atmosphere of the post-Hamidian times, on saving the state, for it to assert itself against the West. The Young Turk revolution represented the triumph of the supporters of such notions as freedom, constitution and parliament which were considered as the only solutions to the problems of the Ottoman polity, including the preservation of the unity of the empire (to put an end to the separatist nationalism of minority groups) through the establishment of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. Since then, the ideological discussions on the nature and future of the political system in Turkey continued under the impact of these currents of thought.¹⁰

After an interval between 1923 and 1946, such discussions on the nature of the Turkish political system have revived. The transition to multiparty politics has created a democratic space for the questioning by Islamists of political modernization in Turkey. Therefore, Islamists began to raise their voice in order to problematize Turkish modernization and democracy, but this time in a secular republican polity. At this point, the primary question to be asked is "what has changed in their outlook, in their conceptualization of state and democracy."

A closer examination of the political thoughts of Islamists in these two periods (1908-1918 and 1946-1960) on the above mentioned issues, will make a contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the comparative analysis of the two periods in question and will enable us to better see the prospects of democratic consolidation in Turkey. A critical comparison of Islamists of the two periods will also serve to determine the impact of the Republican regime on the evolution of Islamist political thought in Turkey. In this respect,

I.B. Tauris and Co., 1993), 132; Richard D. Robinson, *The First Turkish Republic: A case study in National Development* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963), 16.

¹⁰ Berkes, *The Development*. 337.

this study is an attempt to evaluate the achievements and failures of the experience of Turkish political modernization in the eyes of those who oppose it. Under these considerations, in this dissertation, I will try to examine and compare the political thoughts of the established Islamists of the two periods, with a view to assessing the transformation of Islamist political thought in Turkey.

The present study will attempt to provide answers for the following questions: Are political authority and government essential categories of Islamic political thought? What are the Islamist conceptualizations of state and democracy in the periods of 1908-1918 and 1946-1960? What are the continuities and changes in Islamist political thought of the Republican period? What is the impact of Turkish democratic experience and Kemalism on those conceptualizations?

Before starting to delineate the scope of this study on the political ideas of Islamist intellectuals, we should address the question as to why intellectuals have been the focus of this study. Islamist movement in Turkey has some social, political, economic, cultural and religious dimensions, manifesting itself in various organizations, like religious communities and orders, journals and other political organizations. Reflecting the proliferation of the movement, Islamist movement in Turkey might be classified into four groups: a) political organization(s), like the defunct Welfare Party¹¹ b) religious orders (tarikat) and communities like several branches of Nakshibendi order and of Nurcu

¹¹ For the Welfare Party see Ruşen Çakır, *Ne Şariat Ne Demokrasi: Refah Partisini Anlamak* [Neither Sharia nor Democracy: Understanding the Welfare Party] (İstanbul: Metis, 1994); M. Hakan Yavuz, "Political Islam and The Welfare (Refah) Party in Turkey." *Comparative Politics*. (October 1997): 63-82; Haldun Gülalp, "Political Islam in Turkey: The Rise and Fall of the Refah Party." *The Muslim World*. LXXXIX:1 (January 1999): 22-41; Yalçın Akdoğan, *Siyasal İslam: Refah Partisi'nin Anatomisi* [Political Islam: Anatomy of the Welfare Party] (İstanbul: Şehir, 2000), and for its stance on the Kurdish Question see, Burhanettin Duran, "Approaching the Kurdish Question via Adil Düzen: An Islamist Formula of the Welfare Party for Ethnic Coexistence." *Journal Of Muslim Minority Affairs*. 18:1 (April 1998): 111-128.

movement¹² c) intellectuals like Sezai Karakoç, İsmet Özel, Ali Bulaç and Rasim Özdenören d) independent small organizations around some journals and associations. Regarding the political dimension, all these categories, more or less have been involved in Islamist politics.

For present purposes, it does not seem proper to classify Islamism as political Islam (party), social Islam (religious order and communities) and cultural Islam (intellectuals) though it is certain that the first category is directly related to the political dimension of Islamism. Religious orders and communities and intellectuals should be treated under the label of Islamism since they all, in the ultimate sense, have, more or less, an aspiration to shape state, society and individual along the lines of Islamic principles. The will to transform the public sphere in accordance with the moral values of Islam may take mainly social and cultural forms on the part of religious orders and communities and intellectuals but certainly this does not mean a total refrain from political aspirations.

As to the significance of intellectuals within the Islamist movement, it might be firstly noted that the challenge of modernity to the Ottoman-Turkish polity and the response to this challenge were accompanied by the fall of the ulema and the emergence of a new class: intellectuals. The transfer of the function of thinking and theorizing on Islam from ulema to an Islamist intellectual has been an important part of the formation of Islamism in Turkey though it is not a completed process yet. Moreover, one might also observe a tendency of a fusion between intellectual and alim (plural ulema) traditions. There is, however, no established class of ulema who could lead the religious and intellectual

¹² See Ruşen Çakır, *Ayet ve Slogan* [Verse and Slogan] (İstanbul: Metis, 1994) and Şerif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

agenda of Islamist movement in Turkey. Hayrettin Karaman¹³ and Yaşar Nuri Öztürk¹⁴ should be regarded as exceptions in this setting. It was the intellectuals who publicized Islamist discourses regarding the nature and future of the political community and who criticized the Kemalist regime by references to Islamic political values. However, this does not mean that the leaders of religious orders and communities have a minor place in the formation of Islamist movement in Turkey. Despite their influence on the formation of religious understandings for devout people, shaikhs and hocaefendis have not been able to take a place in the republican public arena.

Furthermore, in contrast to the leading role of shaikhs and ulema in traditional society, intellectuals have been the new comers and modern representatives who take their places in the intellectual leadership for the Islamic world and Turkey. Although it is not possible to argue that intellectuals have achieved in substituting the role of shaihks and ulema that served in the classical epoch, they have had a critical place in the formation of Islamist ideologies/discourses and in their introduction to the republican public sphere. Like Islamism, an Islamist intellectual, in this thesis, is defined by a rather loose criterion simply for the reason that the borders of Islamism is not just confined to a movement which has a political project/ideology for capturing political power. Rather, conscious epistemological, ontological reference to “Islam” for shaping/directing state, society and individual directly or indirectly is regarded as the essential feature of our conceptualization of Islamism. Certainly, this conceptualization is broader than what Olivier Roy termed political Islam

¹³ For his ideas see Hayrettin Karaman, *Laik Düzendeki Dini Yaşamak* I-II [To Live Religiously in a Laic Order] (İstanbul: İz, 1997 and 1998).

¹⁴ See A. Esra Özcan, “Yaşar Nuri Öztürk ve Yeniden Öğrenilen İslam,” [Yaşar Nuri Öztürk and Relearning Islam] in *İslamın Yeni Kamusal Yüzleri* [New Public Faces of Islam] ed. Nilüfer Göle (İstanbul: Metis, 2000).

(and its failure), as a totalistic solution/ideology to any political regime in Muslim lands¹⁵ though it includes this particular conceptualization as well. One reason for this broad conceptualization of Islam is the recognition that Islamism in the Ottoman-Turkish context has been different from the Islamism that gained much currency in the literature of Islamism or fundamentalism by reference to the examples in Iran, Egypt and Pakistan. It has never been possible to urge for an Islamic state or sharia based politics in the republican Turkey due to the legal prohibitions.

Seen in this light, it should be noted that the Welfare party as a political representative of Islamism could not develop any Islamist claim/project for capturing the power in order to establish a sharia based state. Any observation for the hidden Islamist intentions of an Islamic state (takiye) on the part of this party should also pay attention to the fact that Islamism in Turkey has a very poor Islamist political language and vocabulary to articulate its discourses regarding the problems of the Turkish polity. Moreover, it is not obvious what Islamists meant by sharia in the Turkish context. Our definition of Islamism would enable us to study different manifestations of Islamism in Turkey from the Ottoman ages to the republican times.

It must be noted that this thesis has a tendency of dividing the Islamist intellectual heritage in Turkey into three parts: 1) Islamists in the second constitutional period, to name a few,

¹⁵ Olivier Roy, *Siyasal İslamın İflası* trans. Cüneyt Akalın (İstanbul: Metis, 1994). This thesis has also a tendency the present positions of Islamism which Olivier Roy termed “post-Islamism,” as a continuation, though it is a new stage, in the history of Islamism. Highly politicized and ideologized stages of Islamist movement should be regarded as different manifestations of Islamism and it is possible that a pendulum might swing back in the future. For the discussions on post-Islamism see Olivier Roy, “Le Post-islamisme.” *Revue Des Mondes Musulmans et de le Mediterranee*. 85-86 (2000?): 11-30 and Farhad Khosrokhavar and Olivier Roy, *İran: Bir Devrimin Tükenişi* trans. İsmail Yerguz (İstanbul: Metis, 2000). Furthermore, it should be also expressed that the political conditions that produced the “failure” of Islamism in Turkey (the case of welfare party) was totally different from the failure of the Iranian revolution.

Said Halim Pasha, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Babanzade Ahmet Naim, Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi and Eşref Edip 2) Islamist intellectuals of the republic till to the 1980s, like Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and Sezai Karakoç, 3) Islamist intellectuals of the 1980s and 1990s like İsmet Özel, Ali Bulaç and Rasim Özdenören. Here, the objective of this thesis is not to dwell on all the Islamists of these three periods, but to expose the early reemergence of Islamism in the republican period with references to medieval heritage as they are necessary and to the Ottoman background and to see the transformation of Islamism from empire (Second Constitutional Period) to republic with a special reference to Kemalism.

The Islamists of the 1908-1918 period have been studied by some students of Turkish politics like Tanık Zafer Tunaya (1962) and İsmail Kara (1994). However, Islamist political thought in republican Turkey still remains to be studied from a comparative perspective with regard to the earlier period. Binnaz Toprak¹⁶ and Michael E. Meeker's¹⁷ pioneering works are confined to the Islamist intellectuals of 1980s and 1990s. In fact, the new Islamist/Muslim intellectuals of the 1980s and 1990s are different from Islamists of the Second Constitutional period in one basic way in that the latter tried to reconcile the “good” aspects of the western modernity with Islam through an unnamed effort of creating an Islamic modernity while the first group have rejected the grand narratives of the nineteenth century such as progress, science, reason and civilization and have essentialized modernity by positioning it in contradistinction to Islam.

¹⁶ Binnaz Toprak, “Islamic Intellectuals of the 1980s in Turkey” *Current Turkish Thought*. 62 (İstanbul: Redhouse Yayınevi, 1987) and “Islamist Intellectuals: Revolt Against Industry and Technology,” in *Turkey and the West: Changing Political and Cultural Identities* ed. Metin Heper, Ayşe Öncü and Heinz Kramer (London: I.B. Tauris, 1993), 237-257.

¹⁷ Michael E. Meeker, “The New Muslim Intellectuals in the Republic of Turkey,” in *Islam in Modern Turkey*, ed. Richard Tapper (London and New York: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 1991), 189-219 and “The Muslim Intellectual and His Audience: A New Configuration of Writer and Reader Among Believers in the Republic of Turkey,” in *Cultural Transitions in the Middle East* ed. Şerif Mardin (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1994), 153-188.

In fact, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek (1904-1983) was an important transitional figure between these two periods. Moreover, despite the common ground of spiritualism and nationalism between Kısakürek and conservative intellectuals like İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu and Peyami Safa, Kısakürek was different from a conservative school of thought in presenting Islam as a way of life and an ideology of salvation. Connecting the beliefs (cosmology) to the social and political affairs, he manifested an Islamist deviation from “the Durkheimian approach” towards Islam dominant among the republican intellectuals.¹⁸ Unlike a conservative mind, Islamism in general and Kısakürek in particular do not have the goal of reforming Islam (even strongly oppose) through a modern intervention while the Turkish conservative intellectuals supported a religious reform in Islam. It should be noted that though Kısakürek shared some basic notions (state, nation, community and authority) of the Turkish organic understanding of state and society which is also apparent in Kemalism and Turkish conservatism, it is still hard to classify his call for an Islamic state and revolution and his ideologization of Sunni Islam, as conservative. Kısakürek does not employ religion for the sake of legitimating a political-social authority but rather seeks for a (re)establishment of a political authority in order to realize Islamic ideals.

His merge of nationalism with Islamism is also different from the one that a conservative-nationalist line comes to get a blend of nationalism with Islam in the 1970s and 1980s. In his Islamism, nationalism seems to be in the service of Islam and much colored by Islamic tenets and not vice versa. Put it differently, if the major aim of the modern Turkish conservatism was to soften the radical reforms of the Turkish revolution¹⁹ or to provide “a

¹⁸ Ahmet Davutođlu, “The Re-emergence of Islamic Thought in Turkey-Intellectual Transformation.” a paper presented at the International Conference on Middle Eastern Studies, at the University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 6-9 July, Brimes Proceedings (1986): 235.

¹⁹ Tanıl Bora, *Türk Sağının Üç Hali: Milliyetçilik, Muhafazakarlık, İslamcılık* [Three Forms of Turkish Right: Nationalism, Conservatism, Islamism] (İstanbul: İletisim, 1998), 76.

competing vision of Kemalism”²⁰ Kısakürek goes beyond, in spite of the common themes he shares with conservatism in criticizing Kemalist modernization project: extremity in language reform, failure of the revolution in creating a social ethics and spiritual crisis. For Kısakürek, these observations are the starting points to be employed in the construction of a counter ideology to Kemalism: Islamism. His attribution of failure to Kemalism in providing an ideology to Turks was succeeded by a proposal of a new identity and ideology of salvation. Thus, Islamism in Kısakürek’s formulation is not a posture/attitude but rather a search for a coherent, systematic and totalistic ideology.²¹

²⁰ Celal Nazım İrem, “Kemalist Modernism and the Genesis of Turkish Traditionalist Conservatism.” Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation (Ankara: Bilkent University, 1996), 344. As İrem aptly points out, traditionalist conservatives like İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu, Peyami Safa, Ahmet Agaođlu, Hilmi Ziya Ülken and Mustafa Şekip Tunç advanced their conservative ideas in order to provide “new means of maintaining stability, order and continuity of the Kemalist status quo” though they were “on the edge of the Kemalist power structure.” They expressed also their opposition to Islamist intentions on the revival of Islamic community by reducing Islam to an element of the Turkish society, pp. 345, 352. For more on traditional conservatism see also İrem, “Kemalist Modernizm ve Gelenekçi-Muhafazakarlığın Kökenleri.”[Kemalist Modernism and Origins of the Traditionalist Conservatism] *Toplum ve Bilim*.74 (Fall 1997): 52-101 and “Muhafazakar Modernlik, ‘Diđer Batı’ ve Türkiye’de Bergsonculuk.”[Conservative Modernity, Other West and Bergsonism in Turkey] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 82 (Fall 1999):141-179.

²¹ It is true to say that Turkish Islamism have always contained a strong tendency of religiously based conservatism especially regarding organic theories of state and society but this kind of conservatism is obviously very different from a kind of conservatism that İrem and Bora are talking about. This nationalist and conservative trend within Islamism has been legitimized with a reference to the Ottoman past, not to Kemalism which actually produced an unprecedented rupture in the Islamic heritage. Seen from this perspective, one might argue that the Kemalist reforms have had a decisive/retraditionalizing impact on the transformation of Islamism in the republican period. A rupture in the Islamist heritage by Kemalism inhibited, as shown in the chapters related to Kısakürek’s political ideas, a continuation of Islamist arguments of the second constitutional period. Thus, Islamism of the republican period manifested a rather traditionalist inclination in interpreting Islam such as the refusal of *ijtihad* by Kısakürek. But it is also correct that Islamism easily embraced a conservative language in the authoritarian days of the early republic, see Nuray Mert, “Cumhuriyet’in İlk Döneminde Yurtdışında İki Muhalefet yayını: Yarın ve Müsavat.” [Two Publications of Outside Opposition in the Early Republic: Yarın and Müsavat] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 69 (Spring 1996): 138-139.

Necip Fazıl Kısakürek as an Islamist intellectual not only responded to the Republican “constructedness of social relations and personal identity”²² he but also sought for another alternative constructedness, i.e. an Islamic state and society. Kısakürek lived in a more or less Islamic society of Islamists in the second constitutional period in his youth but he also experienced the very formation of a new society, state and individual by Kemalism. Unlike Islamist intellectuals of 1980s and 1990s, he rather intimately observed the making and application of Kemalist secular reforms, healing the Turkish republican ethos to a significant extent. But he also inherited some Ottoman Islamist influences which led him to a more nostalgic evaluation of the Ottoman past than Islamists of the 1980s and 1990s who do not see the Ottoman example as good enough to be taken as the example. Kısakürek had a sense of a culture of empire, if we notice that he was nineteen years old when the republic was declared. His intellectual mind also, together with Kemalist intelligentsia, shared the basic characteristics of the late nineteenth century bureaucrats: elitism, authoritarianism and social engineering. Nevertheless, his political ideas were shaped by the intellectual and ideological atmosphere of the republic even when he presented a counter historical writing on Turkish history as opposed to the Kemalist one. The “new Muslim intellectuals” of the 1980s and 1990s are “very much the product of the post-1950 secular Turkish Republic.”²³

Certainly, the study of the reemergence of Islamism on an intellectual level can not be confined only to the examination of Kısakürek’s ideas. There have been some other influential intellectuals within this intellectual revival such as Eşref Edip (1882-1971), Nurettin Topçu (1909-1975), Cemil Meriç (1916-1987) and Sezai Karakoç (1933-) who have contributed much to the shaping of Islamist thought in modern Turkey. Nevertheless, this dissertation will focus on the political ideas of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek because it aims

²² Meeker, “The New,” 194.

at examining both the political ideas of the Islamists of Second Constitutional Period and the reemergence of Islamist political ideas in the republic. Delineating the Islamist line in the republican period through an analysis of some distinguished Islamist intellectuals is out of the scope of the present thesis and could be the subject of another study. Secondly, among the above mentioned intellectuals, it was Kısakürek who firstly tried to transform Islam into an ideology by presenting a systematic and coherent writing in this respect, whereas Eşref Edip,²⁴ for instance, who survived from the second constitutional period limited his diverse writings specifically to the critique of Kemalist conceptualization of secularism and democracy. He was far from offering an Islamist ideological discourse regarding Islamic state and revolution.

Nurettin Topçu, writing in the same period with Kısakürek, is not included to the scope of this thesis mainly due to the reason that he could be called as both nationalist/conservative and Islamist. In this way, S. Seyfi Ögün attributed Topçu to a “communitarian nationalist” trend while İsmail Kara regarded him within the Islamist current. Still for the present purposes, Kısakürek will be considered as a more appropriate representative of the Islamist current in the republican period.

Islamist intellectuals have remained within the tradition of Islamic political thought even though they have been deeply interested in Western constitutionalism and in the socialist thought that developed in the nineteenth and in twentieth centuries respectively.²⁵ For that reason, this dissertation will look at the basic political concepts of that tradition in terms of

²³ Ibid., 189.

²⁴ For more on his political ideas see İsmail Kara, *Türkiye’de İslamcılık Düşüncesi: Metinler/Kişiler* vol. III [Islamist Thought in Turkey: Texts/Personalities] (İstanbul: Pınar, 1994), 11-111.

²⁵ Charles E. Butterworth, “Philosophy, Stories and the Study of Elites,” in *Elites in the Middle East* ed. I. William Zartman (New York: Praeger Pub., 1980), 11; Montgomery W. Watt, *Islamic Fundamentalism and Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1988), 1.

the Islamist literature on state and democracy (in the third chapter) to show how they were transformed on the intellectual level in a way to reappropriate those concepts through a reconstructive attempt to accommodate Western institutions such as parliament and constitution, from the Ottoman empire (in the fourth and fifth chapters) to the Turkish republic (in the seventh and eight chapters). In this thesis, for the republican period, I have studied the political ideas of an Islamist intellectual, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, who established his political thinking before what were translated from Arabic in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, in the last three chapters.

In general, Islamism should be thought of as some sociological, cultural and political responses to the contemporary world, but not as “the mere reflection of the essence of Islam.”²⁶ Its ideological and cultural elements and vocabulary, way of thinking, ideas and values all are a mixture of some adopted modern ideas and of some forms of reinvented Islamic heritage (tradition). Two trends go hand by hand within Islamism: *ihyacılık*, a return to the true form of early Islam by clearing up the defects and superstitions which come from pre-Islamic and western influences and, secondly modernism, an adaptation of Islamic values and principles to the modern necessities.²⁷ One might further argue that all formulations of Islamism has constituted versions of the mixture of these two trends. Kısakürek, in this sense, represents a transitional figure between the nineteenth century Islamists who reconciles Islam with modernity, and Islamist intellectuals of the 1980s and 1990s who have dropped this effort of reconciliation. Through his claim that all good things (ideology, true freedom, true order and so on) exists in Islam, Kısakürek continues the effort of reconciling Islam with the good aspects of the West. On the other hand, his attacks against positivism, rationality and imitative modernization might remind one the

²⁶ Bobby Sayyid, “Sign O’Times: Kaffirs and Infidels Fighting the Ninth Crusade,” in *the Making of Political Identities* ed. Ernesto Laclau (London: Verso, 1991), 273.

²⁷ Türköne, *Siyasi*. 275.

first glimmerings of an Islamist effort to deconstruct the grand narratives of the west such as positivism, reason and progress. But in the final evaluation, Kısakürek resembles more the Islamists of the second constitutional period than Islamist intellectuals of the 1980s and 1990s.

State-Centered Nature of Islamism and A Search for an Islamic Modernity Another contribution this dissertation is expected to make is to the literature on Turkish politics on democracy in that a detailed study of Islamist intellectuals on the issues of state and democracy delineates the development of the idea of democracy and its implications in different sectors of Turkish intellectual life, and in return it has much to offer to a new understanding of the transformation of Islamist political thought in the republican period. The thesis is expected to show how the political ideas of Islamism correspond to the state-centered thought of Turkish intellectuals in general and transforms the main lines of medieval Islamic political thought in modern times with the need of ideology.

Islamism directed its energy to the task of building a sound and stable base for the restoration of the unity of the Islamic community and eventually for rebuilding the Islamic civilization. That meant a search for Islamic modernity vis-a-vis the challenge of the western civilization in the second constitutional period and a search for a new/authentic ideology in the republican period. Comparing the ideas and attitudes of leading Islamist intellectuals towards democracy and state in the second constitutional period and the republican period will give us an insight about the transformation of Islamist political thought in Turkey. This comparison also will provide us with the Islamist intellectual quality on the interplay between religion and modernity and provide at least a partial understanding of what was the Islamist stance towards Kemalist ideology and the impact of Kemalism on Islamism. Throughout the whole thesis, I maintain that the evolution of Islamist political thought in Turkey and its approach to state and democracy is closely

bound up with the “state-dominant nature”²⁸ of Turkish political tradition. This is also related to the fact that Islam is a civilization but in Turkey it is culturally specific.

Contextualizing Turkish Islamist Thought A further scientific merit of this study is its findings on Islamist positioning regarding state and democracy. This should not be conceived without paying attention to the political and intellectual settings of their times. Islamist depictions of state and democracy whether in the Ottoman Empire through Islamist identification of shura with constitutional regime or in the Republican period through Necip Fazıl Kısakürek’s totalitarian Başyücelik State, seem to be influenced by the political ideologies of their times such as liberalism, communism, fascism, and Kemalism. This contention is also related to another argument that the tradition of Islamic political thought is open to different Islamist readings, both as authoritarian/totalitarian formulations and as democratic openings.

The purpose of this thesis is to try to place Turkish Islamist thought in its historical and intellectual context. Since the nineteenth century Islamic thinkers have had to confront new ideas and institutions such as modernity, nationalism and democracy (constitution and parliament) whose origins lie in the West, while at the same time their political mind has been deeply rooted in the Islamic political tradition and medieval theorization on government. Both sets of intellectual sources need to be considered, for it is their interaction which has shaped the Islamist conceptualizations of state and democracy. Islamism did not emerge in an ideological and intellectual vacuum. It is therefore important to see what other ideologies have influenced the formation of Islamist intellectual/ideological mind.

²⁸ Ilkay Sunar and Binnaz Toprak, “Islam in Politics: The Case of Turkey.” *Government and Opposition*. 18:4 (Autumn 1983): 421.

In this way, I present, here, the basic argument that Turkish Islamism constitutes a mixture of four interrelated sources of influence: a) medieval heritage of Islamic political thought b) the idea of strong and transcendental state by the example of the Ottoman state c) the recognition and adaptation of dominant ideologies of the time, this being the idea of progress and civilization in the second constitutional period; Kemalist nationalism in the republican period; the critique of positivism and modernity and the employment of some post-colonial, communitarian and post-modern arguments in the 1980s and 1990s.

The pervasive influence of nationalism as a fourth source of influence, can certainly be attributed to the fact that from the 1940s to even nowadays, nationalism represented a shield and vehicle for the expression of Islamist demands in the secular republican period. An Islamist usage of nationalism also transformed the meaning of the Turkish nation from a non-religious terrain into a religiously legitimated and colored area. An imagination of an Islamic Ottoman past through the Islamic figures the Ottoman sultans like Fatih and Yavuz has been a central element to this religiously based nationalism. This kind of nationalism is obviously different from the Kemalist (secular) nationalism which excluded religion from the definition of nation and the nationalist trend which was established by a reference to a pre-Islamic Turkish Shaman heritage by Nihal Atsız and some others.

In this thesis, qualitative research methods will be employed. For the second chapter which will focus on state and democracy in Islamic/Islamist political thought reliance will be on literature review. For the following chapters which will contain the examination of Islamist thinkers, a discourse analysis will be conducted, especially by looking at the primary sources through a close reading of them. Islamists continued the Young Ottoman tradition of awakening political consciousness through publishing journals both in the second constitutional period and in the republican period. In this way, the study of Islamist intellectuals also will focus mainly on the examination of Islamist journals like *Sebilürreşad*, *Beyanü'l Hak* in the first period and *Ağaç* and *Büyük Doğu* in the latter

period. It should also be stated that the Islamist ideas of the Second Constitutional period will be studied thematically around the concepts of Meşrutiyet, Hilafet, Kanun-i Esasi, istibdat, hürriyet in the third and fourth chapters. For the Republican period, the books and articles published in Aaç and Büyük Doęu of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek will be analyzed in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters.

The outline of the chapters in this thesis is as follows:

The purpose of the second chapter is to examine the Islamist blending traditional material with modern notions such as progress, civilization and ideology. This attempt can be generally read as a quest for an Islamic modernity by Islamist intellectuals. In this regard, the transformation of the idea of state from the medieval formulations into a nation-state will be studied as well. The analyses of the debates on the (in)compatibility between Islam and democracy will be followed by an effort of contextualizing the Islamist conceptualizations of state and democracy.

The objectives of the third and fourth chapters are to indicate various aspects of the Islamist political thought in the second constitutional period on the issues that are closely connected to the concepts of state and democracy, including civilization, the West, true Islam, meşrutiyet, caliphate, shura and nationalism. No attempt will be made, however, to describe all political thoughts of the Islamists in detail. What will be attempted is to discuss the transformation of basic political concepts in the hands of Islamist intellectuals.

The fifth chapter tries to illuminate the nature of the Kemalist ideology as an intellectual/ideological setting in which Islamism reemerged. The main characteristics of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, an Islamist intellectual of the period, will be portrayed in the same chapter. A biography of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and an explanation of his views on Turkish intellectuals are studied in this chapter as well.

The sixth and seventh chapters were directed to delineate the importance of Kısakürek in contrast to the Islamist hope that the adoption of constitutions and the creation of elected assemblies in the Ottoman empire would revive the Islamic civilization. Islamist intellectuals (Kısakürek) in the republic replaced the idea of the “constitution” with the urgent need of a new “ideology” in order to establish Great East or Great Turkey. The analysis of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek’s political thoughts on state and democracy will be complemented by an exposition of his ideologization of Islam as an alternative to the communist and capitalist ideologies. The analysis of his conceptualizations of politics and state were connected with the critical evaluation of his ideal Islamic state: Başyücelik devleti and its institutions. Furthermore, in this chapter, an examination of Kısakürek’s critique of Kemalism will provide a perspective in order to re-understand Kemalism within the ideological and political framework of those who opposed it. That is to say, this would constitute an effort of reading the dark side of the republican modernization.

In the concluding chapter, a synopsis of the thesis will be given in relation to a critical comparison of Islamists of the two periods. The possible influence of Kemalism on Kısakürek’s political ideas and the main similarities between these two set of minds will be presented as well.

CHAPTER I

ISLAMIST CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF DEMOCRACY AND STATE

Islamism, as a political ideology is two-centuries old. In general, since its emergence within the ideas of the Young Ottomans in Turkey, Islamism has been the product of the interaction between the elements of a continuity and the forces of a change. In other words, Islamist political thought in Turkey has a long history and it manifests itself in different formulations in different political/intellectual settings.

As a popular movement in all the Islamic countries, however, Islamism is of relatively recent origin. Its current wave has reached its peak level with the Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979. Nevertheless, it is still true to say that this recent heightening of Islamism is a continuation, though a new phase, of Islamism that emerged in the political ideas of the nineteenth-century Islamist intellectuals. This observation, as I will do in this chapter, compels us to examine the literature on both Islamic reformism of the nineteenth-century and contemporary Islamism. The continuity of the same problems and the same literature also obliges us to combine the Islamist discourses on democracy and state in the past and the present. Moreover, this chapter has the aim of situating the transformation of Turkish Islamist thought from the Ottoman empire to the Turkish Republic as a case study within the contemporary analyses of Islamism. It is believed that this attempt will contribute both to the understanding and analysis of Turkish Islamism under the light of the contemporary literature on Islamism and to the understanding and analysis of Islamism in the world in general.

This chapter will analyze Islamism under three sections. The first section will hypothesize that Islamist intellectuals have had a tendency of mixing modern notions such as progress and ideology with traditional material/grammar to face the challenge of western modernity. In order to reach an Islamic modernity, the concept of Islamic civilization constituted a platform for the transformation and interaction of the elements of continuity (traditional grammar) and change (progress and ideology).

Since the Islamist meeting with modernity has been achieved mostly on the issues of political modernization, the second section will analyze the idea of state in Islamic political thought and its transformation into a nation-state in the modern age. The third section will explore the debate on the (in)compatibility between Islam and democracy with reference to the Islamist conceptualization of democracy. A further analysis of what some well-known students of Islam discussed on the issue will be done by contextualizing the Islamist conceptualizations of state and democracy.

1.1 A Note on Islamism(s): Ideology and Intellectual

Islamic resurgence has taken political, social and cultural forms in its moralizing pursuit of an Islamic life for individual and society in this world. The heightening of Islamic consciousness has been variously called as revivalism, rebirth, fundamentalism, reassertion, awakening, reformism, renaissance, resurgence, radicalism, milleniarism, return to Islam and march of Islam. Actually, these names could be employed to point out different aspects of the Islamic resurgence. But for the political nature and aims of the movements that are within a broader framework of resurgence, students of Islam and Middle East politics have used mainly three terms: fundamentalism,¹ political Islam² and

¹ W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Fundamentalism and Modernity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988); Ernest Gellner, "Marxism and Islam: Failure and Success," in *Power-Sharing Islam?* ed. Azzam Temimi (London: Liberty for Muslim World,

Islamism. Firstly it is worth noting that the first term is not employed in this study for the reason that the term of fundamentalism is pejorative in the sense that it refers to a violent and narrowly dogmatic literalism. This term was coined to describe a Protestant Christian movement in the United States, implying “a passive adherence to a literal reading of the sacred scripture.”³ But today, many Islamist movements have a strong tendency of adapting the Islamic tenets to the needs of the time. Furthermore, this term is defected with the problem of generating and representing the other by a hegemonic discourse about Islam.⁴

The term political Islam does not seem appropriate due to the fact that politicization of Islam is one though the most striking, aspect of Islamic resurgence. It may not be able to reflect the different social, cultural and political dimensions of Islamic resurgence. The second part of the term “Islam” does not indicate originally any ideologization but the addition of “ism” might be a more correct wording to describe the given political emphasis

1993), 33-42 and A. K.S. Lambton, “The Clash of Civilizations: Authority, Legitimacy and Perfectibility,” in *Islamic Fundamentalism* ed. R.M. Burrell (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1989), 33-47; see for a redefined version of this term, Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990); and “The Political Discourse of Contemporary Islamist Movements,” in *Islamic Fundamentalism* ed. Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).

² Ayubi defines political Islam as a doctrine or movement which “contends that Islam possesses a theory of politics and the state” see Nazih N. Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London and NY: Routledge, 1991), ix. For our purposes, the term Islamism which indicates an ideological or moral involvement in politics does not necessarily imply a theory of politics and state. It is concerned with Islamic principles as the basic values of any polity.

³ Robin Wright, “Two Visions for Reformation.” *Journal of Democracy*. 2: 7 (1996): 65-66. For the critics of this terms see Oliver Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 6-7; Gilles Kepel, *The Revenge of God* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1994), 3; William E. Shephard, “Islam and Ideology Towards a Typology.” *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 19 (1987): 307-336; Mark Jurgensmeyer, *The New Cold War* (London: University of California Press, 1993), 6.

by the Islamic movements. Although the word of “Islam” is open to an interpretation which stressed different understandings of religion as “Islams,” still this second form does not directly imply any ideologization. In this study, the term Islamism in place of fundamentalism and political Islam is preferred simply because of the reason that compared to the first two, it seems to contain less ambivalence in describing the phenomenon in respect to Muslims’ acceptance and the conceptual clarification.⁵ Here, we, by the term Islamism, refer to Islamic systems of thought and movements which have a political aim whether as the creation of an Islamic state whose basic feature is the application of Islamic law or as the reshaping of the political systems of their related countries in a religiously framework. The latter form does not necessarily call for an establishment of an Islamic state. But any form of Islamism, whether as a “political Islam” or a “cultural Islam”⁶ advocates a reshaping of society along Islamic principles. Actually, our usage of Islamism includes both the Islamic reformism of the late nineteenth century (and its counterpart in the Ottoman-Turkish context) and the emergence of Islamic movements against the imperialism of the West in the 1940s and 1950s and their heightening in the 1970s, leading to the Iranian revolution. Certainly, Islamism is not a

⁴ See Susan Harding, “Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of Repugnant Cultural Other.” *Social Research*. 58:2 (Summer 1991): 373-393.

⁵ For the usage of Islamism, see Nikki R. Keddie, “Ideology, Society and the State in Post-Colonial Muslim Societies,” in *State and Ideology in the Middle East and Pakistan* ed. Fred Halliday and Hamza Alavi (London: Macmillan Education, 1988), 15; Wright, “Two Visions,” 65-66.

⁶ Nilüfer Göle makes a distinction between Political Islam which gives a priority to a political conflict with the existing secular system and Cultural Islam which stresses an Islamic personality and identity. In this conceptualization, political Islam is defined as a movement which prioritized the capture of the political power and which calls for a systemic change from above while cultural Islam underlined individual and values rather than state and power though it does not mean that cultural Islam is not involved in politics, see *Modern Mahrem: Medeniyet ve Örtünme* [Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling] (İstanbul: Metis, 1991), 105-107.

monolith but a spectrum that covers different opinions from radical to moderate tendencies, from modernist to traditionalist interpretations.

Different theories have been introduced in an attempt to explain the reasons for the emergence of Islamism and its contemporary heightening. To give some illustrative examples, Gellner explains political vigor of Islam in terms of a reaction to underdevelopment which endures political humiliation as a result of a technological and, hence economic and military inferiority.⁷ Nikkie Keddie interpreted Islamism as a reaction to the rapid political and economic modernization and to a heavy western and secular control on the Islamic world that meant a failure of secular nationalism.⁸ According to M. Ira Lapidus, Islamism is a response to the major problem of adopting an Islamic tradition (culture and values) to modernity and its implications, i.e. a construction of a modern state and economy.⁹ Olivier Roy regarded Islamism as not against the modernization of Muslim societies but rather as a product of it.¹⁰ The main commonality of these explanations given for the emergence and rise of the Islamist phenomenon is the interplay between Islamism and modernity/modernization. The question of the urgent need to face the western challenge has been also tied closely to another stimuli which is the effort of finding reasons for the decline of Islam and rediscovering the way of a true Islamic life.

The present study also has an inclination to discuss the issue around the advent of modernity and Islamist responses to both modernity and modernization movements in the Islamic world. Young Ottomans and their followers can be considered as the representatives of Islamism of the second half of the nineteenth century. Their driving

⁷ Gellner, "Marxism," 37.

⁸ See Keddie, "Ideology," 17, 15.

⁹ See Ira M. Lapidus, "A Sober Survey of the Islamic World." *Orbis*, (Summer 1996): 397.

force was to cope with modernity which emerged in the West through Renaissance and reformation movements, in terms of an Islamic values and idioms. Seen in this light, Islamism with its different positioning has always felt the need of a true Islamic life as connected with the necessity of a meaningful response to the western supremacy (modernity).

In this thesis, my discussion on the issue of Islamism¹¹ and its relation to democracy and state shares Aziz al Azmah's contention that "there are as many Islams as there are situations that sustain it"¹² and comes to conclude that there are as many Islamisms, given their specific historical, local, political, socio-economic realities. Islamism as an ideology or a political discourse is derived from a particular understanding of Islam. The process of reading the Islamic text and tradition has been a constant but changing one, especially in the face of the needs of the time. Like the medieval Islamic understanding, a modern conception of Islam and further Islamisms are some specific readings and translations of the text into contemporary notions. Consequently, like the medieval theorization on state and government through the three basic lines, as delineated in the second chapter, in the twentieth century, Islamist movements and intellectuals have provided us with some specific theorization on democracy and state. These political formulations are by nature, a deliberate combinations from the medieval theorization and the early Islamic practice.

¹⁰ Roy, *Siyasal*.

¹¹ In this thesis, for the practical purpose of situating the Islamist reemergence in the republican period, we confine ourselves to the study of Islamism basically in the Sunni part of the Islamic world though the Iranian revolution contributed much to the Islamisms in the Sunni world. For Islamist formulations of politics and state in modern Shi'ite, see Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989).

¹² Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities* (London: Verso, 1993), 1. Al Azmeh pointed to the protean nature in the usage of the word Islam: "it [Islam] appears indifferently, among other things, to name a history, indicate a religion, ghettoize a community, describe a culture, explain a disagreeable exoticism and fullu specify a political programme" see p. 24.

Thus, here at the beginning of the discussion, we pay a critical/deconstructive attention to the Islamist discourse(s) on authentic Islamic identity and civilization and their attribution of themselves as the only true representation to these identity and civilization. Islam is not a concept that should be taken as a monolith, but like other religions, it has varied with political, economic and social variables such as time, place, national culture, social class, ethnicity, and gender.¹³

Islamists of both the nineteenth-century and of the present, through a construction of “an utopia” from the Islamic golden age, do not aim to return back to the past. But rather they express their intention to join the adventure of modernity by advancing a specific version of modernity, Islamic modernity. The political implication of this utopia is to establish “a City” which is regulated by “morality” and virtue and is a place of Islamic life i.e. solidarity, equality and justice, certainly with respect for “the word of God.”¹⁴ Islamism calls for “the retrieval and restoration of the original qualities that made for strength and historical relevance. No progress without the retrieval of pristine beginnings and the cleansing of the essence from the adulterations of history”¹⁵ in the hands of esotericist sects or Persians or Turks or westernized elite. The golden age of Islamism constitutes a source of aspiration in envisioning a worldview which comprised social, cultural, economic and political aspects, by a reference to the past which is not necessarily proven by the historical realities.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the major problematic of the Islamist intellectuals has been how Muslims could be authentic and modern at the same time. In a psychological

¹³ Nikki R. Keddie, “Ideology,” 9-10.

¹⁴ Lahouari Addi, “Islamicist Utopia and Democracy.” *ANNALS, AAPSS*. 524 (November 1992): 126; Lapidus, “A Sober,” 396.

¹⁵ al-Azmah, *Islams*. 85

mood of responding to the challenge of the West, they urged for the revitalization of Islamic civilization. Because of their concern for the West, Abu-Rabi calls the present Islamic resurgence as “a neo traditional Islamism,” which by this aspect differed from other traditionalist and conservative tendencies in the Islamic world.¹⁶ Certainly this does not mean that Islamist movements emerged just as a reaction to the Western impact. On the contrary, as Talal Asad correctly observes, Islamic resurgence predated the impact of western modernity by some attempts of renewal in the eighteenth century on the part of Muslim thinkers such as Shah Waliyullah of Delhi, who discussed the authority of the traditional interpretations of the text.¹⁷

Given the above mentioned reservation, it is still true that identity based quest of Islamists directed itself to the creation of “a major alternative form of modernity” for humanity, including “a feeling of solidarity, a rediscovery of values, an examination of self and the world.”¹⁸ This quest have also taken place in a framework in which the return to Islam have been seen as the only substitute for the failure of the imported ideas from the West such as nationalism and secularism.¹⁹

Haldun Güralp argues that Islamism is opposed to a specific form of modernization or to the ideology of modernism as Westernization but not to modernity/modernization. Given the contradictions, crises and failures of nationalist/developmentalist modernization movements in the Islamic world, the quest for an authentic Islamic identity has taken the

¹⁶ Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, *Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World* (New York: State University of New York, 1996), 9, 44.

¹⁷ Talal Asad, “Europe Against Islam: Islam in Europe.” *The Muslim World*. LXXXVII: 2 (April 1997): 9-10.

¹⁸ Hichem Djait, *Europe and Islam* trans. Peter Heinegg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 131.

¹⁹ Shlomo Avineri, “The Return to Islam.” *Dissent*. (Fall 1993): 410-413.

form of “a politics of identity.”²⁰ Still here it is possible to argue that the failure or success of modernization movements would inevitably bring the issue of identity (and civilization) to the forefront. Islamisms are open to different positioning in regard to modernity whether being against its very bases or using its tools to create another form. But what is significant for our purposes is that Islamism(s) could not escape from the challenge of modernity and modernization movements. The success or failure of the modernization movements might contribute to the direction and contents of Islamism but they could not prevent the urgency of the modernity’s challenge to Islamism. For instance, one implication of this argument may be observed in Islamist attitudes towards the modern state and ideology. Islamisms believed in the possibility and even the necessity of “the translatability of traditional texts”²¹ in their search for a modern state or ideology: thus for some Islamists shura becomes parliamentary democracy and separation of powers while for some others it becomes a counterpart of a modern political ideology.

It is early to declare the end of Islamism by glancing at the diminishing power of political Islam. As H. Sohail Hashmi perceptively observes, the weakening of Islamism as a political force, aiming to capture power, may in fact trigger “more active and broad-based religious politics”²² in the Muslim world. Nevertheless, one may expect this active religious activism more in social and cultural dimensions rather than directly and radically in political dimension. This does not mean that Islamism will lose its political nature though it is hard to foretell the future formation of Islamism. But if Islamism continues to exist in tomorrow’s world, it has to deal with a political dimension in order to influence if

²⁰ Haldun Güralp, “A Postmodern Reaction to Dependent Modernization: The Social and Historical Roots of Islamic Radicalism.” *New Perspectives on Turkey*. 8 (Fall 1992): 15-26.

²¹ Al-Azmeh, *Islams*. 79.

²² Sohail H. Hashmi, “International Society and Its Islamic Malcontents.” *The Fletcher Forum*. (Winter/Spring, 1996): 27.

not to shape, politics and public sphere through its ideal of sharia whether as some state regulations or underlying values of the polity.

Islamism as an indigenous ideology and reaction to the alienating influences of the west represents a “counter-quest for authenticity”²³ or “counter-acculturation,”²⁴ implying the spiritual and moral superiority of Islam over the west. In this respect, Islamism involves a dramatic re-evaluation of the West. Having reminded the fact that Islamists have always criticized the values of the west in terms of moral decadence and idolatry since the nineteenth century, the idea of the failure of the West in spiritual terms has gained much currency in the twentieth century, further leading to a self-assertion of Muslims to a civilization, namely Islamic civilization.

1.1.1 A Quest for An Islamic Modernity: Islamist Intellectual and “Civilization”

Just as the political writing on the decline of the Ottoman state and the adoption of western institutions constituted the touchstone of Ottoman-Turkish political modernization, Islamists also started to develop their political ideas within the confines of this debate. Although the ulema positively contributed to the debate on the decline of the Ottoman empire and Islamic civilization and supported the early Westernization measures, they lost their position to a new class, intellectuals, throughout the reform movement. Consequently, transformation of Islam into a modern ideology and its formulation as an ideology of salvation/revival for the country was realized not by the ulema but mainly by the intellectuals. It was certain that the advent of modernity in the West and its profound effects on the Ottoman elite urged this new class to reimagine Islamic political values in the light of modern democratic institutions and values. All schools of thought in the second

²³ Ayubi, *Political*. 218.

²⁴ Bassam Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 128.

constitutional period, namely Ottomanism, Turkism, Islamism and Westernism were progress oriented and reform minded, but they differed on the values by which the civilization and identity of the Ottomans would be established. Westernist school had the inclination of becoming Western (modern) through a civilizational conversion, while Islamists searched for the revitalization of Islamic civilization, or for advancing an Islamic modernity.

Islamists intellectually embraced the concept of civilization not only to criticize the modernization movements in the Islamic world and to underline the moral decadence of the West but also to express their quest for a new paradigm. The Islamist discourse on civilization starts with the “problematization of a universalistic construction of western civilization”²⁵ and comes to manifest its goal of an Islamic civilizational vivacity: “[t]he revival of Islamic identity is another form of civilizational transformation which provides a comprehensive civilizational alternative and challenge to western civilization rather than posing a political threat.”²⁶ Indeed, this tendency to problematize the issues that belong to the Islamic world and to Turkey has constituted an Islamist intellectual tradition in the Republican period, namely *Büyük Doğu* (Great Orient) of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, *Umran* (Civilization) of Cemil Meriç and *Diriliş* (Resurrection) of Sezai Karakoç.

When Islamist intellectuals speak of Islamic civilization and tradition, they do not refer to “the traditional beliefs and practices of the Turkish Gemeinschaft”²⁷; rather, they envision an Islam that includes not only the precepts of Qur’an, Sunnah and the practices of the four caliphs, but also the intellectual heritage and historical experiences of Muslims all over

²⁵ Nilüfer Göle, “Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey,” in *Civil Society in the Middle East* ed. A.R.Norton (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1995), 25.

²⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Civilizational Transformation and the Muslim World* (Kuala Lumpur: Mahir Publications, 1994), iii

²⁷ Meeker, “The New”, 217.

the world. Nevertheless, the quest of “authenticity” brings a selective approach in the revival or invention of Islamic civilization and tradition.

Islamist discourse postulates a civilizational essence which unifies the experiences of different local cultures and geographies, for both Islam and the West (Occidentalism). To place the western enterprise, modernity as just another civilization is “the provincialization of Europe.”²⁸ Like orientalism, Islamist discourse rests upon the basic conviction that Islamic civilization is ontologically and epistemologically different from the West. The relationship between the civilization of Islam and that of the West is generally presented in terms of difference and often in terms of polarization. Although the word Islam refers primarily to a religion, Islamist intellectuals generally use it to refer not only to the faith and its followers, but also to the civilization of Muslims. Islam can provide an answer to the perplexing problems of the day, be they political, economic, social, cultural or religious. Islamic way of life brings with specific values and mechanisms for the revitalization of Muslim human being, society and politics. The view of the West and its “occidentalization” is crucial not only for rejecting western product of modernity but also for redefining Islamic way of life. Islamist writers’ essentializing attitude towards the concepts of the West and Islam constitutes an “ideological posture” which tries to demolish the superiority of western modernity and positivism. They have employed internal critics of the West to deconstruct the hegemony of the West with its project of modernity. One may argue that Islamist writers, in their understanding of the West, have been caught by the same essentialist logic present in the Orientalist tradition.

Civilization as the dominant idea of the nineteenth century is a controversial concept and as Elias argues, it also “expresses the self-consciousness of the West. One could even say: the national consciousness. It sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or

three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or ‘more primitive’ contemporary ones. By this term, Western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of its technology, the nature of its manners, the development of its scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more.”²⁹

The Islamist emphasis on civilization can be read as an effort to create a native modernity for self-definition. But it is certain that this effort would reject to be called as a new form of modernity whether it is not named as the non-Western modernity or Islamic modernity simply because the employment of the civilization concept aims to go beyond western modernity and to find an alternative to it. Indeed, the concept of civilization provides an avenue for Islamists to express an Islamic authentic identity without ideologization of Islam. Thus, Islam means a civilization which developed throughout history in the Islamic world, not an ideology. However, looking from a civilizational point gains its discourse from a belief that the western civilization have been experiencing an acute civilizational crisis. That is another version of the narrative on the “ends”: the end of west(ern supremacy), mainly related to the discussions on the end of modernity or modernism.

Inevitably, the discussion of modernity in relation to Islamist intellectuals and movements bring us to the point of debating “whether ‘modernity’ is a single tradition, a singular structure, or an integrated set of practical knowledges...whether there are varieties of modernity.”³⁰ The present study has an inclination to make a distinction between western

²⁸ Sayyid, *A Fundamental*. 159.

²⁹ Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners: The civilizing Process* vol. 1 trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 3-4. The term Islamic civilization and its usage against West is also problematic see Sayyid, *A Fundamental*. 102; İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* [The Longest Century of the Empire](İstanbul: Hil, 1995), 16-17 and John Obert Voll, “The End of Civilization is Not So Bad.” *MESA Bulletin*. 28 (July 1994): 3-5.

³⁰ Talal Asad, “Modern Power and the Reconfiguration of Religious Traditions.” interview by Saba Mahmood, *Stanford Humanities Review*. 5:1 (1995): 4.

form/experience of modernity and modernity in general without forgetting the fact that modernity emerged within western societies. But this recognition does not have to led to the conclusion that there is only one kind of modernity which is western one. If modernity is a symphony of humanity, it is plural and not restricted to western experience; then every part of humanity as cultures or civilizations or something else might participate in this experience without losing their some native peculiarities.³¹ Hence, the idea of modernity is open to different conceptualizations in the forms of “alternative modernity,” “native modernity,” “pluralist modernity” or in Nilüfer Göle’s conceptualization as “non-western modernity.”³²

One may argue that the contemporary Islamist discourses around the concept of Islamic civilization have been attempts of recreating/reinventing an Islamic tradition/traditions. Although it is correct to say that the Islamist return to the golden age have produced a rupture or de-traditionalizing effect³³ on Islamic heritage, still, Islamist intellectual discourses around the notion of Islamic civilization directed themselves to the reconstruction of tradition. Hence, despite of its essentializing attitude as Islam and the West, the concept of civilization might provide a ground for both learning from the west and still keeping the claims to authenticity and identity. The idea of civilization which was invented in the nineteenth century Europe, according to Talal Asad, is not helpful for thinking constructively about the present cultural and political problems, including the

³¹ For the plurality of modernity see I.M. Lapidus, “Islam and Modernity,” in *Patterns of Modernity: Beyond the West* vol. II ed. S.N. Eisenstadt (London: Frances Printer, 1987), 89 and Jacques Waardenburg, “Some Thoughts on Modernity and Modern Muslim Thinking About Islam,” in *Islam and the Challenge of Modernity: Historical and Contemporary Contexts* ed. Sharifah Shifa Al-Attas (Kuala Lumpur:ISTAC, 1996), 318-319.

³² Nilüfer Göle, “Batı-dışı modernlik: Kavram üzerine.”[Non-western Modernity: On the Concept] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 80 (Bahar 1999): 130

³³ Göle, “Batı-dışı,” 141.

crisis in the Islamic tradition. The notion of tradition which is falsely opposed to modernity is a more appropriate term to be argued through and reconstructed.³⁴ Still, one has to be added to Asad's above statement that Islamist intellectuals have a tendency to understand the concept of civilization in the way that Asad envisioned for the concept of tradition. Moreover, it can be argued that the battle between Islamists and the secular regimes could be seen as a conflict about which type of modernity, western modernity or a "native one" (Islamic modernity) should be adopted.

The issues of political modernization such as an establishment of a modern nation-state and democracy are central to the agenda of the Islamist search for modernity for two reasons: the first is to save the Ottoman state from its decline and dissolution in the Second Constitutional Period and the second is to create a new society and an individual in the republican period. An examination of the idea of state in Islamic political thought and its transformation into a nation-state are the topics of the following sections.

1.2 The Idea of State in Islamic(ist) Political Thought

The concept of the state, in its modern connotations, did not form a part of the Islamic political thought³⁵ in the classical period and it is sure that modern conceptualization of the

³⁴ Asad, "Europe," 7.

³⁵ For the present purposes, the focus of the study will be limited basically to the elaboration of Sunni political theory. To examine Shi'i and Khariji theories of political authority see Hamid Dabashi, *Authority in Islam: From the Rise of Muhammad to the Establishment of the Umayyads* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 95-120 and 121-146. By employing Max Weber's typology of "charismatic authority" as a model in his investigation, Dabashi considers the formation of these early three sects of Islam as three responses to the loss of Muhammadan charismatic authority (Sunnite routinization of charisma, Shi'ite perpetuation of charisma and Kharijite dissemination of charisma as "modalities of command and obedience") with the aim to institutionalize his authority pp. xii, 1, 11, 13. And to compare Sunni and Shi'i political thought see Andrea M. Farsakh "A Comparison of the Sunni Caliphate

state is a Western one which evolved in relation to the phenomena of the Renaissance and capitalism. Here when I say state, I am referring to the body-politic (types of statesmanship or government) which is the closest thing to the concept of the state in traditional Islamic political thought.³⁶ Put it differently, I shall be using in this chapter the concept of state, not in its modern connotation but rather in a general way that considers 'state' as an organization of political power or authority.

Pertaining to the type of government, traditional Islamic political thought seems to put an emphasis on the concept of political leadership, the caliph. The theory of caliphate, or *imamate*, lacks an abstraction of state in the modern sense: it rather conceptualizes government and state which is entrusted with governing in accordance with the provisions of the *shari'a*.³⁷ This lack of abstraction has led some students of Islam and of political scientists to the conclusion that Islamic polities produced weak states³⁸, which are personal and dynastic and which are not "impersonal source of public law."³⁹ This is because of a distrust of Islam for the government (exercise of political power)⁴⁰ or of the fact that, as

and the Shi'i Imamate." *The Muslim World*. 59:1 (1969): 50-63 and 59:2 (1969): 127-141.

³⁶ See Ayubi, *Political*. 7 and P. J. Vatikiotis, *Islam and the State* (London: Croom Helm, 1987).

³⁷ Ayubi, *Political*. 8; Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of Shii and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century* (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1982), 6; Ann K. S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 17 and Mohammad Salim Al-Awa, "Political Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective," in *Power -sharing Islam?* ed. Azzam Tamimi (London: Liberty for Muslim World Publications, 1993), 71.

³⁸ John Hall and G. John Ikenbery, *The State* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 31,34 and Bertrand Badie and Pierre Birnbaum, *The Sociology of the State* trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 99.

³⁹ Vatikiotis, *Islam*. 37-38.

⁴⁰ Hall and Ikenbery, *the State*. 31; S. D. Goiten, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), 205-212. Goiten holds that the concept of state is alien to the political glossary of Islam and it is a loanword from the Greek polis or

G.E.Von Grunebaum⁴¹ argues, Islamic law started from a definition of political leadership, and not from a definition of state, and came to the latter as late as Ibn Khaldun (d.1037). In other words, it is argued that in traditional Islamic political thought, political authority is not clearly separated from the persons who embody it.

The origins of this essentialist approach to Islam regarding the emergence of state can be found in the writings of Max Weber. He notes that “the state itself, in the sense of a political association with a rational, written constitution, rationally ordained law, and an administration bound to rational rules or laws administered by trained officials, is known, in this combination of characteristics, only in the Occident, despite all other approaches to it.”⁴² However, neither the Medieval Europe nor the Medieval Islam had a state in the modern connotation of a sovereign structure that was above and beyond both the ruler and the ruled.⁴³ It is also striking to see that on the issues of state and democracy, the comparisons of Islamic institutions are made with the European political institutions after the sixteenth and even the eighteenth centuries.⁴⁴ The approach of determining a set of “absences in Islam”⁴⁵, seen in Weber’s analysis of patrimonialism and Karl Marx’s Asiatic

politeia, Moreover, he claims that in Islam religion and government are opponents p. 197 and 208.

⁴¹ G.E. Von Grunebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), 131.

⁴² *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 16-17.

⁴³ Asad, “Europe,” 191. To compare the political philosophies of Islam and Christianity in the Medieval Age see Antony Black, “Classical Islam and Medieval Europe: A Comparison of Political Philosophies and Cultures.” *Political Studies*. XLI: 1 (March 1993): 58-69.

⁴⁴ Mohammed Arkoun, “The Concept of Political Authority in Islamic Thought,” in *Islam: State and Society* ed. Klaus Ferdinand and Mehdi Mozaffari (London: Curzon Press, 1988), 55.

⁴⁵ No rational and formal law, no autonomous cities, no independent burgher class, no parliamentary institutions, no capitalism, no revolution, no right to resist to the bad government and so on.

mode of production⁴⁶ as the most distinguished expressions, is called as Orientalism, a very rich field of study in representing Islam for the Western audience. Orientalist discourse asserted the claim that due to despotism (or patrimonial rule) and other religious features of Islam such as otherworldliness, rational bureaucracy and democratic institutions (civil societal elements, parliament, constitution and the idea of opposition as a constructive political force) did not develop or take root in Muslim lands. As Yahya Sadowski rightly put it, the label of “strong state, weak society” for the Middle Eastern societies is transformed into a new one, “strong society, weak state” by the neo-Orientalists especially after the Iranian revolution in 1979. He writes,

“[w]hen the consensus of social scientists held that democracy and development depended upon the actions of strong, assertive social groups, Orientalists held that such associations were absent in Islam. When the consensus evolved and social scientists thought a quiescent, undemanding society was essential to progress, the neo-Orientalists portrayed Islam as beaming with pushy, anarchic solidarities.”⁴⁷

However, as I have tried to show in the following chapter, Islamic political thought provides enough material for both authoritarian closures and democratic openings, depending on the nature of the specific political culture and attitudes of political elite. Particular historical developments (economic basis, class structure and so on) of the Muslim lands and the international network of capitalist relations should also be employed in the analysis of Islamic political ideas⁴⁸. In this line of thinking, one may say that personalization of government and state in the person of the caliph did not constitute an

⁴⁶ For the parallels between these two thinkers on this subject see Bryan S. Turner, *Weber and Islam: A Critical Study* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 75-79.

⁴⁷ Yahya Sadowski, “The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate,” in *Political Islam* ed. Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (London and New York: I. B. Tauris Pub., 1997), 41.

⁴⁸ See Bryan S. Turner, *Capitalism and Class in the Middle East: Theories of Social Change and Economic Development* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1984), 68-69.

obstacle to the emergence, in Islamic political theory, of an idea of a state with a transcendental reference, namely; the *shari'a*⁴⁹ (divine law). The unity of community and its identification in principle with the office of the caliphate is very intimately linked to the principle that the fundamental loyalty of Muslims is given not to the caliph but to the *shari'a*.⁵⁰ The institution of caliphate is regarded not as being unchangeable, but as an ideal that symbolizes the nature of Islamic political system.

One aim of the dissertation is to observe the changes and continuities in the Islamist conceptualization of democracy and state by comparing the medieval theorization and the modern period. This necessitates a glance at the theoretical perspectives on democracy and state in Islamic political theory. Islamists had provided us with some specific theorizations on state and democracy with references to the Islamic tradition/civilization. These political formulations were some selective combinations from the medieval theorization on state and government and the early Islamic practice. In their attempt to reconstruct Islamic community and polity, Islamists, both in the Second Constitutional Period and in the Republican period, were influenced by all the three main theories of classical Islamic political thought: the theory of the jurists, the theory of Islamic philosophers and the literary theory, but with a greater emphasis on the first. According to all these theories, the main constituting elements of an Islamic polity might be specified as follows: the ideal (or idealized) political authority i.e. the caliph, philosopher king or the pious and the just king;

⁴⁹ The *shari'a*'s intention is wider in scope and purpose than a simple legal system in the modern sense of the term law. *Shari'a* is also more extensive in scope and meaning than the concept of Islamic law (*fiqh*), though both terms are sometimes used interchangeably. *Fiqh* as a composite science of law and morality regulates both the faith, and political and legal matters; Coulson, *A History*. 83. Brinkley Messick defines *shari'a* as a "central societal discourse" or as a type of "total discourse", wherein all kinds of institutions find simultaneous expression: religious, legal, moral, political and economic, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 3, 262.

⁵⁰ H.A.R. Gibb, "Constitutional Organization," in *Law in the Middle East* ed. Majid Khadduri and Herbert J. Liebesny (Washington: The Middle East Institute, 1955), 14.

the supremacy of the shari'a; and the unity of the Islamic community. In this respect, the central question of Islamic political thought was to realize the happiness of the community in this world and in the hereafter through the application of shari'a. In other words, in Islamic legitimization of political authority, the most significant matter was whether or not some types of institutionalization of political authority such as caliphate or sultanate (or republic) fit the Islamic political values such as shura and justice as prescribed by the shari'a.

On this background of medieval theorization on government, Islamists transformed the medieval conceptions of caliphate and shura (meşveret) into modern nation-state and constitutional regime when they faced the advent of modernity and its political institutions. In order to delineate and situate the emergence of the idea of Islamic state through an interaction with the idea of nationalism in the second constitutional period and in the republic, it would be beneficial to have a look at the literature on contemporary Islamist attitudes towards the nation-state.

1.2.1 Islamist Adaptation to the Modern Nation-State: An Islamic State

The abolition of the caliphate, complemented by the western colonialism of the early twentieth century constituted a cause for the highly politicized agendas of the Islamist movements in this century. Actually, the abolition of caliphate did not mean the end of the juristic theorization on state and government but rather, various Islamist movements and intellectuals tried to revitalize the theory of caliphate either by adaptation to the requirements of the nation-state in the form of a call for an Islamic state or by insisting on the possibility of a caliph over all Muslims without much regarding the divisions of Muslims into nation-states. The first reaction became the dominant trend in the minds of Islamists but at the same time they attributed personal aspects of a caliph to a modern construction, namely nation-state. Although the direct or indirect emphasis has represented

a historical and “epistemic continuity”⁵¹ with the Islamic tradition and its self-image, as Talal Asad argued, this Islamist demand for a modernizing Islamic state has been indeed a reproduction of a western model: “most Islamic movements are concerned to capture the center that the modern state represents, instead of trying to cut across or dissolve it..., adding only that it be controlled by a virtuous body of Muslims.”⁵²

The idea of an Islamic state revealed its early glimmerings in the early twentieth century in the writings of the Islamists of the second constitutional period alongside the diminished significance of the caliphate, as our elaborations on the issue show in the third and four chapters. But certainly a theorization of an Islamic state as a reaction to the abolition of the caliphate and along the lines of a modern nation-state was provided by M. Rashid Rida (1865-1935), who influenced the Muslim Brotherhoods in Egypt, spreading an important impact all over the Sunni world.⁵³

From the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to the foundation of a new secular republic from its ruins, the historical experience of the Turkish state came to represent the different stages of the disintegration of the traditional Islamic political order totally, though the Ottoman caliphate had been a blend of the caliphate and sultanate with a suspicious reference to the transfer of the caliphate from Abbasid to the Ottomans. The expansion of the western colonialism over the Muslim lands furthered the crisis of Islam which had showed itself in

⁵¹ Abu-Rabi, *Intellectual*. 9 and Watt, *Islamic*. 1. For Watt, this continuity in Muslim mind is an unchangingness about muslim perception of human nature. This unchangingness of human nature justifies Islamists’s insistence on the finality of Islam as a religion and the supremacy of sharia and therefore there is no need for a fundamental revision of sharia see pp. 3-6.

⁵² Asad, “Modern,” 14, 8.

⁵³ For his political ideas see Malcolm H. Kerr, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966) and Yusuf H.R. Seferta, “The Concept of Religious Authority According to Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridha.” *Islamic Quarterly*. XXX:3 (1986): 162

the process of learning from the West in the nineteenth century, in Islamic intellectual life. Thus, Islamic resurgence appeared in the political life of Islamic lands which had been under the western colonial rule, as a vehicle for anti-colonial independence movements.⁵⁴ The ground for revitalizing Islam as a political element firstly to war against western colonialism and later to oppose the secular/modernist ideologies of the newly established states in Islamic world had been prepared intellectually by Jamal ad- Din al-Afghani and his disciple Muhammad Abduh for the Islamic world in general and by the Young Ottomans and the Islamists of the second constitutional period for Turkey in particular. In the post-colonial era, with the establishment of different nation-states in Muslim lands, the question of the religion in relation to these new states emerged. The general trend was in the direction of secularizing Islamic traditional polities through a strict modernization process. In some cases like Turkey and Tunisia, modernizing elites adopted a radical understanding of secularism to the extent that Islam was far away from providing even “a function of civil religion” for the new polity.⁵⁵ To establish a new political community, nation-state and national identity, an ideology of nationalism had been introduced by the modernizing elites. Thus, Islam as a set of legitimating values for politics and state had been abandoned in the course of modernizing/developmental models of the Islamic countries though it had always been employed in the service of different nationalisms as well. At this point, a complex relationship between Islam(ism) and nationalism enters into the picture. To portray an Islamist stance in the face of nationalism would contribute to the understanding of Islamisms in relation to state and democracy on the whole. A first glance at the issue may reach some easy conclusions that Islamists are unanimous in their

⁵⁴ In Turkey, too, both Islamist goals of freeing the sultan-caliphate and Islamists played important roles in politicizing the masses and mobilizing them for the National Struggle see Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1981), 66.

⁵⁵ Metin Heper, “Islam and Society in Turkey: A Middle Eastern Perspective.” *The Middle East Journal*. 35: 2, (1981): 350.

opposition to nationalism which they consider as unIslamic or western; that Islam has a universal aspect, going beyond the ethnic and local differences; or Islam and nationalism are competing ideological sources of identity and community.

In fact, the discussion on the interplay between Islam and nationalism (and nation-state) can best be summarised in two views. The first view that underlines the emergence of nation-state in the west as a result of the process of secularization (limiting religion to one's private life) is best represented by P.J. Vatikiotis. Reminding the broad framework of sharia which encompasses both the public and private aspects of human life and the non-territorial/universal aspect of the Islamic community, he comes to claim that state in Islam is defined in a religious and ideological way; thus Islam is not compatible with nationalism which is a constructive loyalty to a territorially defined national group. This approach also emphasizes that the concept of the nation-state has no equivalents in the classical Islamic writings. On the contrary, the classical Islam stresses a division of world into two hostile realms: dar al-Islam (the realm of Islam or peace) and dar-al harb (the realm of war). Given the insistence on the holy war, Islam has the aim of conquering the non-Islamic world at the expense of other beliefs.⁵⁶

The second view which stresses a compatibility between Islam and nation-state is best articulated by James P. Piscatori who finds some indications of "territorial pluralism" in the Islamic classical theory.⁵⁷ A significant indication of the acceptance of territorial pluralism is found in the verse of the Qur'an that God divided mankind into nations and tribes for the purpose of better knowing one other. After mentioning the Islamic historical experience as the record of pragmatic adaptation to diversity under different states and

⁵⁶ Vatikiotis, *Islam*. 36.

⁵⁷ James P. Piscatori, *Islam in a World of Nation-States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 144.

empires such as Ottoman, Persian and so forth, Piscatori underlined the important effect of the Islamist/pan-Islamic sentiments in the establishment of the credentials of particularized nationalisms and in validating the idea of a territorial separation between us and them.⁵⁸ Speaking in similar terms, Nazih N. Ayubi argues that the Islamist quest for an authenticity provides a form of “cultural nationalism,” thus, being able to take the support of the secular nationalist people in the Iranian revolution or the admiration and respect of secular nationalist movements in the Arab world.⁵⁹ Hence in a paradoxical way, despite their ideological rejection of nationalism and nation-state as a harmful importation from the west, Islamists accept the nation-state as their operational framework and many of them are strongly attached to the notions of territory, nationhood and nationalism. Although Islamist movements theoretically have situated themselves against the (secular) nationalisms of their relevant countries, they have been influenced by the tradition and practice of these secular nationalisms. This is due to their contention that a modernizing national state and its way of conduct (reform from above) is necessary to bring about the creation of a new Islamic society and individual.

The nationalist aspect of Islamisms led Mark Jurgensmeyer to name Islamist movements as “religious nationalism” in contradistinction to a secular nationalism. According to him, an “almost Hegelian dialectic” between the two competing frameworks of social order (religion and secular nationalism) have given a birth to a synthesis (Islamism or religious

⁵⁸ Ibid., 77.

⁵⁹ Ayubi, *Political*. 217. In fact, in the case of the Iranian revolution, a new national entity came into being that was different from both the polity under the old Muslim rulers and from the Shah’s failed attempt of a new secular nation-state: a religiously-based nation-state. This is similar to the practice of socialist ideology in the USSR (Socialism in one country). Shi’ism and its politicization in the hands of Khomeini contributed to the Iranian self-assertion and pride in nation and culture see Mary Elaina Hegland, “Islamic Revival or Political and Cultural Revolution?” in *Religious Resurgence* ed. Richard T. Antoun and Mary Elaine Hegland (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 214.

nationalism) in which religion has become a new “ally of the nation-state.”⁶⁰ In this respect, a synthesis of mutual accommodation has appeared. On the one hand, pan-Islamic aspirations of Islamism has been cut off, and on the other hand, religion has turned out to be a base for the legitimacy of the nation-state. Islamism can serve the function of restoring the legitimacy of the nation-state’s connections with individual.⁶¹ This may soften the alienating effects and crisis of the modernizing state in the Islamic world. Furthermore, Islamists have been obliged to consider the necessities and interests of a nation-state when they came to power. The realities of politics is not only confined to the recognition and pursuit of national interest but also, internal politics shapes the Islamists in an accommodationist way in that “it is the state or the political power, which defines the place of Islam in an Islamist polity, and not the reverse. Islam is no more than a way to legitimize their power and exclude their opponents.”⁶² In sum, the interplay between nationalism and Islam(ism) seems to open to different combinations in practice, despite the so called theoretical difficulties. This fact, in the case of Turkey, has been connected evidently to an observation that Turkish nationalism has always contained a religious aura and Islamists have been sympathetic to Turkish nationalism, as will be explained throughout this study, as well.⁶³

⁶⁰ Jurgensmeyer, *The New*. 30. A supporting evidence comes from the experience in Turkey during the period between 1980 and 1997. Changing attitude of Turkish state’s conception of secularism and its representation in the ideas of presidents Kenan Evren and Turgut Özal in this period see Burhanettin Duran, “Kenan Evren’s and Turgut Özal’s Conceptualizations of Secularism: A Comparative Perspective.” Unpublished Master Thesis (Ankara: Bilkent University, 1994).

⁶¹ François Burgat, “Ballot Boxes, Militaries and Islamic Movements,” in *Islamism Debate* ed. Martin Kramer (Syracuse and Tel Aviv: The Dayan Center Papers, 1997), 43.

⁶² Olivier Roy, “Islamists in Power” in *Islamism Debate* ed. Martin Kramer (Syracuse and Tel Aviv: The Dayan Center Papers, 1997), 69.

⁶³ The developments after the military intervention in Turkish politics by means of the National Security Council in February 28, 1997, and the downfall of a coalition government, led by a pro-Islamist Welfare Party do not contradict the fact that

Perhaps, the most significant issue which has confronted the Islamist intellectuals since the nineteenth century has been the (in)compatibility between Islam and democracy. As will be discussed in the next two chapters, Islamists of the empire tried to reconcile liberal constitutional democracy with Islamic political institutions and values. Hence, an elaboration of the interplay between Islam and democracy in the eyes of Islamists, including the contemporary debates, will shed a light on the transformation of Islamism in Turkey.

1.3 Islam and Democracy: Islamizing Democracy or Democratizing Islamism

Stemming from the fact that the original Islamic sources, Qur'an and Hadith, do not prescribe a specific type of government, Islamic political thought in the last two centuries has come to witness some differing opinions on the issue of the (in)compatibility of Islam and democracy. As Nuray Mert correctly argues, the discussion of (in)compatibility of Islam and democracy in the Turkish context is related to “a historical habit” of seeing Islam as an obstacle to progress at the core of social problems.⁶⁴ The arguments which underlined the progressive aspects of Islam by supporting the compatibility or which stressed the incompatibility by claiming the uniqueness of Islamic civilization seem to share and reproduce the similar intellectual defects. Any attempt to speak about the (in)compatibility of Islam and democracy is stuck with the fragile position of taking both Islam and democracy as ideal types. Here we start from a point of recognizing that there exist many Islams and Islamisms. Thus, it should be noted that any discussion/argument of

Islamists of Turkey have had a strong inclination to accept the nation-state as their operational framework. Rather the conflict between Islamists and secularists should be taken as an implication that Kemalist establishment does not allow any more Islamization of the Turkish nation-state.

⁶⁴ Nuray Mert, *İslam ve Demokrasi: Bir Kurt Masalı* [Islam and Democracy: A Tale of Wolf] (İstanbul: İz, 1998), 33. Mert advanced the idea that there is no direct relationship between Islam and democracy and consequently no tension between the two, *ibid.*

compatibility or incompatibility is very closely connected to a kind of conceptualization from which Islam is viewed. What is more is that the issue is also tied to the different Islamist positionings regarding democracy. In his way, here we study Islamist intellectuals and their conceptualizations of democracy and state under specific historical conjuncture. As shown in the following chapters, democracy is not new to Islamism, at least it has been a subject of discussion since the Young Ottomans though democracy is new to Islam and Islamism if compared with the Christian experience with democracy.

In order to understand the very nature of the transformation of Turkish Islamism from the empire to the republic, regarding the conceptualizations of state and democracy, there is a need to study the incompatibility between Islam and democracy in detail.

1.3.1 An Analysis of the Islamist Discussion on the (in)compatibility between Islam and Democracy

Three approaches can be distinguished with regard to the debates on the relationship between Islam and democracy. Firstly, having reinterpreted such notions as “equality of men before God irrespective of differences”, ‘freedom of belief and thought for Muslims and nonmuslims’ and “shura, ijma and bay’a”, it was argued that Islam and democracy were inherently compatible, even mutually reinforcing.⁶⁵ Mohammed Iqbal, illustrative of this approach, suggested that due to the centrality of brotherhood and equality in Islam, democracy was the most important ideal in it. Arguing that Islam was inherently democratic not only because of the principle of shura, but also because of the principles of ijma and ijihad, he regarded the abolition of the Caliphate in Turkey as a sound ijihad exercised by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (support for the republican form of

⁶⁵ M. Favzi Najjar, “Democracy in Islamic Political Philosophy” 11th Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, New York November 9-12, 1977, 107.

government). But he also expressed his discomfort with the lack of ethical and spiritual in western democratic systems.⁶⁶

Similarly, contemporary Iranian Islamic thinker, Abdul Karim Soroush argues that “there is no contradiction between Islam and the freedoms inherent in democracy. Islam and democracy are not only compatible, their associations is inevitable. In a Muslim society, one without the other is not perfect.”⁶⁷ Calling for a democratic religious government which does not deform religion and which does not prevent people’s participation in the process of government in the Iranian context, Soroush argues that democracy both as a value system and a method of governance is compatible with Islam. But still, Soroush’s conceptualization of democracy as a value system indicates respecting human rights, justice and public’s right to elect their leaders. At this point it should be reminded that although this enumeration meets a minimum of the required values of modern liberal democracy, Soroush here seems to put the emphasis on the institutions and rationalizing function of democracy such as separation of powers, free elections, free press and political parties and the question of relativity of human values as an essential of political pluralism remains untouched.⁶⁸ In another place, he argues that any Islamic and democratic

⁶⁶ Iqbal, *Reconstruction*. 157; Iqbal criticized modern western democracy which was a democracy of undeveloped individuals:” ‘Democracy is a system where people are counted but not weighed’. The existence of a society whose members are undeveloped individuals necessitated for Iqbal the guidance of great leaders (supermen): the ethical training of humanity is really the work of great personalities, who appear, from time to time, during the course of human history” John L. Esposito, “Muhammad Iqbal and the Islamic State,” in *Voices of Resurgent Islam* ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 180.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Wright, “Two Visions,” 68. Abdul Karim Soroush is an Iranian Shi’ite Muslim intellectual, teaching philosophy in Tehran University, who have been under a close scrutiny of the Iranian Islamist regime.

⁶⁸ George Joffé, “Democracy, Islam and the Culture of Modernism.” *Democratization*. 4:3 (Autumn 1997): 151. For more on political ideas of Soroush see Valla Vakili, *Debating Religion and Politics in Iran: The Political Thought of Abdulkarim Soroush* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996).

government has to synthesize the duty based language of Islam with a right based content of democracy through *ijtihad*.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, Soroush, by his acceptance of an organic relation between politics and state, assigns duty on a religious state in preparing the atmosphere of freedom to believe and to call others to belief. This religious state openly has some unlaic elements and the moral purpose of regulating human life to meet the religious demands of the society. In other words, state is open to being made religious by the society though it could not make society more religious.⁷⁰ Given the supremacy of religious community in colouring the state, Soroush's compatibility argument could not escape from being communitarian in the face of more liberal and individual demands of dissidence from the "right" way of the community.

Contrary to the compatibility argument, the second approach denies the idea that Islam and democracy are compatible.⁷¹ It is argued that the absolute equality of all citizens was impossible due to the inequality between believers and unbelievers in Islamic law and that sovereignty belonged to God not to the people. More sophisticated arguments about the incompatibility of democracy and Islam have been supplied by Sayyid Qutb an Egyptian Islamist thinker who strongly objected to any notion of popular sovereignty. Qutb argued, democracy was a modern form of *jahiliyya* (ignorance) and of usurpation of God's sovereignty; It was also a form of tyranny, for it subsumed the individual to the wishes and

⁶⁹ See his speech in a panel on "Democratic Experience in Islamic countries," in *21. Yüzyıla Girerken İslami Oluşumlar* [Islamic Formations while Entering 21st Century] ed. Yalçın Akdoğan (Istanbul: Pendik Belediyesi Yayınları, 1996), 71-74, 101-104 and see the interviews made with him in his visit to Turkey in 1995, Abdülkerim Sürüş, *Modern Durum ve Dini Bilginin Evrimi* [Modern Condition and Evolution of the Religious Knowledge] ed. Yalçın Akdoğan and Kenan Çamurcu (Istanbul: Pendik Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1995), 20-21

⁷⁰ Sürüş, *Modern*. 22-24. He is dedicated to the flexible employment of sharia as a basis for modern legislation.

⁷¹ Esposito and Piscatori argues that this view emerged during the Constitutional Movement of 1905-1911 in Iran, see John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, "Democratization and Islam." *Middle East Journal*. 45:3 (Summer 1991): 435.

whims of other individuals.⁷² Despite the concept of majority rule and people's sovereignty, to Qutb, a small minority controls sources of power and wealth through indoctrination and brainwashing in a democratic regime.⁷³

This second approach can be also found in the political ideas of two well-known contemporary Turkish Islamist intellectuals, Rasim Özdenören and İsmet Özel who deny the reconciliation of democracy with Islamic values by drawing attention to the unique historical, socio-economic conditions of the West in which democracy was grown up. The first and the great difficulty which Rasim Özdenören found in the attempt to reconcile Islam and democracy is that in Islam it is not acceptable to establish the principle of popular sovereignty in the western sense, which contradicts the supremacy of divine law in Islam. Özdenören, paying attention to the conceptualizations of democracy as a way of thinking not just as a type of government, speaks of the total difference between Islamic way of life and democracy; that is not to say that Islam envisions a despotic regime.⁷⁴ According to İsmet Özel, the formal similarities found between democracy and *nebevi* (Islamic) model stem from the emphasis given to the community in both of them. But while “in democracy, the community is effective in making decisions without determining the direction, in prophetic model it is effective not in making decisions but in determining the compatibility of the decisions made with the right path.”⁷⁵

⁷² Ibid.; Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 177.

⁷³ Youssef Choueiri, “The Political Discourse of Contemporary Islamist Movements,” in *Islamic Fundamentalism* ed. Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 24.

⁷⁴ See Rasim Özdenören, *Yeni Dünya Düzeninin Sefaleti* [Poverty of New World Order] (İstanbul: İz, 1998), 23-79.

⁷⁵ Burhanettin Duran, “Islamist Intellectuals, Kemalism, Democracy and the recent elections in Turkey” A Paper presented at the International Conference on *Islam and the Electoral Process*, Leiden, ISIM, 10-12 December, 1999, 16.

The third approach looks to democracy as a mechanism through which the shariah can be applied.⁷⁶ According to this approach advanced by Abu'l A'la Mawdudi, if democracy is understood as the sovereignty of the people, Islam has no trace of "Western democracy" which contradicts the very first principle of Islamic political theory: the belief in the Unity and Sovereignty of God.⁷⁷ More significantly, Islam repudiates the sovereignty of the people and forms its polity on the basis of the sovereignty of God and the vicegerency (caliphate) of man. According to Mawdudi, if democracy is perceived as a "limited form of popular sovereignty", supervised by the shari'ah, then Islam and democracy are compatible. The term that Mawdudi uses to define the "Islamic democracy" is theocracy.⁷⁸ Thus, the Islamic state is both democratic and theocratic state run by popular viceregency. While Mawdudi's understanding of popular sovereignty is limited regarding the relationship between God and man, it is not a limited one between community and caliph. In fact, the power to rule over the world is given in the Qur'an to the whole community of believers, no one can be raised to that position (every believer is a caliph of God).⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Esposito and Piscatori, "Democratization," 437; Hassan Al-Alkim, "Islam and Democracy: Mutually Reinforcing or Incompatible," in *Power-sharing Islam?* ed. Azzam Tamimi (London: Liberty for Muslim World Publications, 1993), 77-89. After stating that Islam is the ideological bases of an Islamic state, Al-Alkim finds a compatibility of Islamic state and democracy. Islamic political system is "a theocratic democratic one"-theocratic since it is based on shariah and democratic since people enjoy the right of popular involvement in the state affairs. But he also differentiate Islamic democracy which complies with the sharia principles from a liberal democracy which emphasizes its adherence to the worldly constitution and to the fulfilment people's wishes. For his legitimating of multiparty system, interest groups, republic see pp. 83-87.

⁷⁷ Abu'l A'la Mawdudi, "Political Theory of Islam," in *Islam: Its Meaning and Message* ed. Khurshid Ahmad (London: The Islamic Foundation, 1975), 160.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 161. For similar argumentation see A. H. Siddiqi, "Caliphate and Sultanate." *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*. II: 1 (1954): 35-50; Muhammad Asad, *The Principles of State and Government in Islam* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961), 20 and Abdulrahman Abdulkadir Kurdi, *The Islamic State: A Study on the Holy Constitution* (London and New York: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1984), 63-64.

Khurshid Ahmad presents a contemporary conceptualization of Islamic democracy which deals with the issues of sharia's supremacy and the relativistic philosophy behind modern liberal democracy. Speaking about the "multifaced" reality of democracy, he argues that a particular western model of democracy must not be seen as an ideal form of democracy for all the world, including Islamic world who had its own identity and civilization.⁸⁰ Ahmad underlines the claim that the term people's sovereignty as a philosophical root of democracy indicates also a rejection of the relevance of absolute religious and moral values over politics by seeing popular will as the source of values, principles and ideals. And he continues in this way as follows: "As absolute values have no place in this system, the standards of right and wrong were subjected to the whims of the people, who began to change their ethical values as they changed their clothes and fashions."⁸¹ Morally defined individual and society of Islam, to Ahmad, could only realize the spiritual and material perfection in an "ideological, educational and consultative (Islamic) state" which enables them to serve the "higher moral ideals of life," i.e. God's pleasure and eternal bliss. Despite this moral limitation, Ahmad does not accept to drop his Islamist claim to democracy and comes to conclude that "If democracy means rights of a people to self-determination and self-fulfillment, that is what Islam and the Muslim people are striving for, nothing more and nothing short of that."⁸² Regarding the stance of "Islamic democracy", it might be said that this approach constituted a version of a selective Islamist attitude towards the western achievements in its call for taking the good aspects of

⁷⁹ Mawdudi, "Political," 168. But due to his attribution of great powers to the caliph, he comes to negate the sovereignty of the community. State's responsibility in promoting virtue leads to a totalitarian interference in the private life of individuals. Lastly, his emphasis on virtue which is not possible to ascertain is problematic see Abdelwahab El-Affendi, *Who Needs an Islamic State* (London: Grey Seal, 1991), 51-52.

⁸⁰ Khurshid Ahmad, "Islam and Democracy: Some Conceptual and Contemporary Dimensions." *The Muslim World*. 90 (Spring 2000): 1-2.

⁸¹ Ahmad, "Islam," 4.

“western” democracy. Given the naivety in the insistence of developing a kind of specific democracy, this approach is also replete with the neglect of the relations between mechanism and values.⁸³

An interesting example of the search for an Islamic democracy in Turkish Islamism is provided by a leading contemporary Turkish Islamist intellectual, Ali Bulaç. He, in his proposal of Medina Document as a form of living together, tries to advance a kind of Islamic democracy which accepts pluralism, different ways of lives and multiple law of communities in participatory bases. Given his consideration of keeping the supremacy of sharia for the devoted Muslims, he comes to propose a new contract among the communities consisting of people with similar ways of life: “In the new Medina Contract, public sphere will include the common goods and common bads as agreed by the social blocs.... Legislation is left within the realm of social blocs. Therefore, each social bloc is given an opportunity to lead its way of life.”⁸⁴

After an elaboration of Islamist notions of democracy, it would be appropriate to examine the issue of Islam(ism) and democracy with a reference to the theoretical writings by some students of Islam and the Middle East.

⁸² Ahmad, “Islam,” 16, 20.

⁸³ For the discussion on the inevitable relation between mechanism and values and the difficulty in adopting democracy into Islamic civilization in this respect see Ahmet Davutoğlu’s evaluation of Khurshid Ahmad’s paper, in *Doğudan-Batıdan Uluslararası Konferanslar Dizisi* [From East, From West: Series of International Conferences] vol. III (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1998), 117-123.

⁸⁴ Menderes Çınar and Ayşe Kadioğlu, “An Islamic Critique of Modernity in Turkey: Politics of Difference Backwards.” *Orient*. 40:1 (1999): 67.

1.3.2 Views of Observers: The Continuation of the Same Discussion on (In)compatibility

Among the students of Islam, the relationship between Islam and democracy is generally discussed along the dominant line that finds compatibility or incompatibility between these two. Some scholars such as Elie Kedourie, Majid Khadduri and Bernard Lewis seem to take sides with the incompatibility argument. According to Kedourie, there is nothing in the Islamic political tradition which might be connected to “the organizing ideas of constitutional and representative government” in the West. In this way, he argues that the notions of popular sovereignty, representation, elections, legislation by a parliament, an independent judiciary, secularity of the state and lastly civil society are alien to the Islamic political tradition.⁸⁵

Khadduri also asserts that Islamic theory of the state, placing ultimate responsibility in God’s representatives, is certainly not inherently democratic in principle; on the contrary, the people whose basic duties are to obey God’s law and his representatives, is a passive element in principle. In an Islamic political system, political parties are not recognized as a legitimate political opposition to the power but conceived as an act of unbelieving of heterodox religious-political groups.⁸⁶ Having rejected the Islamist argument that Islam is the only authentic democracy, Bernard Lewis also put a stress on the absence in Islamic political tradition of the notion of citizenship as participation and secularism.⁸⁷ The public aspect of Islam as a religion and “Islamicist utopia” is seen as as an obstacle to both

⁸⁵ Elie Kedourie, *Democracy and Arab Political Culture* (Washington: W. Institute for Near East Policy, 1992), 5-6.

⁸⁶ Majid Khadduri, *Political Trends in the Arab World* (Baltimore. The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), 41, 45.

⁸⁷ Bernard Lewis, “A Historical Overview.” *Journal of Democracy*. 7:2 (1996): 52, 55, 62. He also speak about the possibility of diversity and difference as basis for the adoption of mutual tolerance and parliamentary government through the acceptance of four schools of Islamic jurisprudence see p. 56.

democracy and political modernity by Addi Lahouari who maintained that “democratic ideology” can be compatible with Islam only if the latter is reduced to a private concern.⁸⁸

Apart from the difficulties for the adoption of democracy into the Islamic political thought, the nonexistence of democracy in the Islamic countries could also be explained by the lack of socio-economic transformation. According to Charles Issawi who does not find the socio-economic level of development in the middle east enough to have “a political democracy”, for the establishment of “a genuine democracy” in the region, there is a need of “a great social and economic transformation” which will prepare the society for bearing the burdens of the modern state.⁸⁹

Ahmet Arslan expresses an idea on the possibility of reconciling democracy with Islam by the statement that “Islam during its history, has appropriated many of the things thought to be non-Islamic at the beginning” though it is not meaningful to derive democracy from Islam.⁹⁰ Any discussion of Islam and democracy had to face the challenge that neither Islam nor democracy as a political concept have all encompassing definitions. This situation is connected to the fact that Islam has rich and different traditions within itself and its spiritual meaning, i.e. a comprehension of world, universe and the afterlife, rather than its political meaning, has a greater say in its conceptualization as a religion. Islam’s addressing to the totality of life and human relations is another factor that makes the picture more complex.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Addi, “Islamicist,” 120.

⁸⁹ Charles Issawi, “Economic and Social Foundations of Democracy in the Middle East.” *International Affairs*. 32 (1956): 43.

⁹⁰ Ahmet Arslan, “Islam, Democracy and Turkey.” *Privateview*. (Autumn 1997): 88 and *İslam, Demokrasi ve Türkiye* [Democracy and Turkey], (Ankara: Vadi, 1999), 91-97. For the possibility of democratic tradition in Islamic thought see *ibid*, 81-87.

⁹¹ See Timothy D. Sisk, *Islam and Democracy: Religion, Politics and Power in the Middle East* (Washington: US Institute of Peace Press, 1992), 15.

According to John L. Esposito, an incompatibility approach has to remind the fact that the said incompatibility have been found between Christianity and Judaism by some secular and religious writers since the traditions, values and beliefs of these religions had been formed before the development of the modern democracy. Moreover, these religions had also been employed in the legitimation of undemocratic states and empires, ranging from divine kingdom to dictatorship.⁹² William Zartman furthers the same point by presenting the argument that there is no inherent compatibility between democracy and Islam. Like all scripture, the Qur'an can be interpreted to support many different types of political behaviour and systems of government.⁹³ Under the light of these observations, therefore, it seems true to look at not to Islam as a religion but to the Islamist depictions of state and Islamist legitimation of any political authority to situate the relationship between Islam and liberal democracy.

John L. Esposito and John O. Voll seem to regard Islamism and its call for Islamic democracy as compatible with democracy if Islamic principles are not interpreted in a strict way and if a specific western experience is not imposed on the Islamic world.⁹⁴ Bassam Tibi, who places his thoughts in the philosophical tradition of classical Islamic rationalism, disagrees with Esposito's and Voll's contention that Islamism is a variety of democracy. Since establishing democracy on religious grounds is not possible, Tibi defended the idea that Islamism or an Islamic democracy could not be democratic in a real

⁹² John L. Esposito, "Islam ve Demokrasinin Hamlesi,"[Islam and Democratic Elan] in *Doğudan-Batıdan Uluslararası Konferanslar Dizisi* [From east, From West: Series of International Conferences] vol. III (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1998), 11-19; for a similar argument see also Leonard Binder, "Exceptionalism and Authenticity: The Question of Islam and Democracy." *Arab Studies Journal*. IV: 1 (Spring 1998): 44.

⁹³ William Zartman, "Democracy and Islam: The Cultural Dialectic." *ANNALS, AAPSS*. 524 (November 1992): 189.

⁹⁴ John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 21.

sense though Islam and democracy are compatible in the sense that if Islam is understood as a religion and divine ethics.⁹⁵ To interpret Islamic ethics in a democratic manner is to participate in the common core of ethical values of humanity, i.e human rights and democracy, which might be shared by people of different civilizations. Given classical Islam's experience with Greek philosophy, Tibi points to Islam's openness to learning from the other civilizations and finds many ethical affinities between Islam and democracy.⁹⁶ By using Popperian word, Tibi envisages "Open Islam" which is liberal and open to embracing cultural modernity, democracy and civil society, and its enemies, political Islam. Bearing in mind the fact that Islamic rationalism was one of the factors in the emergence of European Renaissance and cultural modernity, he speaks about the possibility of a synthesis of Islam and democracy through Islamic rationalism, not through any Islamism.⁹⁷ Thus, Tibi's compatibility argument is directly related to his conceptualization of Islam as a religion and ethics which reduces sharia principles from legal rules to mere ethical values.

George Joffe tied the Islamist emphasis on morality (which seems to be a major point of conflict with democracy) to the Islamic inability to face the challenge of modernism and the ensuing failure in embracing secularism in public sphere, as took place before the nineteenth-century in Europe. The cause for this failure lies in the overemphasis on juristic tradition while marginalizing the rationalist philosophic tradition in Islam. The Islamist failure in adopting democratic values and an escape into the moral and normative world of

⁹⁵ Bassam Tibi, "Islam, Democracy and the Vision of An Islamic State" in *World, Islam and Democracy* ed. Yahya Sezai Tezel and Wulf Schönbohm (Ankara: Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 1999), 53-54.

⁹⁶ Tibi, "Islam," 58-60, 64.

⁹⁷ Tibi, "The Cultural Underpinning of Civil Society in Islamic Civilization: Islam and Democracy- Bridges Between the Civilizations," in *Civil Society, Democracy and the Muslim World* ed. Elisabeth Özdalga and Sune Persson (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1997), 29-30.

Islam, to Joffé, mainly are stemming from “an inability to cope with the socio-political atomism implicit within the democratic project.” That was tantamount to the denial of the ideological implications of modernism which produced an incomplete transition from organic to a mechanical society in Durkheimian sense.⁹⁸

The worldly and relativistic roots of democracy’s philosophy which contradicts any religious claim to a monopoly over the absolute truth seems to students of Islam as the most problematic issue in the pursuit of a synthesis between Islam and democracy.⁹⁹ Saad Eddin Ibrahim points to the significant place of “sacred” and “absolute” in religion and thus to the difficulties in tolerating and recognizing the other in such exclusive belief systems. On the other hand, each definition of democracy embraces “the inclusion of all human beings of the community” regardless of their differences in religion, race or ethnicity and “the peaceful management of differences” as legal and political equals.¹⁰⁰

Now, it is the time to situate the Islamist conceptualizations of democracy within the confines of the literature on democratic theory. This attempt should also be made with a special reference to the supremacy of the sharia in Islamic political thought.

1.3.3 Elitist Democracy: A Schumpeterian or An Islamist Conceptualization?

The above analyses of the Islamist conceptualization of democracy make it clear that Islamists generally has an inclination of understanding democracy in elitist and procedural

⁹⁸ Joffé, “Democracy,” 133-135.

⁹⁹ See Saad Eddin Ibrahim, “Religion and Democracy: The Case of Islam, Civil Society, and Democracy,” in *The Changing Nature of Democracy* ed. Takashi Inoguchi, Edward Newman and John Keane (Tokyo: United Nations Univ Press, 1998), 214 and Enayat, *Modern*. 135.

¹⁰⁰ Saad Eddin Ibrahim, “From Taliban to Erbakan: The Case of Islam, Civil Society and Democracy,” in *Civil Society, Democracy and the Muslim World* ed. Elisabeth Özdalga and Sune Persson (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1997), 33.

terms, like Joseph Schumpeter. Perhaps, a critical comparison of Schumpeterian democracy and Islamist conceptualizations of democracy will contribute much to the ongoing debate.

Schumpeter conceives democracy as a political method, that is, an “institutional arrangement for reaching political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.”¹⁰¹ Democracy has nothing to do with ideals. It is not an end itself, irrespective of what decisions it will produce under given historical conditions. On the contrary, it could serve a variety of ideals because there are no ultimate values and interests to which all parts of society might be related and because there exists a statist division between the rulers and the ruled. Thus, there is nothing about democracy which necessarily makes it desirable. Schumpeter also claims that democratic method as an instrument can only have “instrumental value,” it is “incapable of being an end itself.” Democracy could be justified by showing that, as a method for arriving at political decisions, it is superior to any possible alternative. Certainly, this expectation of high performance amounts, in Islamist mind, to demonstrating that the decisions arrived at in a democratic regime will be better (more Islamic) than those produced by other political regimes. Schumpeterian account of the “democratic method” assigns a small role to the citizenry of a democratic society: “the role of the people is to produce a government or else an intermediate body which in turn will produce a national executive or government.”¹⁰² Similarly in the determinations of the ultimate values, Islamist discourses tend to assign a small role to the people and a rather large role to the experts (ulema).

¹⁰¹ Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Unwin University Books, 1974, 13th edition), 269 and 242.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 269.

Schumpeter advances the view that people do not actually rule in democracy; they just elect those who would rule. Democracy is a system of the elected and the competing elites; thus it is the rule of the politician: “democracy does not mean and cannot mean that the people actually rule in any obvious sense of the terms ‘people’ and ‘rule.’ Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them.”¹⁰³

In Islamist conceptualizations, democracy is defined in terms of procedural principles and justified on the basis of its service to the supremacy of sharia and to the common interests of the Muslim people. In other words, Islamist conceptualization of democracy construes the interests of the people narrowly within the framework of the sharia values. Democratic elitism would not have so much difficulty in accepting this limited notion of the people though the supremacy of sharia is still a point of tension. Moreover, any Islamist inclination towards elitism and a limited sovereignty to people could be well based on Schumpeter’s claim that no matter how intelligent and competent ordinary people were in their private life, when it came to politics such people would lack any real competence. As Schumpeter states: “Thus the typical citizen drops down to a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field. He argues and analyzes in a way which he would readily recognize as infantile within the sphere of his real interests. He becomes a primitive again. His thinking becomes associative and affective.”¹⁰⁴ A search for a “real interest” of the people again seems to have some parallelism to the Islamist mind which defines the interest of the people in relation to the Islamic principles.

Schumpeter’s attack to the nature of the idea of a popular will in the theory of the classical democracy may well serve any Islamist purpose on the limitation of the popular

¹⁰³ Ibid, 284-285.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 262.

sovereignty by the sharia. According to Schumpeter, the popular will on any issue is manufactured exactly analogous to the commercial advertising.¹⁰⁵ The so called will of the people, in reality, is the will of the majority and is replete with the assumption that there is a uniquely determined common good discernible to all. In fact, there is no such thing. This is due to the fact that to different individuals and groups, “the common good is bound to mean different things and due to the fact that “ultimate values-our conception of what life and what society should be- are beyond the range of mere logic. They may be bridged by compromise in some cases but not in others.”¹⁰⁶

In Islamist discussions on democracy, the source of the common good and of the ultimate values is certainly the sharia. In Islamist usage, when it is referred to the supremacy of sharia in an Islamic society, it is not necessarily meant that this society is constituted and regulated some strict laws which emanates from sharia. But it is pointed to the moralizing impact of the notion of sharia in an Islamist framework. The question of sovereignty (*hakimiyah*) in Islamic political thought is intimately linked to the conceptualization of state and to the idea of law (legislation). In actuality, sovereignty constitutes a framework within which political authority in Islamic political theory is legitimized.¹⁰⁷

The conceptualization of God in Islam entails that the supreme sovereignty of the earth and the universe belongs to God (*malik ul mulk*; Lord of the earth) who alone has the prerogative to determine the moral, legal and religious values of the Islamic community.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 263.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 251-252, 272; for a critique of Schumpeter’s understanding of democracy and common good see, David Held, *Models of Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 164-185 and Thomas Christiano, *The Rule of the Many: Fundamental Issues in Democratic Theory* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 134-140.

¹⁰⁷ By sovereignty I mean “the idea that there is a final and absolute authority in the political community and no final and absolute authority exists elsewhere”and it is, in its internal aspect; the constitution of political and legal authority within the state see F.H. Hinsley, *Sovereignty*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 1.

Human being is the vicegerent of God on the earth. Therefore, it is correct to argue that sovereignty in its ultimate sense belongs to God (divine law) and its immediate sense it belongs to the community¹⁰⁸ or the individual, who is the integral part of the divine trust of vicegerency. The sovereignty of God should be understood in legal terms rather than in political terms.¹⁰⁹ This sovereignty is expressed through the moral obligation of the believers on the observance of His law: *shari'a*.¹¹⁰ Yet from this understanding of sovereignty it is possible “to deduce many different political systems, both monarchical and republican, and a wide variety of mechanisms of government, provided only that the supreme law of the state, the sharia, is respected.”¹¹¹

Thus, it is inevitable that any Islamist conceptualization of democracy would have a kind of common good determined by sharia values whether this conceptualization is based on the popular will of the people or it is based on elitism, especially regarding the promulgation of a constitution and laws by experts (ulema). For the ultimate values of any Islamic society-the conception of what life and what society should be- are to be settled in the moral world of Islam. Thus, a Schumpeterian conceptualization of democracy as a political method (but not as an end) could be regarded as appropriate to the Islamist

¹⁰⁸ Ahmad Hasan, *The Doctrine of Ijma in Islam*. (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1991), 21-22.

¹⁰⁹ While rejecting the idea that God is politically sovereign, Fazlur Rahman contends that the statements in the Qur'an on God as being the supreme judge and all-powerful do not even refer to legal sovereignty. He claims that “God neither acts as political sovereign nor as a law-maker. The Muslim people themselves are the sovereign and the law-maker” “Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu” *Islamic Studies* September VI:3 (1967), 209.

¹¹⁰ Certainly, it is the people who make laws by deriving their legal norms from the revelation (the *ulama*) and who enforce (the caliph) it. Islamic law, though divine in its origin, is human in its matters, its promulgation, its implementation and its end: the welfare of man (*maslaha*) see David de Santillana, “Law and Society” in *The Legacy of Islam* Sir Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume (eds.) (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1931), 290

¹¹¹ H.A.R. Gibb, “Constitutional Organization,” in *Law in the Middle East*, ed. Majid Khadduri and Herbert J. Liebesny (Washington: The Middle East Institute, 1955), 6.

conception of democracy which embodies Islamic moral values to which a Muslim community (and their sense of common good) is supposed to be devoted.

The conception of *shari'a*, defined as comprising both “the acts of the heart as well as overt acts,” contains a moral character to the extent that the ideal of *shari'a* is coterminous with the “good” and “just.”¹¹² The comprehensive nature of Islamic law is perhaps the main source for the Islamist identification of Islamic life with state’s conformity with the *shari'a*. The moral character of the state and its responsibility for enforcing the stipulations of *shari'a* have led some students of Islam to conclude that state in Islam is ideologically based, and the main purpose of government is to safeguard the faith, not the state.¹¹³ In the same vein, Majid Khadduri points out that “[the] Law ... precedes the state: it provides the basis of the state. It is therefore not God, but God's law which really governs, and, as such, the state should be called nomocracy, not theocracy.”¹¹⁴ Nomocracy (Gr. *nomos*, law and *kratein*, to rule) is a system of government based on a legal code, the rule of law in a community.¹¹⁵ A number of scholars¹¹⁶ agree that Islam espouses nomocracy whereas

¹¹² Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 115.

¹¹³ Ayubi, *Political*, 23; Lambton, *State*, 13.

¹¹⁴ Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), 16.

¹¹⁵ The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (London, Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹¹⁶ As far as my examination of the sources shows me, it was T. W. Arnold who firstly deemed that the Islamic state is a universal nomocracy, a system of government based on a legal code. *The Preaching of Islam* (London: Constable, 1935 3rd ed.), 4-7; see also Kerr, *Islamic*, 27; Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 64; Ayubi, *Political*, 22; Enayat, *Modern*, 129; Ann E. Mayer, “Islamic Middle East: A Bibliographical Essay.” *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin*. 5, 1 (1978), 3; Tamara Sonn, “Political Authority in Classical Islamic Thought.” *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*. 13:3 (Fall, 1996), 309-310; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (London, 1966), 107; Gleen E. Perry “Caliph” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* vol. 1, (New York, 1995), 239-243; Mohammad Hashim Kamali, “Characteristics of the Islamic State” *Islamic Studies*, 32:1 (1993)17-40.

some insist that it is a kind of theocracy.¹¹⁷ Nomocracy does not name a governmental system, parallel to monarchy or democracy, but designates a certain kind of placement of the ultimate source of state authority, regardless of the form of government. What concerns us here is the relationship between sovereignty and the law not the forms of government. In Islamic political thought, it is a well-established fact that the *shari'a* is the ultimate sovereign over the life of the community and the individual. Thus, the *shari'a* in this account, is taken as prior to the community and the state.

1.3.4 What is Beyond: Contextualizing the Islamist Argumentation on Democracy

The discussion until now makes it clear that if by democracy is meant a form of government which is the opposite of any kind of despotic/arbitrary rule, there is a consensus on its compatibility with Islam. Islamists have a tendency to see the issue of government as a matter of technique if the adoption of any technique, including democratic government, does not violate the Islamic values and the supremacy of sharia in an Islamic polity. However, it is clear that democracy is not just procedure (as a means) in which people choose their rulers at regular intervals from among the politicians. Whether it is seen as “an ideology”¹¹⁸ or “a condition of freedom from ideology (a moralising and

¹¹⁷ The terms “theocratie laique et egalitarie”, “general theocracy”, “secularized theocracy” are used to draw attention to the particularly theocratic nature of state in Islam. It is argued that though Islam does not embrace theocracy in the sense of priestly rule such as that of the Pope in the Middle Ages (representing God’s authority and will), it is still a kind of theocracy wherein ultimate authority is considered to be vested in a divine law or revelation. See Rosenthal, *Political*, 8; Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton, 1957), 248-249; Ruben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 242 and Detlev H. Khalid “Theocracy and the Location of Sovereignty” *Islamic Studies*, September XI:3 (1972), 187-209.

¹¹⁸ Addi, “Islamicist,” 124.

power hungry way of life claiming to be universal)”¹¹⁹, democracy is also ‘a way of life’ (as an end) which contradicts with the ideological nature of the Islamic state. John Keane lays a stress on the profound tension between ideologically defined Islam and democracy and continues:

democracy rejoices in hotchpotch, melange and controversy, for that is how novelty enters the world. Democracy loves indeterminacy and change by conflict-and-compromise. It fears and resists the absolutism of the pure, the Grand ideology... Religion by definition has a dogmatic core and it is therefore on tense terms with democracy, which encourages ceaseless debate and self-questioning and, thus public spaces for citizens to challenge and to reject many a sacred axiom.¹²⁰

Expectedly, Islam, as a system of belief based upon at least minimum unquestionable ideals, would clash with this kind of conceptualization of democracy. The classical tradition and its Islamist interpretations do not accept the relativity of truth, a basic principle of pluralism. As I have tried to describe to this point, on the one hand, Islamist thinkers seem to be open and willing to reinterpret the classical theories of the state in order to adopt a democratic form of government but on the other, as Fatima Mernissi’s work¹²¹ illustrates, the attempt to grasp the ongoing interplay between Islam and democracy necessitates venturing into the values, ideals and ‘fears’ of Muslims. Although Islam teaches the principles of freedom, human dignity, equality, pluralism, popular vicegerency and the rule of law, there are deeply rooted differences between democratic values and Islamic tradition. To give an example, Western notion of freedom is not what in Islamic political culture is called justice (adl) and there is no word for citizenship in

¹¹⁹ John Keane, “Power-sharing Islam?” in *Power-sharing Islam?* ed. Azzam Tamimi (London: Liberty for Muslim World Publications, 1993), 28.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 29. See also Enayat, *Modern*. 126.

¹²¹ Fatima Mernissi, *Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World* (New York: Addison-Wesley Pub., 1992).

Islamic lexicon.¹²² To adopt the principle that all, including Muslims and non-Muslims, must be equal before the law would be acceptable more easily than the principle that all should be equal in framing the law. In both the classical juristic theory and in the present Islamisms, framing of a law has been regarded as the concern, the right and the duty of men of knowledge, i.e. the ulema.

In fact, the question of whether Islam is compatible with democratic values should be reworded in the way that whether Islamist interpretations/reconstructions of Islamic tradition were/are compatible with democratic values or not. The absence of democracy in Islamic countries has little to do with Islamic principles and much to do with their Islamist interpretations. The answer to this question also must be looked for in the Islamist literature which read the modern issues in the light of the classical Islamic political values and concepts. This statement should not be taken in the sense that we consider the history of political thought as the only element in the establishment of a democratic political culture in Islamic countries. It is certain that the experience with democracy and elite's attitudes in this respect were also significant for the establishment and consolidation of democracy in the Islamic world. But here, this study will confine itself to the analysis of Islamist political thought on state and democracy with a special reference to the Islamist intellectuals.

It is obvious that Islamist ideology in general is not compatible with the idea of democracy. And when they appreciate the significance of democracy, Islamists are basically concerned with the limitation of an arbitrary/despotic rule and the establishment of the rule of law. But certainly this is not the end of the story. The totalitarian nature of Islamist ideology/ideologies have had a close tie to the dominant ideological atmosphere in the West.

¹²² Bernard Lewis, *Islam in History* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993), 323.

Islamist depictions of state, as will be shown in this study for Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's totalitarian Başyücelik State, seem to be influenced by the political ideologies of their times such as the totalitarian aspects of communism and of fascism. In Kısakürek's Great East, Islam as an ideology of salvation was presented with, if we express in Sayyid's words, "all the certainty of a meta-narrative."¹²³ Progress, a meta-narrative of the Islamists in the second constitutional period had been replaced by another meta-narrative, ideology in Kısakürek's political thinking. The content of his ideologization of Islam was coloured by grand claims; Great East as the ideology of humanity and essentialist distinctions and classifications; East, West and Islam. The Young Ottomans ideologized Islam to direct the political mind and to mobilize masses in the path of progress and constitutionalism whereas Kısakürek derived an ideology from Islam to provide the Muslims with "a map of action" to understand and to explain the modern world. The role of religion as a "soft ideology" became a kind of "hard ideology" in Kısakürek's formulation, determining every aspect of political, societal and individual life.

But nevertheless, reminding the Islamist attempts to read Islam from a democratic angle in the second constitutional period in the Ottoman empire, this observation may lead to the conclusion that Islamist intellectuals and movements could/may adopt the democratic values and institutions from the West, whether in the forms of an Islamic democracy or in the form of dropping their demand of an Islamic state. Islamist adoption of democracy might be possible only if any democratic wave on the part of both political elite and intellectuals establishes itself as a strong political tradition in Islamic countries. Nevertheless, the guidance of sharia for a Muslim individual and society would continue to constitute a source of Islamist demands and further Islamist revitalization of the idea of an

¹²³ Sayyid, *A Fundamental*. 118

Islamic state. The process of transforming sharia principles as universal ethical values is not easy though it seems possible in the future.

Islamist emphasis on the supremacy of sharia employs sometimes a democratic discourse in appearance, as worded by Gudrun Kramer as follows: “given that all people are created equal and that consequently no one has the right to impose his or her will on others, and given that people are too weak to control their passions and desires (hawa), a higher authority is needed to keep them in check. This higher authority is divine law, binding on all-high and low, rich and poor. The submission to God’s sovereignty as demonstrated in the strict and exclusive application of the sharia, therefore signifies not just the (only genuine) rule of law, but also the (only genuine) liberation of man from servitude to man (‘ubudiyyat al-insan).”¹²⁴

Any Islamist claim to democracy has to answer the following questions: are all laws and government policies humanly decided in accordance with the changing opinions of people in an Islamic state? What is sharia? Let alone the problem of defining sharia, is sharia incumbent over those who do not share Islamic belief and if not, how could a unity of law be kept in a given state? If sharia’s principles are transformed into general public ethics of an Islamic community, what is the stance of the state regarding these ethical principles? And is the reduction of sharia from legal rules to ethical values something appropriate for the realization of Islamic/Islamist ideals.

An illustrative example that deals with the above mentioned questions is supplied by Fazlur Rahman who put a great emphasis on the community as the final authority in understanding Islam. As to the Islamic community’s right to interpret the text of the Qur’an and to understand the sharia principles, Fazlur Rahman expressed a positive view

on the community's performance in this respect. By arguing that the Islamic community is charged by the Qur'an with a certain moral mission, he proposed a solution to the problem of the lack of values in democratic regimes as follows: "if the Muslim ummah is just like other societies, including western ones, then we must admit that the Muslim ummah does not exist." Put it differently, Rahman comes to say that if there exists a Muslim ummah, then, its democratic regime will not experience the ethical and spiritual crisis of the western democracies.¹²⁵ Seen in this formulation as well, there is a long way to walk on the issue of Islam and democracy.

All said, it would be correct to say that the attempts of reconciling Islamic political tradition with the Western notions of state and democracy, will continue to dominate the intellectual agenda of Muslims. The process of reinterpreting Islamic political tradition in terms of Western political achievements through the principle of *ijtihad* is still going on. The limits for the operation of *ijtihad* in the minds of Islamists also constitute the other side of the pendulum between authoritarian/totalitarian¹²⁶ and democratic inclinations in the future reformation of Islamic political thought.

After such theoretical perspectives on state and democracy in Islam in general, now it is the time to observe the reflections of the discussion on the Islamist political thought in the Second Constitutional Period in the following two chapters.

¹²⁴ Gudrun Kramer, "Islamist Notions of Democracy," in *Political Islam* ed. Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (London and New York: I.B. Tauris Pub., 1997), 76.

¹²⁵ Fazlur Rahman, "The Principle of Shura and The Role of the Ummah in Islam," in *State, Politics and Islam* ed. Mumtaz Ahmad (Washington: American Trust Publications, 1986), 94.

¹²⁶ For the reasons of the supremacy of authoritarian trend in Islamic thought see Hasan Hanefi, "Geleneksel İslam Düşüncesindeki Otoriteryenliğin Epistemolojik, Ontolojik, Ahlaki, Siyasi ve Tarihi Kökenleri Üzerine." [On the Epistemological, Ontological, Moral, Political and Historical Roots of Authoritarianism in the Traditional Islamic Thought] *İslamiyat*. Trans. İlhami Güler II:2 (April-June 1999): 25-37.

CHAPTER II

ISLAMISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1908-1918) I: A QUEST FOR ISLAMIC MODERNITY

Islam, they say, is a stumbling-block to the progress of the state
This story was not known before, and now it is the fashion.
Forgetting our religious loyalty in all our affairs
Following Frankish ideas is now the fashion.

Ziya Paşa.

2.1 Organizing Ideas of Ottoman-Turkish Political Modernization on the “Decline”

The debate on the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the call for reform among the Ottoman political elite started in the middle of the sixteenth century when the Empire was at the peak of its power. A grand vezir of the Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent, Lutfi Pasha drew attention to the signs of weakness and decline in the Ottoman state and society. His book *Asafname* was not only an example of Islamic advice literature to rulers but also it was the first example of Ottoman political writing in which “the urgent and hopeful demand for reform gives way to a profoundly pessimistic longing for a lost Golden Age [the idealized era of the Ottoman Empire exemplified by the reign of Sultan Suleiman], as the faith of the Turks in their ability to restore the greatness of the past faded.”¹ The several books of this tradition, including Mustafa Ali’s *Nushat üs-Selatin* (Counsel for Sultans, in 1581), Koçi Bey’s *Risale* (presented to Sultan Murad IV in 1630), Katib Çelebi’s *Düstur ül-Amel fi-Islah ül-Halel* (Regulations for Reforming Defects, presented to Sultan Mehmed IV in 1653) and Sarı Mehmed Pasha’s *Nasaih ül-Vüzera ve-ül-Ümera* (Counsel

¹ Bernard Lewis, “Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline.” *Islamic Studies*. I, (March 1962): 74.

for Viziers and Commanders, written in 1703)², laid a great stress on the restoration of the political order (maintaining the status quo as elaborated in “the circle of justice”), the elimination of corruption, and the respect for shariah and qanun, which was the strength of the religion and state (din-ü-devlet)³. With the aim to restore the Ottoman greatness, this literature underlined, in their conceptualization of the decline of the Empire, the concepts of justice, shariah and qanun which were the other names of the rule of law in the Ottoman political system.

Starting with İbrahim Müteferrika’s *Usul ül-Hikem fi Nizam ül-Ümem* (Philosophical Principles for the Politics of Nations, presented to Sultan Mahmud I in 1731), the Ottoman statesmen recognized the fact that they should learn from the military strategies of the European enemies while at the same time adhering to shariah.⁴ The reason for the failure of the Ottomans in the field of military and economics was not because of the insufficiency of the qanun and shariah but because of the reluctance in adopting the new methods of the

² Zuhuri Danişman, trans., *Koçi Bey Risalesi* [Report of Koçi bey] (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı yay., 1997); Katip Çelebi, *Bozuklukların Düzeltilmesinde Tutulacak Yollar* [Regulations for Reforming Defects] ed. Ali Can (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı yay., 1982); Defterdar Sarı Mehmet Paşa, *Devlet Adamlarına Öğütler* [Counsel for Viziers and Commanders] ed. Hüseyin Rağıp Uğural (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı yay., 1992).

³ Lewis, “Ottoman,” 83. On the advice (decline) literature, see also Cornell Fleischer, “Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and ‘Ibn Khaldunism’ in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters,” in *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology*, ed. Bruce B. Lawrence (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984), 46-68; Douglas A. Howard, “Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of ‘Decline’ of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.” *Journal of Asian History*. 22 (1988): 54; Agah Sırrı Levend “Siyaset-nameler.” [A Mirror for Princes] *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı Belleten*. I (1962): 71-87; Ahmet Uğur, *Osmanlı Siyaset-nameleri* [Ottoman Mirrors for Princes] (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yay, 1992) and Mehmet Öz, *Osmanlı’da “Çözülme” ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları* [Decline and Its Traditionalist Interpreters in the Ottoman Empire] (İstanbul:Dergah, 1997).

⁴ İbrahim Müteferrika, *Milletlerin Düzeninde İlmi Usüller* [Philosophical Principles for the Politics of Nations] (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı yay., 1990) and Virginia H. Aksan, “Ottoman Political Writing, 1768-1808.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 25 (1993): 53-69.

Europeans in these fields⁵. The awareness of the need to reform the Ottoman state structure by borrowing from the West, certainly firstly in the military field⁶, became manifest when Sultan Selim III convened a council to discuss the problems of the Empire. One of the participants, Ebubekir Ratib Efendi (an ambassador to Vienna, 1791-92) in his report, expressed the idea that “the introduction of the new order (nizam-ı cedid) of Europe would be needed for the Ottoman Empire to regain its former position of power”⁷ Following this line of thinking, the reform movements of the nineteenth century, namely Tanzimat and Islahat differed from the earlier ideas of reform in one major understanding: “modern European society was superior in many ways to that of the Ottomans; that instead of seeking to regain the past, new institutions and new methods should be imported from the West.”⁸

Apart from the recognition of the necessity for the adoption of new institutions from Europe, still at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in an official Ottoman note sent in August 1821 to the Russian ambassador, the Ottoman state was described as “the Muhammedan state and Ahmedi (Muslim) nation [which]... was born 1200 years ago,”

⁵ Berkes, *The Development*. 45.

⁶ This awareness can be linked to the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774 after the defeat of the Ottomans by Russia, an event that urged the Ottoman political elite toward westernization Roderic H. Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), xi.

⁷ Aksan, “Ottoman,” 63. Aksan notes that the classical Ottoman model of social and political harmony embodied in the circle of justice lost its force as a literary convention in the Ottoman political writing of 1768-1808 period, p. 64.

⁸ Stanford J. Shaw, “Some Aspects of the Aims and Achievements of the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Reformers,” in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: the Nineteenth Century* ed. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), 32.

being the heirs of the city state established in Medina in 622.⁹ True to this commitment, the reforms of Selim III, Mahmud II, Tanzimat and Islahat were made ‘for the sake of religion and state’ and presented as being compatible with Islam and as being necessary in order to keep its ideals. Put it differently, the traditional philosophy of the Ottoman state, *din ü devlet* was present in all these reforms.¹⁰ Ottoman statesmen’s concern on keeping the shariah was so important that the attempts of reform were legitimated with the claim that they were trying to regenerate religion and state.

But what was significant in Tanzimat and in the following reforms was that they gave the “expression of the need to get into step with a rapidly changing world, the world created through the still rumbling French Revolution and the nascent Industrial Revolution. The Tanzimat was not an imitation of Europe: it was Ottoman participation in an Age of Reform when Europe itself lacked stability.”¹¹ With the proclamation of the Tanzimat, the notion that reform was merely the import of military weapons and technics was abandoned and replaced by the understanding that keeping the unity of the Empire was possible only by restructuring state and society on the basis of modern political institutions such as a parliament, a constitution etc.¹² Tanzimat aimed to transform procedures (*usüller*) into

⁹ Uriel Heyd, “The Ottoman Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmud II,” in *the Modern Middle East* ed. Albert Hourani, Philips S. Khoury and Mary C. Wilson (London and New York: I.B.Touris and Co ltd, 1993), 50.

¹⁰ Ibid., 53; see also İnalcık, *From Empire*. 136. In the Hatti Sherif of Gülhane of 1839 which was issued with “the sole benevolent intention of strenghtening the religion and the State, and with the sincere desire of giving renewed vigour to the Law,” the traditonal philosophy was clearly stated; see Salahi R. Sonyel, “Tanzimat and Its Effects on the Non-Muslim Subjects of the Ottoman Empire,” in *Tanzimat’ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslar arası Sempozyumu* (Ankara:Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994), 363.

¹¹ Ezel Kural Shaw, “Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire Age of Reform in Europe,” in *Tanzimat’ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu (Bildiriler)* (Ankara: Milli Kütüphane, 1991), 208.

¹² By arguing that the Tanzimat period is a “seed-time” in which ideas and institutions of political modernization which later became ripe in the Republic first took root,

institutions, for example *usul-ü meşveret* (shura) was linked to an institution, namely parliament.¹³ Modernization was seen as an adaptation to the age or as meeting the needs of the age (*icab-ı asra intibak yada ihtiyacı asrı karşılamak*) and in this vein, Tanzimat presented itself as the establishment of the rule of law and restructuring the administration.¹⁴

The Gülhane Rescript of 1839 (Noble Edict of the Rose Chamber; Gülhane Hatt-ı Şerifi) advocated the idea of Ottoman nation (composed of different religious groups; millets) as an imperial, solidaristic ideology, in order to preserve the unity of the state and to eliminate the increasing separatist demands of the Christian subjects of the Empire. By recognizing the urgent need to reform the Ottoman state and society, the Tanzimat Statesmen preferred an autocratic and centralizing way of modernization by thinking that they alone had the necessary knowledge to reform the Empire.¹⁵ The elitism of the Tanzimat statesmen might be connected to the fact that the first direct Western intellectual effect on Ottoman ideas was through the tradition of enlightened despotism of the Western states and Cameralism.

Davison enumerates twelve points in this respect: 1) the concept of the state as the fatherland of its people, 2) the concept that sovereignty should be complete and unfringed, 3) the concept of the state as an indivisible territorial unit, 4) The concept of people as individual citizens of a state, not as members of a religious community from which they derive their civil status, 5) the concept of the equality of all citizens before the law, 6) the concept of the guaranteed individual rights and civil liberties, 7) the concept of the right of the people to a representative voice in government, 8) the concept of a written constitution on the western model, 9) the concept of the right of the people to control the government, 10) the concept of responsible government, 11) the concept of the separation of powers, 12) the concept of an expanded sphere of governmental activity and responsibility, Davison, *Essays*. 243-264.

¹³ Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de Toplum ve Siyaset* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1990), 255. The great desire for institutionalization and less emphasis on good ruler (a traditional Ottoman argument) were apparent in the ideas of Ottoman reformist statesmen like Mustafa Reşit Paşa. This was also the very core of the modern constitutionalist movement, *ibid*, pp. 252, 254.

¹⁴ İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* [The Longest Century of (İstanbul: Hil yay., 1995, 3rd ed.), 205.

¹⁵ Shaw, “Some,” 37.

Cameralism, a theory underpinning enlightened despotism, seemed appropriate to Ottoman statesmen in order to create a national unity from a very dispersed country under the umbrella of Ottoman citizenship as a melting pot.¹⁶ Consequently, the Tanzimat reformers “did not see the role of the state as that of nightwatchman, as liberal theory required; the state had to be interventionist -the state as social engineer- so as to transform society.”¹⁷ The elitism of the Tanzimat statesmen produced the intellectual opposition of the Young Ottomans in the 1860s. For purposes of this discussion, the most significant development of the Tanzimat period was the emergence of the intellectuals alongside the ulema who were losing their power and influence with the impact of modernization. Before discussing the rise of the intellectual, it is important to observe the ulema’s position towards westernization movement and its decline.

2.2 The Decline of the Ulema and the Emergence of Intellectuals: Early Islamist Ideas in the Ottoman Empire

The power of the Ulema during the earlier phases of Ottoman modernization increased considerably and they secured their representation during all the age of reform (1839-1918) in many of the committees which were established to determine specific issues of reform. Sultan Selim III and Sultan Mahmud II who gave a permanent place to *şeyhülislam* in the cabinet, were supported by the ulema in their adoption of European military science and the employment of foreign instructors and experts.¹⁸ The support of ulema to the reforms also showed itself in political aspects of modernization by their active

¹⁶ Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi*, [Turkish Modernization] (İstanbul: İletişim, 1991), 12-13, 83.

¹⁷ Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 27.

¹⁸ Heyd, “The Ottoman,” 30-31. Veli-zade Mehmed Emin, Tatarcık Abdullah, Mehmet Tahir, Mehmed Es’ad and some others were among the ulema who expressed their approval of the reforms.

role in the promulgation of 1876 Constitution and in the convention of the first Ottoman parliament. This support was mainly because of their awareness that reform was the only way to save the Empire and the glory of Islam against their European enemies. They supported the reforms due to the deeply rooted conviction that "the basic character of the Ottoman Empire as an Islamic state was being preserved and that their own position within the system was not being seriously threatened."¹⁹ But side by side with support, the opposition of the lower ulema to the reforms was also evident especially when the reforms were regarded as contrary to the principles of the sharia.²⁰ Nevertheless, the ulema's position in the reform movement gradually weakened as a result of the secularising nature of further reforms and as a result of the ulema's inability to devise a working formula as to how European institutions and ideas could be adopted into Ottoman society. Moreover as Şükrü Hanioglu states, the ulema "due to their close adherence to the establishment, seemed unable to produce ideologies that challenged the westernization movement, leaving fervent popular feeling against westernization with no strong guiding ideology."²¹ True to these observations, Islamist current of thought in the Ottoman Empire was developed not by the ulema but mainly by intellectuals who were familiar with western philosophy and science even though some of them were of ulema origin.

The advent of modernity in the West and its profound repercussions on the Ottomans initiated a new intellectual reformulation beyond the traditional formulations. For the Ottoman intellectual, Western political philosophy supplied political and philosophical concepts of far-reaching significance in order to adopt the modern political institutions and at the same time in order to reimagine Islamic political values. In this perspective, Young

¹⁹ David Kushner, "The Place of the Ulema in the Ottoman Empire During the Age of Reform (1839-1918)." *Turcica*. 19 (1987): 72.

²⁰ Kushner, "the Place," 71.

²¹ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 10.

Ottomans' opposition to the reform policies of Tanzimat and at the same time their appropriation of modern ideas into Islamic forms can be seen as the attempt of "the first modern ideological movement"²² and can also be seen as the emergence of a group of intellectuals from the ruling strata of the Ottoman empire. Transformation of Islam into a modern ideology and its formulation as a universal political and social theory in the hands of the Young Ottomans²³ were the products of this new group of intellectuals who were very different from the alim (plural, ulema) of the Ottoman polity. Alim was a scholar, representing Islamic learning and morality, and a part of the Ottoman ruling class who did not have enough autonomy from state to criticize political goals of the state ideology. The European impact on the Ottoman intellectuals, the Young Ottomans was manifested itself in the areas of ideologies such as romanticism, and liberal constitutionalism and later this impact extended itself to the ideologies of positivism and nationalism. In this respect, political ideas of European philosophers, Montesquieu and Rousseau provided Young Ottomans' theoretical foundations to translate islamic jurisdic notions into western political institutions and ideas. Although the Renaissance and the Reformation did not found any considerable response among the Ottoman elite, the French Revolution made a significant impact on the Ottomans. Nevertheless, the abolition of monarchy and establishment of republic in France did not affect the Ottoman elite because "[t]he Ottomans had been familiar for centuries with republican institutions in Venice and Ragusa and there was nothing in the mere establishment of a republic to alarm them. What was by now disturbing ruling circles in Istanbul was the secularism of the Revolution-the seperation of State and Church, the abandonment of all religious doctrines, the cult of

²² Zürcher, *Turkey*. 74.

²³ Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 279, 30-31.

reason”²⁴ Young Ottomans’ selective approach to Western heritage in order to appropriate good aspects of modern civilization became manifest in their reference to the eighteenth century romanticism and to the concept of “natural law”, but not to the nineteenth century positivism.²⁵

Young Ottomans’ popularization of western political ideas in the Ottoman intellectual life made its impact over all the quests for the progress of the Ottomans, including the three schools of thought in the second constitutional period; Islamism, Turkism and Westernism. In fact, each of these three schools, in their vision of reform for the empire, believed that a degree of westernization was necessary both to strengthen the state and face the European challenge. They differed as to what extent Westernization needed or acceptable. Three schools of thought were primarily concerned with denying that Eastern (or Islamic) culture was inferior to that of the West. Thus, since then, the distinction between “culture” and “civilization” which was made by Young Ottomans and later developed Ziya Gökalp, has constituted a framework for the Ottoman-Turkish intellectual life to discuss the scope, limits and goals of Westernization (modernization) and its reflections in the Ottoman-Turkish society.²⁶ Through this distinction, Islamism, as an “ideology of salvation and

²⁴ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University press, 1968, 2nd edition), 40, 68; On this subject see also Şerif Mardin, “The Influence of the French Revolution on the Ottoman Empire.” *ISSJ*, 119 (1989): 17.

²⁵ Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 272.

²⁶ Gökalp considered all feelings, values and judgments as part of culture which was national, while science and technology were regarded as belonging to civilization that was international, see *The Principles of Turkism* trans. Robert Devereux (Leiden:E.J.Brill, 1968), 22-23 and Uriel Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp* (London:Luzac Company and the Harvill Press, 1950), 63. In Gökalp’s view, the distinction between culture and civilization was so clear that there was no problem in accepting civilization, like religion in its entirety. In Gökalp’s words, “when a nation reaches the higher stages of its development, it is obliged to change its civilization” see *Principles*. 39-40.

progress”²⁷, tried to achieve a synthesis: to take technology of the West (civilization aspect), but to reject their moral values (culture aspect). But unlike Gökalp, Islamists advocated the idea of “Islamic civilization” which regenerates itself in the modern world. In other words, for Islamists, the most vital question to answer was “how to bring about a synthesis of these European elements with Muslim Ottoman civilization; in other words how to become modern while remaining oneself.”²⁸ Although all the three schools were progress oriented and reform minded, they differed on the values by which civilization and identity of Ottomans would be established.²⁹ Westernists had the inclination of becoming Western (modern) by accepting civilizational conversion, while Islamists favored the search for the revitalization of Islamic civilization, in today’s terminology native modernity or a kind of non-western modernity or Islamic modernity.

2.3 Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period

It was during the “turbulent decade” of 1908-1918 that Islamism had established itself as the strongest school of thought. Accepting the selective Westernization, indeed, the Islamists of the Young Turk Period, Mehmed Akif (Ersoy), Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, Said Halim Paşa, Musa Kazım, Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi, Elmalılı M. Hamdi, M. Şemsettin (Günaltay), Eşref Edip (Fergan), Mustafa Sabri Efendi and Said-i Nursi to name a few, continued the particular ambition of identifying certain traditional concepts of Islamic thought with the dominant ideas of the West. The proclamation of the constitution triggered a public debate on political and societal issues ranging from parliament to women’s place in society through the journals which all tried to create public opinion by discussions among themselves as well. Like the members of other schools of thought,

²⁷ Kara, *Türkiye’de*. vol.1, xxvii.

²⁸ Zürcher, *Turkey*. 132.

²⁹ Göle, *Modern*. 25.

Islamists gathered around journals to propagate their ideas about how the Ottoman political and social life should be restructured. Sırat-ı Mustakim (later Sebil-ür Reşat) Circle, the most important of all Islamist journals, represented a kind of Islamic modernism or “an intellectual Islam” which focused on the idea that the gates of free interpretation ((içtiḥad) and research had to be reopened for Islamic scholarship. A group of the ulema, including Mustafa Sabri, Elmalılı Hamdi, İskilipli Atıf and Ermenekli M. Safvet became organized in a circle of Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i İslamiye (Islamic Society of Men of Learning) and published a monthly journal called Beyanu’l Hak (Presentation of the Truth) to denounce the claim that Islam was an obstacle to progress. Another Islamist circle, İttihad-ı Muhammedi which was a group of provincial, lower ulema, constituted a kind of populist Islamism or people’s Islam (halk İslamlığı) in the second constitutional period through Volkan journal.³⁰

Following the political ideas of the Young Ottomans, shura and meşveret turned into the principle of national sovereignty or parliament (hakimiyet-i milliye ve meclis-i Mebusan), the shari’ah into the constitution (Kanun-i Esasi) by Islamists of the second constitutional period; Islam itself became identical with civilization. Furthermore, in the emphasis placed upon the return to the Qur’an and the Sunnah with the belief that true Islam might be derived from the original sources and in the attempt to reconcile the Islamic principles of shura and ijma with the Western institutions of constitution and parliament, it may be said that Islamists of the second constitutional period were strongly influenced by the ideas of the Young Ottomans, Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi. The endeavor of enlarging if not distorting, the meanings of these concepts through the opening of the gate of ijtiḥad was aimed at finding answers to the some vital questions as follows: “ what are the causes of Muslim and Ottoman decline? What should be done to unify all Muslims? Is Islam

³⁰ Şerif Mardin, “İslamcılık.” [Islamism] *TCTA* vol. 5, 1402-3.

reconcilable with the Western values such as freedom, equality, science, freedom of thought which are the sources of Western superiority? What is the scope for the adoption of Western institutions? How can specifically the institutions of state, religion, education, economy be reformed? Do the political principles of Islam prescribe a specific form of government? Is the constitutional regime in accordance with these principles?"³¹ In fact, the questions asked by the Islamists reflected the consideration of rethinking Islam in relation to the concepts of Western civilization, which might be called as "cultural borrowing"³² or "acculturation."³³ The acculturation meant, in the context of Turkish political modernization, "the beginning and unfolding of an exogenously induced cultural and political change,"³⁴ producing adaptation of the Western institutions such as constitution and parliament into the Ottoman politics.

Just as the political writing on the decline of the Ottoman state and the adoption of western institutions constituted the touchstone of Ottoman-Turkish political modernization, Islamists also started to develop their political ideas within the confines of this discussion. Here, we will study firstly, Islamist discourses on the reasons for the decline of the Ottomans and the Islamic world; and secondly the Islamist conceptualizations of the Western civilization in respect to what should be taken from Europe and how to be adopted into the Ottoman political and social life. Islamist effort to reconstruct religious understandings on the basis of the significance given to the idea of progress and civilization will be explored as well.

³¹ Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 34; Berkes, *the Development*. 347; Kara, *İslamcıların*. xx1-xx11.

³² G.E. Von Grunebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), 237.

³³ Bassam Tibi, "Islam and Modern European Ideologies." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 18 (1986): 15-29 and *The Crisis of Modern Islam*, (Salt lake City:University of Utah Press, 1988).

³⁴ Tibi, *Islam*. 20.

2.4 Symptoms: The Reasons for the Decline and Tanzimat

Generally, the Islamist interest in the discussion of the decline seemed to be grounded on the rejection of the Orientalist assumption that Islam was an obstacle to progress and civilization. In Islamist opinion, of course, it was not possible to think of Islam as the cause of decline; rather Muslims owed their days of greatness and earlier great civilization to their religion and their present state of decline to their turning away from it. Said Halim Paşa made it clear that : “No religion has ever been an obstacle to progress. Christianity did not prevent the Europeans from achieving progress; neither was Buddhism an obstacle to the Japanese. This is even more true of Islam. Because Islam is a rational religion. The best proof is the heights reached by the Islamic civilization in the past.”³⁵ Against the Orientalist claim about Islam’s role in the decline of Muslims, Islamists also advanced an Occidental argument regarding Christianity’s negative role in achieving progress. Christianity had been an obstacle to the progress in the West because of the inherent contradiction between its fundamentals and modern science. Christians reached their level of civilization by departing from their religion. The situation was completely different in Islam; Muslims could get civilization and progress by their adherence to their religion.³⁶

³⁵ Said Halim Paşa, *Buhranlarımız ve Son Eserleri*, [Our Crises] ed. M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ (İstanbul: İz, 1993),153; Berkes’s translation, *The Development*. 349; see also Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mezaya-yı İnsaniye; Hasaili Fazıla.” [Human Qualities, Virtuous Results] *SM*. II/ 38, (14 Mayıs 1325/7 Cemaziyelevvel 1327/1909): 177; Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır, “Müslümanlık Mani-i Terakki Değil, Zamin-i Terakkidir.” [Islam is not an Obstacle to Progress but a Guarantee of Progress] *SR*. XXI-XXII/544-545, 546, 547-548, 549-550, 551-552, 553-554 (Zilkade/Zilhicce/Muharrem, 1339/1341-1342/ 1922-1923), 187-189, 203-205, 3-7, 21-22, 36-38, 52-53; M. Akif Ersoy, “Süleymaniye Kürsüsünde,” [On Süleymaniye Mosque] in *Safahat*, ed M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Vakfı, 1987), 170-171; Halil Halid, *Hilal ve Haç Çekişmesi*, [Conflict between the Crescent and the Cross] ed. Mehmet Şeker and A. Bülent Baloğlu (Ankara: TDV, 1997), 222.

³⁶ Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, “İslamiyetle Medeniyet-i Cedide Birleşebilir mi?” [Can Islam be Unified with Modern Civilization] *BH*. I/21 (9 Şubat 1324/30 Muharrem 1327/ 1909): 466-468; Şeyh Mihridin Arusi (a pseudonym of Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi), “Avrupa Medeniyeti Nereden Geldi, Bu Medeniyetin Doğru İsmi Nedir?”

Islamist picture of the Muslim's decline contained not only their material backwardness in industry and science but also their moral values and religious understandings.³⁷ What disturbed the Islamists about the present conditions of Muslims was the disconnection between their degenerated daily lives and their Islamic values. Bringing a viable relation between the two was possible by means of teaching the real Islam. Indeed, this was the major way for the beginning of Islamic revival (intibah-i İslam). In this way, Islamists seemed to unite in determining the main reason for the backwardness of Muslim world: Muslims have lost the true nature of their religion, and this had been furthered by the decline of religious institutions such as medreses and tekkes and by ignorance and passivity of the ulema who were also expected to be in a leading position in the revival of Muslims, even in the holy war against the enemies.³⁸ But unfortunately what appeared to be as the duty of the ulema in the modern age to address the problems of Islamic

[Where has European Civilization emerged, What is the True Name of this Civilization?] *Hikmet*. 3 (22 Nisan 1326/25 Rebiülahir 1328/1910): 4.

³⁷ See Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Mevaliz." [Sermons] *SM*. I/4 (4 Eylül 1324/21 Şaban 1326/ 1908): 63; M. Akif Ersoy, "Nasrullah Kürsüsünde." [In Nasrullah Mosque] *SR*. XVIII/464 (25 Teşrinisani 1336/15 Rebiülevvel 1339/1920): 254; Babanzade Ahmet Naim, "Hadis-i Şerif." [Sacred Hadith] *SR*. XIV/361 (4 Temmuz 1334/25 Ramazan 1336/ 1916): 199; Halil Fahreddin, "Bizde Ahlak." [Our Morality] *SR*. IX-II/210-28 (30 Ağustos 1328/ 30 Ramazan 1330/ 1912): 31; Said Nursi, "Hutbe-i Şamiye," [Speech of Damascus] in *Risale-i Nur Külliyyatı*, [Complete Works of Said Nursi] vol 2 (İstanbul: Nesil, 1996), 1961-2.

³⁸ M. Şemseddin (Günaltay), "Medreselerin İslahı Hakkında: İtiraf ve İshadçılara." [On the Reform of Religious Schools, to those who Confess and Witness] *SR*. X/238 (21 Mart 1329/26 Rebiülahir 1331/1913): 64-66; *Zulmetten Nura* [From Darkness to Light] (İstanbul: Furkan, 1996), 101, 107; Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, "Saadet-i hakikiyye." [Real Happiness] *BH*. I/15 (29 Kanunuevvel 1329/18 Zilhicce 1326/ 1908): 328-333; Sebilürreşat, "Ahkamı Kuraniyenin İfası İçin Ulema Davetname-i Resmi Bekliyor." [The Ulema are Waiting an Official Call to Execute the Laws of Qur'an] *SR*. IX-II/ 219-37 (1 Teşrinisani 1328/5 Zilhicce 1330/1912): 200-201; Abdürreşid İbrahim, "Müslümanları İntibaha davet Hakkında." [On the Invitation of Muslims to Awakening] *SM*. IV/89 (6 Mayıs 1326/10 Cemaziyelevvel 1328/1910): 191; "Cihad Meydanları Ulema-yı Azamı bekliyor." [Battlefields are Waiting the Ulema] *SR*. XIII/328 (12 Şubat 1330/10 Rebiülahir 1333/1915): 121; Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi* [History of Islam] ed. Ziya Nur (İstanbul: Ötüken, 1974), 571.

community was not translated into action. The ulema was caught in the throes of passivity and decline and was caught in the selfish struggles.³⁹ Needless to say, the ulema had been the foremost responsible agent for the decline of Muslims “because they do not perform their duty of guiding and enlightening people (avam), because they do not teach people the fact that religion’s existence is dependent on this world and the fact that those Muslims who are not striving for this world will be under the domination of other nations.”⁴⁰ In line with their effort to enlighten people, the ulema had to study the spirit of contemporary civilization and had to prepare the public for the adoption of its good aspects which were, in nature, not contrary to Islam.⁴¹ For this purpose, medreses which contributed much to the decline of Muslims and the Ottomans, had to be reformed to introduce modern sciences into their curricula.⁴² Islamists of the Second Constitutional period voiced the argument that the revival (intibah) of the nation (Osmanli milleti) or Islamic ummah had to come from the ranks of the ulama and also this ulama had to come to grips with the modern sciences and with the spirit of the time, progress (terakki). Islamists of second constitutional period urged the ulema to take a superior position again in devising formulas for the solution of the Ottoman state’s problems and also in enlightening and guiding the

³⁹ Abdürreşid İbrahim, “Islahat-ı Umumiye.” [General Reform] *TM*. I/16 (16 Eylül 1326/25 Ramazan 1328/1910): 251; İbnül Assam Rıza, “Mekatib: Bütün Ulema-i İslamiyenin Dikkatine, Bütün Müslümanları Toplayacak bir Kuvve-i İlmiye Lazım.” [Letters: to the Attention of the Ulema, We Need Ulema which is capable of bringing Muslims together] *SR*. VIII-I/189-7 (5 Nisan 1328/1 Cemaziyelevvel 1330/1912): 124.

⁴⁰ Sırat-ı Mustakim, *SM*. V/117 (18 Teşrinisani 1326/29 Zilkade 1328/1910): 219; see also Sebilürreşad, “Bütün Memalik-i Osmaniye Mekatibi İbtidaiye Muallimleriyle Müslüman aile Reislerine.” [To the teachers of all primary schools and to the heads of families in the Ottoman Empire] *SR*. XI/264 (19 Eylül 1329/1 Zilkade 1331/1913):66; Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi, “Ümmet-i İslamiye Nasıl Salah Bulabilir?” [How Can Islamic Community Recover] *SR*. XII/298, (15 Mayıs 1329/3 Recep 1332/1914): 223.

⁴¹ Sırat-ı Mustakim, *SM*. V/117 (18 Teşrinisani 1326/29 Zilkade 1328/1910): 219.

⁴² M. Şemseddin, “Medreselerin,” 64-66.

public. The responsibility of calling the ulema to perform their duty was on the shoulders of Islamic community as well.⁴³

According to the Islamists, the ignorance and backwardness of Muslims were the fault of the Muslims themselves rather than of Islam as such.⁴⁴ If despotism was the cause of political and economic decline of Muslims, superstition (hurafe) was the major factor responsible for the intellectual and religious stagnation in Islamic world. Thus, the most recurring theme of Islamism was perhaps the explanation that Muslims were backward and weak due to their departure from the true Islamic principles (sharia) and from the practice of the prophet and first four caliphs.⁴⁵ Seen in this light, the political, economic and cultural decline of the Muslims in general, and of the Ottoman Empire in particular were due to the influence of pre-Islamic traditions.⁴⁶ Moreover, one of the causes which had led to the decadence of Muslims and Islamic civilization, according to Islamists, was the abandonment of ijihad. Abandonment of ijihad had made some Muslims imitate the Europeans (taklit) in every fields of life (political, social, and cultural) while it had caused others to reject any reform attempt on the basis that it was contrary to the precepts of Islam (taassub).⁴⁷

⁴³ Mehmed Hayali, "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SR*. VII/175 (29 Kanun-uevvel 1327/21 Muharrem 1329/ 1911): 301.

⁴⁴ M. Akif Ersoy, "Hatıralar," in *Safahat*. 280; M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 99.

⁴⁵ Abdürreşid İbrahim, "Müslümanları," 191; A. Hamdi Akseki, "Müslümanların Zaafi Düşmanlarına Cüret Verdi, Avrupa'yı Devr-i Vahşete Rücu' Ettirdi." [Weaknesses of Muslims Encouraged their Enemies and Made Europe Return to the Epoch of Savageness] *SM*. VII/172, (8 Kanun-uevvel 1327/30 Zilhicce 1329/1911): 247.

⁴⁶ Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 154; Ahmet Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 620.

⁴⁷ The neglect in studying philosophy because of al –Ghazzali's influence was regarded as one of the reasons for the decline in the Islamic world by Ahmet Hilmi, *Huzur-u Aklü Fen'de Maddiyun Meslek-i Dalaleti* [A Deviance of Materialism in the Presence of Science and Reason] ed. Sadık Albayrak (İstanbul:Tercüman Binbir Temel Eser, nd), 149.

Among Islamists, it was so common to argue that in the present time the only way of ending the decline of the Ottoman state was the adoption of European institutions (the causes of the European progress), while remaining faithful to the spirit of the sharia. Put it differently, the gulf between the West and the Muslim world could only be bridged by accepting the necessity of change and by linking that change to the ideals of Islam. In their explanation for the rise and decline of nations, they often repeated the verse: “Lo! Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts.”⁴⁸ Muslims, for long centuries, have remained in a state of ignorance (cehalet) and stagnation (atalet) due to the unjust (despotic) rule of the political leaders, from the times of Umayyads. Ahmet Hilmi’s statements were representative of the dominant trend among Islamists:

I will tell you the reason why we are despicable, wretched, poor, enslaved. It is because we have not harkened to nor understood the commands of our God and of our Prophet; because we have been shameless and ignorant; because we have tyrannised over ourselves, over our brothers, over all servants of God...Many of us have strayed into evil ideas not based upon Islam. Science and knowledge have passed to other nations, but we have remained ignorant...We do not work; we act as though ignorance and poverty were necessary conditions of Islam.⁴⁹

Islamists also paid attention to the external factors of the decline in the Islamic world: it had fallen into poverty and slavery because of the struggle between Islam and the West,

⁴⁸ Our’an, Surah XII, verse 11; see Elmalılı M. Hamdi (Yazır), “Müslümanlık Mani-i Terakki Değil, Zamin-i Terakkidir.” [Islam is not an Obstacle to Progress but a Guarantee of Progress] *SR.* XXII/553-554 (23 Ağustos 1339/10 Muharrem 1342/1923): 52-53.

⁴⁹ Şeyh Mihridin Arusi, *Yirminci Asırda Alem-i İslam ve Avrupa-Müslümanlara Rehber-i Siyaset* [Islamic World in the 20th Century-Quide of Politics to Muslims] quoted in Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 336; see also Eşref Edip, “Anlaşamadık, Hala da Anlaşamıyoruz.” [We failed to agree and it seems We won’t be able to do so] *SM.* I/10 (14 Teşrinievvel 1324/1 Şevval 1326/1908): 160; M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten.* 101-2.

and because of the imperialism of Christendom.⁵⁰ An interesting argument about the role of the West in the decline of the Islamic world was advanced by Milaşlı İsmail Hakkı. He rejected the naive claim that Muslims were backward because of their departure from religion and continued: “if we say that Muslims are backward because they left their religion then, due to the fact that all Muslims are in the same position, the question that comes to the mind is whether Islam has the capability of application?”⁵¹ By proposing a different explanation for the decline of Muslims, he went on to argue that “we should not ask why muslims are undeveloped but rather we should ask why muslims are underdeveloped. Because Islamic world is underdeveloped... Because Muslims’ present situation emanated mainly and firstly from the development of Europeans, not from the backwardness of Muslims. Therefore, we should look better to how Europeans developed.”⁵² Thus, Western challenge as the external factor and the superstitions and taqlid as the internal factors, in their eyes, were undermining the authority and prestige of Islam to the point of threatening its identity and existence.

Turning to the second facet of the discussion on the decline; how to overcome the decline, Islamists provided a harsh critique of the beginnings of the Ottoman-Turkish modernization, namely Tanzimat and Islahat movements. At this point it may be useful to start the analysis by mentioning briefly the criticisms made by the Young Ottomans and to continue with the ideas of the Islamists of the Second Constitutional period against the

⁵⁰ See Halid, *Hilal*. 104-5, 222-223; M. Şemsettin, “Müslümanlık Aleminde İntibah Emareleri:2.” [Signs of Awakening in Islamic World] *İslam Mecmuası*. 4(13 Mart 1330/28 Rebiülahir 1332/1914): 110-114; Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 130.

⁵¹ Milaşlı İsmail Hakkı, “Geri Kalmışlığımızın Sebebi Dinimiz midir? Usülsüzlük müdür? Daha Başka bir şey midir?” [Is Our religion the Reason for Our Backwardness or Our Lack of Method or Something Else] *SR*. XVII/429-430 (17 Temmuz 1335/18 Şevval 1337/1919): 102.

⁵² Milaşlı İsmail Hakkı, “Müslümanlar Neden Geri Kaldılar ve Niçin İlerleyemiyorlar?” [Why are Muslims backward and why can not they progress] *SR*. XVII/423-424 (19 Haziran 1335/21 Ramazan 1337/ 1919): 58.

edicts of the Tanzimat and Islahat. Although Young Ottomans supported the declaration of Gülhane Hattı by calling it as source of happiness (mebde-i saadet) in terms of its will to reform the empire, the first and foremost charge which they brought against the Tanzimat was that of its departure from sharia.⁵³ Namık Kemal argued that the Divan-ı Hümayun (the Ottoman assembly of high officials), the ulema and Jenissaries (a kind of armed popular assembly) provided checks and balances against absolutism and thus, the sultans were in a fashion elected by these civil and military elite.⁵⁴ The arbitrary and absolutist policies of Ali and Fuad Pashas which would lead to the destruction of the Ottoman state, destroyed these democratic bases and left the political power free from any check at all.

Islamist intellectuals of Second Constitutional period also criticized Tanzimat and Islahat movements of blind imitation of Europe without taking into account the Ottoman nation's own hars (culture).⁵⁵ Islamists usually addressed negatively westernist policies of Tanzimat especially when they discuss on what should be taken from the West. The imitative nature of Ottoman modernization movement was presented as an illness which would had resulted in further decline, as Babanzade Ahmet Naim argued:

“ we have been imitating Europe for a century. We imitated their courts, their modes of walking, speaking, eating, and every kind of their madness. We imitated their popular nationalist conflicts. We have put their issues of socialism and democracy on our agenda as the matters of our country without questioning their possibility of application...But have we become European?

⁵³ Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 74; Namık Kemal, “Nüfus.” *İbret*, 9 (25 Haziran 1872) in Mustafa Nihat Özön, *Namık Kemal ve İbret Gazetesi* [Namık Kemal and İbret Journal] (İstanbul:Yapı Kredi yay., 1997), 79.

⁵⁴ quoted in Nevin Önberk, “Namık Kemal’de Özgürlük Fikri,” [the Idea of Freedom in Namık Kemal] in *Doğumunun Yüzellinci Yılında Namık Kemal* (Ankara: TTK, 1993), 107. This was indeed the extreme form of democratic government (hükümet-i meşruta) under the mantle of independent government (hükümet-i müstakille); Namık Kemal, quoted in Önberk, “Namık,” 101.

⁵⁵ M. Şemseddin, “Tanzimatçılık İflas etti mi?” [Did the Way of Tanzimat Fail?] *SR. X/236* (7 Mart 1329/12 Rebiülahir 1331/1913): 22; Sebilürreşad, *SR. XIII/322* (1 Kanun-usani 1330/27 Safer 1333/ 1914): 79.

Has our material power increased? Have our industry and trade developed? Has our morality been perfected?.. With our imitation, have we stopped Europeans' enmity towards us? [No] Our science has not increased but decreased. Our trade and industry has been dominated by the alien hands. Our national wealth has decreased. Our strength has exhausted. And our morality has fallen down."⁵⁶

Eşref Edip attributed the failure of Tanzimat to two interrelated factors: first, to its adoption of French institutions such as courts and schools which were entirely irrelevant to our social setting; second to its reluctance in reforming the Ottoman institutions which assured the greatness of Turkey.⁵⁷ The failure of Tanzimat in reforming the Ottoman state also led to despotism which was contrary to the nature of the state. What was to be done was the regeneration of the existing institutions in a new form while keeping their spirit and values.⁵⁸ Therefore, at the core of Islamist formula for the regeneration of the Ottoman state and society, there was bringing the values of sharia back into the society and political system to prevent further cultural deterioration which started with the impact of the Tanzimat reforms.⁵⁹

2.5 An Islamist Quest for Modernity: Positioning the West and Reinventing Islamic Civilization

Islamists believed that Muslims could face the challenge of the Western imperialism by reappropriating reason, science and technology and also by the advocacy of

⁵⁶ Babanzade Ahmet Naim, "Hadis-i Şerif." [Sacred Hadith] *SR*. XI/283 (30 Kanunusani 1329/16 Rebiülevvel 1332): 355, see also Arusi, *Yirminci*. 66-73.

⁵⁷ Eşref Edip (Fergan), "Türkiye-Avrupa Heyeti İçtimaiyeleri Arasındaki Manianın İzalesine Dair Hareketler." [Movements which Strive for the elimination of obstacles between Turkish and European Societies] *SR*. XXII/547-548 (2 Ağustos 1339/19 Zilhicce 1341/1923): 9.

⁵⁸ Edip, "Tanzimatçılık bu Memleket için Mahz-ı Felaket Olmuştur." [The Way of Tanzimat has become a mere Disaster for this Country] *SR*. XIX/486 (2 Temmuz 1327/26 Şevval 1339/1921): 194.

⁵⁹ See Mardin, *Türk*. 91-92.

constitutionalism and parliamentary government. It is not true to say that Islamists initially regarded the change to the use of Western technology as a change of minor importance only, which would not affect the central values of the Ottoman culture. In fact they were aware that the admittance of Western technology and institutions would inevitably bring more and more new elements with more and more changes, resulting in serious disturbances in the Ottoman traditional Islamic culture. But the necessity of adopting some good aspects of the West (industry, science and technology) was so striking that Islamists saw no other way around. The word *icabat-ı medeniyet* (the necessities of civilization) was among the mostly used concepts in Islamist journals like *Sebilürreşad* and *Beyanül Hak*. An important feature of modernity, the rapidity of change or the necessity of progress had a far-reaching impact on the Ottoman-Islamist mind to the extent that humanity was moving in the way of progress and perfection like a clamorous flood (*seyl-i huruşan*) and it was necessary to participate into its move; otherwise, decline was inevitable.⁶⁰ Time was the time of progress; the laws of progress which were the will of God could not be resisted like that of natural laws.⁶¹ Islamists, in their search for adopting the positive elements of the Western civilization, especially for the adoption of science, advocated an understanding of natural law which recognized “the parallel competence of both reason and revelation within the same sphere, denying that there is either a separation or a conflict between them... Reason and revelation are different paths to truth and fulfill differing

⁶⁰ M. Akif Ersoy, “Mevaiz: Beyazıt Kürsüsünde.” [In Beyazıt Mosque] *SR*. IX-II/230-48 (24 Kanunusani 1328/29 Safer 1331/1913): 373-376; Ömer Ferit (Kam), “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SR*. XVIII/449 (20 Teşrinisani 1335/25 Safer 1338/1919): 77; M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 184; Faruki Ömer, “Yadigar-ı hayatımdan: İstikbalde Terakki.” [From Soveniour of My Life: Progress in the Future] *Volkan*. 23 (4 Kanunusani 1324/24 Zilhicce 1326/17 Ocal 1909): 103.

⁶¹ Ahmed Hilmi, *Üssü İslam (İslam İnancının Temel İlkeleri)* [Basic Principles of Islamic Faith] (İstanbul: Kültür Basın Yayın Birliği, 1987), 97.

functions, but can not contradict each other..If there appears to be a contradiction one or the other has been incorrectly understood.”⁶²

Apart from being the first Ottoman intellectual who put the emphasis on progress (terakki), Namık Kemal was also the thinker who presented the concept of civilization (medeniyet) as “an ideal to be achieved” by the Ottoman society⁶³ and who made a distinction between civilization and culture. Here culture simply refers to morality, religion, tradition and customs of the Ottomans: “The Muslims did not need to borrow the moral (*manevi*) civilization of the West. The standards of our own morality are amply sufficient to meet all the requirements of modern civilization.”⁶⁴ In other words, in Young Ottoman language, to differentiate good and bad aspect of Western civilization meant the rejection of the blind imitation of Europeans in every field of social life. According to Namık Kemal, civilization, in its essence, did not necessarily contain bad things (*fuhşiyat*) such as immoral family relations and dance in itself, rather they emanated from the shortcomings of the application (*nekais-i icraat*): “Civilization, as defined by our old philosophers, if it is taken in the sense that human being lives as a social group, is the natural need for human life.” This understanding of civilization naturally produces the argument that a new civilization which is composed of just good aspects i.e. science, books, progress and technology, can be established in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁵

Being used in the sense of modernity in the nineteenth century, the dominating concepts of civilization and progress were absorbed by Islamists in order to adopt the positive sides of the West as well as to reimagine Islamic civilization. They accepted and assimilated

⁶² Malcolm H. Kerr, *Islamic Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 107, 110.

⁶³ Tanpınar, *19. Asır*. 426.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Berkes, *The Development*. 218.

⁶⁵ Namık Kemal, quoted in Özön, *Namık*. 210, 213-214.

modernity and some of its attributes that were regarded reconcilable with the Islamic principles. They laid an equal emphasis on the return to early Islam as well as assimilation of the spirit of the modern age. To the Ottoman people, Islamists' message was that to be "modern, progressive and democratic", you don't have to borrow anything, since you already have it in your own Islamic past and what was to be done was to return to this pristine Islam.⁶⁶ In other words, for a Muslim, a better understanding of the "good" values (proper qualities) of modernity can best be derived from the study of shariah and Islamic civilization.

The concept of civilization was defined by Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period as a totality of the "good aspects" of human experience such as progress and science. In this sense, civilization was a product of political, social and economic gatherings by the people in every stage of the human history. Human achievements (progress and science) should be directed to the realization of happiness in this world and in the other world. Here, civilization, to an Islamist mind, came to represent a state of being which fulfilled the ideals of religion, namely Islam.

Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi's argument is illustrative of the Islamist selective approach in the adoption of modern civilization: "Let us accept European civilisation, i.e., science and industry, and even carry them still further. But let us not abandon the blessed customs of our religion and our nation, i.e., let us not adopt the material civilisation of the Europeans."⁶⁷ They were, in one sense, admirers of the Western material progress but they

⁶⁶ According to İsmail Kara, the emergence of new themes such as going back to the original sources and Islamic civilization were the natural extensions of the process of transformation from alim to intellectual; *Şeyhefendinin Rüyasındaki Türkiye* [Turkey in the Shaikh's Dream] (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1998), 163.

⁶⁷ Arusi, *Yirminci*. Landau's translation, *The Politics*. 340, see also Ahmet Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 71; Kırımlı Yakup Kemal, "Medeniyet-i Garbiyeyi İktibasta İçtimaiyyunumuzun Gösterdiği Tesamuh." [Tolerance of Our Sociologists towards the

were also against the mere taqlid (imitation) of European laws and institutions which had no relevance to the Islamic principles. Appropriation of some philosophical schools such as materialism and positivism was conceived as a dangerous terrain that could undermine the very basis of the Islamic faith. Nevertheless, Islamists approved sending students to European countries to study science certainly on the single condition that they should not lose their religious and national characteristics. For example, Mehmet Akif encouraged Asım, a representative of his idealized young generation, to go to Germany in order to bring civilization (progress; science and technology) into Turkey.⁶⁸

According to Islamists, modern western civilization, particularly in the sphere of science, was the inheritor of Islamic civilization. The era of Enlightenment in Europe was initiated with Europeans' borrowing of sciences from Islamic civilization and their further progress was based on them.⁶⁹ Therefore, the acquisition of science and technology from the West was to take back what was lost (hikmetin yitik mal) by the Muslims and was not contrary to the precepts of Islam. To obtain scientific and industrial progress of the West became necessary in order to advance and revive the Islamic civilization and its institutions. But this did not mean the imitation of Western civilization and did not mean destroying Islam which was the source of Muslims' progress: "Because civilization can not be imitated. Civilization is not a product of material elements. Civilization emanates from origins and

adoption of Western Civilization] *TM*. I/7 (24 Haziran 1326/30 Cemaziyelahir 1328/1910): 112; Bediüzzaman Said-i Kürdi (Nursi), "Bediüzzaman-ı Kürdi'nin Fihriste-i maksadı ve Efkarının Programıdır." [This is a Programme of Bediüzzaman Kürdi's aim and Ideas] *Volkan*. 84 (12 Mart 1325/3 Rebiülevvel 1327/25 Mart 1909): 402.

⁶⁸ M. Akif, "Asım," in *Safahat*. 408; see also M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 81-82

⁶⁹ East was portrayed as the source of civilization and progress which were later adopted by Europeans, see Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Mev'iza," [Sermon] *SM*. I/18, (11 Kanunuevvel 1324/30 Zilkade 1326/1908): 288; İzmirli Mustafa Necati, "Müslümanlara bir Ders-i İntibah." [A Lesson of Awakening to Muslims] *BH*. V/119, (4 Temmuz 1327/20 Recep 1329/1911): 2168; Ahmed Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 409; Halid, *Hilal*. 58; Mahmud Esad, "Bi'set-i Muhammediye." *TM*. I/1 (2 Nisan 1326/5 Rebiülahir 1328/1910): 5.

views (telakki). Our origins are different than theirs. We can just take what is needed for the perfection and elevation of our civilization and what is compatible with it; just as the Islamic civilization adapted from the old civilizations in the past.”⁷⁰

Islamic civilization was presented as a “real”(hakiki medeniyet) and “virtuous” civilization (medeniyet-i fazıla) which was immune from the shortcomings of western civilization. Islamic civilization was, prescribed by sharia, based on cooperation, right, justice and virtue whereas western one was established on might and interest.⁷¹ Islam had the goal of reaching a level of civilization which was superior to the contemporary progress of humanity. The idea of Islamic civilization was supported by the conviction that civilization and religion were indeed the same thing.⁷²

Islamist understanding of Western civilization was twofold. Islamists came to regard the Western civilization sometimes as a universal civilization transcending national and religious affiliations but sometimes as an opposite and enemy of Islamic civilization. What captured the Islamists’ imagination about Western life (civilization) was, on the positive

⁷⁰ Ömer Rıza (Doğrul), “İslam Mefkuresine Doğru.” [Towards Islamic Ideal] *SR.* XVI/400-401 (27 Mart 1335/24 Cemaziyelahir 1337/1919): 107-108; see also Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*.18.

⁷¹ Sırat-ı Mustakim, *SM.* V/117 (18 Teşrinisani 1326/29 Zilkade 1328/1910): 219; Sebilürreşad, “Avni Hakla Sebilürreşad Yirmibirinci Cilde Başlıyor.” [With God’s Help, Sebilür Reşad starts to publish its twenty first volume] *SR.* XXI/521 (11 Teşrinisani 1338/ 2 Rebiülevvel 1341/1922): 2; M. Akif Ersoy, “Nasrullah Kürsüsünde.” [In Nasrullah Mosque] *SR.* XVIII/464 (25 Teşrinisani 1336/15 Rebiülevvel 1339/1920): 257; Volkan, “Volkan” [Volcane] 8 (5 Kanunuevvel 1324/18 Aralık 1908): 38; Said Nursi, “Sünühat,” [Manifestations] in *Risale-i Nur Külliyyatı.* vol. 2, 2049.

⁷² Milaşlı İsmail Hakkı, “Müslümanlar,” 57; Ahmed Hamdi, “Şems-i Münir-i Medeniyet Şarktan mı Tulu Etti Yoksa Garbtan mı?” [Has Civilization Emerged from the West or from the East] *SR.* VIII-I/187-5 (22 Mart 1328/16 Rebiülahir 1330/1912): 82; “Din-i İslam Medeniyet-i Hakikinin Ruhudur.” [Islam is the Spirit of the Genuine Civilization] *SR.* VIII-I/192-10 (26 Nisan 1328/22 Cemaziyelevvel 1330/1912): 182; Ömer Rıza, “Avrupa Dine Rücu Ediyor.” [Europe is Returning to Religion] *SR.* XIV/344 (25 Haziran 1331/25 Şaban 1333/1915): 48.

side, the dynamism (progress, science and so on) and vitality of this life and, on the negative side, the imperialist dimension of the Western civilization. On the one side, Islamists perceived the West as people of the Cross (Ehli Salib), or false civilization (yalancı medeniyet), or the monster with one tooth (tek dişi kalmış canavar) by drawing public attention to the imperialist and religiously fanatical aspect of Western civilization.⁷³ Islamists often felt themselves under the duty of explaining the true Islam and its perfect culture to the fanatic, hypocritical, egocentric and materialistic western audience. Moreover, they enjoyed accusing the West of “an inability to live up to their own proclaimed religious, political and social values.”⁷⁴ Western civilization was portrayed as being fond of power and even worshipping the manifestations of power, especially in the aftermath of the Balkan and Tripoli wars.⁷⁵ West’s desire for power and its neglect of humanist values were partly connected to its colonialist ambitions and partly to the foundations of its Christian fanaticism. Western civilization had been experiencing a crisis which would lead the world into decline and non-existence. Seen from this perspective, the Western civilization had been destined to decline in Ibn Khaldunian sense. Moreover, the

⁷³ M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 32, 36-7; M. Akif, “Hakkın Sesleri,” in *Safahat*. 183.

⁷⁴ S. Tanvir Wasti, “Halil Halid: Anti-Imperialist Muslim Intellectual.” *Middle Eastern Studies*. 29:3 (July 1993): 569; see also Ahmet Hilmi, “Hukuk-u İnsan ve Alem-i İslamda Bunun Manası.” [Law of Man and Its Meaning in the Islamic World] *Hikmet* 3 (22 Nisan 1326/25 Rebiülahir 1328/1910): 1; Hasan Hikmet, “Medeniyet Terakkiyat-ı Maddiyeden mi İbarettir?” [Does Civilization Consist of Only Material Progress] *SR*. XXIV/622 (23 Teşrinievvel 1340/24 Rebiülevvel 1343/1924): 376; M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 47. Halil Halid’s book, the Crescent versus the Cross, provides an anti-imperialist and anti-Orientalist document which criticises the civilizing mission of the West and “the Western European powers who used means of violence, exploitation and plunder to subjugate large areas of the world in the nineteenth century in the name of civilization” Wasti, “Halil,” 568.

⁷⁵ See Mehmet Akif, “Asım,” in *Safahat*. 388; Ahmet Hilmi, *Huzur-u*. 52, 59 and *Asr-ı Hamidi’de Alem-i İslam ve Sanusiler*, [Islamic World and Sanusiyyah in the Hamidian Age] ed. İsmail Cömert (İstanbul: Ses yay., 1992), 41; Nursi, “Sünuhat,” in *Risale-i*. vol. 2, 2049.

West was responsible for the prevention of the East's and Islamic world's progress as well.⁷⁶

But on the other side, they often made references to Islam's contribution to this civilization and its universal character as the common experience of all human beings. Islamists' negative assessments of the concept of civilization was also partly related to the established equivalence between civilization and the West since the times of the Young Ottoman intellectuals. This sometimes led to using positively charged terms for civilization; for instance, Mehmet Akif preferred *çemenzar-ı terakki* (garden of progress) and *seyr-i tekamül* (course of evolution) to connote a meaning of civilization.⁷⁷

Actually, Islamists did not neglect to examine the spirit responsible for the development of West's impressive material accomplishment when they became focused on the good aspects of this civilization. Having found the sources of the "spirit of civilization" in Islam, they favored the revitalization of Islamic spirit in order to reach the civilizational level of the West without losing the centrality of Islamic values for Muslim individual and society.⁷⁸ In Islamist perspective, religion, humanity and civilization were seen as interdependent to each other.

Islamists always rejected the idea that Muslims could only progress by following the way of the West. Europe triggered the discussion on whether Islam was inimical to progress or not simply in order to impose their own way of progress on Muslims.⁷⁹ Progress of

⁷⁶ Ahmet Hilmi presented analysis, similar to twentieth century "underdevelopment" thesis, see *Yirminci*. 66-73 in Kara, *Türkiye'de*. vol. 1, 23-24.

⁷⁷ M. Orhan Okay, *Kültür ve Edebiyatımızdan* [From Our Culture and Literature] (Ankara: Akçağ, 1991), 126 and M. Akif, "Süleymaniye," in *Safahat*. 170.

⁷⁸ Hasan Hikmet, "Medeniyet," 376; Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 84.

⁷⁹ Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, *İslam Düşüncesinin Problemlerine Giriş*, [Introduction to the Problems of Islamic Thought] ed. Recep Kılıç (Ankara: TDV, 1996), 66.

Muslims could be realized by creating their way of progress which was strongly related to their own roots (moral values, customs and environment). Progress came to denote not neglecting the values of the past (tradition) but perfecting and reforming them by some changes and inventions.⁸⁰ One might say that the contemporary terms of this debate go back to the Second Constitutional period.

In this vein, Musa Kazım argued that

“Imitating a country’s sciences and industry does not necessitate imitating its morality, customs and way of life, because there is no any relationship between the two. Because every country and every nation has its own way of life, means of subsistence and accepted custom. But no country and no nation has its own peculiar industry, techniques and sciences. These are common to all people and all nations.... Applying a nation’s peculiar morality, customs and way of life to another country means trying to change the law of nature.”⁸¹

What was to be done was not a conversion to western civilization but “nationalization of European civilization” (Avrupa medeniyetini millileştirmek).⁸² Interestingly enough, The Orientalist picture of East as the lands of passivity and degeneration as compared to active and progressive West seemed to be shared by Islamists.⁸³

⁸⁰ Muhammed Fatin, “Müteferrika.” [Details] *BH.* I/24 (2 Mart 1324/22 Safer 1327/1909): 565; Ermenekli M. Safvet, “Nazar-ı Hükümette Ahlak.” [Morality in the Eyes of the Government] *BH.* V/107 (11 Nisan 1327/24 Rebiülahir 1329/1911): 1982-3; M. Şemseddin, “Tanzimatçılık,” 21; Yazır, *İslam.* 24; M. Akif, “Süleymaniye,” in *Safahat.* 170, 172; Ahmet Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi.* 2; *Allahı İnkâr Mümkün müdür? Yahut Huzur-u Fende Mesalik-i Küfür* [Is it Possible to Deny God or Issues of Disbelief in the Presence of Science] ed. Necip Taylan and Eyüp Onat (İstanbul: Çağrı, 1979), 20.

⁸¹ Musa Kazım, “Hürriyet-Müsavat.” [Freedom-Equality] *SM.* 1/7 (25 Eylül 1324/12 Ramazan 1326/1908):100; see also Ömer Ferit (Kam), “Hüvviyet-i Milliye.” [National Identity] *SR.* VIII-I/197-15 (31 Mayıs 1328/27 Cemaziyelahir 1330): 276-278.

⁸² Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız.* 76.

⁸³ M. Akif Ersoy, “Fatih Kürsüsünde,” [In Fatih Mosque] in *Safahat.* 207-264; Ahmet Hilmi argued that even Islam could not change this passivity of East, “Hükümet Ne Demektir?” [What is Government?] *Yeni Tasvir-i Efkar.* 207 (28 Kanun-i evvel 1909) in *Huzur-u.* 26-27. Some Islamists like Bediüzzaman and Hüseyin Hazım in their arguments on the priority of religion to nationalism and on the necessity of religious

In the optimistic era of Young Turks, the model of Japan as a modernized non-western country which had defeated a European power (Russia) was depicted as the desirable way to modernize the Ottoman polity and to adopt science and technology from the west while remaining Ottoman, namely, Muslim. For Islamists, the Japanese became modern without abandoning their religion and nationality and, as a result, had caught up with the Europeans in every respect.⁸⁴ Here, it would be tempting to argue that Islamists saw the Japanese way of modernization as a kind of “modernization from within” or “native modernity” which attained somehow the synthesis of East and West or the revitalization of Eastern-Islamic civilization against the Western one.

The spirit of the time when Islamists tried to face the challenge of the West was the spirit of progress and civilization. In fact, the Western belief in progress was so influential on the rest of the world that it transcended cultural and national boundaries. Certainly, one obvious example for the influence of French revolution on the Ottoman intellectuals was their emphasis on the concept of progress.⁸⁵ Namık Kemal, by rejecting Ibn-i Haldunian argument of decline, argues that the “sick man” (hasta adam), namely the Ottoman empire, could secure its vitality and prevent its decline if it acted in accordance with the needs of the nature (mukteza-yı tabiat).⁸⁶ The optimistic view of Kemal for the progress of the

education, shared the same observation with Marx and Engels that the history of Asia (East) always appeared as the history of religions (spiritualism). Therefore the strength of Turkey should be searched in religion, not in nationalist feelings see Hüseyin Hazım, “Cihet-i Camia’ı Muhammediye ve Uhuvveti İslamiyye.” [Aspect of Muhammadan Community and Islamic Brotherhood] *BH*. II/53 (10 Mart 1326/16 Rebiülevvel 1328/1910): 1107.

⁸⁴ See M. Akif, “Süleymaniye,” in *Safahat*.155-156; Abdürreşid İbrahim, “Ahval-i Müslimin ve Ulema Hakkında.” [About the state of Muslims and the Ulema] *SM*. IV/ 88 (29 Nisan 1326/ 3 Cemaziyelevvel 1328/1910): 175; *SM*, V/ 120, (9 Kanun-u evvel 1326/20 Zilhicce 1328/1910): 268; “Beyanül Hak.” [Expression of Right] *BH*. III/67 (21 Haziran 1326/26 Cemaziyelahir1328/1910): 1331.

⁸⁵ Mardin, “The Influence,” 29.

⁸⁶ Kemal, “Hasta,” quoted in Önberk, “Namık,” 101.

Ottomans was accompanied by his advocacy of the liberal premise of development and his rejection of the notion of underdevelopment: “Europe will not impede the progress of the Ottoman state because progress of each nation will serve other nations’ progress as well.”⁸⁷

The Islamists of the nineteenth century focused on the concepts such as mastery of nature to control and shape physical conditions of life, public morality and progress. Being prepared to recognize Europe’s superiority in its power, Islamist discourse on progress appropriated a principle of Darwinism, the survival of the fittest, as applied to nations and civilizations: “the strong survives and the weak becomes extinct; this is the law of nature, nobody can change it.”⁸⁸ The duty of the preparation of force (i’dad-i kuvvet) which was sanctioned by some verses (Qur’an, VIII:60) such as, ‘prepare against them (the enemies) what force ye are able’ was enlarged to become the obligation to acquire good aspects of modern civilization (mehasin-i medeniyet), including science, technology, industry and trade.⁸⁹ Since the early attempts of reform in the time of Sultan Selim III, learning from the West had been justified on the grounds that the sharia permitted Muslims to use the enemy’s methods. Indeed, the statement of the Prophet to the effect that science should be sought wherever it existed to be employed to legitimate learning from the West.

⁸⁷ Kemal, in Özön, *Namık*. 257. Kemal attributes the superiority of the West and the flood of progress (terakki tufanı) to its struggle for the achievement of law, Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye’de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* [History of Contemporary Thought in Turkey] (İstanbul: Ülken, 1994), 103..

⁸⁸ Ahmed Hamdi, “Müslümanların Uğradıkları Felaketler Kendi Nefislerindedir.” [Muslims, themselves are Responsible from the Disasters they face] *SR*. XI/282 (3 Kanunusani 1329/9 Rebiülevvel 1332/1913): 339; “Tefsir-i Şerif,” [Sacred Interpretation] IX-II/228-46 (10 Kanunusani 1328/15 Safer 1331/1913): 342; M. Şemseddin continued to argue that “those organisms that are not able to adaptate to the needs of environment atrophies. A society which does not adaptate its action to the needs of the age is like that”, *Zulmetten*. 53.

⁸⁹ See Musa Kazım, “Kuvvet hazırlamak-1.” [Preparing Force-1] *SM*. III/56, (17 Eylül 1325/15 Ramazan 1327/1909): 52-53; “Kuvvet hazırlamak-2.” [Preparing Force-2] *SM*. III/59 (8 Teşrinievvel 1325/6 Şevval 1327/ 1909): 99-102.

In the nineteenth century, science as the most significant basis of western civilization was elevated to the status of religion in the minds of Ottoman intellectuals; thus “science became endowed with a transcendent meaning.”⁹⁰ Islamist intellectuals were disturbed by this superior status of science in relation to religion and often underlined the compatibility between Islam and science in their articles in order to weaken the perception of science as the only criterium to shape every aspect of life.

To sum up, Islamist intellectuals continued to voice the classical discourse that the decline of the Ottoman state was due to the deviations from the Islamic ideal society and insisted that the restoration of this ideal society was the solution to the backwardness of Muslims. But at the same time, they increasingly modified the picture of the ideal society by their strong emphasis on progress and by their attempt to equate the modern civilization with this ideal.

Reading from today’s perspective, it can be said that Islamist intellectuals shared the basic conviction that Islam and modernity are compatible, once both are properly understood. Islamists’ emphasis on the compatibility of religion and science (or reason) and their underlining of the concept of *ijtihad* to pave way for the adoption of new ideas and institutions was a sign of the tendency to combine modernity and Islam. And consequently they tended to see learning from the West as a way of creating Islamic modernity which was nevertheless distinct from Westernization. Although this idea of compatibility seems to be similar to the approach of Islamic philosophers towards the Greek philosophy in the medieval age, this time, the task of harmonizing Islamic tradition with Western modernity was more difficult due to the global and unprecedented features of modernity and Europe’s superiority. It was easier said than done that what had been done in the past could be

⁹⁰ Hanioglu, *The Young*. 11-12; “Osmanlı Aydınındaki Değişme ve ‘Bilim’.” [Science and Change in Ottoman Intellectual] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 27 (Fall 1984): 191.

achieved again in the present age. Moreover, learning from the West was presented as just taking back what originally Europe borrowed from Islamic civilization.

2.6 Reconstructing the Understanding of True Islam

When Islamists criticized the imitation of Europe, they did not mean a simple rejection of Europe-inspired reforms and a return to the pre-Tanzimat era but a return to the “true” Islam which they recognized as the representative government (biah and meşveret) and the sovereignty of people (umma). The true Islam of the Islamists contained: a) the idea that when the Qur’an and Sunnah contradicted reason or science, they should be reinterpreted b) An opening of the gate of interpretation (ijtihad), accompanied by the return to the original sources of Islam and to the times of prophet and the first four caliphs c) the unification of schools of law d) reconstructing all the religious schools and institutions of Islam, including theology, tradition of prophet, fiqh (law) and sufism.

Islamists urged Muslim masses to take their destiny into their own hands by forcing their rulers to accept democratic institutions. By reminding the grandeur of the early days of Islam, they aimed at inspiring the masses to act for creating the kind of political system that ought to be. This retrospective look to (glorification of the past) the greatness of the past aimed at calling Muslims for “action” but not turning the time back. They denied the passivity (atalet), tevekkül of popular Sufism⁹¹ as well as the secularist restriction of religion to private life. They tried to awaken Muslims to the fact that Islam was a religion, and a dynamic, progressive force to answer to the needs of the modern age or modernity. The Islamists recognized the dangers in the traditional dichotomy of different systems of value (understanding of religion) for the few (havass) and the many (avam) and tried to bridge the gap through their articles in their journals which were very successful in

⁹¹ M. Akif, “Tefsir-i Şerif.” [Sacred Interpretation] *SR*. VIII-I/192-10 (26 Nisan 1328/22 Cemaziye'l-evvel 1330/1912): 173-174.

popularizing intellectual discussions on complex religious issues. True Islam, they argued, was compatible with advanced civilization like that of Europe. Islam had been corrupted by superstitions and as a result, Muslims lost their spirit of progress which was derived from true Islam of Prophet and his companions. In order to recover the great days of Islam, the remedy was simply to restore Islam to its true form in accordance with Qur'an and Sunnah.⁹² The titles of two books written by M. Ş. Günaltay in the period are helpful in understanding how Islamist intellectuals evaluated the conditions of Muslims of their time: *From Darkness to Light (Zulmetten Nura)* and *From Superstitions to Truth (Hurafattan Hakikata)*. According to İsmail Kara, the notion of superstition was used not to attain a true understanding of religion but to get rid of some beliefs and convictions which were considered as obstacles to modernisation.⁹³ Islamist reconceptualization of religion (from a traditional to a dynamic conception of Islam) advocated the main conviction that Islam has within itself the faculty and the spiritual force for a far-reaching adaptation to meet the needs of the modern times.⁹⁴ Seen from this perspective, Islamism has been partially a modernizing ideology with its emphasis on progress, civilization and democracy.

With the acceptance of natural law theory, the dependent position of reason to the revelation in the classical theological schools was transformed into a new one in which the revelation was considered secondary to the reason, at least equal, in identifying right and wrong. In this context, Islam was presented as a “natural religion” (*tabii din, fitri din*)

⁹² M. Şemseddin, “Müslümanlık Aleminde İntibah Emareleri.” [Signs of Awakening in the Islamic World] *İslam Mecmuası*. 1 (30 Kanunusani 1329/16 Rebiülevvel 1332/1913): 25-26 and 4 (13 Mart 1330/28 Rebiülahir 1332/1914): 110-114; *Zulmetten*. 71; M. Akif, “İkinci Mev’iza.” [Second Sermon] *SR*. IX-II/231-49, p. 393, (31 Kanunusani 1328, 7 Rebiülevvel 1331/1913): 391; “Süleymaniye,” in *Safahat*. 171; Halim Sabit, “Dinin Şekli Aslisine İrcamın Lüzumu.” [The Need of Returning Religion to its Original Form] *SR*. XI/278 (26 Kanunuevvel 1329/11 Safer 1332/1913): 273-4.

⁹³ Kara, *Biraz Yakın Tarih, Biraz Uzak Hurafe* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1998), 34.

⁹⁴ See Musa Kazım, “Kuvvet Hazırlamak-2,” 100.

which did not contradict with the human nature and reason, and its principles were compatible with the laws of progress and were applicable in every century. Islam, free of superstitions and beliefs was the only natural religion among the existing religions.⁹⁵ Sometimes the compatibility between religion and reason was understood in the way that both religion and reason had their own separate and different realms. If religion violated the realm of science, it would be damaged.⁹⁶

Escalating the position of reason coincided with the desire of liberating Islamic faith and reason from the chains of taqlid (imitation). In the matters of theology and law, Islamists took a stand against uncritical acceptance (taqlid) of the religious formulations which were made by the ulema of the medieval age. The harsh critique of medieval religious understandings sometimes went to such an extent that, for example, Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi accused Al-Ghazzali as one of those thinkers responsible for the intellectual decline in the Islamic world.⁹⁷

In the revitalization of religious institutions and sciences, the center of concern and the focus of attention of the Islamists was on the shariah and its relation to modern society. The present understandings of Muslims about their religion were thus regarded as degenerated by the distorting impact of foreign elements and bad customs in the form of superstitions.⁹⁸ It was not Islam that was petrified, but its distorted understandings by the

⁹⁵ Ahmet Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 3, 67, 69, 613; İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, *Anglikan Kilisesine Cevap*, [Reply to the Anglican Church] ed. Fahri Unan (Ankara: TDV, 1995), 292; M. Akif, *SR*. IX-II/231-49 (31 Kanunusani 1328/7 Rebiülevvel 1331), 389-395; Aksekili Ahmet Hamdi, “Müslümanların,” 339; “Müslümanlık Fıtri bir Dindir.” [Islam is a Natural Religion] *SR*. XIV/342 (28 mayıs 1331/27 Recep 1333/1915): 30; M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 60.

⁹⁶ Ahmet Hilmi, *Üssü İslam*. 21, 26, 27, 28.

⁹⁷ Ahmed Hilmi, *Huzur-u*. 149.

⁹⁸ M. Akif, “Tefsir-i Şerif.” [Sacred Interpretation] *SR*. IX-II/209-27 (23 Ağustos 1328/23 Ramazan 1330/1912): 4; “Asım,” in *Safahat*. 372-3; Halil Fahreddin, “Din

foreign elements. Far from being an obstacle to progress, Islam signified, in Islamist understanding, the most significant factor which facilitated science, technology, civilization and strengthened the unity of the state. Closely tied to this recognition, Islamists underlined the necessity of reforming or reconstructing all the religious schools and institutions of Islam, including theology, tradition of prophet, fiqh (law) and sufism. In that way, Islamic theology (kalam), among other branches of religious sciences, were restated by the means of modern European philosophical arguments such as Boutroux and Bergson's theories, to fit the need and understanding of modern man (yeni ilmi kelim).⁹⁹ Through reconstructing religious thought as cleared off from the superstition (hurafe), they contemplated the creation of a dynamic and progressive religiosity and society. But, as Elmalılı Hamdi stated: "renewing religion was not an alteration or distortion. Due to the fact that the greatest principle in Islam was the unity (tawhid), other principles would be effective for the improvement of the principle of unity. Keeping this point of view in the generality of renewal, the identity of Islamic nation would be maintained... The duty of renewer would not be denying the essential principles of religion, nor destroying the identity of umma."¹⁰⁰ While for some Islamists like M. Şemseddin, renewing Islam by returning to the times of prophet and four caliphs and by the clearing off superstitions from religion came to mean a "revolution" in religion,¹⁰¹ for others like Mustafa Sabri this would constitute the distortion of the basis of Islam, by copying Europe's revolution in

Mani-i Terakki Değildir." [Islam is not an Obstacle to Progress] *SR.* VIII-I/203-21 (12 Temmuz 1328/11 Şaban 1330/1912): 406; M. Şemseddin, *Hurafattan Hakikata*, [from Superstitions to Truth] 316-358 quoted in Ülken, *Türkiye'de*. 397

⁹⁹ İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, "Yeni İlmî kelim Hakkında Sebilürreşad Ceride-i İlmîyesine." [To the Scientific Journal of Sebilür Reşad, On the New Theology] *SR.* XXII/551-552 (16 Ağustos 1339/3 Muharrem 1342/1923): 38-40; "Yeni İlm-i kelim." [New Theology] *SR.* XXI/528-529 (16 Mayıs 1339/30 Ramazan 1341/1923): 58-59.

¹⁰⁰ Yazır, *İslam*. 62-63. In fact, this was the "renaissance of Islam" which would be more enlightened than European one, pp. 16-17.

¹⁰¹ M. Şemseddin, "Müslümanlık," 4, 113.

religion, namely Reformation.¹⁰² It would be beneficial to point out that those Islamists such as M.Ali Ayni, Şemsettin Günaltay, who put more emphasis on the issue of reforming the religious understandings of Muslims, supported the Republican attempt to modernize and nationalize the rituals of worship in 1928, taking part in the committee of the reformation of religion.

Islamist aim to get true Islam manifested itself in the discussions of unifying the Muslim medhabs (schools of legal doctrine) which were seen as the way of uniting Muslims at least culturally and religiously. Rashid Rıza's book on the same subject was translated into Turkish by an Islamist, Ahmed Hamdi Aksekili.¹⁰³ Perhaps, Islamists of the second constitutional period were influenced by the Islamic modernism of Cemaladdin Afghani and Muhammed Abduh mostly on the issues of getting true Islam and, for this purpose, returning to the early form of Islam in order to put an end to the decline of Muslims. Mehmet Akif, Şemseddin Günaltay, Said Nursi, Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi were among Islamists who were heavily influenced by the writings of Afghani-Abduh line. For instance, almost every work of Muhammad Abduh and of his disciples, Rashid Rıza and Muhammad Farid Wajdi was translated into Turkish by M. Akif and Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi and their various views on the political and social matters of Islam were quoted in the articles of Islamists. Their articles in *Sırat-ı Mustakim-Sebiliür-Reşad* were written and translated with the special object of showing the truth about Islam on the issues ranging from the rights of women to slavery in Islam.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Dini Mücedditler* [Religious Innovators] (İstanbul: Sebil, 1977), 87; *Yeni İslam Müçtehidlerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi: Musa Carullah Bigiyef'e Reddiye* [The Scientific Value of the New Islamic Renonators: A Refutation to Musa Carullah Bigiyef] (İstanbul: Bedir, 1998), 228.

¹⁰³ Berkes, *The Development*. 381.

¹⁰⁴ See Ahmet Hamdi Aksekili, "İslamiyet ve Teaddüdü Zevcat." [Islam and Polygamy] *SR*. XI/275, pp. 226-228, (5 Kanunuevvel 1329/19 Muharrem 1332/1913): 226-228; M. Şemseddin, "Müslümanlık," 4, 110; M. Akif, "Asım," in *Safahat*. 405; Nursi,

Generally, Islamists expressed a negative view on Sufism, because it, as they claimed, taught passivity (atalet) and created apathy towards the worldly affairs, neglecting society at the expense of the individual's moral purification. Sufism, by its more emphasis on (tevekkül) docility and contentment as opposed to vigour, courage and an active interest in social and political affairs of true Islam, distorted the real meaning of this Islamic term.¹⁰⁵ One the one side, Islamists, such as Ferit Kam, İsmail Fenni Ertuğrul, M. Ali Ayni and Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahnet Hilmi accused Sufism of being the source of docility and superstition, but on the other side, they had mystical characteristics which came from their educational background and their social ties with people's Islam (halk islami)¹⁰⁶ and their interest in philosophical sufism such as Muhyiddin Arabi's idea of Vahdet-i Vücut.

Islamists, in their endeavour to realize the renaissance of Islam, turned their eyes to Islam both in the sense of religion and in the sense of civilization. In other words, Islamists employed their selective approach not only in adopting some European ideas and institutions but also in their evaluation of the historical heritage of Islam. If they thought that it was suitable for the understanding of the modern times, some medieval conceptualizations also were regarded as truly Islamic. The movement of turning back to the original sources of Islam emanated from the belief that modernization was of inevitable necessity. In this way, the original sources, Qur'an and Sunnah seemed flexible enough to incorporate modern meanings and to clear up their historical interpretations which were considered inimical to the spirit of the time, progress.¹⁰⁷

“Divan-ı Harbi Örfi,” in *Risale-i*, vol 2. 1922. For Afghani and Abduh's ideas see Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983).

¹⁰⁵ M. Şemsettin, *Zulmetten*.187-192, see also in Kara, *Türkiye'de*. vol. II, 424-427; M. Sabri Efendi, *İnsan ve Kader (Mevkifu'l Beşer Tahte-Sultani'l Kader)* [Human Being and Fate] trans. İsa Doğan (İstanbul: Kültür Basın Yayın Birliği, 1989), 312.

¹⁰⁶ Kara, *Amel Defteri* [Notebook of Deeds] (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1998), 169.

¹⁰⁷ Kara, *Şeyhefendinin*. 153-154.

All in all, the arguments of Islamists contained “a constant effort of translation,”¹⁰⁸ for their arguments which were established by reference to the values and principles of the texts (Qur’an and Hadith), the early Islamic practice and medieval theorization.

2.7 Political Power and Islamists

In Muslim lands, Islam as a source of political legitimization was employed by the ruling elites to keep the existing political order but at the same time it was also used by the oppositional movements in order to protest this political order.¹⁰⁹ In joining the Young Turk opposition to Abdul Hamid II, Islamists, by the employment of religious terminology, considered the Hamidian regime as an autocratic regime which was an obstacle not only to the preservation of Ottoman moral values- sense of solidarity and love of motherland but also to the realization of shari’ah. It was the Young Ottomans who started to use autocratic rule synonymously with despotism (istibdad) against the rule of Tanzimat statesmen and Islamists of the second constitutional period continued this tradition even by reading all the Islamic history through this word. In fact, as explained at the end of the first chapter, absolutism was regarded as necessary for the strong and just rule in order to distribute the welfare among subjects in the classical times of the empire.¹¹⁰ Stuck with the dichotomy of despotism and constitutional regime, Islamists used Islamic concepts for both opposing the Hamidian rule and supporting the Young Turk regime. In order to achieve clarity in the explanation of Islamist political ideas in the following chapter, it seems necessary to discuss the Islamist attitude(s) towards political power in practice in the rest of this chapter.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Azmeh, *Islams*. 84.

¹⁰⁹ Karpat, “the Stages,” 81.

¹¹⁰ Interestingly enough, even, in the fatwa for the de-thronement of the sultan Abdul Hamid II, there was no accusation of despotism, see Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun*. 235.

2.7.1 Why Did The Islamists Join the Opposition Against The Hamidian Regime?

The autocratic rule of Abdul Hamid II brought about the shift of the centre of political power from the Porte, the bureaucracy to the palace, the sultan-caliph. Mainly because of this concentration of power in the hands of the sultan, Islamists, unlike the Young Ottomans, directed their criticism and opposition to the personality of Abdul Hamid II, portraying his rule as a kind of despotic and unjust “ancien regime.”¹¹¹ Their negative feelings about the personality of sultan became apparent when the Committee of Union and Progress felt itself strong enough to enthrone the sultan in 1909 by exploiting the incident of 31 Mart.¹¹² Abdul Hamid’s picture as a selfish and unjust despot (müstebid) who was seeking to fulfill his desires and interests at the expense of the nation’s interests¹¹³ was so common among Islamists that one could not find any argument for the support of the Sultan’s policies in Islamist journals of the time. By the portrayal of Abdul Hamid II, against whom they participated in the Committee of Union and Progress; they usually referred to the sultan’s absolutism simply as the foremost impediment to the progress of Ottomans and saw nothing in it contributing to the modernization of the Ottoman state. Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi argues that “[t]he Ottomans opened their eyes and saw their faults; they removed from his throne their Khalif and Sultan, who acted contrary to God’s command and the tradition of the Prophet; they did away with the accursed rule

¹¹¹ Kara, *İslamcıların*. 127-130; Yazır, “Va’z.” [Sermon] *BH*. I/2 (29 Eylül 1324/16 Ramazan 1326/1908): 7; Nursi, “Bediüzzaman-ı,” 407; Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Fariza-i Şükran.” [A Duty of Gratitude] *SM*. II/37 (7 Mayıs 1325/30 Rebiülahir 1327/1909): 162; M. Akif, “Süleymaniye,” in *Safahat*. 148; also “İstibdat” and “Hürriyet” in *Safahat*. 73-79 and 80-81.

¹¹² For a careful interpretation on Abdulhamid before the event of 31 Mart, see Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mevaiz.” [Sermons] *SM*. I/4 (4 Eylül 1324/21 Şaban 1326/1908): 60-63; “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM*. I/7 (25 Eylül 1324/12 Ramazan 1326/1908): 112.

¹¹³ Mustafa Sabri Efendi, “Taşrada İrad Olunmuş bir Nutuktan.” [From A Speech Delivered in Countryside] *BH*. III/56 (5 Nisan 1326/7 Rebiülahir 1328/1910): 1150-1; Ahmet Hilmi, “Millet-i Celile-i İslamiyeye hitabe-i i’di said.” *Hikmet*. 25 (23 Eylül 1326/2 Şevval 1328/1910): 1-2.

called despotism, and its place established the principle of consultation and constitution, which is the command of Islam and the tradition of the Prophet.”¹¹⁴ The dethronement of Abdul Hamid also indicated the end of absolutism (usul-ü mutlakiyet), which was contrary to Islamic principles, in the Muslim world.¹¹⁵ In this way, by reading the Islamic history in terms of the dichotomy of freedom (meşrutiyet)/ absolutism (istibdad), they reached the conclusion that Muslims had lived under absolutist rules until the 1908 revolution, certainly with the exception of the periods of the prophet and his four caliphs.

During the Hamidian times, as to the ulema, particularly lower ranks, they were allowed to be in poverty and decline whereas the modern schools (mektebs) were supported and spread to the provinces. Sultan Abdulhamit II attempted to undermine the financial powers of the Ulema, not only by adding the wealth of the religious foundations to the state treasury, but also by preventing the Ulema “from retaining power which would have enabled them to hinder or prevent the secular reforms which followed.”¹¹⁶ Abdul Hamid’s poor treatment of the ulema was attributed to his ambition to continue the despotic regime and to prevent any opposition to his rule. Thus, medreses and their students were forced to be in decline¹¹⁷; even the main religious books of Islam were burnt¹¹⁸ by Abdul Hamid,

¹¹⁴ Arusi, Landau’s translation, *The Politics*. 337.

¹¹⁵ Ahmet Hilmi, *Asr-ı Hamidi’de*. 105, 106. Abdul hamid ‘s abdication from the throne was regarded by Islamists as the application of the Qur’an’s command see *SM*. III/62 (29 Teşrinievvel 1325/27 Şevval 1327/1909): 149.

¹¹⁶ Stanford J. Shaw, “Sultan Abdulhamid II: Last Man of the Tanzimat” in *Tanzimat’ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu (Bildiriler)* (Ankara: Milli Kütüphane, 1991), 182; see also Lewis, *The Emergence*. 178). As Mardin states: “Insofar as the *ulema* are concerned, they were the most neglected of the three orders. During the Hamidian era there was an absolute veto on measures that would aim to rejuvenate the religious estate or its schools.” Şerif Arif Mardin, “Libertarian Movements in the Ottoman Empire 1878-1895.” *Middle East Journal*. XIV (1962): 180.

¹¹⁷ Ceride-i İlmiye-i İslamiye, “Asker Evladlarımıza Hitabımız.” [An adres to Our Children in the Army] *BH*. II/29 (6 Nisan 1325/27 Rebiülevvel 1327/1909): 669-672.

Islamists claimed. Furthermore, Islamists strongly criticized the dissolution of the Mecelle committee by Abdulhamid II as well. Like the civil code, other branches of law were codified by this official committee.

Abdulhamid II tried to raise the sense of unity into the Muslim community's consciousness as a defensive political programme of action against the menace of the imperialist West to the Ottoman state, the bastion of the Islamic civilization. Inside the empire, his Islamism was mainly directed to awakening a new social and religious motivation for the Ottoman people.¹¹⁹ But according to Islamists, the Sultan ideologically and mentally was very far from developing İttihad-ı İslam as an effort to unify the Muslims of the world under his leadership as Sultan and Caliph or cement the Muslim elements of the Empire.¹²⁰ The Sultan's good relations with the sheikhs of some tarikats in peripheral parts of the empire and Muslim lands, including Sheikh Muhammed Zafir of the Shazeli order, Ebul Huda as-Sayyadi and Ahmed Esad of the Rukai order were not regarded as the policies of İttihad-ı İslam.¹²¹

Abdulhamid put the priority on the caliphate part of his titles, rather than his sultanate because in his view, the social structure and politics of the Ottoman state was based upon

¹¹⁸ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SM*. I/18 (11 Kanun-evvel 1324/30 Zilkade 1326/1908): 286; Mehmed Akif Ersoy, "Koleraya Dair." [On Cholera] *SM*. V/115 (4 Teşrinisani 1326/15 Zilkade 1328/1910): 178-179; Hayret, "Ya Alim, Ya Halim." [O the Omniscient, O the Clement] *BH*. I/1 (22 Eylül 1324/9 Ramazan 1326): 6-7; Hafız Muhammed, "Makale-i mahsusa." [Specific Article] *BH*. I/3 (6 Teşrinievvel 1324/ 23 Ramazan 1326): 11-13.

¹¹⁹ Cezmi Eraslan, *II. Abdülhamid ve İslam Birliği*, [Abdul Hamid II and Islamic Union] (İstanbul: Ötüken, 1992), 32. In fact, Abdulhamid did not consider seriously invoking the caliphate as an instrument of foreign policy in order to get the political support of Muslims around the world. "It was the Young Turks who deliberately sought to make use of the caliphate as a political weapon, Caesar E. Farah "Great Britain, Germany and the Ottoman Caliphate." *Der Islam*. 66 (1989), 264, 286-7.

¹²⁰ See Ahmet Hilmi, *Asr-ı Hamidi'de*. 65 and 89.

¹²¹ A. Seni, "İttihad-ı İslama Sözle mi Hizmet Edeceğiz." [Do We Serve Islamic Union Only with Words] *Hikmet*. 17 (29 Temmuz 1326/6 Şaban 1328/1910): 4.

religion and thus, in the Empire, the idea of motherland should not come first before the love of faith and the caliph. The love of motherland should be of secondary importance.¹²² The sultan tried to prevent the advance of the idea of nationalism within the empire and to substitute Islamism in its place. Abdul hamid's anti-nationalist policy and his discontent with the idea of vatan was criticized by Islamists on the grounds that the love of motherland was indeed "a part of the faith."¹²³ The "despotic" regime of the Sultan also created a sense of separation and enmity between muslims and non-muslims. Even, non-muslims subjects of the empire were in better position than muslims due to the advantages of the millet system.¹²⁴ Islamist identification of Abdulhamid II's rule with istibdad, was not a contested one. Ahmed Midhat, the most distinguished intellectual of the Hamidian time, defended Hamid's regime by making a distinction between absolutism which was synonymous with lawlessness and autocracy, and by emphasizing the claim that the sultan's rule was entirely true to Islamic principles.¹²⁵

2.7.2 Points of Tension Between the Young Turks and the Islamists

In their struggle against the rule of Abdulhamid, Young Turks addressed mostly to Islamist arguments as an oppositional ideology and got the support of the ulema and of some parts of popular Islam, namely tarikats. Among the ulema who established the science branch of the Union and Progress in 1908 with the goal of displaying the Islamic nature of the

¹²² Sultan Abdülhamid, *Siyasi Hatıratım* [My Political Memoirs] (İstanbul: Hareket, 1974), 166-167.

¹²³ Hafız Muhammed, "Makale-i," 11-13.

¹²⁴ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Mevaliz." [Sermons] *SM. I/25* (29 Kanun-u Sani 1324/20 Muharrem 1326/1908): 399; Hayret, "Ya Alim," 6.

¹²⁵ Hanioglu, *The Young*. 26. In fact, Abdulhamid II founded an administration with a number of special committees which acted as organs of meşveret in its medieval conceptualization see Berkes, *The Development*. 256.

constitutional regime, were Musa Kazım Efendi, Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı Efendi and Mustafa Sabri Efendi, writing in different Islamist periodicals at the moment.¹²⁶

Islamists were in full agreement in supporting the erection of constitutional government and the June revolution against the absolutism of Abdulhamid II. According to Musa Kazım, “The Islamic state was restored thanks to the constitution (of 1876/1909) which is based on the Islamic principle of consultation, revealed in the Koran (Sura 42:38). The *umma* (Muslim Community) is represented by the Ottoman parliament. The neglect of the principle of consultation led to the decline of Islam.”¹²⁷ Islamists presented the July revolution to the people as the last chain of the revolutions that occurred in Islamic world.¹²⁸ Even Volkan which was later involved in the event of 31st Mart, considered the July Revolution for the Ottomans as the beginning of being the nation which was until then composed of several ethnicities.¹²⁹ The word revolution (inkilap) as something positive was incorporated into Islamist discourse(s) by the July revolution and continued to be used in that way in the Republican period. The revolution was achieved under the leading role of the Union and Progress as “the guarantee of the freedom and constitution.”¹³⁰ An interesting and somehow telling evaluation of the June revolution was provided by Mustafa Sabri Efendi who mentioned the ulema’s duty of ‘commanding the

¹²⁶ They gave some speeches on the issues of religion to an audience, comprised of the members of the Union and Progress see Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler* [Political Parties in Turkey] vol III (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı yay, 1989), 308.

¹²⁷ A.H.De Groot, “Modernist Attitudes in Ottoman Official Islam (1856-1918),” in *State and Islam* ed. C. Van Dijk and A.H. de Groot (Leiden:Research School CNWS, 1995), 62.

¹²⁸ Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 99.

¹²⁹ Volkan, “Nutuk.” [Speech]1 (28 Teşrinisani 1324/11 Aralık 1908): 4.

¹³⁰ Ahmet Hilmi, “İttihat ve Terakki ve Ordu: Garip bir Körlük.” [The Union and Progress and Military: A Strange Blindness] *Hikmet*. 14 (8 Temmuz 1326/14 Recep 1328/1910): 1-2; “Birazcık İzahat: Meslek-i İ’tisam.” [Some Explanation: Way of Protection] *Hikmet* 49 (10 Mart 1327/22 Rebiülevvel 1329/23 Mart 1911): 1-2.

good and forbidding the bad’ and continued: “Although the duty of leading the force which would forbid and remove the bad [the despotic Hamidian regime] belonged to the ulema, we, unfortunately, could not perform this duty. But our glorious soldiers and the Committee of Union and Progress did this legitimate duty.”¹³¹

While a group of Islamists, the Society of Muhammedan Union, under the leadership of Derviş Vahdeti through Volkan journal, played a role in organizing the Incident of the 31st Mart, almost all Islamists, including Sırat-ı Mustakim and Beyanül Hak, opposed to the uprising and tried to persuade the public not to participate in the revolt. Interpreting the usage of *Şeriat* by the uprising as something reactionary (irtica), Islamists claimed that the uprising was religious in its appearance but was political and reactionary in reality. It was organized by the despot Abdul Hamid in order to bring the despotism back and in order to put an end to the constitutional regime.¹³² In their eyes, denying meşrutiyet and meşveret which would save the Ottoman state was, indeed, tantamount to denying Islam and humanity.¹³³ Looked from this particular perspective, the Operation Corps (Hareket ordusu) which suppressed the rebellion of 31 Mart in 1909 was saluted by Islamists as being “the saver of Islamic nation, caliphate and Ottoman government.”¹³⁴

¹³¹ Mustafa Sabri Efendi, “Beyanü’l Hakk’ın Mesleği.” [The way of Beyanül Hak] *BH.* I/1 (22 Eylül 1324/9 Ramazan 1326/1908): 2.

¹³² Ceride-i “Asker,” 669-672; *Sırat-ı Mustakim*, II/34 (20 Nisan 1325/13 Rebiülahir 1327/1 Mayıs 1909): 114. For more on the event see, David Farhi, “The Şeriat as a Political Slogan-or ‘the Incident of the 31st Mart’.” *Middle Eastern Studies.* 7:3 (October 1971): 275-299.

¹³³ Yazır, “31 Mart Vakasına Dair-Meclisi Mebusanda.” [On the Incidence of 31st March in the Parliament] *BH.* II/34 (6 Temmuz 1325/2 Recep 1327/1909): 789

¹³⁴ *Sırat-ı Mustakim*, *SM.* II/34 (20 Nisan 1325/13 Rebiülahir 1327/1 Mayıs 1909): 114; Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mevaiz.” [Sermons] *SM.* I/1 (14 Ağustos 1324/30 Şaban 1326/1908): 10-11; “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM.* II/28 (19 Şubat 1324/11 Safer 1327/1909): 32.

Islamists hoped much from the proclamation of the second constitution (İkinci Meşrutiyet); in fact they participated into the secret organizations of the Union and Progress to oppose Sultan Abdulhamid and to force him for the reopening of the parliament (Meclis-i Mebusan). During the years of opposition to the Hamidian rule and after the June revolution, the different sectors of the Islamists of the Second Constitutional period called the Union and Progress as “the renewers (müceddidin)” or “the good people of the ummah (ahyar-ı ümmet)” while accusing the sultan of not applying the sharia.¹³⁵ Despite of the fact that Islamists supported wholeheartedly the oppositon to the Hamidian regime by denouncing any accusation of irreligousity for the Young Turks, as İsmail Kara underlines, the ulema was not in a position of establishing the opposition but rather was a passive and secondary part of the opposition so that its legitimacy was controversial from an Islamic point of view.¹³⁶

But the performance of the Union and Progress defeated their expectations, for this party was carrying out some unIslamic (or secular) and nationalist policies. Like Young Turks, Islamists were imbued with the ideas of the Young Ottomans on constitution and parliament and even some Islamists mentioned Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi among their

¹³⁵ Tasavvuf, “Beşayir-i Maneviyye.” [Spiritual Good News] *Tasavvuf*. 6 (14 Nisan 1327/27 Rebiülahir 1329): 2; “Hilf-ul Fudul ve İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyetinin Şeriat-ı Garra-yı İslamiyede Mazhariyet-i Maneviyesi.” [Hilf-ul Fudul and the Spritual Attainment of the Union and Progress in the eyes of Great Sharia] *Tasavvuf*. 2 (17 Mart 1327/29 Rebiülevvel 1329): 5; Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM*. I/7 (25 Eylül 1324/12 Ramazan 1326): 110; “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM*. I/18 (11 Kanunuevvel 1324/30 Zilkade 1326/1908): 286; Derviş Vahdeti, “İttihad-ı Muhammedi Cemiyeti.” [Association of the Mohammedan Union] *Volkan*. 95 (23 Mart 1325/14 Rebiülevvel 1327/ 5 Nisan 1909): 462; Nursi, “Münazarat” in *Risale-i*. vol. 2,1946; see also Kara, “Ulema-Siyaset. İlişkilerine Dair Önemli Bir Metin: Muhalefet Yapmak/Muhalefete Katılmak.” [An Important Text on the Relations Between the Ulema and Politics: Creating Opposition or Joining into the Opposition] *Divan*. 4 (1998):18, 24.

¹³⁶ Kara, “Ulema-Siyaset,” 2. Within the same text, there was an attempt of limiting the meaning of ulul emr to the ulema as the ahl hal ve’l akd with the aim to oppose to the rule of Abdul hamid II see *Ibid.*, 11-12.

sources of intellectual and political inspiration. But while the Young Ottomans' attempt to reconcile western civilization with Islamic values found an echo in the intellectual life of the Islamists, Young Turks considered this effort as useless, except for the purposes of propaganda.¹³⁷ Thus, it was inescapable that the Young Turks and Islamists would be in a serious conflict on how to define ideological features of the post-Hamidian state and on which layers of Ottoman identity, Islamic or Turkist, would be emphasised to give the colour to the new regime. Although in their search for the support of the ulema, Young Turks employed the jurisdic arguments of Islamic political theory and the shari'a as the source of constitutionalism and as a leverage to oppose the despotic government (*istibdad*) of the sultan Abdulhamid II, as Hanioglu rightly points out, their ideology was "originally 'scientific,' materialist, social Darwinist, elitist, and vehemently antireligious; it did not favor representative government."¹³⁸

It is not true to say that after their disillusionment with the direction of the Union and Progress's regime, Islamists changed their minds and became anti-democratic.¹³⁹ But rather, they criticized, especially after the Balkan wars, the Union and Progress as ruling the country despotically similar to that of Abdulhamid's despotism¹⁴⁰ and as "not walking along the way of true Islamization and not completing the political revolution by social and

¹³⁷ Hanioglu, *The Young*. 18.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 32. The Young Turks disparaged religion and God privately and besides "reflecting their striving to become oriental Büchners, the thinking of most early members of the CUP bore the deep stamp of the theory of social Darwinism, which the Young Turks saw as a tool for understanding reality," Ibid., 23. More on Young Turks see also E.E.Ramsaur, *The Young Turks: Prelude to the Revolution of 1908* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1957.

¹³⁹ Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 60.

¹⁴⁰ The "despotism" of the Union and Progress was severely criticized especially by Volkan in its various copies. Beyanu'l-Hak and Sırat-i Mustakim-Sebilürreşat line distanced themselves from the Committee and started to criticize its policies, for example see Mustafa Sabri Efendi, "İttihat ve Terakki Kongresinde Kıraat Olunan

religious revolutions.”¹⁴¹ Furthermore, the Young Turk regime’s reluctance in promulgating laws which were derived from the sharia and its Turanist and secular policies gave way to the serious disturbances among Islamist circles.¹⁴² Another significant subject of tension between Young Turks and Islamists, especially Beyanul Hak circle was the negative image of the ulema portrayed as *sarıklılar*, denoting a group of reactionary and anti-constitutionalist people, in the second constitutional period. This negative image of the ulema was also discussed in connection with its involvement in politics. Beyanul Hak circle, composed of the ulema who expected a more significant place for themselves in the new regime simply because of their unique role in executing sharia, discussed the subject in great detail between 1911 and 1912. Closely tied to their duty of commanding the good and forbidding the evil, they regarded themselves as the inheritor of the prophet to supervise the government policies and to enlighten the public opinion from a position, that was above party politics. The involvement of the ulema in politics was also defended by reference to the idea of national sovereignty which the ulema was a part of as well.¹⁴³

Raporun bir Noktası.” [A Point of the Report Delivered in the Congress of the Union and Progress] *BH*. VI/131 (3 Teşrinievvel 1327/23 Şevval 1329/1911): 2361.

¹⁴¹ Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 62.

¹⁴² See S.M. Tefvik, “Memleketi Kurtaracak Ancak İslami bir Teşkilattır.” [Only An Islamic Organization Can Save the Country] *SR*, XV/389 (30 Kanun-usani 1325/27 Rebiülahir 1337/1919): 441 and Ömer Fevzi, “Niday-i Ehli İslam.” [Voice of Muslims] *BH*. I/17 (12 Kanun-usani 1324/2 Muharrem 1326/1908): 373-5.

¹⁴³ See Mustafa Sabri, “İlmiye Bütçesi Münasebetiyle.” [On the Occasion of the Ulema Budget] *BH*. V/106 (4 Nisan 1327/16 Rebiülahir 1329/1911): 1958-1961; “İttihat,” 2359-2363; Ermenekli M. Safvet, “İzah-ı Hak ve Hakikat.” [Explanation of Right and Truth] *BH*. VI/139, (5 Kanunuevvel 1327/26 Zilhicce 1329/1911): 2493-5; Ahmed Şirani, “Bir Müdafaa.” [A Defence] *BH*. VI/139, (5 Kanunuevvel 1327/26 Zilhicce 1329/1911): 2499; Ahmed Necati, “Ulema-i Kiramdan bir Rica.” [A Request to the Ulema] *BH*. VII/171 (30 Temmuz 1328/28 Şaban 1330/1912): 3009 and Demirhisarlı Hafız Hüseyin, “Ulemanın Mevki-i Siyasisi.” [Political Role of the Ulema] *BH*. VII/160 (14 Mayıs 1328/10 Cemaziyelevvel 1330/1912): 2829.

CHAPTER III

ISLAMISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1908-1918) II: POLITICAL IDEAS

A Muslim's fatherland is the place in which the shari'a prevails
M. Said Halim Pasha, Buhranlarımız

3.1 Islamizing Democracy: Islamists and The Meşrutiyet

The notions of constitutionalism, representative government and popular sovereignty came to constitute the heart of the modernization movement in the Empire, embracing the view that they were compatible with the principles of Islamic government. Based on the compatibility argument, the idea of democracy as the basis of a constitutional regime was widely discussed in the writings of the Young Ottomans, most notably by Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi. They advocated liberal constitutionalism because it, as they argued, could put an end to the absolutism and restore shariah or rule of law, in a parliamentary framework. By emphasizing certain concepts (shura, ijma and bay'a) of Islamic jurisdic tradition and relegating others to the background, they reconstructed Islamic theorizing on democracy and state to justify the adoption of democratic institutions.¹ For example, Namık Kemal advocated the doctrine of popular sovereignty and found its equivalence in Islamic tradition : bay'a as a social contract between the people and the sovereign.² In this way, *shura* and *meşveret* grows into representation or democracy, *ümmet* into nation, *ijma*

¹ Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 289.

² Namık Kemal, in Özön, *Namık*.105.

into social contract, *içtihad* into the parliamentary legislation, bay'a into the delegation of sovereignty to the ruler by the people, justice into freedom and *ilm* into science.³

There are two differing opinions regarding Islam's compatibility with democracy in Turkish political thought. They can be traced back to the disagreement between the two thinkers on the issue of popular sovereignty. While Namık Kemal assumed that popular sovereignty could be reconciled with the notions of bay'a and ijma, Suavi was the first political thinker who voiced the argument that there is no popular sovereignty in Islam because sovereignty belongs to God, not to people.⁴ Through this understanding of sovereignty, he speaks of Islamic government in nomocratic terms and comes to conclude that "sharia is superior to caliph and sultan in the Islamic state (Devlet-i İslamiyye) and that government is indeed conducted in the name of sharia." The central importance of sharia, in Suavi's ideas was highly tied to the ulema's supreme duty of control (murakebe) over statesmen and the sultan.⁵ Young Ottomans sometimes broadened the compatibility established between meşrutiyet and meşveret to the approval of republic as a form of government by the argument that Islam and the Ottoman state were a sort of republic when they first arose.⁶

Here we have the beginning of an interesting line of thought- an attempt to establish the legitimacy of Western democratic values and institutions within the framework of a

³ Berkes, *The Development*. 261; Bernard Lewis, *Islam in History* (Chicago:Open Court, 1993), 331.

⁴ Ali Suavi, in Hüseyin Çelik, *Ali Suavi* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yay., 1993), 216; Mardin, *The Genesis*. 381.

⁵ Ali Suavi, quoted in Hüseyin Çelik, *Ali Suavi ve Dönemi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1994), 551 and 554.

⁶ Namık Kemal, quoted in Davison, *Essays*. 252, Ali Suavi, "Demokrasi, Hükümet-i Halk, Müsavat." [Democracy, People's Government, Equality] *Ulum*. 18: 1083-1107 in Çelik, *Ali*. 232, 234; Ülken, *Türkiye'de*. 83.

general Islamic political heritage. Their liberal interpretation of Islam, their reconciliation of Islamic political values with the Western political institutions, their emphasis on spreading education and the use of journalism to create public opinion prepared the Ottoman intellectual mind for accepting modern concepts and institutions. The concepts were old but their contents were new and to a great extent Western ones.⁷ The Young Ottomans were addressing people whose foremost commitment was to religious values and when they say that the Western political ideas and institutions such as parliament and democracy, were to be found in Islam's early days, they were trying to appropriate modern ideas into Islamic forms. Interestingly enough, Islamist intellectuals' effort to combine western political ideas with Islamic tradition constituted the most effective channel for the penetration of Western ideas into the Ottoman intellectual mind.⁸

More importantly, Islamists of the Second Constitutional period like the Young Ottomans, had the inclination of adopting (and justifying) democratic institutions and notions for the cause of adopting good aspects (mehasin-i medeniyet) of Western "civilization," without sacrificing the Islamic ideals and values of the Ottoman society. Young Ottomans' effort to amalgamate European liberal constitutionalism and Islamic (classic) political theory was taken up by the Islamists of Second Constitutional period. Put it differently, the political institutional framework coming from modernity was tried to be adopted and legitimized by the traditional political symbols of Islam.

3.1.1 From Meşveret To Constitutional Regime: Hürriyet and Kanun-i Esasi

At the proclamation of Meşrutiyet, like the Young Turks, for Islamists freedom (hürriyet) signified the ending of Abdülhamid II's autocracy (istibdad) and the restoration of the

⁷ Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 102.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 273.

constitutional regime (free election and parliament) and so that, ‘constitutional regime became in perfect conformity with the Islamic government’. Against the accusation that the constitution was a thing which was taken from Christian Europe, Ahmet Hilmi argued that “It was by Islam that consultation was proclaimed for the first time in the world.”⁹ He went on to claim that although the prophet’s form of government was a patriarchal government, it was basically a constitutional regime that its principles were subjected to well arranged laws and its details were subjected to meşveret.¹⁰ Common among Islamists was the effort to find the principles of democracy in the era of the first four caliphs. The only cure for the problems of Muslims is to return to the rules of Islam and their practice in accordance with what it was in the days of the early caliphs.

In their articles, Islamists, in order to introduce modern-democratic ideas into their readers, used classical jurisdic terminology and combined traditional and modern concepts with the aim to give the legitimacy of old concepts to the new ones, as if they were synonyms. In this way, Islamists tried to transform the Islamic legal conceptions of hürriyet, müsavat and uhuvvet into political ideas as something similar to the democratic political concepts of freedom, equality and fraternity.¹¹

While adhering to the institution of Shura or meşveret, they made it clear that members of shura or *Ehl-i Hal ve'l Akl* (men with power to bind and loosen) should be elected by the people and the ruler should be bound by the decision of the majority of Shura. Shura was what made political authority legitimate and more importantly, the continuation of legitimacy hinged on the application of the sharia. The principle of shura or meşveret was made into the most significant element of political thought in Islam. Its employment

⁹ Arusi in Landau, *The Politics*. 338.

¹⁰ Ahmed Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 198-199.

served two objectives: first, to absorb modern political institutions such as constitution and parliament within Islam; second, to denounce the autocratic rule (istibdad) of Abdulhamid II and later, at least by a small part of Islamists, the Committee of Union and Progress. Islamists were against also the despotic rule under the cloak of meşrutiyet in the regime of the Union and Progress.¹²

The support to constitutionalism was mainly accompanied by the rejection of despotism in Islamist discourse. Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi's statement is an illuminating example: “[t]he method of government of all governments subject to the faith of Islam is that of lawful consultation and constitution. In Islam there is not despotism, i.e., rule according to the arbitrary wishes of one man. If any Moslem accepts any principle other than that of consultation, he is guilty of disobedience towards the tradition of our Prophet and the command of God, and of giving assistance to tyranny.”¹³

In Islamist definition, meşrutiyet denoted a contract, a social contract, between the nation and the government on the condition that the nation had the right of controlling the government.¹⁴ According to another definition, meşrutiyet was composed of justice, meşveret (shura) and limitation of power in law.¹⁵ Generally, meşrutiyet was defined in contradistinction to despotism. Meşrutiyet meant government's acceptance of being limited by laws while applying its political power to carry out the affairs of the nation

¹¹ Kara, *Şeyhefendinin*. 263. Kara thinks that this attempt was not successful.

¹² See Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Dini Mücedditler*. 108-109.

¹³ Arusi in Landau, *The Politics*. 336-7; see also Ömer Rıza (Doğrul), “Türkçülük, Memleketçilik.” [Turkism, Patriotism] *SR*. XVIII/448 (13 Teşrinisani 1335/18 Safer 1338/1919): 70; Mustafa Sabri, *Dini Mücedditler*. 101

¹⁴ Mustafa Sabri, “Talebe-i Uluma.” [To the Students of Learning] *BH*. II/33 (29 Haziran 1325/23 Cemaziyelahir 1327/1909): 766.

¹⁵ Said-i Kürdi (Nursi), “Hakikat.” [The Truth] *Volkan*. 70 (26 Şubat 1324/18 Safer 1327/11 Mart 1909): 337.

whereas despotism signified the noncompliance with the laws by rejecting any sense of limitation. The Ottoman Constitution, Kanun-i Esasi was legitimated and defended by Islamists on the ground that meşrutiyet as a form of government and a political ideal was completely in accordance with the sharia. Within this mood, Musa Kazım, in his article, 'Freedom and Equality' argued that "the Constitution is nothing but the embodiment of some parts of the fundamental provisions of the Kur'an relating to worldly affairs."¹⁶ Similarly, Elmalılı M. Hamdi suggested that Kanun-i Esasi was a document of agreement between the nation and the government in order to protect Islamic sharia and to execute its laws.¹⁷

As Berkes rightly argues, "[i]t had never occurred to the Young Ottomans to claim that the constitutional system they found in the West had been taken over from the Arabs. They simply believed that in the past Islam, too, had had its constitutionalism". Islamists of the second constitutional period went further. Europeans owed both their constitutional system and their science and technology to Islamic civilization of the medieval ages.¹⁸ Thus, for Islamists the ideas of hürriyet (freedom) and müsavat (equality) were not new to Muslim mind. Constitutional democracy was welcomed by them because it was believed that this new political system of Europe was the revitalization of the early Islamic government (the early caliphate of Islam) in the times of the first four caliphs.¹⁹ Islamic political system as

¹⁶ Musa Kazım, "Hürriyet-Müsavat." [Freedom-Equality] *SM*. I/2 (21 Ağustos 1324/7 Ramazan 1326/1908): 20-22.

¹⁷ Yazır, "31 Mart," 790.

¹⁸ Berkes, *The Development*. 263; see Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SM*. I/7 (25 Eylül 1324/12 Ramazan 1326/1908): 109; Mustafa Sabri, "Muhterem Hemşehrilerim." [My Respected Fellow Citizens] *BH*. II/43 (7 Eylül 1325/5 Ramazan 1327/1909): 950 and for a more sophisticated version of this argument see Ahmet Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 201-202.

¹⁹ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "İslam ve Usul-ü Meşveret." [Islam and Principle of Consultation] *SM*. I/5 (11 Eylül 1324/28 Şaban 1326/1908): 70; "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SM*. I/13, p. 13, 6 Teşrinisani 1324/24 Şevval 1326; İsmail Fenni Ertuğrul, *Hakikat*

exemplified by the first four caliphs decayed because of the absence of meşveret (consultation). By classifying the types of government into three; monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, İzmirli İsmail Hakkı argued that Islamic government was a kind of democratic government in which political head of the government was elected by the people. As in democracy everybody was equal in front of the law, everybody in Islam has the same rights and equal in front of the sharia. As democracy was a people's government in which people participated in the affairs of the state, Islamic government was a government of the umma to whom the three powers, executive, legislative and judiciary belonged.²⁰

The identification of constitutional regime with the Islamic political principles; shura and ijma was justified in such a way that ” the constitutional regime which ‘the Europeans believe to be their own invention is nothing but the totality of the sacred Şariat.’ ”²¹ Islamist discourse envisioned such a very close and organic tie between meşrutiyet and sharia, calling it as meşrutiyet-i meşrua (shari constitutionalism) so that they generally regarded meşrutiyet not only as a form of government which was compatible with Islam but also as a form of government that would realize the goals of sharia such as ittihad, progress and religiosity.²² Commenting upon constitutionalism of a government which

Nurları [Lights of the Truth] quoted in İsmail Kara, *Türkiye’de İslamcılık Düşüncesi* [Islamist Thought in Turkey] vol.2 (İstanbul: Risale, 1989), 164-5; Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, “Müslümanlık Mani-i Terakki Değil, Zamin-i Terakkidir-5.” [Islam is not an Obstacle to Progress but a Guarantee of Progress-5] *SR.* XXII/551-552, p. 36-38, 3 Muharrem 1342; Mahmud Es’ad, “Din-i İslam Meşrutiyeti emr eder.” [Islamic Religion Commands Constitutional Regime] *TM.* I/15, pp. 238-239, 9 Eylül 1326/18 Ramazan 1328.

²⁰ İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, *Anglikan.* 278-279, 282.

²¹ Quoted in Berkes, *the Development.* 369.

²² Said-i Kürdi (Nursi), “Bediüzzaman-ı,” 402-403; ”Lemean-i Hakikat ve İzale-i Şübühat.” [Shining of Truth and Elimination of Doubts] *Volkan.* 101 (29 Mart 1325/20 Rebiülevvel 1327/11 Nisan 1909): 494; Elmalılı M. Hamdi, “Vaaz.” [Sermon] *BH.* I/2 (29 Eylül 1324/16 Ramazan 1326/1908): 7.

applied the sharia based laws, Mustafa Sabri spoke of the adherence to sharia as the major condition in the contract between nation and head of government.²³

In fact, even when the expectations produced by the July revolution (Young Turk revolution) faded away with the autocratic rule of the Committee of Union and Progress, Islamists continued to identify the constitutional regime with the Islamic model. Despite their opposition to the application of constitutionalism by the Young Turk governments through their articles in some periodicals, *Sırat-ı Mustakim* (The Straight Path) (from 1912 known as *Sebilürreşad*, Path of Righteousness), *Beyan'ül Hak*, *Hikmet*, *Volkan* and the like, Islamists did not voice any argument against the said compatibility between Islam and the constitutionalism. Even *İttihad-ı Muhammedi* circle led by Derviş Vahdeti in the periodical *Volkan* presented not an anti-democratic discourse but rather it advocated a more libertarian and democratic language in their opposition to the policies of Union and Progress.²⁴ Certainly this discourse was overtone by their call for the strict adherence to shariah in the new regime. Nobody paid attention to the apparent incompatibility between the notion of national sovereignty and Islamic principles, on the contrary it was seen as a form of *ijma*.

One exception to this trend was Said Halim Pasa, who, interestingly enough, was also the prime minister (grand vezir) of the Young Turk government during the period of 1913-1917.²⁵ He presented a wide range of arguments against the adoption of constitutional regime, including the uniqueness of Western democratic experience. Said Halim said: “Constitutionalism is one of the results of the erroneous idea of achieving reform by making

²³ Mustafa Sabri, *Dini Mücedditler*. 101.

²⁴ Kara, *Şeyhefendinin*. 64-5.

²⁵ Kara, *İslamcılarının*. 121. His connections with the Arab world made him a suitable candidate for prime ministry in the period of Union's Islamist policies.

laws drawn from Europe. European constitutionalism will not work here...The tyrannies of the West were made in the name of religion and church. This is not so with us. The internal class struggles of Western society do not exist in Islam... Democracy, which has been found as a remedy to the inequalities inherent in Western society, therefore is entirely irrelevant to us.”²⁶ Moreover, according to him, Kanun-i Esasi of 1908 was a great error and it was not compatible with the politico-social situation of the country and with the beliefs and customs of the people. This error mainly emanated from one major conviction that if the foreign institutions and laws were adopted, then the Ottomans would realize progress.²⁷ However, Said Halim did not propose a return from the constitutional regime to the old autocratic regime, but rather a reformation of the existing democratic regime on the basis of the sui generis features and values of the Ottoman society.²⁸

The acceptance of the compatibility between constitutional rule and meşveret were a part of the deliberative intellectual attempt that tried to transform the religious understanding of the time into a new one capable of absorbing what was good in modern science, philosophy, politics and economics as being not the introduction of something new but a return to the true spirit of Islam. Unfortunately, many Islamists, with the exception of Said Halim Pasha, supposed that identifying meşveret of the early days of Islam with constitutional rule would do away with the problems of the existing political culture as distorted by autocratic rulers and missed the significance of socio-economic factors and political heritage in the formation of both new institutions and their justification.

²⁶ Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 14-22; Berkes’s translation, *The Development*. 372

²⁷ Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 17.

²⁸ Ibid., 23. The Islamist views of Said Halim influenced an Indian Muslim thinker, Muhammad Iqbal to the extent that Iqbal considered him as one of the greatest Muslim thinker and statesmen, along with Al-Afghani. See Rahat Nabi Khan, “Modern Muslim Thinkers of the Indian subcontinent,” in *Islam, Philosophy and Science* (Paris: The UNESCO Press, 1981), 99-131.

The idea of meşveret was not unknown to the Ottoman mind but it had never meant the sovereignty of the people.²⁹ In modern sense, through the theories of constitutionalism, the sovereign was transformed from the caliph to the parliament, a representative of the people's sovereignty. A constitutional regime (meşrutiyet) which meant national sovereignty (hakimiyet-i milliye), had one major essence: national interest in the form of majority's interest.³⁰ National sovereignty was evaluated in positive terms because it was believed that the Islamic nation had a right of control and sovereignty over the early Islamic government in the times of the first four caliphs.³¹ Connected to the idea of national sovereignty, it was argued that public opinion (efkar-ı umumiyye) had to become supreme in a constitutional regime otherwise the parliament which did not follow the public opinion were a form of absolutism.³² Some Islamists, like İzmirli İsmail Hakkı underlined the sovereignty of the umma more than others, on the grounds that the essence of Islamic state was not government nor its forms, but the interests of the umma (mesalih-i ümmet). Therefore, all the three powers, executive, legislative and judiciary powers belonged only to the umma by the existence of ijma. The Umma had a legislative power simply because it had the duty of commanding the good and forbidding the evil, and therefore, umma's ijma was canonically legal. Certainly, the umma's legislation was an act

²⁹ Berkes, *The Development*. 238.

³⁰ Ahmet Hilmi, "Mutlakiyet ile Meşrutiyette Suistimal Suretlerinin Mukayesesi." [Comparing Forms of Abuse Absolutist Rule and in Constitutional Regime] *Yeni Tasvir-i Efkar* 315 (15 Nisan 1910) quoted in *Huzur-u*. 43; for the idea of majority (sevad-ı azam) see also Abdürreşid İbrahim, "Aleyküm bi-s-sevadilazam." [The Majority of Muslims are Supporting You] *TM*. I/3, (29 Nisan 1326/3 Cemaziyelevvel 1328/1910): 34-36.

³¹ İskilpli M. Atıf, "Medeniyet-i Şer'iyye, Terakkiyat-ı Diniyye." [Sharia Civilization and Religious Developments] *BH*. VI/154 (2 Nisan 1328/27 Rebiülahir 1330/1912): 2734.

³² Derviş Vahdeti, "Tenzil-i Maaşat Yahud İdare-i Meşrutada Kayd-ı Hayat Yoktur." [Salary Reductions or There is no Life-time Job in Constitutional Rule] *Volkan*. 31 (18 Kanunisani 1324/9 Muharrem 1327/31 Kanunisani 1909): 141; İskilpli M. Atıf, "Medeniyet-i Şer'iyye, Terakkiyat-ı Diniyye." [Sharia Civilization and Religious Developments] *BH*. VI/155 (9 Nisan 1328/5 Cemaziyelevvel 1330/1912): 2749.

of discovering the law which God, the Lawgiver prescribed.³³ It is therefore obvious that the principle of *ijma* should represent a very different thing to Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period than to the ulema of the classical age. The major difference between Islamism of the Second Constitutional Period and the Islamic medieval theorization on politics was that the latter underlined values such as justice and the application of sharia, whereas the former laid a great emphasis on the necessity of institutionalization such as constitution and parliament.

Despite their identification of shura with democracy, Islamists sometimes argued that the sharia did not prescribe any form of government; and it was not correct to say that the form of government would determine the decline or progress of Muslims. İsmail Hakkı Milaşı and Osman Fahri spoke of the merit of the nation (*liyakat-ı millet*) as the criteria in determining the goodness of any form of government. By reading from Plato's Republic, Osman Fahri went on to claim that monarchy with just sultan was more beneficial than democracy with ignorant and immoral people.³⁴

After the proclamation of *meşrutiyet*, Islamists were disturbed by the “unlimited freedom” of people in their daily life, neglecting their religious and moral duties such as women's inclination to uncover their heads. Freedom did not mean being without any limitation. Absolute freedom could not be thought of anywhere in the world and even in “the

³³ İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, *Anglikan*. 285-86, 283, 279. Within the framework of this supremacy of the sharia, the most interesting critique of national sovereignty was given by Said Halim Pasha who argued that national will indeed constituted the dominance of the majority over the minority. Therefore, national will could not claim the right of sovereignty in social and spiritual matters and had to accept the sovereignty of the sharia, *Buhranlarımız*. 230-231; 239-241.

³⁴ Osman Fahri, “Memleketi Kurtarmak İçin.” [To Save The Country] *SM*. VII/165 (20 Teşrinievvel 1327/10 Zilkade 1329/1911): 140-141; Milaşı İsmail Hakkı, “Başka Milletler Ne İçin Terakki Ediyorlar Biz Ne İçin Edemiyoruz?” [Why Do Other Nations Progress While We Can not] *SR*. XVII/427-428 (10 Temmuz 1335/11 Şevval 1337/1919): 88.

universe.”³⁵ Freedom had to be settled within the sphere of sharia by obeying its principles otherwise freedom might be a form of despotism or slavery to selfishness.³⁶ Musa Kazım stated that “the universal need for world order and the regulation of society demand that freedom always will be limited socially according to traditions, character and (Islamic) law school.”³⁷ The discussion on the limits of freedom was extended to the critique of adopting constitutionalism in the form of parliamentarism which was the most developed form of freedom, by Ahmet Hilmi. The Union and Progress did not recognize that the nation could not absorb such a huge freedom just after the violent despotism. The Ottoman political culture was not suitable for this development. What was to be done was rather to adopt gradually the reasonable level of meşrutiyet which was proper to the existing conditions of the Ottomans; otherwise meşrutiyet was destined to be a mere imitation or another form of despotism in the hands of five to ten people.³⁸

3.1.2 The Views on Parliament: Elitism and Limited Legislation

Young Ottomans used the Prophet’s saying, ‘difference of opinion within my community is an act of divine mercy’, to legitimize the creation of an assembly which represented

³⁵ Musa Kazım, “Hürriyet-Müsavat-2.” [Freedom-Equality-2] *SM*. I/1 (14 Ağustos 1324/30 Şaban 1326/1908): 2; Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mevaiz.” [Sermons] *SM*. I/4 (4 Eylül 1324/21 Şaban 1326/1908): 63; Sebilürreşad, “Hürriyet-i Hakikiye nefse hakimiyettir.” [Genuine Freedom is the Control over Personal Indulgings] *SR*. VIII-I/206-24 (2 Ağustos 1328/2 Ramazan 1330/1912): 470; Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi, “İslam tabii, umumi ve fitri bir dindir.” in Kara, *Türkiye’de*. vol. 2, 239.

³⁶ Bediüzzaman-ı Kürdi Said (Nursi), “Reddü’l-Evham.” [Refutations of Suspicions] *Volkan*. 91 (19 mart 1325/10 Rebiülevvel 1327/1 Nisan 1909): 441-442; İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, *Anglikan*. 261; M. Refet, “İslamiyette Medeniyet ve Hürriyet.” [Civilization and Freedom in Islam] *BH*. I/18 (19 Kanunisani 1324/9 Muharrem 1327): 409.

³⁷ de Groot, “Modernist,” 61.

³⁸ Ahmed Hilmi, *Muhalefetin İflası: İtilaf ve Hürriyet Fırkası* [Failure of Opposition: The Party of Liberty and Conciliation] ed. Ahmet Eryüksel (İstanbul: Nehir, 1991), 36, 42; “Halet-i Hakikimiz.” [Our Real Situation] *Hikmet* 45 (10 Şubat 1326/24 Safer 1329/1911): 2-3; for similar critiques about parliamentarism see Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 42-44.

different opinions.³⁹ For the legitimacy of the assembly, for instance, Namık Kemal used meşveret and icma-i ümmet which would offer the suitable ground for the establishment of a kind of western parliament in the Empire.⁴⁰ Learning from one man's autocratic rule, Abdulhamid II's despotism, in their own words, Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period had the inclination to put the real power in the hands of the umma, or more precisely the parliament (Meclisi Mebusan), rather than in the hands of the caliph, for realizing the ideals of sharia; shura and justice.⁴¹

Shura, having been founded on democratic principles, was regarded as a great check on the absolutism of the rulers. In the eyes of Islamists, the shura represented an indigenous principle of representative or constitutional government in Islam or a check on the ruler's authority or power. The inclusion of non-Muslims into the circle of meşveret was new to Islamic mind and was justified by the necessities of the time to keep the political unity of the empire.⁴² Actually, the acceptance of Ottoman citizenship by enlarging Islamic brotherhood to non-Muslims was the manifestation of the same kind of reasoning.

The Islamist identification of shura with the parliament sometimes confused the idea of representation with the idea of public debate. For instance, after stating the fact that the prophet took different opinions of the umma while making public decisions, Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı claimed that shura in its essence was no different than parliamentary sessions though deputies from different countries did not come together for public debate in the first

³⁹ Lewis, *The Emergence*. 140.

⁴⁰ Davison, *Essays*.105.

⁴¹ The duty of commanding the good and forbidding the evil was not confined to the ulema but it was also the duty of whole umma, Mehmed Seyyid (Bey), *Usul-i Fıkıh-I (medhal) [Methods of Law-Introduction]* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire,1333/1917), 134-5.

⁴² Kara, *İslamcıların*. 169-171.

one. But it was the “real” ulema who served as the deputy of the nation. Actually, the representative element, the parliament was brought into existence as a necessity due to the deterioration in morality and justice and due to the dominance of private interests over general interest (*menafi-i umumiye*).⁴³ More significantly, the members of the elected parliament was expected to be the most wise, religious and learned men of the umma, being charged with the duty of carrying out the affairs of the Ottoman Islamic caliphate in accordance with the interests of state and religion.⁴⁴ The qualifications to be elected as a member of the parliament was defined by Islamists in the same way as they actually described the characteristics of the ulema in the jurisdic theory. Nevertheless, their elitist and virtue and knowledge based portrayal of a parliament member was meaningful if one remembered the fact that Islamists justified the existence of a parliament with reference to an elitist notion: *ehl-i hal ve'l akd* (men with power to bind and loosen) who were the ulema in the classical period.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the idealistic characterization of parliament members and political leadership can be considered as similar both to the jurisdic idealization and Muslim philosophers’ good city (*al-madiyah al-fadilah*).

According to Said Halim, the parliament of Muslims would have no legislative powers because Islamic society had unchanging ideals, prescribed by sharia while the Western parliaments had to legislate to meet the fluctuating demands of their societies. The parliament could only exercise supervisory function; the legislative power belonged to the

⁴³ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Meva’iz.” [Sermons] *SM*. I/7 (25 Eylül 1324/12 Ramazan 1326/1908): 109.

⁴⁴ Sebilürreşat, “İntihabat Münasebetiyle Müslümanlara Vesaya.” [Recommendations to the Muslims on the Occasion of Elections] *SR*. XVIII/444 (16 Teşrinievvel 1335/20 Muharrem 1338/1919): 23; see also Faruki Ömer, “Hikmet-i meşveret.” [Wisdom of Consultation] *Volkan*. 22 (3 Kanunisani 1324/23 Zilhicce 1326/16 Ocak 1909): 97.

⁴⁵ Kara, *İslamcıların*. 173. For Islamist idealization of the qualifications to become a deputy, see *ibid*, pp.173-175. For the equivalence between *ahli hall vel akd* and *meb’usan* and *a’yan*, see Seyyid Bey, *Usul-i*. 110.

independent delegation of the learned men, the ulema, for it was not a question of majority, but simply one of competence like being a doctor.⁴⁶ In fact, the ulema's power of legislation was also limited in the sense that the ulema was under the duty of ijtihad for the discovery and understanding of the divine laws nor for the legislation of the laws, because the power of legislation belonged only to God.⁴⁷ A leading member of Beyanül Hak circle, Mustafa Sabri, rejecting the use of kuvve-i teşriye (power of legislation) for the parliament, claimed that the right of legislation belonged only to God, not even to the prophet. He added that the right word for the parliament might be kuvve-i kanuniye or kuvve-i tanzimiye.⁴⁸ Certainly, according to those Islamists who accepted the legislative power of the parliament, it had to make laws which were in accordance with sharia.⁴⁹ Islamists often referred to the article of the 1908 Constitution stating, "the religion of the state is Islam," as a support to their claim that any legislation had to be in accordance with the principles of sharia.

⁴⁶ Said Halim, "İslam'da Teşkilat-ı Siyasiye," [Political Administration in Islam] in *Buhranlarımız*. 274-276

⁴⁷ Yazır, "Müslümanlık Mani-i Terakki Değil, Zamin-i Terakkidir-2" [Islam is not an Obstacle to Progress but a Guarantee of Progress] *SR*. XXI/546 (19 Temmuz 1339/4 Zilhicce 1341/1923): 203-205.

⁴⁸ This conflict over the usage of the word teşri occurred between two Islamists, Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı from Sırat-ı Mustakim and Mustafa Sabri from Beyanül Hak, see Mustafa Sabri, "Edeb-ü Tahrir." [Manners of Publication] *BH*. I/15 (29 Kanunuevvel 1324/18 Zilhicce 1326/1908): 327; "Cevabım." [My Reply] *BH*. I/17 (12 Kanunisani 1324/2 Muharrem 1326/1908): 382-384 and "Cevabım." [My Reply] *BH*. I/21 (9 Şubat 1324/30 Muharrem 1327/1909): 476-479; Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Kuvve-i Teşriye Tabirine Dair." [On the Term of Legislative Power] *BH*. I/21 (9 Şubat 1324/30 Muharrem 1327/1909): 476.

⁴⁹ Mustafa Asım, "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SR*. XVII/425-426 (26 Haziran 1335/27 Ramazan 1337/1919): 69.

3.1.3 Difficulties on the Concepts of Political Opposition and Political Party

The significance of the Islamist reaction to the event of 31st March was that Islamists, unlike the Young Ottomans' and Young Turks' usage of religion as a source of opposition, employed religious arguments to legitimate the existing political regime.⁵⁰ The call for sharia as form of opposition to the Young Turk regime in this event was rejected by Islamists as being an anti-constitutionalist and reactionary movement (*irtica*). As Islamists were discomforted with the religious nature of any opposition to the power, they discredited the idea of opposition.⁵¹ The quest for unity and solidarity in the circles of intellectuals and statesmen in the second constitutional period to keep the unity of Ottoman state was certainly more effective in Islamist conceptualization of opposition. Here, important for our purposes, Islamists, for the sake of protecting the sharia, were trying to undermine the possibility of any political appeal to the sharia which functioned as source of political opposition for social and religious movements at any time in the Islamic world. As the juristic consideration of preserving order and unity and preventing civil war and anarchy had shifted their focus of attention much to the duty of obedience but less to the contractual side of that obedience. Similarly, Islamists concentrated much on the obedience but less on the right of non-obedience to unjust rule. This was, a continuation, if not a revitalization of the doctrine of passive obedience, discussed in the first chapter. At this point, it would be insightful to reiterate Mardin's observation on the difficulty of constituting any opposition to the power in a legitimate way in the Empire: "There is an element in Turkish political culture to which the notion of opposition is deeply repugnant," Mardin continues, "[i]f a political opposition is defined as a mechanism which has as its

⁵⁰ Kara, *İslamcıların*. 37.

⁵¹ For the examples of this observation, see Kara, *İslamcıların*. 195-205.

function (a) the checking of absolute power and (b) the suggesting of real policy alternatives, then it may be stated that no such thing existed in the Ottoman Empire.”⁵²

In the Islamist discourse of the second constitutional period, there were two different opinions about the existence of political parties. For those who denied the possibility of different political parties, since the emphasis was on the urgent need of ittihad for the Ottoman progress, political party (firka) was apparently synonymous with dividing the society, self-seeking, destructive competition, taassub (etc.); therefore there was no place for it in the structure of Islamic political system. Musa Kazım was cautious especially about the destructive effects of establishing parties on the basis of ethnic and religious differences which would result in the breakdown of the Ottoman unity.⁵³ A more sophisticated example was provided by Said Halim. In his opinion, since in Islamic society, where there were no class rivalries and where the ideals were the same for all Muslims, national representation would take a form different than that of Western one. By maintaining in the political sphere the solidarity which was found in the social sphere, to him, “in the parliament of Muslims, there would be neither communists nor socialists; neither partisans of republic, nor partisans of sultanate. All the members of this parliament would devote their lives to the same goal: the sincere enforcement of the wise commands of sharia. They might be differing among themselves as to the selection of the best way in order to serve this common ideal.”⁵⁴ In the same vein, Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi interpreted the right to differ in the prophet’s saying that ‘difference of opinion within my community is an act of divine mercy’ as a sign of division of labor among Muslims in the search of

⁵² Mardin, “Opposition and Control in Turkey.” *Government and Opposition*. 1:3 (April 1966): 376-7, 380.

⁵³ Musa Kazım, “Kuvvet Hazırlamak-2.” [Preparing Force-2] *SM*. III/59 (8 Teşrinievvel 1325/6 Şevval 1327/ 1909): 101-102.

⁵⁴ Said Halim, “İslam’da,” in *Buhranlarımız*. 273, 44-52.

science and industry but not as a proof of forming different political parties.⁵⁵ Needless to say, this line of thinking presumed that the political and social conflicts that occurred among Europeans would not take place in Islamic societies; if any conflict arised, it would be resolved by the application of sharia. Clearly, this understanding did not foresee the fact that the adoption of West's good aspects such as industry and science would produce political, economic and social conflicts among different sectors of any Islamic society and that the existence of representation and parliament would inevitably bring into factions and parties on public issues. Interpretation of sharia and its different conceptualizations were enough for the differing ideas and groups within Islamic parliament.

On the other side, a significant group of Islamist intellectuals came to regard the existence of political parties as the natural and useful elements of the constitutional regime, especially after it became clear that the Union and Progress could not meet the Islamist demands about the future destiny of the new regime. The existence of different political parties in the parliament would provide an opportunity for the selection of different programs that were suitable to different views or ijthads. To denounce any opposition as a betrayal to the unity of nation and state was not incompatible with the idea of meşrutiyet.⁵⁶ İttihad-ı Muhammedi and Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası were established or supported by some Islamists within this framework in order to oppose the ruling party, the Union and Progress. As a consequence, it would be true to say that although the idea of political party and opposition was recognized as something legitimate, the reservations made about its

⁵⁵ Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi, "Mebus Nasıl Olmalı." [How to Become a Member of Parliament] *SM* VII/182 (16 Şubat 1327/11 Rebiülevvel 1330/1912): 411.

⁵⁶ Ermenekli M. Safvet, "Meşrutiyetin bizde Suret-i Tecellisi." [Meşrutiyet's Form of Application in Our Country] *BH*. VI/138 (28 Teşrinisani 1327/19 Zilhicce 1329/1911): 2477-2480; see also Kilisli Münir, "Gayri Müslimler ile İtilaf Muhalif-i Şer'i midir?" [Is it UnIslamic to get to Agreement with NonMuslims] *BH*. VI/147 (13 Şubat 1327/8 Rebiülevvel 1330/1912): 2619; Beyanül Hak, "Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası" [The Party of Liberty and Conciliation] *BH*. VI/137 (14 Teşrinisani 1327/5 Zilhicce 1329/1911): 2458.

harmful results such as hatred (*adavet*) and division (*tefrika*) came to mean debunking it (*muhalefetin iflası*) alongside with the ruling party. The main functions of any political party, were relegated to supervising the government and enlightening the public opinion.⁵⁷

3.2 Disarming the Caliph and the Early Emergence of the Idea of Islamic State

When the issues of constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*), *meşrutiyet* and the source of political authority were at stake, the Islamists unanimously accepted that the representative government was Islamic. They made reference to the caliphate and supported the *meşrutiyet* regime but with the extra effort to make it sure that *Kanun-i Esasi* should be compatible with the principles of *Shari'ah*. While the jurists of the medieval age tried both to idealize and justify the institution of caliphate, the Islamists attempted to justify the *meşrutiyet* and its institutions such as parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) and constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*) which were established by the Union and Progress regime. Turkish Islamists did not establish a theory of caliphate while they defended the Ottoman caliphate, unlike Rashid Rida who thought that only if a true caliph (an idealized ruler mainly springing from medieval theorization but with modern implications) could help a real Islamic political system to exist. They did not give much attention at all to the juristic formulations and instead applied the practice of prophet and the first four caliphs to modern needs; therefore, the juristic theory of the caliphate acquired the potentiality of becoming a positive constitutional system in the hands of Islamists, even though for the jurists it was something else. Islamists did not defend the historical record of Umayyad and Abbasid caliphate after the first four caliphs and in fact they severely criticized them as distorting the democratic nature of caliphate and establishing *istibdat*. The principle of

⁵⁷ See Ahmed Hilmi, “*Muhalefet ve Adavet Kabineye mi Vatana mı?*” [Are Opposition and Hostility to the Government or to Homeland?] *Hikmet*. 27 (7 Teşrinievvel 1326/16 Şevval 1328/1910): 2-4; *Muhalefetin*. 26; 78-9.

election and the consultation with the electors (shura) were perverted by the authoritarian rules of these dynasties and were replaced by the principle of force (güç).

With the dominance of the democratic ideas in Islamist political mind, the sultan-caliph conceptualization of the Ottoman classical times, which was discussed in the first chapter, started to be transformed from the absolute right of the sultan to the head of executive, under the duty of sharia's application. Actually most Islamists came to neglect and reject the supreme position of the sultan in Ottoman traditional sense and came to use caliph and sultan synonymously in order to denote a political authority or a head of state.⁵⁸ While the title "caliph" for the sultan, in the classical period, was used in the sense of shadow of God in the world, this time, the sense of successorship to the prophet became well established in any Islamist depiction of caliphate. Actually sultan became another name for caliph, a political authority. This was stated in very clear terms by Elmalılı Hamdi: "in the era of meşrutiyet, it is better to use the word caliphate instead of sultanate which implied a usurpation of power (tasallut) and domination over others (tagallüb) or despotism (istibdad)."⁵⁹ But, the unification of sultanate and caliphate on the personality of the Ottoman caliph-sultan was restated for the unity of religious and worldly political powers of the caliph in order to reject their separation. The necessity of having a political authority, for Muslims, to apply the sharia also made its reference to such unity.⁶⁰ The

⁵⁸ See, Ahmet Şirani, "Hukuk-u Saltanat ve Bir Kuvve-i Hafiyye." [Law of Sultanate and a Secret Power] *BH*. VI/140 (12 Kanunuevvel 1327/4 Muharrem 1330/1911): 2507.

⁵⁹ Yazır, "İslamiyyet ve Hilafet ve Meşihat-ı İslamiyye." [Islam and Caliphate and Office of Şeyhül İslam] *BH*. 1/22 (16 Şubat 1324/8 Safer 1327/1909): 511; see also, Halil Halid, "Sene-i Devriye-i Hilafet-2." [Anniversary of Caliphate-2] *SM*. VI/141 (5 Mayıs 1327/14 Cemaziyelevvel 1329/1911): 170.

⁶⁰ Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi, "Din ile Devlet Yahut Hilafet ve Saltanat Tefrik Olunabilir mi?" [Can Religion and State or Caliphate and Sultanate be Separated?] *SR*. XIV/351 (22 Teşrinievvel 1331/26 Zilhicce 1333/1915): 99; Sebilürreşat, "Din ve Devlet Yahut Hilafet ve Saltanat." [Religion and State or Caliphate and Sultanate] *SR*. XIV/359 (6 Teşrinievvel 1332/21 Zilhicce 1334/1916): 178.

necessity of political authority and government for the goals of religion was expressed very openly in İzmirli İsmail Hakkı's words: "the religion of Islam survives with the lasting of Islamic state and declines with its decline as well... The obligation of commanding the good and forbidding the evil, holy war and justice can be completed by the force and political leadership."⁶¹

It is obvious that Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period did not wish to revive the caliphate along the lines of jurisdic theory. By making it as the core value and institution of Islamic political theory, Islamists gave much attention to the element of consultation (meşveret), which was not so central to the classical writings of jurists. What was new in Islamist enlisting of caliph's duties was their emphasis on meşveret and freedom alongside the classical jurisdic duties.⁶² Expectedly, the first and foremost duty of caliph or sultan was considered to be the application of sharia among his other duties. According to Eşref Edip, "Islamic conceptualizations of sultan and government is different that of Europe. Unlike the European experience, Islam does not accept the right of the king. In Islam's view, caliphs are nothing but officials charged with the application of sharia. Caliphs of Islam are neither innocent nor eligible for the legislation of divine law. If the caliph violates the sharia, it is an obligation on the Islamic nation to resist this acts."⁶³ It

⁶¹ İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, "Devlet-i İslamiyenin Takip Ettiği Tarik." [The Path followed by the Islamic State] *SR.* XVII/423-424 (19 Haziran 1335/21 Ramazan 1337/1919): 56, for the necessity of appointing an imam (political leader) as a trustee of the nation in order to enforce sharia and justice, see Seyyid Bey, *Usul-i.* 116-7.

⁶² See İbnür Rahmi Ali Tayyar, "İslamiyet-Saltanat." [Islam-Sultanate] *BH.* VI/141 (19 kanunuevvel 1327/11 Muharrem 1330/1911): 2524. For enlisting the caliphs's duties in the way tha the jurists did, see Abdülaziz Çaviş, *Hilafet-i İslamiye ve Al-i Osman* [Islamic Caliphate and the Ottoman Dynasty] (İstanbul: Bedir, 1993); Şeyh Salih Şerif, "Hilafet-i İslamiye." [Islamic Caliphate] *SR.* XIV/359 (6 Teşrinievvel 1332/21 Zilhicce 1334/1916): 175.

⁶³ Eşref Edip, "Milleti Yükseltecek Ancak Müslümanlık Esaslarıdır." [Only Islamic Principles Can Improve the Nation] *SR.* XX/502 (18 Mayıs 1338/21 Ramazan 1340/1922): 92; see also Sebilürreşat, "Garplılaştırmak Münakaşaları." [Debates of Westernization] *SR.* XXII/563-564 (27 Eylül 1339/16 Safer 1342/1923): 142.

was indeed this limitation of caliph's power by sharia that enabled the establishment of the constitutional regime.⁶⁴

But on the other hand, Islamists were following the jurisdic theory, while they were regarding the Ottoman caliphate as the symbol of the unity of the Muslim community. In the eyes of Islamists, the Ottoman caliphate was then the only power which could conceivably face the challenge of European colonialism. They did not oppose Sultan Abdulhamid's claim to the title of caliph in particular because this claim was the natural outcome of the Ottoman dynasty's claim to caliphate, regarding the transfer of caliphate from the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil to Sultan Selim. According to Islamists, the requirement of the Qurayshi lineage for the caliphate was no longer operative (by reference to Ibn Khaldun's ideas in this respect) and therefore the Ottoman claim to caliphate as the most powerful protector of Muslims was beyond dispute.⁶⁵ Unlike their negative assessments on the performance of Abbasid and Umayyad caliphates, Islamists spoke of the good credentials of the Ottoman caliphate, similar to the prophetic era and to the practice of the first four caliphs: "the Ottoman state was a law-abiding Islamic state and Ottoman sultans were law-abiding Muslim sultans as well."⁶⁶ During the World War I, Sebilürreşat published Ibn Taymiyya's famous book, *Siyasetüş-Şer'iyye* to support implicitly the Ottoman caliph's fatwa of holy war, calling the Muslim cooperation against the enemies of the Ottomans.⁶⁷ All in all, although the Ottoman sultan was still regarded as the head and leader of all Muslims and it is their duty to obey his commands if they are

⁶⁴ *Sırat-ı Mustakim*, *SR.* III/62 (29 Teşrinievvel 1325/27 Şevval 1327/1909): 149.

⁶⁵ Ahmed Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 357, 569; Çaviş, *Hilafet-i*. 28-29; Hakkı, "Hilafet-i İslamiye." [Islamic Caliphate] *SM.* III/56 (17 Eylül 1325/15 Ramazan 1327/1909): 49, 51; Şerif, "Hilafet-i," 175-177.

⁶⁶ Ahmed Hilmi, *İslam Tarihi*. 568, 569.

⁶⁷ See, *SR.* XIII/ 333, 334, 335, 338, (19 mart 1331/16 Cemaziyelevvel 1333/1915-30 Nisan 1331/28 Cemaziyelahir 1333/1915).

lawful and true, Islamist equivalence established between modern democratic institutions and the classical theory of caliphate not only gave a new substance to jurisdic theory but also weakened the authority of the caliph.

Unlike the jurisdic theory, Islamist reconceptualization of caliphate clearly attributed sovereignty to people (constitution and parliament) and progressed in its treatment of sovereignty beyond the religious to the positive level. The question of procedures for legislative interpretation which was not discussed in jurisdic theory was solved in favor of the elected representatives of people and parliament. The Shari'a was a universally acknowledged divine law to be respected by the parliament and the constitution and legislation of new law could not be contrary to this supreme divine law. Elmalılı Hamdi's statements can be taken as the example of the new democratic reading of the jurisdic theory: "the caliph possesses the representation (vekalet) of the umma who made an oath of allegiance to him on the one side and the regency of the Lawgiver in the execution of sharia on the other side. The caliph can not violate the sharia by his despotic opinion... if he does, the national sovereignty (hakimiyet-i milliye) will execute its judgement [will overthrow him]. Caliphate is nothing different than a presidency of executive power for sharia."⁶⁸ Elmalılı also interpreted the bay'ah as the "contract" between the caliph and the umma by identifying the conditions of bay'ah with the articles and content of Kanun-i Esasi.⁶⁹ In the same way, Ömer Rıza put the emphasis on the national sovereignty when he made it clear that caliphate was not a theocracy. According to him:

⁶⁸ Küçük Hamdi (Yazır), "İslamiyet ve," 513.

⁶⁹ İsmail Kara, "Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi ve Halifelik,"[Caliphate and Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi] in *Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır Sempozyumu* (Ankara: TDV, 1993), 255; for seeing caliphate as the contract between Islamic nation (millet-i İslamiyye) and the caliph by making reference to Mawardi's al-Ahkam-us Sultaniyye, see Seyyid (Bey), *Usul-i*. 109, 114, 118.

“the caliph is appointed by the nation or its deputies; sovereignty belongs to the nation. If the national interests (mesalih-i milliye) needed, the caliph would be overthrown...Caliphate is not a theocracy. Theocracy means receiving sharia directly from God, having the right of legislation, possessing the right of obedience not the right of bay’ah, over people and thus no any opposition without being evaluated in terms of the (in)compatibility of actions with sharia. Because his saying is religion and sharia, like the church of the medieval age.”⁷⁰

Islamists often put the emphasis on the fact that in juristic theory, the caliphate was defined to have contractual (delegation) features. Seyyid Bey, providing an example of reformulating juristic theory in the Second Constitutional Period, stated that the majority of the jurists maintained that the caliphate could only be conferred by consent and election because the caliphate was a contract between people and the caliph. Due to the fact that caliphate was a sort of contract between the caliph and the Islamic nation, the caliph was not only the successor to the prophet but also the trustee or deputy (vekil) of the nation, therefore he could be dethroned by ending the contract by the nation.⁷¹ Public trusteeship (velayet-i amme) given to the caliph was limited by the idea of public interest (maslahat-i amme).⁷² Thus, the obligation of obedience to the caliph was restricted by two conditions: a) “no obedience in sin”, that is a command contrary to the shari’a was not to be obeyed b) the caliph’s acts and commands had to contain the public interest of the nation and state.⁷³ Nevertheless, Seyyid Bey had a rather traditionalist understanding on the issue of the right of revolt (sultana karşı ayaklanma), saying that it was not permitted to revolt against the sultan just because of his injustice and immorality. Otherwise it would mean dividing the

⁷⁰ Ömer Rıza, “Klerikalizm.” [Clericalism] *SR*. XVI/410-411 (1 Mayıs 1335/30 Recep 1337/1919): 187. Around the discussion on the şeyhülislam ‘s responsibility to the parliament, Elmalılı Hamdi rejected any notion of innocence and sacredness for this religious position. Unlike the papacy in the West, Şeyhülislam was not a spiritual leader, and had to be responsible to the parliament; see “İslamiyet ve,” 511-514.

⁷¹ Seyyid Bey, *Usul-i*. 110, 113.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 117.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 122-123.

nation and weakening the state, that were forbidden in Islam.⁷⁴ The goal of establishing caliphate and government was to elevate Islamic state and the word of God, and to attain the happiness of Islamic nation, Seyyid Bey said.⁷⁵

While justice was the only sound basis for the Ottoman state and while the ruler's autocratic power was the guarantee to ensure the just rule in the traditional ideological formulation (the circle of justice), Islamists considered the limitation of ruler's power as the sign of justice. It would not be incorrect to say that Islamist notion of freedom was the natural outcome of the classical Islamic idea of justice. But this time, the notion of justice constituted the answer to the different questions: how should the people govern themselves? And how should the ruler be limited? The notion of justice as the main principle of Islamic state was the spirit of the supreme sharia and strongly related to the progress of Muslims in the near future.⁷⁶

Theoretically, it can be said that Islamists had two conceptualizations of state in their minds at the same time: 1) state as a transcendental and abstract entity and 2) state as body politics, the level of rulership. In fact, these two different conceptualizations often get mixed with each other and make the picture more problematic. On the one hand, when there is injustice it is regarded as coming from the bad rulers, if good government (rulers) comes to power, there will be no problems because state, in its nature, basically good and can not do wrong things. But on the other hand, if you disobey and oppose the wrong commands of the rulers, you may find yourself opposing not to the bad rulers but to the

⁷⁴ Ibid., 127-128. Seyyid Bey also spoke of the right of revolt to the sultan only when the sultan furthered his injustice to a high level. p. 128.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 148.

⁷⁶ İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, "Devlet-i İslamiyyenin Binası." [Structure of the Islamic State] *SR*. XIV/392 (20 Şubat 1335/19 Cemaziyelevvel 1337/1919): 22, *Anglikan*. 264 and 267; Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SM*. I/15 (20 Teşrinisani 1324/9 Zilkade 1326/1908): 238; "Mev'iza." [Sermon] *SM*. II/37 (7 Mayıs 1325/30 Rebiülahir 1327/1909): 173.

notion of abstract (good) state in the eyes of your opponents. Any opposition to political authority, therefore, has to justify itself that it is not an opposition to the good/abstract state but to more concrete manifestations, to bad rulers. Regarding the form of government, in their opinion, the Islamic state (devlet-i İslamiye) which was founded in the early Islam was open to the good aspects of the modern state, paying attention to its essence, not to its form. Government in Islam was under the duty of executing the laws and of protecting the rights (goals) of religion and civilization. Sovereignty belonged to the rule of law, namely sharia.⁷⁷ Although the idea of Islamic state was conceptualized by Rashid Ridha (1865-1935) in response to the abolition of caliphate by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1924, we encounter, especially with the weakening of the institution of caliphate, the first glimmerings of the idea of Islamic state based on sharia in the second constitutional period.⁷⁸ Still, it is true to argue that, as İsmail Kara does, the concept of “Islamic state” in the minds of the Islamists of the Republican period was inspired much from the translations of the writers from Eyyptian Ikhwan al Muslimun and Pakistanian Cemaat al Islami in the 1960s.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ See İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, “Devlet-i,” 21; *Anglikan*. 278, 284; Eşref Edip, “Tanzimatçılık bu memleket için mahz-ı felaket olmuştur.” [The Way of Tanzimat has become a mere Disaster for this Country] *SR*. XIX/486 (2 Temmuz 1337/26 Şevval 1339/1921): 198; Mustafa Sabri, *Dini Mücedditler*. 46.

⁷⁸ For the idea of an Ottoman Islamic state (devlet-i İslamiye-i Osmaniye) see, Ömer Rıza (Doğrul), “Türkçülük,” 70; Nuri Alizade Gıyaseddin Hüsnü, “Alem-i İslama Karşı Tecavüzat.” [Agressions Against the Islamic World] *SM*. IV/95 (17 Haziran 1326/22 Cemaziyelahir 1328/1910): 299; İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, “Devlet-i İslamiyenin,” 56; M. Akif, “Süleymaniye,” in *Safahat*. 164; Seyyid Bey, *Usul-i*.148.

⁷⁹ Kara, *Şeyhefendinin*. 177. But it is oversimplification to claim that this concept is a formulation which does not take into account Turkey’s unique local (yerel) political culture and experiences and which emanates from the ideas of anti-Ottoman caliphate. The first signs of the idea of Islamic state became apparent during the time where the Ottoman caliphate still existed. The supremacy of sharia became the anchor point in the conceptualizations of Islamic state in the absence of the caliphate. Certainly, the emergence of this concept coincided with the efforts of adopting the modern nation-state.

3.3 The Rule of Sharia Conceived as Framework of Democracy

Not unexpectedly, Islamism of the Young Ottomans, draws special attention to the place of shariah in the establishment or appropriation of civilization and progress; this is certain especially in Namık Kemal's and Suavi's writings. Being the main source of strength in order to catch up with Europe, Shariah gains a further importance in their eyes, not known in the classical period of the Ottoman Empire. In this way, Young Ottomans broaden the domain of shariah to the extent that the legal prerogative of the sultans to issue kanun was viewed as "a Mongolian accretion with no Islamic precedence" and to the extent that the Shari'a, as conceived by Kemal, "incorporated within it key elements of the European discourse of reform: sovereignty of the people, representation, constitutionalism, egalitarianism, individual freedom and division and separation of powers among the judicial, legislative and executive branches of government."⁸⁰ Young Ottomans established an equivalence between sharia and the natural law theory of the eighteenth century in order to defend the unchanging principles of sharia and to oppose the importation of French codes by the Tanzimat statesmen as well.⁸¹ In the same way, Islamists of Second Constitutional Period saw paralellism between natural law and sharia, which were both acts of God, therefore could not contradict each other.⁸²

Moreover, closely tied to the central importance of sharia, political sovereignty, according to N. Kemal, "had to fulfill two conditions for legitimacy: (a) it should be based on the consent of the people, and (b) it should act according to the law derived from the abstract good. 'In Islam the good and bad are determined by the Şeriat which is the expression of

⁸⁰ Joseph G. Rahme, "Namık Kemal's Constitutional Ottomanism and Non-Muslims." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*. 10/1 (1999), 26 and 32.

⁸¹ Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 277.

⁸² Yazır, "İlhad ne Büyük Cehalettir-9." [Heresy is a Great Ignorance-9] *SR*. XXV/630 (18 Kanunuevvel 1340/21 Cemaziyelevvel 1343/1924): 81-83; Seyyid Bey, *Usul-i*. 161.

the abstract good and the ultimate criterion of the truth.”⁸³ Such concepts as hilafet-i İslamiye, devlet-i islamiye or hükümet-i islamiye gained their meanings in the minds of the Young Ottomans within this framework⁸⁴: “If our state wants to survive, it has to continue to be an islamic state and it has to follow the sharia. Sharia is the soul of our state.”⁸⁵

Certainly, according to Islamists there was no doubt that the shariah was the binding force for the Muslims at all times. But at the same time, they were ready to reinterpret the laws of shariah in keeping with the changes of the time. Islamists advocated the view that it was not necessary to follow the Prophet’s opinion in worldly matters, by quoting the tradition ‘I am only a human being, when I give you a command in religious matters, you should obey it, but when I give you a command in daily affairs, then remember that I am only a human being.’ They did not believe that Islamic jurisprudence, in its medieval formulation, without the opening of the gate of ijtiħad, could meet the modern needs. The closing of the gate of ijtiħad was one of the principle reasons for the decline of Muslims today simple because of the despotism of the rulers and of the backwardness of the ulema.⁸⁶

Apart from the fact that they were highly critical of the mere imitation (taqlid) in the field of law, to Islamists, the responsibility for the backwardness of Muslims belonged to their

⁸³ Berkes, *the Development*, 212; see also Önberk, *Namık*. 107-108.

⁸⁴ For the use of these concepts by Namık Kemal see, *Namık Kemal’in Mektupları*, [Namık Kemal’s Letters] vol. III ed. F.A. Tansel (Ankara: TTK, 1973), 254 and Özön, *Namık*. 239; by Ali Suavi see Çelik, *Ali*. 80 and 246.

⁸⁵ N Kemal, quoted in Önberk, *Namık*, 104.

⁸⁶ M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 354-355. Sebilürreşat circle was more open to ijtiħad see Ömer Rıza (Doğrul), “Müceddidler.” [Religious Renovators] *SR*. XIX/ 486 (2 Temmuz 1337/26 Şevval 1339/1921): 200. But Beyanül Hak circle was hesitant and even against the opening of the gate of ijtiħad, for example M. Sabri stood for the line within Islamism that rejected the opening of the gate of ijtiħad, by mentioning the danger of distorting the basis of Islam through so called ijtiħad, especially in noneligible hands and in times of decadence.

rulers and to the ulama who did not codify Islamic law. Codification, a deliberate attempt to systematize (formulate) the fiqh as a positive law, was not considered as a sign of secularization or something against the precepts of Islam to Islamists.⁸⁷ Actually the process of codification started with the compilation of the Mecelle under the head of Cevdet Paşa (1822-1895) and this codification was praised by the Islamists as a very positive thing and was expected to be continued, rather than the adoption of European laws, by the regimes of the second constitution and the new Republic.⁸⁸ In this vein, the failure to fully apply sharia since the times of sultan Suleyman the Magnificent caused the decline of the Ottomans though the adherence to sharia was the source of the Ottoman greatness. In the minds of the Islamists, constitutionalism became associated with the reinstitutionalization of the Shari'a.

Around the discussion about sharia and örf between Islamists and Turkists, the first group was trying to enlarge the domain of sharia in order to Islamicize the society and to rescue from the deteriorating effects of unIslamic customs while the latter aimed to enlarge the domain of örf in order to introduce some secular reforms by their emphasis on ijihad.⁸⁹ The predomination of örf over the nass by Turkists such as Ziya Gökalp, Halim Sabit and Mansurizade Said was rejected by Islamists to ensure the supremacy of sharia in devising

⁸⁷ Sivasi Selim Efendizade Mustafa Taki, "Bir Mütalaa." [An Observation] *BH.* I/25 (9 Mart 1325/29 Safer 1327): 584; Salih Zeki, "Şeriat-ı Garra ve Kanun-i Esasi." [Brilliant Sharia and the Constitution] *BH.* V/122 (25 Temmuz 1327/11 Şaban 1329/1911): 2221.

⁸⁸ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, "Ahkam-ı İslamiyye ve İctihad." [Islamic Laws and Ijtihad] *SM.* II/29 (26 Şubat 1324/18 Safer 1327/1909): 34; Yazır, "Mecelle-i Ahkam-ı Adliyemize Reva Görülen Muahezeyi Müdafaa-2" [Defending the just Laws of Mejjelle-2] *BH.* II /49 (15 Şubat 1325/18 Safer 1328/1910): 1035-1038; "Makale-i Mühimme." [Important Article] *BH.* I/18 (19 Kanunusani 1324/9 Muharrem 1327/1909): 399-404; Derviş Vahdeti, "Kanun-i Adalet mi? Yoksa Kanun-i İstibdad?" [Law of Justice or Law of Despotism] *Volkan.* 35 (22 Kanunusani 1324/13 Muharrem 1327/4 Şubat 1909): 161.

⁸⁹ Tunaya, *İslamcılık.* 106.

rules for Islamic society.⁹⁰ A middle way in these discussions was provided by Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım who “devised a theoretical formula how to introduce modernization while maintaining Islamic tradition: örf (=adet or custom of the believers) was to have the legal force of nass (the prescript of the Sacred Scripture) in matters not contained in the latter. All örf or adat belongs to the rule of Islamic law (shari’a).”⁹¹ According to Islamists, sharia was the totality of principles in order to institute the just community and is above the constitution (Kanun-i Esasi) just for this reason.⁹²

3.4 Islamist Ideal: İttihad-ı İslam As a Social and Religious Unity

The Islamist ideology, with its twin goals i.e. to establish a cohesive political and social order with an Islamic identity in the Ottoman polity and to reach the material and intellectual level of modern civilization, advocated the idea of Pan-Islamism (İttihad-ı İslam) which is regarded as “proto-nationalism.”⁹³ With the possible influence of the pan movements of Germans and Slavs, the idea of İttihad-ı İslam, a union of all Muslims, appeared first in the texts written by the Young Ottomans in the late 1860s (Hürriyet of 9 November 1868).⁹⁴ By underlining the concept of the sultan-caliph, panislamism aimed to deter European powers from attacking the empire “as well as to forge a unity within the

⁹⁰ See İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, “Örf’ün Nazar-ı Şer’ideki Mevkii.” [Place of Custom in Sharia] *SR.* XII/293 (10 Nisan 1330/27 Cemaziyelevvel 1332): 132.

⁹¹ de Groot, “Modernist,” 61; see Musa Kazım, “Hürriyet-Müsavat.” [Freedom-Equality] *SM.* I/7 (25 Eylül 1324/12 Ramazan 1326/1908): 99-101.

⁹² Mardin, *Türkiye’de Din ve Siyaset* [Religion and Politics in Turkey] (İstanbul: İletişim, 1992), 27.

⁹³ Nikkie R. Keddie quoted in Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 247

⁹⁴ Landau, *The Politics*. 2-3. N. Keddie made it clear that the original ideologists of pan-Islam were Young Ottomans, and Afghani “was to a large degree carrying forth and expanding on their ideas and methods” Nikkie R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 26 ; also Türköne, *İslamcılığın*. 36.

Ottoman Empire that might resist the inroads of further European penetration and arrest the internal forces of disintegration.”⁹⁵ For them, the Islamic union under the leadership of the Ottoman state, being the centre of the caliphate and being near Europe, could be a civilizing force for other parts of Islamic world as well.⁹⁶ They embraced the idea of İttihad-ı İslam to stop Western encroachments in Muslim lands, but not to end the adoption of western institutions and ideas. Moreover they were also “firm in their belief that the Sultan Caliph, who was entrusted to rule with justice by the Sharia, should remain as head of state, as he was the centre of loyalty within the Empire and also the head of the Islamic Ummah.”⁹⁷ Here, it is significant that pan-Islamism triggered the “imagination of a political community”⁹⁸ which was different from Ottomanism that was basically centered around the empire.

During the Second Constitutional Period, Islamist journals contained a lot of news about Muslims and other movements of Islamic revival in various parts of the Islamic world. The impact of journalism in this period was particularly recognized in the dissemination of political and religious ideas. For instance, Resid Rıza’s and Egyptian press’ reaction to the dethroning of sultan Abdul Hamid II found enough columns in *Sırat-ı Mustakim*. The Islamists were appealing to what appeared to be the most effective tool to provide solidarity and loyalty among the Muslim elements of the Ottoman Empire and the available defensive strategy against the great powers such as England and France. Young Turk regime’s and Turkist intellectuals’ call for İttihad-ı İslam to defend the Ottoman state

⁹⁵ T. Cuyler Young, “Pan-Islamism in the Modern World: Solidarity and Conflict Among Muslim Countries,” in *Islam and International Relations* ed. J. Harris Proctor (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Pubs, 1965), 195.

⁹⁶ Namık Kemal, “İttihad-ı İslam.” [Islamic Union] *İbret*. 11 (27 June 1872) in Özön, *Namık*. 87.

⁹⁷ Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), 35.

⁹⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Thetford: Thetford Press, 1983).

and to weaken the British rule in its Muslim populated colonies during the World War I, was welcomed by Islamists as “a great revolution.”⁹⁹ Tied to the idea of İttihad-ı İslam which was the spirit of Islam, tevhid (the unity of God) was not considered just as the cornerstone of Islamic belief but also as the symbol and source of the unity of Muslims.¹⁰⁰

According to Islamists, the Ottoman state was the last fortress of Islam against the expansion of Europe. Therefore, the Islamist ideal was to strengthen Turkey as the force of Islam, which might rescue other parts of the Islamic world from European colonialism.¹⁰¹ Islamist emphasis on the Ottoman caliphate aimed at the defence of the empire and the umma against the increasing encroachments of Europe at a time when most Muslim lands were falling under European colonial rule, with the exceptions of the Ottoman empire, Iran and Afghanistan. Under the leadership of Ottoman caliphate, Afghanistan, Iran and the Ottoman Empire had to establish alliances and agreements among themselves against the European colonialism.¹⁰²

İttihad-ı İslam in this period were concerned much with the revival of Islamic civilization in its religious and cultural dimensions rather than with the political unity of all Muslims

⁹⁹ Sebilürreşad, *SR*. XIII/322 (1 Kanunisani 1330/27 Safer 1333/1914): 79.

¹⁰⁰ Yazır, “Müslümanlık,” 203-205; Abdürreşid İbrahim, “İttihad-ı İslam.” [Islamic Union] *TM*. I/23 (11 Teşrinisani 1326/22 Zilkade 1328/1910): 363-364; “İttihad-ı İslam.” [Islamic Union] *TM*. I/19 (14 Teşrinievvel 1326/24 Şevval 1328/1910): 301.

¹⁰¹ See Abdürreşid İbrahim, “Müslümanları Kim Uyandıracak.” [Who Will Wake Muslims up] *SM*. IV/98 (8 Temmuz 1326/14 Recep 1328/1910): 343. Muslims’ concern about the Ottoman caliphate was so intense that, for example, “since the latter half of the nineteenth century, a fear had haunted the Muslims of British India that if Turkey was to disappear they would become like unto Jews- a mere religious sect whose kingdom was gone. Thus, Turkey was to them the last hope of Islam” M. Naeem Qureshi, “The Indian Khilafat Movement (1918-1924).” *Journal of Asian History*. 12:2 (1978), 152.

¹⁰² *Sırat-ı Mustakim*, “İttihad-ı İslam.” [Islamic Union] *SM*. VI/101 (29 Temmuz 1326/5 Şaban 1328/1910): 392; *Sırat-ı Mustakim*, “Hutbe-i Arafat ve İttihad-ı İslam.” [Arafat Khutba and Islamic Union] *SM*. V/119 (2 Kanunuevvel 1326/14 Zilhicce 1328/1910): 244.

around the world. Islamists viewed İttihad-ı İslam as a mainly cultural and religious phenomenon which was expected to serve the awakening and progress of Muslims all around the world by the adoption of the modern civilization.

The idea of İttihad-ı İslam had two sides: 1) the unity of Muslims living beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire 2) Islamism within the empire, most particularly among its Muslim subjects, including Arab, Albanian and other nations. Islamists often rejected the Western view of Pan-Islam as the fanatic Muslim threat to the West and saw the political unity of all Muslims as something could not be realized.¹⁰³ Rather, ittihad-ı İslam was a sense of brotherhood born in the times of the prophet and the four caliphs. The believers were regarded as the human body, which suffers if its one part was ill. Certainly, the Union of Muslims was not confined to the spritual togetherness, but rather it had to be improved by cooperation, mutual help, affection and consultation. But Muslims were very far away from establishing an Islamic union (İttihad-ı İslam) as a threat to the West, even Muslims were not capable of being acquainted with one another (Tearüf-i Müslimin).¹⁰⁴ One of the most authoritative explanations for the different levels of İttihad-ı İslam was given by Ahmet Hilmi who talked about its three levels: 1) İttihad-ı İslam as a political unity, it was a clear madness to think of such a unity under the rule of one government, for Muslims were composed of different ethnicities, languages and interests; 2)İttihad-ı İslam as a

¹⁰³ Halil Halid, “Dersaadette Sırat-ı Mustakim Risale-i Mu’teberesine.” [To the Journal of Sebilür Reşad in the Capital] *SM.* V/125 (13 Kanunusani 1326/25 Muharrem 1329/1911): 349; *Hilal.* 232; Ahmet Hilmi, “İntibahı Akim, Esareti Baki Bırakmak İçin Yalandan İttihad-ı İslam Cemiyetleri.” [False Associations of Islamic Union which are Established to Prevent the Awakening and to Endure the Slavery] *Hikmet.* 17 (29 Temmuz 1326/6 Şaban 1328/1910): 3-4; Hüseyin Hüsameddin, “İttihad-ı İslamı Ortaya Atarak Camiay’ı Nasraniyete Bürünen Avrupa Diplomatlarıyla, Bulgarlara.” [To European Diplomats who were wrapped around the Idea of Christian Community by Underlining the Islamic Union and to Bulgarians] *SM.*V/129 (10 Şubat 1326/23 Safer 1329/1911): 413; Abdürreşid İbrahim, “İttihad-ı,” I/23, 363-364.

¹⁰⁴ Tearif-i Müslimin, “İttihad-ı İslam Kongresi Hakkında.” [On the Congress of Islamic Union] *TM.* I/8 (8 Temmuz 1326/14 Recep 1328/1910): 125.

religious unity which was already existent in Islamic world and which could be improved by unifying medhabs and orders; 3) İttihad-ı İslam as a social unity which was the most reasonable among the three levels. Social unity of Islam (İttihad-ı İçtimai-ı İslam) meant brotherhood, cooperation and the agreement in the demand for progress among Muslims by means of Islamic awakening and science.¹⁰⁵

Islamists, who acknowledged that it was impossible to achieve the union of Muslims in the near future, argued for a theory of Aile-i İslam (Family of Islam). According to this theory, every ethnicity of Islam should establish their nationhood and their independent state, then furthering a future union of all Muslim nations.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, despite their rhetoric against nationalism, like Afghani, at least some Islamist intellectuals of the second constitutional period thought that the Union of Islam and nationalism could be mutually complementary. This acceptance would lead to the approval of nation-state for different parts of Islamic world.

The Islamists, in a way, combined nationalist and pan-Islamic ideals or arguments against the imperialism of the West. Although they advocated the idea of the Islamic nation (umma), they also accepted the reality of different ethnic groupings (kavimler) or nationalities.¹⁰⁷ But in the final sense, the idea of nationhood was based on religion and

¹⁰⁵ Ahmet Hilmi, *Asr-ı*. 64-67. Similar to Ahmet Hilmi's "social unity of Islam," another term, *Camia-i İslamiyye* was used to mean the brotherhood and cooperation of different Muslim nations against the encroachments of the enemies see Sebilürreşad, "Camia-ı İslamiyye: Manası ve Hududu." [Islamic Community: Its Meaning and Limits] *SR*. XIX/491 (10 Kanunuevvel 1337/10 Rebiülahir 1340/1921): 247-248; Abdü'lmelik Hamza, "Camia-ı İslamiyye, Manası ve Hududu." [Islamic Community, Its Meaning and Limits] *SR*. XIV/363 (1 Ağustos 1334/23 Şevval 1336/1918): 244.

¹⁰⁶ Şeyh Muhsini Fani, *Felaha Doğru*, [Towards Happiness] quoted in Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 95-96. See also Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 179, 211-215.

¹⁰⁷ See M. Akif, "Köy Hocası." [Village Hodja] *SR*. XV/382 (12 Kanunuevvel 1334/8 Rebiülevvel 1337/1918): 332; Ahmed Hamdi Aksekili, "Ümmet-i İslamiye nasıl salah bulabilir?" [How Can Islamic Community Recover] *SR*. XII/298 (15 Mayıs 1329/3 Recep 1332/1914): 221.

thus; these ethnic groupings were considered as the parts of the body of Islamic nation (milliyet-i İslamiye).¹⁰⁸ According to Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi, “the idea of one umma is not contrary to the idea of nationality [and to the existence of separate governments]. Although the Islamic umma contained hundreds of different ethnicities (akvam), it has not violated their nationalities (milliyet). This is demonstrated by the ten century-experience.” Moreover, the umma might correct and alleviate the disintegrating peculiarities of the idea of nationhood.¹⁰⁹ This acceptance of ethnic groupings in the second constitutional period later turned into an advocacy of Turkish nationalism whether in the form of Said Nursi’s positive (müspet) nationalism¹¹⁰ or just nationalism in the republican period.

3.5 From İttihad-ı İslam to the Acceptance of Nationalism as the Vision of Political Community

The concepts of nation (millet), liberte (hürriyet) and patrie (vatan) in their modern connotations were foreign to the political imagination of both the classical ruling elite who made distinctions among their people (reaya) in terms of their religious beliefs and the modernizing statesmen of Tanzimat. Being aware of both the “imagined” character of the

¹⁰⁸ See Mehmed Fahreddin, “Son Darbe Karşısında İslamda Kaç Millet Var?” [How many nations are there in Islam after the last blow] *SR*. XI/277 (19 Kanunuevvel 1329/4 Safer 1332/1913): 262.

¹⁰⁹ Ahmet Hilmi, “Mısır Meselesi.” [Issue of Egypt] *Hikmet*. 10 (10 Haziran 1326/16 Cemaziyelahir 1328/1910): 2. Certainly a recognition of different ethnic groupings within the Empire did not bring about the acceptance of Prens Sabahattin’s decentralization (adem-i Merkeziyet). It was regarded as deadly to the unity of the Ottoman empire. In this respect, Islamists were all centralist like Young Turks, see Ahmed Hilmi, “Yine Merkeziyet, Adem-i Merkeziyet Fikirleri, Biraz Etraflı Düşünelim.” [Again Centralization, Decentralization: thinking in Detail] *Hikmet*. 52 (31 mart 1326/14 Rebiülahir 1329/13 Nisan 1911): 2-3.

¹¹⁰ For Nursi’s distinction of good (müspet) and bad (menfi) nationalisms, see “Mektubat,” [Letters] in *Risale-i* Vol.1. 498-501.

ideas of nation and fatherland and their power in keeping political unity of states¹¹¹, a Young Ottoman intellectual, Namık Kemal created a new terminology in which the words millet, hürriyet and vatan took their modern meanings and served as “the ideological instrumentarium”¹¹² for later Islamist, Westernist and nationalist intellectuals in Turkey. Namık Kemal’s conceptualizations of Ottoman nation and fatherland was Ottomanist and its emotional content was both religious and patriotic: “Kemal’s ideology of patriotism was pan-Ottomanism with Islamist ‘nationalism’ at its base”, in Berkes’s words.¹¹³

After the proclamation of the constitution, three political themes which were all somehow related to the position of non-Muslims in the Empire appeared in the articles of Islamist journals: brotherhood (uhuvvet; fraternity), equality (müsavât), freedom (hürriyet). In fact, just at the beginning of the new regime, all schools of thought; westernists, Turkists and Islamists were united around the idea of Ottomanism which advocated the brotherhood and equality of Muslims and non-Muslims in order to keep the unity of the Empire.

Islamists seemed to share the Young Turk regime’s Ottomanism (İttihad-ı Anasır), which aimed to promote the desire to defend the political boundaries of the Empire and which also sought to promote a spirit of patriotism (Osmanlılık) among the various religious communities and ethnic groups. Ottomanism of the July revolution, the idea that all subjects of the Empire should be united around the Ottoman citizenship was accepted vigorously by Islamists (especially in the early years of the revolution) and it remained so until all Ottomanist ideals were broken in the Balkan wars and the Albanian

¹¹¹ Namık Kemal, “Meyelan-i Alem.” [Inclination of Universe] *İbret*. 17 (6 Temmuz 1872) in Özön, *Namık*. 100; “İmtizac-ı Akvam.” [Blending Ethnicities] *İbret*. 14 (2 Temmuz 1872) in *Ibid.*, 92 and “Vatan.” [Homeland] *İbret*. 121 (22 Mart 1873) in *Ibid.*, 257.

¹¹² Zürcher, *Turkey*. 72.

¹¹³ Berkes, *The Development*. 221.

independence.¹¹⁴ People of the Ottoman political system had multi-layered identities; religious, ethnic and local and one could appeal to any of them when it was needed. According to Islamists, Uhuvvet (brotherhood), depicted as a sense of unity could be established at the several levels, from narrower to larger: Uhuvvet-i nesebiye (ethnic brotherhood), Uhuvvet-i diniye (religious brotherhood), Uhuvvet-i vataniye (brotherhood of fatherland), Uhuvvet-i insaniye (brotherhood of humanity).¹¹⁵ In Islamist formulation, uhuvvet-i vataniye, called also as uhuvvet-i Osmaniye (Ottoman brotherhood) was the other name of the European idea of citizenship. Ottoman citizenship based on religious terminology was conceptualized in a way that it recognized the equality of Muslims and non-Muslims, simply to keep the political unity of the Empire and to discourage the demands of separation, coming from different political imaginations. Islamists believed that the Ottoman empire could be reformed within the framework of Islamic practices and sharia, which they thought was progressive and elastic enough, to allow also the adaptation of the idea of citizenship.

Though it was certain that the concept of Ottoman citizenship was a break with the Ottoman classical millet system, in which Muslim nation was dominant (millet-i hakime) over non-muslim nations, Islamists did not see it as unIslamic if the supremacy of sharia was kept intact. In the classical age of the empire, the millet system, providing a cultural and religious autonomy to different religious groupings, was a form of organisation and

¹¹⁴ See Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM*. I/16 (27 Teşrinisani 1324/16 Zilkade 1326/1908): 255; Beyanül- Hak, “İttihad ve İtilafın Manayı Hakikileri.” [True Meanings of Union and Entente] *BH*. VI/145 (30 Kanun-u sani 1327/23 Safer 1330/1912): 2599; A. Seni, “Türklük, Müslümanlık, Osmanlılık.” [Turkishness, Being Muslim, Being Ottoman] *Hikmet*. 12 (24 Haziran 1326/30 Cemaziyelahir 1328/1910): 6. For an insightful analysis about the problems of the unity, see A.Y., “Meclis-i Umumide Siyaseti Umumiye Müzakeresi ve İttihad-ı Anasır Meselesi.” [The Discussion on General Politics in the National Assembly and the Problem of the Union of Elements] *SM*. V/121 (16 Kanun-u evvel 1326/27 Zilhicce 1328/1910): 280-3.

¹¹⁵ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mevaiz.” [Sermons] *SM*. I/4 (4 Eylül 1324/21 Şaban 1326/1908): 60-63; for the details see Kara, *İslamcılığın*. 32.

legal status in which “the religious community and religious law regulate the subjects’ lives and determine their obligations.”¹¹⁶ But the departure from the classical millet system was not new since during the Tanzimat period, the classical millet system was transformed into a kind of modern citizenship under the name of Osmanlılık (İttihad-ı Anasır) by introducing the idea and policy of the equality of all Ottomans whatever religion they hold. Under the pressure of the claim that the application of sharia was the obstacle to the political unity of non-muslims and muslims, Islamists generally suggested that the shariah could unite all religious and national groupings of the Ottoman empire in equality of government, even though the non-muslim minorities were not believer of the faith of Islam. Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı from Sırat-ı Mustakim journal voiced this argument in these words: “All Ottomans are the followers of Islam. Some of them are really Muslim and some [non-Muslims] are Muslim in law because of their allegiance to the laws of Islam [sharia].”¹¹⁷

Against the charges of intolerance to Christian subjects, an Islamist thinker Çerkesşeyhizade Halil Halid¹¹⁸ argues that “Is not the existence of such a large number of

¹¹⁶ İlber Ortaylı, “The Ottoman Millet System and It’s Social Dimensions,” in *Boundaries of Europe* ed. Rikard Larsson (Stockholm: FRN, 1998), 126. More on millet system see Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire* two volumes (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982); Aran Rodrigue, “Difference and Tolerance in the Ottoman Empire.” interview by Nancy Reynolds, *Stanford Humanities Review*. 5:1 (1995); C. Küçük, “Osmanlılarda Millet Sistemi ve Tanzimat,” [Millet System in the Ottomans and Tanzimat] in TCTA vol. IV 1007-1024; Bilal Eryılmaz, *Osmanlı Devletinde Gayrimüslim Tebaanın Yönetimi* [Ruling the NonMuslim Subjects in the Ottoman Empire] (İstanbul: Risale, 1996, 2nd edition).

¹¹⁷ Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM*. I/18 (11 Kanun-u evvel 1324/30 Zilkade 1326/1908): 287; “Mev’iza.” [Sermon] *SM*. I/14 (13 Teşrinisani 1324/2 Zilkade 1326/1908): 222.

¹¹⁸ Halil Halid was one of the first writers against ‘Orientalism’ see Wasti, “Halil,” 559. Medrese graduated. Elected to the Ottoman Assembly as a deputy from Ankara (from April 1912 till January 1913, when he resigned. He taught Islamic philosophy at the University of Istanbul from 1922 to 1930, Wasti, “Halil,” 561. “The ancestral lands endowed to the family by the sultan Mahmud II that provided considerable income to the family passed on to Halil Halid’s father after the death of his grandfather, but were

Christians in Turkey a living proof of the tolerance granted them by the ‘persecuting’ Turks? If our ancestors had exterminated them by the same methods which are now practised by some Christian States in Mussulman countries seized by them, there would not now remain such a large number of Christians who are becoming dangerous plague-spots to the body politic of our country.”¹¹⁹

In the ultimate stage, Islamists generally identified what was Ottoman with what was Islamic; this became evident especially after Balkan Wars. Due to this fact, Islamists advocated a kind of Ottomanism which envisioned, at the first stage the unity of Muslim subjects and later the unity of all the subjects in the empire.¹²⁰ With the dramatic decrease in the numbers of non-Muslims after the Balkan Wars, Islamists easily and voluntarily transformed the idea of Ottoman nation, based on the patriotism (*uhuvvet-i vataniye*) and citizenship to the idea of Ottoman nation, based on the unity of *vatan* and Islam. In other words, it has to be noted that when the Islamists used the term “nation” they meant the nation of Islam, since the cause of any nationalism, based on ethnicity (*kavim*) was regarded as unIslamic.¹²¹ In one sense, Islamists continued the classical conception of the

subsequently confiscated by the government under Sultan Abdul Hamid....He became convinced that it was only a matter of time before he would be thrust into prison on some trumped up charges and therefore decided to flee to England” *Ibid.*, 563.

¹¹⁹ Halil Halid, *A Study in English Turcophobia* quoted in Wasti, “Halil,” 564-5.

¹²⁰ Ahmet Hilmi, “Birazcık İzahat: Meslek-i İ’tisam.” [Some Explanation: Way of Protection] *Hikmet* 49 (10 Mart 1327/22 Rebiülevvel 1329/23 Mart 1911): 2.

¹²¹ Sebilürreşad, “Asabiyet-i Kavmiyye Davaları Etrafında.” [Journals on the Issues of Nationalist Zeals] *SR.* XI/279 (2 Kanunusani 1329/18 Safer 1332/1913): 301; A. Süleyman, “İslamiyet ve Türklük.” [Islam and Turkishness] *SR.* VIII-I/191-3 (19 Nisan 1328/15 Cemaziyelevvel 1330/1912): 166; Abdürreşid İbrahim, “Milletin Terakkisi Herkesin Matlubudur.” [Nation’s Progress is Everybody’s Desire] *TM.* I/15 (9 Eylül 1326/18 Ramazan 1328/1910): 235; A. H. Aksekili, “İslamın Hayat-ı Sabıkını İade.” [Restoration of an Early Islamic Life] *SR.* XI/283 (30 Kanunusani 1329/16 Rebiülevvel 1332/1914): 363; Mehmed Fahreddin, “Müslümanlıkta bir Millet Var.” [There is One Nation in Islam] *SR.* XI/279 (2 Kanunusani 1329/18 Safer 1332/1913): 298; “Feminizm Meselesi Münasebetiyle-5” [On the Occasion of Feminism] *SR.* VIII-I/200-18 (21 Haziran 1328/19 Recep 1330/1912): 339.

Ottoman state or Islam that all Muslims form one millet which was used generally synonymously with the term ümmet (Islamic community).

Islamist thinkers of the second constitutional period were not opposed to the idea of vatan (fatherland), patriotism, not seeing it as an obstacle to Islam, even they considered it to be the religious duty of every Muslim to be patriotic and to strive for the sake of their fatherland.¹²² In various numbers of Sebilürreşad journal, the territories of the Ottoman empire were referred to as *Türkiye* alongside the terms, “*memalik-i Osmaniye ve İslamiye*” and “*Osmanlı toprağı,*” its people as Turks but in the sense of Ottomans. Moreover, again in this journal, in order to define other parts of humanity, the classical Islamic classification of the world into the lands of war and lands of Islam (darülislam, darülharb)lost its significance while the words nations (milletler/ümmetler), our nation, our fatherland (memleketimiz, vatan) appeared very often.¹²³

According to the Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period, the feeling of nationality and nationalism was something acquired and invented. Islam was incompatible with nationalism but did not repudiate the reality of ethnicity. Islam united Muslims of different countries and obliterated all traces of race and nationality, by rejecting racism. Shariah regulated in detail the rights and duties of both the ruler and the ruled, and removed all racial distinctions. Muslims were in a decline and were subject to many weaknesses due to divisions (tefrika) among them. While the need of unity (ittihad) was so acute, the idea of

¹²² A. H. Aksekili, “Kuvvet: Alem-i İslam İçin bir Ders-i İntibah.” [Power: A Lesson of Awakening for the Islamic World] *SM*. VII/176 (5 Kanunusani 1327/28 Muharrem 1329/1911): 315; “Bütün Müslümanlara ve Orduya Hitabe.” [To all Muslims and the Military] *SR*. IX-II/219-37 (1 Teşrinisani 1328/5 Zilhicce 1330/1912): 204; Ermenekli M. Safvet, “Bu Vatanı Kimler Daha Ziyade Sever.” [Whom Love more this Homeland] *BH*. V/106 (4 Nisan 1327/16 Rebiülahir 1329/1911): 1961-2; Hüseyin Hazım, “Vatan Muhabbeti.” [Love of Homeland] *BH*. II/55 (29 Mart 1326/30 Rebiülevvel 1328/1910): 1143.

¹²³ “Heybeliada Sebilürreşad Mektebi İbtidaisi.” [Sebilür Reşad’s Primary Shool in Heybeliada] *SR*. 11/263 (12 Eylül 1329/23 Şevval 1331/1913): 35.

nationalism in the forms of Arab nation, Turkish nation or Kurdish nation among the muslim subjects of the empire was detrimental, even to the survival of Muslims and Ottomans as well. The invention of nationalism might be natural for Christians who had no unity of religion and holy book as that of Islam, but for Muslims it was a degrading imitation from Europe, taking no place in Islam. The nation of Islam would be broken into pieces if its different elements (ethnicities) seeked for their own national imagination (milliyet-i mahiyet-i muhayyilesi).¹²⁴ Certainly what disturbed Islamists about nationalism was its political nature but not its contribution to the awakening of consciousness about the language and culture of ethnicities.¹²⁵

Similar to the emergence of any idea of nationalism among Muslim subjects of the empire, Islamists considered Turkism as dangerous to the unity of the state, to the vitality of Islamic community (and brotherhood), and as contrary to the precepts of Islam; as Babanzade Ahmed Naim argued that the assertion of nationalism (*dava-yı kavmiyet*, *dava-yı cinsiyet*) was rejected by sharia; it was an assertion of pre-islamic paganism (*cahiliye*). He also continued to say that: “Turkishness was nothing but an artificial invention of the Turkists. There was no Turkish history apart from that of Islam... They have invented

¹²⁴ Mehmed Fahreddin, “Müslümalıkta,” 298; Ömer Rıza (Doğrul), “Türkçülük,” 69; Ahmed Hamdi Aksekili, “Her Kavmin Kendi Başına Hareketi İslam için Felakettir.” [Independent Movement of Each Nation is a Disaster for Islam] *SR.* XII/290 (20 Mart 1330/6 Cemaziyelevvel 1332/1914): 66; A Şehabeddin, “İslamiyet.” [Islam] *Volkan.* 25 (12 Kanunusani 1324/3 Muharrem 1327/25 Ocak 1909): 111; Abdülaziz Çaviş, “Kavmiyet ve Din.” [Ethnicity and Religion] *SR.* XIII/335 (2 Nisan 1331/30 Cemaziyelevvel 1333/1915): 180; M. Akif, “Tefsir-i Şerif.” [Sacred Interpretation] *SR.* VIII-I/198-16 (7 Haziran 1328/5 Recep 1330/1912): 293-4; “Tefsir-i Şerif.” [Sacred Interpretation] *SR.* IX-II/214-32 (27 Eylül 1328/29 Şevval 1330/1912): 101-2; “Tefsir-i Şerif.” [Sacred Interpretation] *SR.* IX-II/212-30 (13 Eylül 1328/15 Şevval 1330/1912): 62-63; *Safahat.* 163-164, 186-188; Mustafa Sabri, *Dini Mücedditler.* 296-7.

¹²⁵ M. Akif, “Köy,” 331.

strange national days. They would almost revive the ancient shamanistic cults.”¹²⁶ In their rejection of the idea of Turkish nationalism, Islamists, like Ali Suavi, made a distinction between East, namely Islamic world and West in this respect: “in the East, Islam not Türklük is dominant whereas in Europe, nationalism is dominant, not religion.”¹²⁷ Berkes is right in his point that Islamists sensed from the beginning that the Turkists would achieve what Westernists could not do: further secularization of Ottoman political and social life.¹²⁸ For instance, the Westernist inclination in the circle of *Türk Yurdu* journal (Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver, Ahmet Ağaoğlu and Yusuf Akçura) and its aim of getting the Turkish nation into the family of Western nations without making distinction between good and bad aspects of the West was harshly criticized by Sebilürreşat.¹²⁹ Interestingly, Islamists sometimes suggested that İttihad-ı İslam which put the emphasis on the importance of caliphate, would contribute to the ideals of pan-Turanism much more than Pan-Turanism might do.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ See Ahmet Naim, “İslamda Dava-yı Kavmiyyet.” [Issue of Nationalism in Islam] *SR.* XII/293 (10 Nisan 1330/27 Cemaziyelevvel 1332/1914), 114-128; Berkes’s translation, *The Development.* 375; see also A. Süleyman, “İslamiyet ve Türklük.” [Islam and Turkishness] *SR.* VIII-I/191-9 (19 Nisan 1328/15 Cemaziyelevvel 1330/1912): 166; H. İsmail, “Şeyh Muhsin-i Faniye Cevap.” [reply to Şeyh Muhsin-i Fani] *BH.* VII/176 (10 Eylül 1328/11 Şevval 1330/1912): 3095; Ç.Ş.Z (Halil Halid), “Mülâhazat-ı Mütenevvia.” [Various Interpretations] *SR.* IX-II/209-27 (23 Ağustos 1328/23 Ramazan 1330/1912): 12. Ömer Rıza, in his criticism of Turkism, denied Turkist symbols of grey wolf (bozkurt), Kızılelma and Cengiz, see “Türkçülük,” 69.

¹²⁷ See Çelik, *Ali.* 92; see also Mehmed Fahreddin, “İttihad-ı İslam.” [Islamic Union] *SR.* XIII/325 (22 Kanunisani 1330/19 Rebiülahir 1333/1915): 98; M. Akif, “Beyazıt,” 374-375.

¹²⁸ Berkes, *The Development.* 373.

¹²⁹ Sebilürreşat, “Garba Doğru: Türk Yurdu Yeni Düsturlarını Tatbik Ediyor.” [Towards the West: *Türk Yurdu* is practising its new principles] *SR.* XXI/534-535 (9 Haziran 1339/24 Şevval 1341): 115-7. Interestingly, some Turkist intellectuals like Yusuf Akçura, Halim Sabit, and Ahmet Agayef (Ağaoğlu) wrote articles on the political events in the Islamic world, just at the beginning of the second constitutional period, in *Sırat-ı Mustakim* which was the predecessor of Sebilürreşat.

¹³⁰ A. Süleyman, “İslamiyet,” 167; Abdürreşid İbrahim, “Pan-Turanizm.” [Pan-Turanism] *TM.* I/2 (15 Nisan 1326/18 Rebiülahir 1328/1910): 18.

In spite of the dominant trend among Islamists against Turkism, there was also an inclination that put the emphasis on Turkish ethnicity, as the leading element of the Ottoman and Islamic nation. Certainly for most of the Islamists, the place of Turks among Islamic nations was vital to the extent that the rise and fall of Islamic civilization was considered as directly related to Turks' strength against the enemies of Islam: "[w]hen the Abbassid Khalifs grew weak and fell into a state in which they could not be of any service to the Moslem faith; God had pity on this religion and on Islam, and made the Ottoman Turks soldiers and defenders of the Faith. They took over the Prophet's trust from the last of the Abbassids; they carried the frontiers of Islam to the very centre of Europe."¹³¹ Some Islamists like Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi and M. Şemseddin spoke of the supremacy of Turks in the empire and in the Islamic world as well. By establishing an equivalence between what was Ottoman and what was Turkish, Turks were considered as the line of the unity and as the basis of being Ottoman for the Ottomans.¹³² To save the Ottoman state and nation was seen directly related to the fate of Turkishness as a matter of life and death. It was high time to prefer national interests rather than persons and private interests.¹³³ In Islamist usage, the term Turk seemed to lose its classical derogatory sense to designate the ignorant peasants of the Anatolian villages.

The tension between Islamists and Turkists just after the Balkan Wars increasingly lost its significance during the World War One, because of the Islamist foreign policies of the Young Turk Regime. During the National Struggle, the inclination that emphasized

¹³¹ Ahmet Hilmi (Arusi) in Landau, *The Politics*. 337. He continues that: "The Turks are the outposts of the Moslem army. The enemy knows that the day they destroy the Turks they destroy Islam, and therefore, they try to sow dissension among Ottoman Moslems." Ibid., 339-340.

¹³² Ahmed Hilmi, "Türklük ve Türkler." [Turkishness and Turks] *Hikmet*. 60 (26 Mayıs 1327/11 Cemaziyelahir 1329/1911): 1; *Asr-ı*. 27-8; for similar ideas see İsmail Hakkı İzmirli, *Anglikan*. 289; M. Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*. 193-216, Ispartalı Hakkı, "Türklük gayreti." [Zeal of Turkishness] *SM*. VI/141 (5 Mayıs 1327/14 Cemaziyevvel 1329/1911): 166.

¹³³ Ahmed Hilmi, *Muhalefetin*. 82-83.

Turkishness among Islamists had gained upperhand. Islamists rather, seriously criticized the Westernist ideas of Turkist intellectuals on the grounds that Westernism and secularization would undermine the very existence of firstly the Islamic nature of Turkish (Ottoman) state and secondly the social and cultural unity of Muslims over all the world. Thus, when the Islamists were faced with the dramatic results of a new ideology i.e nationalism, they, at the beginning, rejected nationalism in principle simply because it negates the ideals and teachings of Islam; but in practice, in the course of the events they had to make some concessions in favour of the idea of nationalism, especially if they thought that they could equate Turkishness with Islam and that nationalism could be served for the ideals of Islam. Writing at the end of the world war I, Said Halim Pasha acknowledged the significance of nationalism by accepting implicitly the nation-state system: "The most excellent form in the social organization of human groups in the world is accepted as classifying people in terms of nations. Therefore, this form is naturally the convenient one for revealing and realizing the Islamic truths in the most perfect way... One day, humanity will understand the most true and beneficial type of nationalism by the means of Islamic principles. It is a great mistake to see Islam as contrary to every kind of nationalism."¹³⁴ This did not mean dropping the Islamist ideal of getting a kind of Islamic unity among Muslims. The acceptance of nationality had to be situated within the confines of an Islamic internationalism which was, to Said Halim, similar to the socialism's internationalism. Here what I am trying to suggest is not to claim that Islamists, at the end of the second constitutional period, constituted the forerunners of Turk-Islam synthesis; but rather to delineate the intellectual material which enabled Islamists to revive their Islamic ideals from the ideological elements of Turkish nationalism such as national identity and national culture. It would be more correct to say that Turkish Islamism has

¹³⁴ Said Halim, *Buhranlarımız*. 213, 215. Said Halim's ideas reminds us Afgani's combination of nationalism and Pan-Islamism. Pasha's division of nationalism into müsbet (good) and menfi (bad) forms was developed by Said Nursi in the republican period.

always contained the tendency to regard Islam and nationalism as complementary to each other if nationalism was in the service of Islam not vice versa. In other words, with the dissolution of the empire and the establishment of the Turkish nation-state, Islamists searched for a strong refuge in Turkish nationalism in order to oppose the radical secularization policies of the Kemalists.

3.6 At the Crossroads: How the Islamists Interpreted the National Struggle?

Actually, the National Struggle represented an era of the rising Islamist expectations and of their death in relation to the nature of the new regime which was on the way of establishment. This era also provided us with enough material for understanding the transformation of Islamism and its reemergence in the republican period.

Islamists considered the National Struggle in Anatolia as a movement which was dedicated to Islamist ideals and which was striving to promote the glory of Islamic caliphate by reviving the sense of brotherhood and unity among Muslims. The National Struggle, as “the Islamic revolution in Anatolia” was depicted as the “key” which had triggered the movements of independence in the other parts of Muslim world under the European colonization since Turks were the vanguards (*alemdar*, *pişdar*) of Islam from the times of their acceptance of Islam and since the *ijma* of the *umma* (*icma-ı ümmet*) was in Anatolia.¹³⁵ Expectedly, by identifying *kuvayı milliye* (national forces) with *kuvayı İslamiye* (Islamic forces), each victory of the National struggle (İnönü wars, Lausanne Treaty) against the invading forces of Greece was saluted by Islamists as” the great victory

¹³⁵ Sebilürreşat, “Bugün İcma-ı Ümmet Anadolu’dadır.” [Today, İjma of Islamic Community exists in Anatolia] *SR. XVIII/466* (13 Kanunuevvel 1336/3 Rebiülahir 1339/1920): 277-8; *SR. XX/510* (22 Temmuz 1338/27 Zilkade 1340/1922): 186; “Şuun.” [Events] *SR. XIX/469* (24 Şubat 1327/16 Cemaziyelahir 1339/1921): 12.

of Islam.”¹³⁶ True to this Islamist expectations and commitments, Islamists urged the Grand National Assembly to take a lead in organizing an Islamic Congress which would discuss the social and religious problems of all Islamic nations in Ankara. This sense of İttihad-ı İslam was brought into agenda by Sebilürreşat circle with the aim to improve the political relations among Islamic states and nations and with the aim to base these political relations on the political and legal principles of Islam by creating an Islamic international law (hukuk-u beynelmilel-i İslamiye).¹³⁷

The Grand National Assembly appeared to Islamists as the proper basis in order to establish the Islamic state and in order to Islamicize not only the secularist policies of the Young Turks but also the reforms that had been made through the process of Tanzimat-İslahat Edicts. This was outspoken in more concrete terms by the owner of Sebilürreşat, Eşref Edip in his criticism of Tanzimat and Meşrutiyet: “since the times of Tanzimat and İslahat, the state has always been evolved in the direction of despotism” and “religious institutions, including medreses have been neglected deliberately.”¹³⁸ Meşrutiyet in the form of a second movement of westernization (or second movement of Tanzimat) in the Empire directed itself to the goal that was not completed in the period of Tanzimat:

¹³⁶ Sebilürreşat, “Şuun.” [Events] *SR.* XIX/475 (8 nisan 1337/28 Recep 1339/1921): 58-59; “İslamın Büyük Zaferi.” [The Great Victory of Islam] *SR.* XX/516 7 eylül 1338/15 Muharrem 1341/1922): 264; “Alem-I İslamda Mevkiimiz.” [Our Place in the Islamic World] *SR.* XXII/557-558 (6 Eylül 1339/24 Muharrem 1342/1923): 96.

¹³⁷ Sebilürreşat, “Avni Hakla Sebilürreşat Yirmibirinci Cilde Başlıyor.” [With God’s Help, Sebilür Reşad starts to publish its twenty first volume] *SR.* XXI/521 (11 Teşrinisani 1338/2 Rebiülevvel 1341/1922): 8; “İslami Bir Kongrenin Lüzumu.” [The Necessity of an Islamic Congress] *SR.* XX/512 (3 Ağustos 1338/10 Zilhicce 1340/1922): 210.

¹³⁸ Eşref Edip, “Türkiye-Avrupa Heyet-i İçtimaiyeleri Arasındaki Manianın İzalesine Dair Hareketler.” [Movements which Strive for the elimination of obstacles between Turkish and European Societies] *SR.* XXII/547-8 (2 Ağustos 1339/19 Zilhicce 1341/1923): 10 and “Maarife bir İstikamet-i Salime Vermek Zamanı Gelmiştir.” [It is High Time to give a Healthy Direction to Education] *SR.* XIX/477 (23 Nisan 1337/15 Şaban 1339/1921).

departure from Islam (islamdan uzaklaşmak) and secularizing the state from the effects of religious laws as happened in the Christian world. According to Eşref Edip, if the Young Turks had remained in power for a while, they would declare the separation of government and religion publicly and would erase the articles stating, the religion of the state was Islam, and the government was under the duty of enforcing the laws of sharia, from Kanun-i Esasi.¹³⁹ Islamist criticism against the reforms of Tanzimat and Meşrutiyet concentrated mainly on the adoption of laws from Europe on the grounds that the laws and institutions of Turkey had to be extracted from the nation's own spirit, customs and culture (hars) and that was the only way to protect the national identity (hüvviyet-i milliye).¹⁴⁰ What was expected from the Grand National Assembly in Islamist circles was to reverse this secularizing reform policies by replacing the Europe-imported institutions and laws with the Islamic institutions and laws in their true forms. In Eşref Edip's words, for the Grand National Assembly, "today there are two ways to choose; one is the way of Tanzimat (Tanzimatçılık yolu) and the other is the way of Islam (Müslümanlık Yolu)." What was meant by the way of Islam was the establishment of a "true Islamic state" which would be a glorious achievement in the history of Islam as well.¹⁴¹ On the necessity of an Islamic state, he made a rather interesting comment: "since there is no clericalism in Islam, Muslims' intermediary between God and themselves is not their hodjas (ulema) but their governments. Muslims have always considered dying for the sake of their state and

¹³⁹ Eşref Edip, "Meşrutiyet Devrinde Türkiye'yi İslamdan Uzaklaştırma Hareketleri." [Movements which Seperate Turkey from Islam during the Second Constitutional Period] *SR.* XXII/549-550 (9 Ağustos 1339/26 Zilhicce 1341/1923): 27.

¹⁴⁰ Sebilürreşat, "Avn-i," 3-5 and Muhammed Şeref Bey, "Büyük Millet Meclisinde Şer'iyye Bütçesinin Müzakeresi." [Discussion on the Budget of Religious Affairs in the Grand National Assembly] *SR.* XX/515 (31 Ağustos 1338/8 Muharrem 1340/1921): 246.

¹⁴¹ Eşref Edip, "Tanzimatçılık," 198; "Hakimiyet-i Milliye Devrinde hükümetin Takip edeceği Yol." [The Way to be Followed by the Government in the Era of National Sovereignty] *SR.* XXII/551-552 (16 Ağustos 1339/3 Muharrem 1342/1923): 42.

government as the greatest virtue and deed; because they know that their worldly and other worldly interests can only be secured with state and government.”¹⁴²

As expected by Islamists, indeed, some policies of the First National Assembly manifested an inclination towards Islamization of the state apparatus such as the decrees for the opening of new medreses and for the prohibition of gambling and drinking alcohol. As Berkes noted the Islamic nature of the assembly was heightened to the extent that “all bills of the parliament had to pass the Şeriat Committee in addition to the usual parliamentary committees concerned.”¹⁴³ Having supported these prohibitions, in Islamist eyes, the Grand National Assembly was considered as the most Islamic assembly among the assemblies of Turkey up to that time and was expected to codify the muamelat and ukubat parts of fiqh in order to execute properly the laws of sharia.¹⁴⁴ Similarly as a manifestation of the Islamist expectation from the Assembly, Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi presented a report to the Assembly about the reform of medrese system with the aim of constructing new, modernized religious schools in order to educate the ulema who could extract laws from fiqh and enlighten people in religious subjects.¹⁴⁵ In this perspective, the “Islamic government” (hükümet-i İslamiyye) of Grand National Assembly could not be a laic (laik-ladini) government like the one in France and any accusation of the national government

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Berkes, *The Development*. 448.

¹⁴⁴ Pir-i Fani, “İnşaallah.” [If God Wills] *SR*. XIX/475 (8 Nisan 1337/28 Recep 1339/1921): 64-67.

¹⁴⁵ Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi, “Yeni İslam Medreseleri Hakkında Mühim bir Rapor.” [An Important Report on New Islamic Schools] *SR*, XXI/522, (18 Kanunisanı 1339/30 Cemaziyelevvel 1341/1922): 11-16.

with laicism had to be rejected since the religion of the state was Islam, commanding the enforcement of sharia laws.¹⁴⁶

When Islamists sensed the new regime's increasing tendency towards secularism, they continued to stress the significance of enforcing the sharia laws by making a reference to national will (milli irade) or to people's government (halk hükümeti). They maintained that people, in a country which was entirely composed of Muslims was demanding the codification of laws, emanating from its spirit, emotions and culture. That was the essential right of Turkish people.¹⁴⁷ Unlike the Islamists of the second constitutional period, Islamists this time did not make a distinction between sharia and the nation's mores (culture); rather they tried to protect the first one under the cloak of the second one. The given emphasis to the nativity and its positive effect on the attainment of progress were supported by the examples of English and Japanese modernizations which conserved their culture (terbiye-i içtimai).¹⁴⁸ Again this time, what was stressed in their arguments was not the Islamization of the every aspect of life but rather was the conservation of Islamic characteristic of the national culture from further secularization in the hands of Kemalists. This "defensive" positioning showed the way for the adoption of some Europe-inspired ideological formulations, such as conservatism and pragmatism in order to propagate the

¹⁴⁶ Sebilürreşat, "Hükümet-i Milliyemize İftira." [Slander to Our national Government] *SR*. XXI/528-529 (16 Mayıs 1339/30 Ramazan 1341/1923): 72; "Garplılaşmak Tezahüratı." [Manifestations of Westernization] *SR*. XXII/571-572 (25 Teşrinievvel 1339/14 Rebiülevvel 1342/1923): 205. In fact, Sebilürreşat insisted so long on the Islamic nature of the new regime even after the abolishment of Umur-u Şeriyye ve Evkaf Vekaleti see *SR*, "Devletimiz (layik-ladini) midir?" [Is Our State Secular-Nonreligious] *SR*. XXIV/617 (18 Eylül 1340/18 Safer 1343/1924): 301.

¹⁴⁷ Sebilürreşat, "Ankara haberleri." [Ankara News] *SR*. XXII/557-558 (6 Eylül 1339/24 Muharrem 1342/1923): 95; "Ankara Haberleri." [Ankara News] *SR*, XXII/567-568 (11 Teşrinisani 1339/30 Safer 1342/1923): 175. The beginning of secular reforms such as the abolishment of sharia courts was criticized and seen as the acts of Ziya Gökalp and his comrades who had tried to weaken the principles and laws of Islam for the years, *Ibid*, 175-176.

¹⁴⁸ Hasan Hikmet, "Asr-i Terbiye." [Modern Training] *SR*. XXIII/587 (7 Şubat 1340/1 Recep 1342/1924): 234.

ideals of sharia without naming it openly. As an Islamist writer from Sebilürreşat, Hasan Hikmet put it: “Penetration of a foreign civilization and spirit into our social life is the greatest one of the dangers. Instead of imitating West’s science and industry, the imitation of its social ills has resulted in the decline of morality, absence of solidarity and the weakening of family ties.”¹⁴⁹ To him, conservatism was neither reactionary nor fanatic but it was dedicated to raising Turkish society to its true place and to striving for its material advancement as well.¹⁵⁰ Conservatism also showed the most proper and natural way for the development by paying attention to the spirit of Islamic civilization which contained independent social principles and by its adherence to progress and renewal as well.¹⁵¹

As a reaction to the westernist conceptualization of republic which denied the existence of sharia laws in the new regime, Islamists then underlined the aspect of popular sovereignty in their Islamicly oriented republic. According to them, republic did not mean replacing Islamic laws with European laws in the social life of the nation; rather it indicated the total sovereignty of the nation’s spirit, will and beliefs. Since a republic represented and enforced the national will (*irade-i milliye*), those Westernists who spoke of democracy and populism could not pass this test. Rather, they just spoke in the name of the nation for their personal wills.¹⁵² Significantly, similar to the identification of early Islamic government with *meşrutiyet* in the previous decade, Hasan Hikmet established an equivalence between

¹⁴⁹ Hikmet, “İçtimaiyatta Muhafazakarlığa niçin Muhtacız.” [Why are we in need of Conservatism in Social Life] *SR*. XXIII/589 (21 Şubat 1340/15 Recep 1342/1924): 265. Within this conservative framework, similarly, Eşref Edip vehemently denied any discussion of social revolution (*inkilab-ı içtimai*) which meant the further secularization of social life, “Hakimiyet-i.” 43.

¹⁵⁰ Hikmet, “Muhafazakarlığın Mahiyeti ve Manası.” [Essence and Meaning of Conservatism] *SR*. XXIII/588 (14 Şubat 1340/8 Recep 1342/1924): 247.

¹⁵¹ Hikmet, “İçtimaiyatta,” 264.

¹⁵² Sebilürreşat, “Cumhuriyet Devrinde Kavanin-i Şer’iyyenin Tatbik Olunmayacağı Davasını Gündenler.” [Those who Refuse the Applicability of Islamic Laws in the Republican Period] *SR*. XXIII/577 (29 Teşrinisani 1339/20 Rebiülahir 1342/1923): 74-76.

Islamic government and the republic as a form of government by calling new Turkey as an Islamic republic.¹⁵³ Putting an emphasis on the difference between laiklik (laicite) and asrılık (modernity), Hasan Hikmet argued that the former meant the replacement of what was spiritual with the principle of materialism in the social life while the latter denoted the synthesis of human progress (international) with the national principles and customs; namely the principles of sharia. “Since Islam has assured progress and evolution by its credentials in the past, asrılık exists within our soul”, he continued, “but laiklik is a detrimental principle to the national structure.”¹⁵⁴ In this line of thinking, he also denied the connection between laiklik and democracy which had lived within the frame of Islam for centuries with a different name: rights of people (hukuk-u ibad).¹⁵⁵

3.6.1 How to Reconcile the Abolition of the Caliphate with Islamist Ideas

More importantly, at this period, the discussions on the nature and limits of the caliphate represented a turning point in Islamist theorizing on state and democracy which resulted in justifying firstly the separation of sultanate and caliphate and later the abolition of the caliphate by the Grand National Assembly. Particularly, Islamists advanced the argument that the caliphate, far from being divinely ordained, was a political institution designed for the welfare of the community. This time, more than in the classical theory of the caliphate, the caliph was seen as the trustee of the nation (or ummah) and as the representative of the national sovereignty. Seeing the caliph only as the head of government, this line of thought

¹⁵³ Hikmet, “Asr-i Kanun-2.” [Modern law-2] *SR.* XXIII/579 (13 Kanunuevvel 1339/5 Cemaziyelevvel 1342/1923): 104.

¹⁵⁴ Hikmet, “Laiklik-Asrılık.” [Secularism-Modernity] *SR.* XXII/555-556 (30 Ağustos 1339/17 Muharrem 1342/1923): 73-74; “Asrılığın Manası.” [Meaning of Modernity] *SR.* XXII/559-560 (105, 13 Eylül 1339/1 Safer 1342/1923): 103. Ömer Ferit (Kam) also criticized of interpreting asrılık (secularism) as the total imitation of western contemporary practices including their culture without differentiating the good and bad aspects of asrılık, see “Hasbihal.” [Talk] *SR.* XXIV/612 (14 Ağustos 1340/12 Muharrem 1343/1924): 209.

¹⁵⁵ Hikmet, “Asr-i Kanun-2,” 105.

transferred the representation of the national sovereignty from the caliph to the assembly when the abolition of the caliphate was discussed in the Grand National Assembly.¹⁵⁶

During the discussions on the abolition of caliphate, Mehmed Seyyid Bey¹⁵⁷ made a classification of caliphate as the true caliphate (Hilafet-i hakikiye) which lasted for thirty years after the death of prophet and the nominal caliphate (hilafet-i suriye or hilafet-i hükmiye) which followed the real caliphate of the four caliphs, including the Ottoman one and which was not different from a despotic sultanate. The true caliphate was the one in which the caliph had been chosen by the nation's baya (election) and he had all the conditions, given in the jurisdic theory. Moreover, due to the impossibility of realizing the important condition that the caliph should be from the lineage of Quraysh, it was no longer possible to have a true caliphate for the time being. The jurisdic arguments on the necessity of a caliphate or imamate was related to the fact that the nation could not be left in chaos

¹⁵⁶ The separation of sultanate and caliphate and the abolition of the former as a reaction to the invitation of the Sultan's government to Lausanne for peace negotiations by the Allies, escalated the discussion on the future role of the caliphate in the First National Assembly. An orthodox reading of the jurisdic theory on the caliphate was provided by a deputy of Afyon, İsmail Şükrü who, in his book *Hilafet-i İslamiye ve Büyük Millet Meclisi* (Islamic Caliphate and Grand National Assembly) expressed the idea that there was no spiritual office in Islam; the caliphate, together with sultanate or not, a kind of government unique to Islam. Without a caliph invested with temporal powers, it was not possible to enforce the sharia and even religious practices; see Berkes, *The Development*. 453-4.

¹⁵⁷ The minister of justice, Seyyid Bey wrote a book called as Hilafet and Hakimiyet-i Milliye (the Caliphate and National Sovereignty), but published without any signature, in order to justify the replacement of the sultanate by a spiritual caliphate and also gave a long speech on 3 March 1924 (later published as Hilafetin Mahiyet-i Şeriyyesi) during the discussions on the abolition of caliphate by rereading critically the classical jurisdic theory. For more on his ideas about caliphate see Mohammad Sadiq, "The Turkish Revolution and the Abolition of the Caliphate." *International Studies*. 28/1 (1991): 25-40; Sami Erdem, "Cumhuriyet'e Geçiş Sürecinde Hilafet Teorisine Alternatif Yaklaşımlar: Seyyid Bey Örneği (1922-1924)." [Alternative Perspectives on Caliphate in the Proces of Transition to the Republic: the Case of Seyyid Bey] *Divan*. 2 (1996): 119-146.

and its rights had to be protected by the application of sharia and justice.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, by making an equivalence between caliphate and government, he came to conclude that the caliphate was a matter for the Muslims of selecting the proper form of government in accordance with the exigencies of time, only on condition of being committed to the ideas of meşveret and justice as the basis of that government.¹⁵⁹ It can be said that Seyyid Bey was agreed with Muhammad Abduh that government (caliphate) “is not a matter specifically determined by Islamic doctrine but is rather to be determined from time to time according to circumstances, by general consultation within the community.”¹⁶⁰ Caliphate was a kind of contract between the nation and the caliph, and therefore, the caliph’s authority was limited by the terms of contract and the will of the nation. If the nation conferred authority to the caliph without any limitations, this would be the form of absolute government (hükümet-i mutlaka); with some limitations, it would be meşrutî hükümet. Finally, Republic was a form government in which the nation delegated authority to nobody. This was what happened in Turkey because the nation (or umma) had reached a mature stage of intellectual development, and there was no need any more for delegation of authority on the part of the people to conduct governmental affairs. According to him, the Assembly, embodying the principle of shura was fully authorized to make any decision ensuring the proper conduct of the nation’s affairs and that abolition of caliphate as a great revolution in the history of Islam was one such decision.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Seyyid Bey, “Hilafetin Şer’i Mahiyeti,” [Islamic Nature of Caliphate] in *Türkiye’de İslamcılık Düşüncesi* [Islamist Thought in Turkey] vol. I ed. İsmail Kara (İstanbul: Risale, 1986),188-189, 196.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 201, 205.

¹⁶⁰ Kerr, *Islamic Reform*. 149; Seyyid, “Hilafetin Şer’i Mahiyeti,” 181, 183.

¹⁶¹ Seyyid, “Hilafetin Şer’i,” 201, 204-208 ; for transferring the meanings of the sultanate and caliphate to the assembly with the condition of enforcing sharia see also Said Nursi, *Risale-i*. vol. 2, 1318.

Certainly, the Assembly inherited the moral purpose of the caliphate which was ensuring the application of the stipulations of the shari'ah. The hope behind Seyyid Bey's very justification for the abolition of the caliphate was the expectation that the parliament would enforce the religious law or sharia, which was the caliph's principal duty in the juristic theory: "There is one point on which all jurists and legal thinkers, Eastern or Western, agree and that is the theorem that the laws of a country should be in agreement with the mores of the nation...Just as the West has mores and laws peculiar to itself, the East, and within that out country, have their own."¹⁶² There was the idea of completing the codification of Mecelle in Seyyid Bey's mind when he spoke of the peculiar mores of the Turkish nation in the Assembly.

In fact, Mustafa Kemal used some Islamist arguments which were developed by Islamists, like Seyyid Bey, saying that Islam originally depended on consultative government and on the community's sovereignty. He did this in order to defend absolute sovereignty of the nation as represented at the GNA against those who advocated sovereign rights of the Caliph in the execution and legislation of laws for the nation, during the process of abolishing both sultanate and caliphate. What Islamists and Kemalists had in common was precisely the principle that the caliphate was a temporal and political office.

During the discussions on the declaration of the republic as the new regime of Turkey by amending the Constitution in this respect, Seyyid Bey, according to the Speech (Nutuk) of Mustafa Kemal, saw nothing new in the proposition: "Necessities and not theories dictate laws. The times and events are stronger than everything. The law of evolution is an unalterable law. The proposed form does not include any innovation. When we render the already existing form clearer and more explicit, we shall surely have acted in a manner that

¹⁶² Seyyid, "Hilafetin Şer'i," 218; Berkes's translation, *The Development of Secularism*. 468.

more nearly corresponds to the interests of the country and the nation.”¹⁶³ But in general, Islamist intellectuals of the second constitutional period preferred being silent regarding the selection of the republic as the new form of government and Sebilürreşat, perhaps the only enduring Islamist journal at the time, gave a very little space to the declaration of the republic within its pages without making any comments.¹⁶⁴

The concepts of progress, civilization (with certain emphasis on its imperialist aspect), ittihad, law of nature (kanun-u tabiat; sünnetullah), national identity (hüvviyet-i milliye) and the necessities of the time were still widely used during the National Struggle. Moreover, the new issues such as socialism, communism, masons and dönmeler (members of a Jewish community who were converted to Islam in the seventeenth century) were critically discussed in the Islamist journal, Sebilürreşat. Ottoman lands (Memalik-i Osmaniye) was turned into Turkish state (Türkiye devleti) and even Turkism would not be in contradiction with the principles of Islam, if not deviating into racism. In fact, with the formation of the new regime, the most basic difference between Islamists and Turkists became clear around the hot issue: secularization of law. While Islamists tried to present the codification of Islamic laws through the claim that sharia was the mores and culture of Turkish people, Turkists were more open to the adoption of European laws and to further westernization in every aspect of political and social life.

¹⁶³ *A Speech delivered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk 1927*, (İstanbul: Ministry of Education Printing Plant, 1963), 670.

¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, this journal did not voice any comment and argument for or against the declaration of the republic until its closure by the government in 1924, with the exception of the aforementioned article by Hasan Hikmet. For the news on the declaration of the republic in this journal see, Sebilürreşat, “Cumhuriyetin İlanı.” [Declaration of The Republic] *SR. XXIII/573* (10 Teşrinisani 1339/21 Rebiülevvel 1342/1923), 16-17.

CHAPTER IV

KEMALISM AND THE REEMERGENCE OF ISLAMISM IN THE REPUBLIC (1943-1960): AN ISLAMIST INTELLECTUAL

The philosophers have tried to understand the world; our task is to change it

Karl Marx

The purpose of the following three chapters is to examine how the ideas of state and democracy are formulated in the discourse of an Islamist intellectual, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek. In order to clarify these conceptualizations, generally, these chapters also seek to investigate his main political ideas and polemics, both at theoretical and practical levels, that underlie his articulation of Islamist ideology. In this regard, they deal with how Kısakürek addressed the fundamental issues and stages of Turkish political modernization movement, such as the reasons for the Ottoman decline, Tanzimat, the Republican experience, transition to democracy, modern political ideologies and nationalism. Under these considerations we shall firstly analyse some aspects of Kemalism¹ and understand the place it occupied in the elaboration of Islamist conceptualizations of state and democracy.

¹ Since the six principles of Kemalism were accepted in the third congress of the Republican People's Party in 1931 and were included in the Turkish constitution in 1937, here we use the word of Kemalism to describe a political mind which made several secularizing reforms from above through a social engineering. It is certain that Kemalism as an ideology was in the stage of formation for the period I have discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter. Still, it would be useful to use Kemalism here simply because Islamism reemerged in 1943 when Kemalism established itself as an ideology of the regime.

4.1 Kemalism: Participating in a Modern “Civilization”

The Turkish Grand National Assembly, at the very beginning, was united with the aim to liberate the caliphate and sultanate from the custody of the enemies and contained a wide range of political views, including westernists and Islamists. Within the political atmosphere of the First National Grand Assembly, Islamist views found an avenue to express their opposition to the policies of the First Group which was established by Mustafa Kemal. Second Group² which consisted of different tendencies such as liberals, conservatives and some Islamists like Mehmet Akif Ersoy and Hasan Basri Çantay, showed an opposition to the increasing monopoly of power in the hands of Mustafa Kemal and defended the supremacy of the Assembly. However, the course of the time witnessed the disappearance of the Second Group and the unquestioned authority of Mustafa Kemal and the First Group in the Second Assembly where the regime was able to initiate its secularizing reforms without almost any opposition. Moreover, in 1925 and 1926 through the Law on the Maintenance of Order (Takriri Sükun Kanunu) just after the Şeyh Sait revolt and the trials of İzmir assassination, the Kemalist regime got rid of all potential competitors for the leadership, including the Progressive Republican Party (Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası) which contained many famous personalities of the National Struggle such as Kazım Karabekir, Refet Bele, Rauf Orbay and Ali Fuat Cebesoy, and some leaders of the Union and Progress who wanted to have a say in the new regime.³ These events culminated in the monopoly of political power by Mustafa Kemal and his close friends, in

² For more information on the ideas of the Secound Group see İhsan Güneş, *Birinci TBMM'nin Düşünce Yapısı (1920-1923)* [Intellectual Structure of the First GNA] (Ankara: İş Bankası yayımları, 1997) and Ahmet Demirel, *Birinci Meclis'te Muhalefet: İkinci Grup* [Opposition in the First Assembly: Second Group] (İstanbul:İletişim, 1994).

³ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: the Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1984), 158-160, 170.

Zürcher's words: "...the rather amorphous but democratic political structure of the nationalist movement gave way gradually to a monolithic power structure dominated by the radical wing of the movement under Mustafa Kemal Pasha Atatürk."⁴

In the course of Kemalist reforms, for Islamists it became certain that despite the usage of some Islamist slogans during the war of Independence, the ideal of establishing a "true Islamic state" to realize Islamic ideals was not acceptable to Kemalist mind which regarded Islam, at least in its current forms and institutions, as an obstacle to progress and to the goal of reaching at the level of modern civilization. Since Turkey had to be transformed "from a medieval, superstition country to a twentieth century, westward-looking nation"⁵, there could not be a place for Islam in the legitimization of a new state and society. To westernize what was oriental in Turkish culture, the Kemalists regarded Islam as the representation of orientalism, as Sayyid argues: "it was through Islam that the Orient was given shape. Islam then became a marker of oriental identity. Hence, Kemalists could see that in order to westernize they had to de-Islamize."⁶ In this way, Kemalist reforms were initiated by a set of mind, which exalted the virtues of the positivism, and of Western civilization and by the same token vilified the Islamic past. Pre-Islamic Turkish history gained a significance mainly in order to glorify the "golden age" of Turks who, had achieved great things in their national past as well. Having inherited a new ideology of

⁴ Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party, 1924-1925* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1991), viii.

⁵ Henry Elisha Allen, *The Turkish Transformation: A Study in Social and Religious Development* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 9.

⁶ Boby S. Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism* (London: Zed Books, 1997), 68-69.

imagination i.e. Turkish nationalism, from the Young Turks⁷, the Kemalist modernization has reached its aim: the creation a modern (secular) nation-state.

The Republican ethos, like that of any other modernization movements, was based on a firm conviction of the necessity of becoming a part of the modern western civilization through the establishment of a new secular nation-state.⁸ This consisted of a series of secularizing reforms: the abolition of the sultanate in 1922, the abolition of caliphate in 1924, the prohibition of orders and closure of their lodges in 1925, the introduction of the new secular civil code in place of Sharia in 1926, the removal of the clause stating that the religion of the state was Islam from the Constitution in 1928, the introduction of the latin alphabet in 1928 and the inclusion of the clause stating that Turkish state was secular in 1937. Kemalism, by abolishing the caliphate, constituted a radical “epistemological break”⁹ with the classical Ottoman political system since continuity with the Islamic past was considered as an obstacle to the realization of the Turkish revolution. But on the other hand, Kemalism especially by its stress on civilization, nationalism and positivism was the

⁷ See Ergun Özbudun, “Antecedents of Kemalist Secularism: Some Thoughts on the Young Turk Period,” in *Modern Turkey: Continuity and Change* ed. Ahmet Evin (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1984). For a view seeing the Kemalist revolution as “an extension of the Young Turk movement, in which the policies of that movement, in which the policies of that movement were taken one step further, but based on the same concepts and attitudes” see Erik J. Zürcher, “The Ottoman Legacy of the Turkish republic: An Attempt at A New Periodization.” *Die Welt Des Islams*. 32, (1992): 252.

⁸ For the early western evaluation of the Atatürk’s struggle see Nur Bilge Criss, “Atatürk’s Movement at Its Start: The Views of Outsiders (1919-1921).” *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*. VI/17 (Mart 1990): 345-376 and for the reflection of Kemalist reforms in Islamic world see İskender Gökcalp and François Georgeon, *Kemalizm ve İslam Dünyası* [Kemalism and the Islamic World] trans. Cüneyt Akalın (İstanbul: Arba, 1990) and Richard Hattemer, “Atatürk and the Reforms in Turkey as Reflected in the Egyptian Press.” *Journal of Islamic Studies*. 11/1 (January 2000): 21-42.

⁹ Nilüfer Göle, “The Quest for the Islamic Self within the Context of Modernity,” in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* ed. Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1997), 86.

last stage, though the most radical one, of Turkish modernization movement since the times of Sultan Selim III.¹⁰

In Kemalist mind, perhaps, the most important aspect of continuation with the Islamic past has been its solidaristic perception of society which coalesced without any privileges and classes. As to the continuation of Umma structure in which community was considered as a coalescent unity and everybody was equal in front of God, as Mardin perceptively observed, Kemalist solidarism “was a programme that kept some of the features of the older Ottoman/Islamic culture in the sense of its affirmation of a sense of community responsibility and idealized conception of civil intercourse as free of conflict. Solidarism as an ideology was taken over by the more clearly secular-Jacobin- founding fathers of the Turkish Republic who made it the ideological foundation of republican society in 1923.”¹¹

Political ideas of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was strongly influenced by the positivist and nationalist thought of the Young Turks whose dreams were fulfilled in the Turkish republic, as correctly argued by many students of Turkish politics.¹² In the search of determining the ideological roots of Kemalism, Ziya Gökalp’s ideological impact on

¹⁰ According to Davison, Atatürk’s emphasis on raising the country to the level of modern civilization is “almost pure Tanzimat language- as the Hatt-ı Hümayun of 1856 put it, to achieve a situation in conformity with the position that it (the Empire) occupies among the civilized nations” *Essays*, 260.

¹¹ Mardin, “Civil Society and Islam,” in *Civil Society*, ed. J. A. Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 294 and *Din ve İdeoloji*. 101. Levent Köker, in his analysis of the continuity in the forms of legitimacy from the Islamic-nomocratic form of the Ottoman empire to Kemalism, argues that the Islamic-nomocratic transcendental reference was replaced by again a transcendently constructed notion of positivist scientism, “Kimlik Krizinden meşruluk krizine: Kemalizm ve Sonrası.” [From Identity Crisis to Legitimacy Crisis: Kemalism and Its Aftermath] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 71 (Winter 1996): 157 and “National Identity and State Legitimacy: Contradictions of Turkey’s Democratic Experience,” in *Civil Society, Democracy and the Muslim World* ed. Elisabeth Özdalga and Sune Persson (İstanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1997), 68.

¹² Lewis, *the Emergence*. 292; Özbudun, “antecedents,” 43 and Hanioglu, *The Young*. 216.

Mustafa Kemal's ideas was overstated, though it was significant especially in the areas of solidarism and nationalism. However, Kemalist principle of nationalism with its more emphasis on secularism and westernism differed from the ideas of Ziya Gökalp whose secularism, "in essence aimed at adjusting Islam to Turkish life and of interpreting its institutions accordingly."¹³ Frank W. Creel draws our attention to the fact that the some important elements of Kemalism have clear roots in the westernism of Abdullah Cevdet.¹⁴ Şerif Mardin also states that many of the themes taken up in Abdullah Cevdet's journal of İçtihad -ranging from the importance given to the women's rights to westernization with a materialist-biologist framework-, anticipated the secular reforms of Atatürk under the republic.¹⁵

Kemalist modernization has been characterized by "its radical commitment to emulating and matching Europe and the fragile synthesis it has formed with democracy."¹⁶ This fragile synthesis with democracy has led to the different interpretations of Kemalism among Turkish political scientists. A line of argument which found the basic parameters of liberal democracy as embedded in the very intentions and ideals of Kemalism is best illustrated in Ergun Özbudun's statement:

¹³ Kemal Karpat, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multiparty System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 50. Atatürk's perception of religion as obstacle to progress was also beyond Gökalp's thought on Islam see Mardin, *Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset*. 59, 97.

¹⁴ Frank W. Creel, "Abdullah Cevdet: A Father of Kemalism." *Journal of Turkish Studies*. 4 (1980): 9. This observation is also consistent with the statement that Westernism rather than Turkism has become more influential in the Kemalist reshaping of a new state and society, though the latter was declared to be as the most important foundation of Kemalism see Uriel Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp* (London: Luzac Company and the Harvill Press, 1950): 151.

¹⁵ Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908* [Political Ideas of the Young Turks 1895-1908] (İstanbul: İletişim, 3rd edition, 1989), 168.

¹⁶ Ümit Cizre Sakallıoğlu, "Rethinking the Connections Between Turkey's 'Western' Identity Versus Islam." *Critique* (Spring 1998): 8.

No component of the RPP doctrine provided a permanent legitimation for the single-party system. On the contrary, liberal democracy remained the ideal, and authoritarianism was justified only as a temporary measure arising out of the need to defend the Kemalist revolution against counterrevolutionaries. Kemalism as a doctrine was much closer to nineteenth-century liberalism than to the authoritarian and totalitarian philosophies of the twentieth century. Communism and fascism were never seen as models to be imitated.¹⁷

An opposite line of argument in regard to the relationship between Kemalism and democracy is provided by Levent Köker and Taha Parla. By criticizing the perception of Kemalism as “a democratizing ideology” within the framework of modernization theories, Köker points to the thrust of Kemalism: the nineteenth-century positivism which emphasized the elitist and centralized strong state and which had a authoritarian and nondemocratic conceptualization of the idea of historical progress. At the time when the ideological formation of Kemalism was achieved, it was not possible to regard the western type of democracy as “the final goal” for Turkey. Moreover, due to the necessity of implementing the reforms by the bureaucratic intelligentsia, and due to the political nature of Turkish revolution, Kemalism was transformed into a “bureaucratic-conservative ideology.”¹⁸ Parla’s analysis is more concrete on the non-democratic nature of Kemalism: Atatürk’s notion of republic was not a democratic one but rather a “Bonapartist, plebisiterian and dictatorial republic.”¹⁹ Certainly, since this chapter does not propose

¹⁷ Ergun Özbudun, “Paradoxes of Turkish Democratic Development: The Struggle between the Military- Bureaucratic Founders of Democracy and New Democratic Forces,” in *Politics, Society and Democracy: Comparative Studies* ed. H.E. Chehabi and Alfred Stepan (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 299; see also Metin Heper, “‘Kemalizm’ ve Demokrasi.” [Kemalism and Democracy] *Türkiye Günlüğü*. 28 (May-June 1994): 37-39; Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, “Demokrasinin ‘Prelude’ü olarak Kemalizm.” [Kemalism as a Prelude to Democracy] *Türkiye Günlüğü*. 28 (May-June 1994): 16-19; Toktamış Ateş, “Mustafa Kemal, Kemalizm ve Demokrasi.” [Mustafa Kemal, Kemalism and Democracy] *Türkiye Günlüğü*. 28 (May-June 1994): 20-23.

¹⁸ Levent Köker, *Modernleşme Kemalizm ve Demokrasi* [Modernization, Kemalism and Democracy] (İstanbul: İletişim, 1990), 121-122.

¹⁹ Taha Parla, *Türkiyede Siyasal Kültürün Resmi Kaynakları, cilt 1, Atatürk’ün Nutuk’u*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1991), 79 and 138.

discussing the interplay between Kemalism and democracy in greater detail and is not a suitable place to further the discussion, we try to investigate, in a broad outline, some of the basic points of discussion in order to situate Islamism within the Republican context.

It was certain that Kemalism established itself as the ideology of modernizing Turkey when liberalism and democracy had also been discredited in the eyes of this modernizing-bureaucratic elite not only due to the unstable nature of democracies in Western Europe, but also due to the desire for a radical transformation on the part of the elite. Kemalist modernizers were impatient to see a new society rise in a very short time. Halide Edip, writing at the end of 1920s, stated that such words as liberalism and freedom of thought which implied a slow growth were out of favor both in Turkey and in the world: “there has never been so much ‘doing’ instead of ‘thinking’ as there is in the world today. No other country in the world stands more in need of ‘doing’ than Turkey. This fundamental psychology in the world and in Turkey will tend to create and maintain strong, centralized governments in Turkey, although the dictatorial form is a passing phase.”²⁰

In the eyes of some Kemalist intelligentsia like M. Esad Bozkurt, the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes of fascist Italy and Nazi Germany appeared as the similar political regimes to that of Kemalism which was an “authoritarian democracy with its chief (şef) who came from within the people.”²¹ Hence, the Kemalist intelligentsia saw themselves as the guides of society (the top of pyramid) with the right to determine what was wrong and

²⁰ Halide Edib (Adivar), *Turkey Faces West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 222-223.

²¹ M. Esad Bozkurt in *İlk İnkılap Tarihi Ders Notları*, [The First Course Notes of the History of Revolution] ed. Oktay Aslanapa (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1997), 46 and 73. Just after the death of Atatürk, Bozkurt who regarded Kemalist revolution as one of the true revolutions like the French and Russian revolutions, shared the observation of a German historian: both National Socialism and Fascism were versions of Kemalism with more or less changes see p. 73. Recep Peker also clearly spoke of the totalitarian nature of Turkish revolution see *Ibid.*, 212.

what was true for the Turkish people in the path of modernization. The Kemalist principle of revolutionism (inkilapçılık) meant revolutionary cadres had the right and duty of discovering this “collective idea of the society, express it, and illuminate the people on the road to progress. In this perspective, politics was seen not as a process of accommodating and aggregating diverse demands and interests of social groups but of discovering what is right for the entire society.”²² As a consequence of this conceptualization of democracy and politics, the parliaments of Kemalist regime were composed not of elected politicians but of selected intellectuals, educating and enlightening the people without representing any societal interests and it was a place where the enlightened and rational legislation for the interests of the nation was made. This understanding was on the same side with the above mentioned organic nature of the umma structure. For the reproduction of this organicism by the help of a new cement, nationalism, Islam had to be redefined and resituated in the new republic. The burden for the task of finding an ideological bases for creating a new society and individual was on the shoulders of intellectuals. Therefore, Islam and intellectuals in relation to Kemalism are here primary subjects of the discussion regarding the study of Islamism within the republican context.

4.2 Kemalism, Intellectuals and Islam

After the elimination of the clause that the religion of the state was Islam, the theological faculty of Istanbul University presented a report with regard to the reformation of Islamic worship practices. The report proposed two significant innovations in the practice of worship: the introduction of pews and instrumental music into the mosques and the use of Turkish language in the practice. The aim was not to destroy Islam but to nationalize it.

²² Ergun Özbudun, “State Elites and Democratic Political Culture in Turkey,” in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries* ed. Larry Diamond (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), 252-253.

Through a series of secularizing reforms, Kemalism reduction of Islam to a secondary role as an affair of individual conscience was accompanied by an attempt to give Islam a more rational and national form. Similar to some Islamist argument that Islam should be purified from the superstition which had gradually found its way into the religious life, Kemalists discussed the necessity of purifying Islam from superstitions and Judaistic intolerance to give people the holy teachings of Islam in their primary simplicity. This purification had to be made by examining the whole structure and the foundations of Islam in a rational and scientific way according to modern concepts.²³

Despite the intention of reforming Islam as manifested in the report of reformation in 1928, it is still hard to claim that Kemalist elite had a clearly defined policy of reformation which would nationalize and rationalize Islamic system of belief and its institutions. This reluctance in the reformation of religion might be partly related to the fact that Kemalists did not want to empower the ulema and to continue the ideological strength of religion in the formation of societal and individual mind.²⁴ On the other hand, Kemalists did not aim

²³ Halil Nimetullah, *Milli Mecmua*. (August 15, 1927) in Lutfy Levonian, *The Turkish Press* (Athens: School of Religion, 1932), 11, 14-15. On the March 1, 1924, in the opening of the Assembly, Atatürk stated that “We also recognise that it is indispensable, in order to secure the revival of the Islamic faith, to disengage it from the condition of being a political instrument, which it has been for centuries through habit” *A Speech*. 700. Professor Nimetullah also provided a Kemalist, secular reading of the political life of the early Islam: “The prophet has not given any religious command or direction for the affairs of the State. His successors have also left the affairs of the State completely in the hands of the council of the people and thus they have demonstrated that the affairs of the State are secular and so subject to the will of the people... In modern terms, they were presidents of a republic. But later on, some despots, in their anxiety to secure a religious authority over the people, gave a religious meaning and status to the institution of the Caliphate. They had established a despotic government which is not derived from the religion of Islam. The Turkish Revolution, by abolishing this meaningless institution, rendered a great service to Islam, and to Turkey.” See Halil Nimetullah, professor of logic in the university of Istanbul, the Darül Fünun, *Milli Mecmua*, September 1, 1927 in Levonian, *The Turkish*. 39.

²⁴ Mete Tuncay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetimi'nin Kurulması (1923-1931)* [The Foundation of the Single Party Rule in the Turkish Republic (1923-1931)]

to eradicate the faith in Islam and to accept a new faith, for example a Christian one, but wished to get rid of the paramount influence of Islam in both public and societal life. The failure of the hesitant Kemalist attempt to reform Islam might be also partly connected to the pacifist resistance of the old ulema who took their place in the offices of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. Within this background, it is true to conclude that the basic aspect of Kemalist approach towards religion was the intention of replacing Islam with a Durkheimian “civic religion” which would promote the loyalty of citizenship and individual morality on secular basis.²⁵

Pertaining to the main source of a new civility, Kemalist political elite put the burden of creating an “imaginary”, i.e a new “Turkish identity” on the shoulders of intellectuals by making them as a part of the propaganda of the republican regime.²⁶ Kemalist intelligentsia was the continuation of the intellectual trend which took its main elements of

(Ankara:Yurt, 1981), 220. The Kemalist attitude on the subject of the reformation of Islam might be more clearly understood in the light of the fact that Kemalism has always shown a characteristics of “control over Islam,” despite its changing strategy at different periods see Ümit Cizre Sakallıoğlu, “ Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey.” *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 28 (1996), p. 248-9.

²⁵ Mardin, “Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey,” in *Islam in the Political Process* ed. James P. Piscatori (Cambridge: Columbia Univ press, 1983), 142. Mardin’s observation of a “civic religion” was reinterpreted by Mustafa Erdoğan’s adoption of David Apter’s “political religion” which replaces older beliefs about the forms of allegiance and which is actually a political doctrine but with the functions of political religion. According to Erdoğan, the secularization process of Kemalism resembles the formation of a new political religion which was expected to become the basis of new citizenship and public morality. David E. Apter, “Political Religion in the New Nations,” in *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* ed. Clifford Quest (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 58-9; quoted in Mustafa Erdoğan “Islam in Turkish Politics: Turkey’s Quest for Democracy Without Islam,” in *Islam, Civil Society and Market Economy* ed. Atilla Yayla (Ankara: Liberte, 1999), 77-80.

²⁶ Mardin, “Cultural,” 203.

worldview from positivism.²⁷ Positivism represented “an epistemic community” in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century among the Ottoman intellectuals.²⁸ French positivism rather than German idealism was considered by the Ottoman intellectuals and elite as practical in order to understand the goals of modernization. For this positivist trend, “the “carriers” of the modernist ideology were the judges, secondary school teachers, military officers, provincial governors, university professors, and the “enlightened (aydın) intelligentsia.”²⁹

In the Republican ideology, then, the intellectual was regarded as a representative of the basic goals and values of the regime and as the creator and disseminator of legitimacy in place of the ulema in the Ottoman Empire. This dependence on the state was by no means confined to intellectuals; it was an inherent nature of the relationship between the state and civil societal elements in a country where state was traditionally strong.³⁰ The notions of “a general interest” was central to the conceptualization of intellectual in republican Turkey. For a definition of this general interest, it is true to say that Turkish intellectual has always spoken from within a group whether it was a position of pro-regime or anti-regime discourse. The notion, as well as the perception, of the public was thus crucial in the conception of the intellectual.³¹

²⁷ See Ekrem İşin, “Osmanlı Modernleşmesi ve Pozitivizm,” [Ottoman Modernization and Positivism] *TCTA*, vol.2, 353.

²⁸ Hüsamettin Arslan, *Epistemik Cemaat: Bir Bilim Sosyolojisi Denemesi* [Epistemic Community: An Attempt At Sociology of Science] (İstanbul: Paradigma, 1992).

²⁹ İlkay Sunar, “State, Society and Democracy in Turkey,” in *Turkey Between East and West: New Challenges for A Rising Regional Power* ed. Vojtech Mastny and R. Craig Nation (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 143.

³⁰ See Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey* (North Humberstone: The Eothon Press, 1985).

³¹ Ron Eyerman, *Between Culture and Politics: Intellectuals in Modern Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 105.

The Kemalist project of modernization as a conversion into Western civilization gave a prominent place to the intelligentsia's power and mission of transforming the society in the path of progress. The portrait of the intellectual in Kemalist understanding was a secular, progressive, rational, and ethical one which saw himself/herself as the carrier of westernization/modernization to the undeveloped parts of the country. In other words, Kemalist intellectual is the educator of the uneducated and the civilizer of the uncivilized. This civilizing mission of the Kemalist intelligentsia legitimized the bureaucratic measures of "from top to bottom" to penetrate (and "enlighten") into every aspects of public and societal life basically by means of issuing new laws and education. It should be noted, as Turan argues, the Kemalist intelligentsia resembled the Ottoman ulema in the basic way that they both had the claim of possessing the knowledge and prescriptions to define and to construct the ideal society for the Turkish people. It is likely that the Ulema's role in the Ottoman society was a model for its counterpart in the Republic: a secular intellectual, a "westernist ulema" (aydın, münevver). Both of them regarded their duty as the transmission of an absolute truth (an Islamic dogma or a positivist one) in the construction or in the continuation of the society.³²

At the end of the 1920s, in their project of a civilizational conversion from the orient to the West, the Kemalist intelligentsia were aware of the difficulty of creating a "sense of civilized morality": "the establishment among us of European judgements of value of goodness and truth is still remote; meanwhile no trace has been left of the old judgements of value. Although those old judgements of value did not possess a high meaning, as they were all based on hypocrisy and fatalism, still they were better than sheer non-morality."³³

³² İlter Turan, "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey," in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State* ed. Richard L. Tapper (London: I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 1991), 49-50.

³³ Yakup Kadri Bey, *Milliyet*. (June 30, 1929) in Levonian, *The Turkish*. 162-3.

Yakup Kadri (Karaosmanoğlu) was not alone in his observation that this civilizational conversion which resulted in the sudden fall of old values was creating a crisis of value in Turkish society. Speaking on the event of some conversions to Christianity in the American School at Bursa, Köprülüzade expressed the idea that Turkish society was passing through a very deep “cultural crisis”. This crisis through which Turkey had been passing since the beginning of modernization movement, reached its zenith.³⁴ In this setting, the Turkish intellectual had to face the challenge of putting new values and public morality in place of the Islam-based values that had been destroyed, in order to give a new ideal and a new direction to individual and society. Put it differently, what emerged from this sense of the deeply rooted cultural crisis in the minds of the Turkish intellectuals was the search of new roots.

4.3 What Happened to Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period?

During the authoritarian one party rule of the the Republican People's Party (RPP) (1923-1945) which aimed at “a wholesale Westernization” of the Turkish political and social life³⁵, the Islamist current of thought was pushed out of the political arena, and was not in a position to criticize the radical reforms of Kemalism.³⁶ Whatever their opinion about the secular reforms of Kemalism, the voice of Islamists were not heard at the formation of the new regime. That is to say that there was no active Islamist political opposition to the republican revolutions due to the simple fact that Kemalism did not provide any space for such opposition. Islamists, being very aware of the nonexistence of any space to oppose

³⁴ Köprülüzade Mehmed Fuad, *Hayat* (February 9, 1928) in Levonian, *The Turkish*. 67-68.

³⁵ C. H. Dodd, *Democracy and Development in Turkey* (London: The Eathon Press, 1979), 86.

³⁶ Islamists journals, including Sebilürreşat were closed down by the Law on the Maintenance of Order.

the new regime, directed their energies to the study of religious sciences and to the conservation of Islamic values and forms.³⁷ But still, it would be useful to make a classification of the Islamists of the second constitutional period by determining how they approached the republican revolutions and the question of the new relationship between Islam and state.

The Islamist position towards the new regime might be classified into four lines³⁸: 1) those who took somehow a significant part in the formation of the secular order by emphasizing Turkish nationalism and the rational approach to religion; Mehmet Ali Ayni, Şerafettin Yaltkaya, M. Şemsettin Günaltay, Seyyid Bey and, İzmirli İsmail Hakkı. Actually, the change that occurred in the political ideas of this group in the republican period, makes it difficult to continue calling them as Islamist.³⁹

2) those who did not (and could not) have an important place in the formation of the regime but took a part in the religious and educational institutions; the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the İstanbul Darülfünun. This line of Islamists did not participate in the attempt to nationalize (to reform) Islam and further one may argue that they showed a pacifist resistance to the reformation of religion both by filling the positions in the Directorate and by writing Islamic books on the subjects of tefsir, hadis and ilmihal in traditional ways without criticizing the regime. Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, Ömer Nasuhi

³⁷ Kara, *Şeyhefendinin*. 258.

³⁸ It is sure that every attempt of classification and generalization has its defects, but this classification, though a simple one, is needed to describe the heritage of Islamism in the republic and to understand its transformation. Since the famous Islamist personalities of Islamists in the second constitutional period; Said Halim Paşa, Şehbenderzade Ahmed Hilmi and Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım died before the establishment of the republic, İskilimli M. Atıf was handed by the Independence tribunals with the charge of opposing to the hat reform, thus, they were not included in the classification.

³⁹ For the changing ideas of this group on the subjects of caliphate, laicism and nationalism see Kara, *Türkiye'de*. Volumes I-II.

Bilmen, Babanzade Ahmed Naim, Ömer Ferit Kam, Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır were the most prominent names. Upon the demand of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Elmalılı and Babanzade prepared a commentary on the Qur'an (tefsir) and a collection of the tradition of the Prophet (hadis), respectively. Mehmet Akif Ersoy was also expected to write a translation of the Qur'an again by the demand of the Assembly but he dropped his promise due to the fear that the Kemalist regime would use the translation in its project of Turkicization of worship.⁴⁰ The report of reformation issued by the theology faculty of İstanbul Darülfünun might be helpful in clarifying the border between the first group and the second one. İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, Mehmet Ali Ayni, Şeraffetin Yaltkaya put their signatures under the recommendations of the reform committee while Babanzade Ahmet Naim ve Ferit Kam declined to do so. The latter two were not given a post in the university after the 1933 Darülfünun reform.⁴¹

3) those who waged a cultural opposition to the positivism of Kemalism in order to conserve the belief in Islam, mainly Bediüzzaman Said Nursi. He was a member of the ulema from the Islamists in the second constituitonal period and his influence increased significantly in the republican period through his advocacy of himself (called as the New Said) as showing the truths of Islamic belief via books called Risale-i Nur (Books of Light). Contrary to his political activism in the second constitutional period (called as the

⁴⁰ Kara, "Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinde Dini yayıncılığın Gelişimi Üzerine Birkaç Not." [A Few Notes on the Development of Religious Publication in the Republican Turkey] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 29/30, (Spring-Summer 1985): 154.

⁴¹ Halil Halid 's position is not clear in this respect. Kara, *Türkiye'de*. vol II, 499. The İstanbul Darülfünun failed to live up the Kemalist demand of rapid Westernization. The Darülfünun reform aimed to cleanse the university from the religiously oriented professors in order to assure the intellectual assistance of the university to Kemalism in the path of rationalism and positivism; see Ayşe Öncü, "Academics: The West in the discourse of University Reform," in *Turkey and the West: Changing Political and Cultural Identities*, ed. Metin Heper, Ayşe Öncü and Heinz Kramer (London: I.B.Tauris&Co Ltd Publishers, 1993), 142-176.

Old Said), he was not involved in politics in the republican period but did not escape from the court trials and custody.⁴²

4) those who severely criticized the republican revolutions such as the abolition of caliphate and the introduction of a new secular code by taking a refuge in a foreign country, mainly Şeyhülislam Mustafa Sabri Efendi. Mustafa Sabri, who was a şeyhülislam in the cabinet of Damat Ferit Pasha government (1919) and who opposed the National Struggle from its very beginning whereas the former three groups supported the Struggle. He left Turkey together with the members of the old regime and took refuge in Egypt (later in İskeçe, Greece publishing a newspaper called Yarı) and wrote articles and books to denounce the irreligious direction of the “new Turkey” under the Kemalist rule. According to Mustafa Sabri, the Kemalists, by abolishing the caliphate (Islamic government) and by its strong dedication to Turkish racism, committed apostasy from its religion. What was behind the Kemalist victory in İzmir against the armies of the Greece and Allied powers was the agreement, by the help of Jews, between the two sides on the abolition of the caliphate in return for the acceptance of the new regime.⁴³ By publishing a newspaper called as Yarı, he strongly criticized the Kemalist revolutions and provided some

⁴² Here, it is not possible to discuss the Islamist ideas of Nursi in detail. For more on the various aspects of Said Nursi’s thought see Şerif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1989) and the international syposiom books; *İslam Düşüncesinin 20. Asırda Yeniden yapılanması ve Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* [Reconstruction of Islamic Thought in the 20th Century and Bediüzzaman Said Nursi] ed. Mehmet Paksu (İstanbul: Yeni Asya, 1992) and *Uluslararası Bediüzzaman Sempozyumu III: 20. Asırda İslam Düşüncesinin Yeniden yapılanması ve Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*, [International Symposium On Bediüzzaman: Reconstruction of Islamic Thought in the 20th Century and Bediüzzaman Said Nursi] ed. Mehmet Paksu (İstanbul: Yeni Asya, 1996).

⁴³ Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Hilafetin İlgasının Arkaplanı* [Background to the Abolition of the Caliphate] (İstanbul: İnsan, 1996), see also Kara, *Türkiye’de*. vol. 2, 263-310, Nuray Mert, “Cumhuriyet’in İlk Döneminde Yurtdışında İki Muhalefet yayını: Yarı ve Müsavat.” [Two Publications of Outside Opposition in the Early Republic: Yarı and Müsavat] *Toplum ve Bilim*. 69 (Spring 1996): 138.

materials for Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's deconstruction of the Kemalist discourse pertaining to the Turkish revolutions and its achievements, as it will be elaborated in the next chapter.

Spiritualism gained much sympathy among the Islamists in the Second Constitutional Period facing the dominance of materialism and positivism in the Ottoman-Turkish intellectual life. Due to the fact that spiritualism has a system of knowledge and thought in conformity with all religions⁴⁴, it provided an alternative channel for Islamists and conservatives to discover the real West. As a reaction to the materialism and positivism of the Westernists, spiritualist current in Turkey pointed to the "ethical void" in the foundations of Turkish modernization. Turkish spiritualism was, at the beginning, based on the sufism's doctrine of ontology, Vahdet-i Vücut and later was accompanied by Bergsonism.⁴⁵

Among the leading members of the Turkish spiritualism, there were some famous Islamist intellectuals of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, like Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi and M. Şemsettin Günaltay. In the Republican period, some Islamists, chiefly İsmail Hakkı İzmirli, İsmail Fenni Ertuğrul and Ö. Ferit Kam continued to write on religious matters and continued this spiritualist intellectual tradition. With the transition to multiparty politics, this spiritualist trend eventually provided a fertile ground for the reemergence of Islamist political thought, notably in the writings of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek (1905-1983) and Nurettin Topçu (1909-1975). In fact, if Kemalism was rooted in

⁴⁴ Neşet Toku, *Türkiye'de Anti-Materyalist Felsefe (Spiritualizm)-İlk Temsilciler* [Anti-Materialist Philosophy in Turkey (Spiritualism)-First Representatives] (İstanbul:Beyan, 1996), 23. For spiritualism in Turkey see also Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* [History of Contemporary Thought in Turkey] (İstanbul: Ülken yay, 1994, fourth ed.), 375-382.

⁴⁵ İrem, "Kemalist Modernism," and Toku, *Türkiye'de*. 9.

Enlightenment, the French Revolution and positivism,⁴⁶ these Islamist intellectuals were inspired by the spiritualist and idealist tradition in the West: Bergson's intuitionism in Kısakürek and Maurice Blondel's philosophy of "action" in Topçu.⁴⁷ Indicative of this spiritualist influence, they employed the spiritual-versus- material dichotomy in their opposition to the Kemalist reforms as well as and in their ideological formulation.

4.4 The Revival of Islamism in the Republic

Under the democratizing/liberalizing impact of the San Francisco Conference in 1945, the transition to competitive politics in Turkey started in the following year when the Republican People's Party (RPP) allowed the establishment of the Democratic Party (DP) by some members of the RPP -Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Fuat Köprülü and Refik Koraltan- as an opposition party.⁴⁸ The restoration of party politics, despite the DP's commitment to the Kemalist principles, produced a space in which Islamic demands could articulate themselves. Actually, the RPP itself modified its conception of secularism by initiating some liberal policies on the issue of religious education and worship after its General Congress in 1947. Within this liberalizing political framework, Turkish society witnessed the revival of religious orders and communities which did not lose their hold on some sectors of the society. In fact, the leaders of the Islamic revival were mainly shaikhs of the Sufi orders like Nakshabendism and or Islamists who survived from the second constitutional period, like Said-i Nursi's movement. Islamist circles voiced their views

⁴⁶ Ali Kazancıgil, "The Ottoman Turkish State and Kemalism," in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State* ed. A. Kazancıgil and E. Özbudun (London: Hurst, 1981), 37 and "Democracy in Muslim Lands: Turkey in Comparative Perspective." *International Social Science Journal*. 2/ 43 (1991):350.

⁴⁷ Süleyman Hayri Bolay, *Türkiye'de Ruhçu ve Maddeci Görüşün Mücadelesi* [The Struggle Between Spiritualism and Materialist Views in Turkey] (İstanbul: Yağmur Yayınları, 1967), 23.

⁴⁸ Karpat, *Turkey's*. 141.

through articles in the 1940s and the 1950s in *Büyük Doğu*, *Sebilürreşad*, *Hareket*, *Allah Yolu*, *İslam*, *Müslüman Sesi*, *Din Yolu*, *Fetih*, *Hilal*, *Hür Adam*, *İslam*, *Serdengeçti* and *Ehli Sünnet*.⁴⁹ It is important to note that in this period, Islamist ideas often identified themselves with Turkish nationalism but colouring it with Islamic tones and values. By this combination, they tried not only to desecularize Kemalist principle of nationalism but also to use it as a shield to their Islamist ambitions.

But what is significant here about the Islamic revival in the 1940s and 1950s, especially when studied for the purpose of delineating the intellectual transformation of Islamism, is that, aside from the importance of orders and communities in the process of the revival, we concentrate on the reemergence of Islamist thought, at the level of intellectuals. What is also significant in this revival is the politicization of Islam in the hands of intellectuals who brought the issue of Islam into the Kemalist public agenda. An attempt to investigate the reasons for the Islamic revival, in general, has to take into account the achievements of Kemalism such as the effect of educational mobilization, urbanization and economic development.⁵⁰ But specifically, the study of the reemergence of Islamist intellectuals has to focus not only on the paramount influence of Kemalism with its state-oriented mind but also on the weaknesses of Kemalism, in order to contextualize Islamism. The Kemalist reluctance, if not a failure, of reforming Islam created an opportunity for the revitalization and politicization of Islamic tradition in several forms. This observation might be linked to the paradox which Bobby Sayyid found in the Kemalist treatment of Islam: “Paradoxically, the Kemalists did not depoliticize Islam, but, by removing it from the

⁴⁹ See for the details, Şaban Sitembölükbaşı, *Türkiye’de İslamın Yeniden İnkişafı (1950-1960)* [The Revival of Islam in Turkey (1950-1960)] (Ankara: İSAM, 1995), 165-186.

⁵⁰ Şerif Mardin, “Culture and Religion: Towards the Year 2000,” in *Turkey in the Year 2000* (Ankara: Turkish Political Science Association, 1989), 168.

centre of their constructions of political order, they politicized it: unsettling it and disseminating it into the general culture, where it became available for reinscription.”⁵¹

Moreover, Kemalism, with the exception of Turkish nationalism could not provide a social and ethical map by drawing its principles out of a “credible ideology.” The inability of Kemalism in creating “a social ethos that appealed to the heart as well as to the mind” culminated in an ideological vacuum in a society where Islamic rules and values shaped the everyday of the individual and the society.⁵² Mardin furthers the inability of Kemalism as such to the extent that it neither became a rival ideology to Islam by sending its ideological forms to even villages, nor allowed the emergence of any other rival ideologies to Islam.⁵³

Actually, the reemergence of Islamism in the hands of intellectuals occurred within the given context. Before starting to portray an Islamist intellectual, it would be appropriate to analyze what an intellectual is at a general level and to establish connections with the Turkish context.

4.5 The Intellectual Under the Shadow of the State

The concept of the intellectual emerged in France in the late nineteenth century in relation with the Dreyfus Affair, forging the participation in political life as its main characteristics. Due to the intention of intellectual activity in transforming its abstractions about the world into social reality, the intellectual has a strong tendency to intervene in the political world.

⁵¹ Bobby Sayyid, “Sign O’ Times: Kaffirs and Infidels Fighting the Ninth Crusade,” in *the Making of Political Identities* ed. Ernesto Laclau (London:Verso, 1994), 73.

⁵² Mardin, “Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey,” in *Islam in the Political Process* ed. James P. Piscatori (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 155-6 and *Türkiye’de Din ve Siyaset*. 243.

⁵³ Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*. 148-149.

In other words, the intellectual came to see an “unmediated relationship between the creation of ideas as an intellectual vocation and doing politics.”⁵⁴

From a historical perspective, “the idea of intellectual is a child of the Enlightenment and the forces that supported or opposed what has come to be called modernization. The idea of progress, of social development through the application of human reason to the world, has been a central theme in the generational formation of intellectuals.”⁵⁵ Intellectuals as a distinct social group acquired a paramount influence first in modern western societies and then in the rest of the world as concomitant to the process of modernization/westernization.⁵⁶

Intellectuals who employ general symbols and abstract references, in expressing their ideas concerning man, society, and the universe, create and develop a high culture by transmitting their modes of understanding reality to the next generations through an intimate interaction⁵⁷ It is this prolonged contact with the modern culture which makes the intellectual. But what is more important is that the intellectual is the main actor in the “discovery of the glories of the past, of cultural traditions, which usually was but not always an action, *ex post facto*, which legitimated the claims asserted on behalf of that newly imagined collectivity.”⁵⁸

⁵⁴ George Ross, “French Intellectuals From Sartre to Soft Ideology,” in *Intellectuals and Politics: Social Theory in a Changing World* ed. Charles C. Lemert (California: Sage, 1991), 69 and Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals and the French Communist Party: Disillusion and Decline* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 19.

⁵⁵ Eyerman, *Between*. 27.

⁵⁶ Edward Shils, “Intellectuals,” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, New York: Macmillan, 1968), 401.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 399, 410.

⁵⁸ Edward Shils, “The Intellectuals in the Political Development of the New States,” in *Political Development and Social Change* ed. Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Gable (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc, 1971), 258.

The constitution of the intellectual identity in the West by constructing “the other” was carved out of the bourgeois public sphere, against the middle class.⁵⁹ The other of the intellectual in a French-inspired country, Turkey, was the ancien regime and its legitimating culture (read the Ottoman Empire and Islam). Thus, the constitution of the Turkish intellectual in the republic took shape in opposition to the empire and its values. Conversely, constructing the Kemalist “imitative” modernizers as the other to glorify the empire and to reislamize the Turkish society was a part and parcel of the reemergence of the Islamist intellectual.

The intellectual in the West derives his/her authority and legitimation from the roots which lie deep in the western philosophy and in the Enlightenment. In a modernizing country, the project of participating in the “civilization” has allowed the modernizing intellectual to claim some special insights into societal affairs to judge and to transform the society. The political and social identity of the Turkish intellectual congealed in a context of the debates of how to reconstruct every aspect of Turkish life to join the western civilization while departing from the eastern and medieval one. Expectedly, the discourse around the civilization and the dichotomy of the West and East has been crucial to the formation of the Turkish intellectual, whether as westernist or as Islamist one. In the context of Turkish modernization, the mission of the intellectual was to arrive the level of modern civilization. The means of this mission was politics but with the reservation that politics was basically perceived as education by other means: “it was the process by which the most educated sector of the population acted on the masses and provided them with ideals by which to live and to organize their common life.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Eyerman, *Between*. 33-34.

⁶⁰ Eyerman, *Between*. 62-63.

In modern times, as Shils states, the major political vocation of the intellectuals has been the “enunciation and pursuit of the ideal.”⁶¹ This is true for the intellectual experience both in the West and in the modernizing countries. Seen from this perspective, both the Young Ottomans’ search for the modern liberal and constitutional politics and the republican intellectual’s quest for the revolution (whether in the Kemalist intelligentsia as the Turkish revolution or in Islamist expectations of a true revolution) have largely been the enunciation and pursuit of the ideal. Indeed, revolutionary politics in the modern age could not be explained without mentioning the primary role of the intellectuals as such. Edward W. Said goes further: “there has been no major counter-revolutionary movement without intellectuals. Intellectuals have been the fathers and mothers of movements, and of course sons and daughters, even nephews and nieces.”⁶²

The state featured prominently on the horizon of the Turkish intellectual. Independently of his/her position in relation to the political center, the nature of the Turkish political culture ensured that even those who remained outside the centre were left with an imprint of the *idea* of the strong/transcendental state. This sense of the state was not acquired exclusively by the bureaucratic recruitment of the elite but also through the reproduction of the Ottoman classical values: order and justice (in modern times it meant progress). A significant part of the intellectual heritage of Islamic political thought, as depicted in the first chapter, ensured that the supremacy of the state was given and saluted so as to keep the unity of the political system. The strong state tradition of the Empire had been intensified through the process of modernization in the hands of the bureaucratic/modernizing elite, resulting in the direct and active involvement of the state in the creation of culture and in regulating the direction and framework of intellectual

⁶¹ Shils, “Intellectuals,” 414.

⁶² Edward W. Said, *Representation of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (London, Vintage, 1994), 8.

activity. In the early Republic, intellectuals did not succeed in freeing themselves from the tradition of strong state. Neither the Islamist intellectuals who regretted the destruction of the Islamic institutions, nor the Kemalist intelligentsia who looked forward to a world of new civilization could emancipate themselves from this tradition. It remains to be analyzed how this authoritarian bureaucratic-intellectual paradigm, which was established in the late nineteenth and in the early twentieth century, continued to define the contours of the intellectual intervention in public life throughout the republican era.

In the Turkish context, the usage of the term intellectual for both Kemalists and Islamists was problematic. Because of the emphasis on the sense of a mission, the intellectual became “a contested concept and a *nom de guerre* taken on to do battle with the establishment. Thus, the intellectual took on for a time the same connotations as the intelligentsia: an identifiable group with a self-proclaimed mission to defend ‘culture’, either by doing battle with all established authority or as the defenders of ‘standards’ against those who would degrade them.”⁶³ Intelligentsia connoted a type of intellectuals who were bound up with the idea that they had a mission and even an obligation to civilize and enlighten the dark corners of the society; and the modernizing state was their main instrument and their ally.⁶⁴ Seen from this perspective, both the Kemalist elite and Islamists shared these features. But here, due to their critique of the Turkish modernization and their opposition to the Kemalist establishment by proposing an alternative ideology for shaping the society and state, we name those who drew on an Islamic discourse as Islamist

⁶³ Eyerman, *Between*. 23.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 21. There is a tendency to define an intelligentsia as a collectivity of intellectuals sharing a common ideological, occupational, or even spatial property see Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals*. 20. Alwin W. Gouldner distinguished intelligentsia from intellectuals as follows: “intelligentsia, whose interests are fundamentally technical and intellectuals whose interests are primarily critical, emancipatory, hermeneutic and hence often political” quoted in Rajendra Pandey, *The Role of Intellectuals in Contemporary Society* (New Delhi: Mittal Pub., 1990), 3.

intellectuals while calling those who became a part of the establishment by developing an ideological legitimation for the secular reforms as Kemalist intelligentsia.

4.6 A New Genre of Islamist intellectuals As Critiques of Kemalism and In Quest of an Islamic Ideology

During the one party rule, the political, social and institutional contexts (such as journals, medreses, parliament so on) which had sustained and helped to constitute Islamist intellectual tradition narrowed. The Islamist intellectual tradition, with the exceptions of religious and philosophic arenas, were in a danger of disappearing.

In late thirties and early forties a new group of Islamist intellectuals appeared. A search for an ideology dominated Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, (*Büyük Doğu*: Great East of Kısakürek), Nurettin Topçu (*Anadoluculuk*: Anatolianism) and other intellectuals whose thoughts indeed comprised “the four elements accepted as general characteristics of ideology: a philosophy of history, an analysis of man’s present stage of development, a projection into the future and a plan of action.”⁶⁵ By the same token, their political thinking went beyond the agenda of the Islamists of the Meşrutiyet (adaptation of Western institution and saving the state from decline) by their quest for the realization of the ideal state, community and individual. Apart from the fact that they were heavily influenced by Western (Christian) spiritualism- Kısakürek and Topçu were among the first students who were sent to France by the Republic, they derived their “ideological symbolic resources”⁶⁶ from Sufism (tasavvuf) to formulate their ideologies. Actually, in the reemergence of Islamist

⁶⁵ L.H. Garstin quoted in Kemal Karpat, “Introduction,” in *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. Kemal H. Karpat (New York: Praeger, 1982), XIX.

⁶⁶ Mardin, “Culture,” 213.

intellectual thought in Turkey, Sufism served as a “second culture” through which they have kept an interactive relation with the Islamic tradition.⁶⁷

The politicization of the reemerging Islamist intellectual partly resulted from the Kemalism’s politicization of the intellectual activity. With state management of culture through the new reforms, every field of intellectual activity took on political and ideological meanings in the process of the civilizational conversion. Some intellectuals took part in the creation of the new regime by accepting and producing the ideological norms of Kemalism. But some of them moved into the political opposition by the advocacy of a new ideology. Islamist intellectual was the one who produced a new, modern ideology from the old values destroyed by the Kemalist regime. The Kemalist intelligentsia was the elite identifying themselves with republican principles such as secularism and nationalism as the instruments of westernization and of social and cultural transformation while the Islamist intellectual, drawing from an Islamic discourse, was a dissident who believed that the Kemalist project of modernization did not correspond to the needs and roots of the Turkish society.

It may be argued that the reaction of Islamist political thought in this period went beyond criticism of the modernization of the state and the establishment of a secular nation-state; it also challenged Kemalism's attempts to penetrate into every aspect of Turkish life⁶⁸ on the basis of a six-fold ideology: republicanism, secularism, nationalism, revolutionism, statism and populism. Bound with the Republican intellectual setting, however, Islamist intellectuals dwelt mainly on nationalism, revolutionism and secularism. As the urban

⁶⁷ Mardin, “Culture and Religion,” 166.

⁶⁸ Göle, “Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey,” in *Civil Society in the Middle East* ed. A. Richard Norton (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 21.

Turkish elite culture at the time was French inspired, their criticism of the republican ideology was formulated in a genuinely Western mode.⁶⁹

It may be said that the Islamist intellectual was the one who found his/her emotional core in Islam and its value system. The real problem with the modernization paradigm was that there were many modernities (or modernities and traditions). Intellectuals create political ideas to influence a world that is dominated by the political actors (leaders) and institutions (parties). Islamist intellectuals had the claim to not only appeal to the sectors of the society that were discomfited by the strictly secular reforms of Kemalist elite, but also to give a renewed worldview (a totalistic vision), providing the very means through which a new political ideology against the capitalist and communist ones was available. Islamist intellectual performed its intellectual tasks (theorizing about state and democracy), through the means of communication and literary, namely journals and newspapers.⁷⁰ The publications such as *Büyük Doğu* and *Hareket*, provided the vehicles for the expression and even the very formation of critical intellectual tradition along Islamic lines, basically to criticize and problematize Kemalist project of modernization. Certainly, democratization and the transition to multiparty politics provided the very possibilities for the creation of journals and newspapers which were the bastions of “the counter-cultural intellectual.”⁷¹

Islamist intellectual was different from a nationalist-conservative intellectual on the point that the first recognized Islam as an independent force in the every aspects of societal life, including the political one whereas the latter acknowledged religious values as

⁶⁹ Mardin, "Culture Change and the Intellectual: A study of the Effects of Secularization in Modern Turkey" in *Cultural Transitions in the Middle East*. Şerif Mardin (ed.) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 194.

⁷⁰ Duran, "Islamist," 3.

⁷¹ Eyerman, *Between*. 199.

complementary element of Turkish culture.⁷² The first and foremost aim of Islamist intellectual was to reconstruct Islamic way of thinking and living. Islamist intellectual with his grasp of western philosophy and critical attitude towards political power was different from the traditional ulema. On the other hand, they also “stress[ed] the preservation of the internal consistency of Islam through setting up a channel between cosmological, ontological, epistemological, and eschatological bases, and a axiological and sociological evaluations. Methodologically, there [was] an attempt in this trend to develop a new version of the mentality of *alim* rather than accepting the partial and limited core of the mentality of intellectual in western sense.”⁷³

Islamist intellectual transformed the cognitive framework of the Islamic teachings to produce an ideology which would be helpful in understanding and explaining the universe, the world and the place of the individual in relation to these two. As Mardin states, religion by its “set of symbols” provides individual with enough conceptual opportunities to have a unique perspective in the perception of the outside world.⁷⁴

In the transformation-process of Islam into an ideology/discourse of opposition, the gaining of a religio-political consciousness was seen as vital firstly to deconstruct the “victories” and “achievements” of the Kemalist regime and secondly to create a new worldview in order to realize the ideal system. Islamist intellectuals positioned themselves as the guardians of this new worldview in relation to the place of the ulema as the heir of the prophet in the classical period, in order “to act as the carriers of a cultural

⁷² Duran, “Islamist,” 3.

⁷³ Davutoğlu, “The Re-emergence,” 237.

⁷⁴ Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*. 38, 65.

transformation which will lead to the internalization of the Islamic worldview by the masses.”⁷⁵

In their portrayal of the west as distinct from the orient, it does not seem true to say that the attribution of all that was good in Islam and all that was bad in the West is the prominent feature of the writings of all Islamist intellectuals.⁷⁶ But by the distinction of East and West, they made “occidentalization” to determine what was western and at the same time made “orientalization” to elaborate what was oriental. This attempt, more or less, necessitated the acceptance of an essentialist logic, similar to the Orientalist tradition.

For the Islamist intellectuals, “Islam is a social discourse which represents an *alternative* to the Western and secular *Gesellschaft* in contemporary Turkey, one which would be free of the emptiness and injustice that they attribute to modern society.”⁷⁷ Islamist intellectual was the one who aimed at the re-invention of a Muslim’s “strong self perception” as a source of a new worldview in the face of the western supremacy.⁷⁸

Islamist intellectual attempted to restore the break which Kemalism created by its “weak historicity.”⁷⁹ In contrast to the Kemalist conceptualization of modernity as the project of civilization by adopting the western way of life, Islamist intellectual had the desire of rediscovering the past which might be tantamount to its reinvention. But on the other hand, Islamism produced a type of weak historicity by its strong rejection of Kemalism which was also a continuity with the political culture of the Ottoman elite.

⁷⁵ Toprak, “Islamist,” 249.

⁷⁶ Meeker, “The New,” 209.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 196.

⁷⁸ Davutoğlu, *Civilizational*. 67-68.

⁷⁹ Göle, *Modern*. 131.

Both Kemalist and Islamist intellectuals used history and culture in a similar way, recreating a past for understanding (reconceptualizing) and shaping the present as a source of collective identity and a new society. Islamists intellectuals were those who wrote or spoke out in public either as opponents to the Kemalist project of modernization or as active supporters of the ideologization of Islam. İlder Turan, in his evaluation of the role of religion as an ideology in Turkey concludes that religion has constituted one of the elements of “a political counter-culture”. However, it is hard to share Turan’s argument, at least for the Islamist intellectuals, in that those who were dedicated to this counter-culture were individuals who were unable to deal with change and their marginal status in society.⁸⁰ This reemerging Islamist intellectual, especially Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, took part in the secular milieu and clientele of Kemalist intelligentsia.

True to the very emergence of the intellectuals in the non-western countries, Islamist intellectual was the most susceptible to the challenge, if not the infiltration, of western ideas. One of the reasons for this was surely that he/she had been educated in western-type schools or had been educated in a western country. This enabled him to have a privileged access to western culture and philosophy. Thus, Islamist intellectuals were familiar with the western philosophy, literature and art which constituted the cultural bases for the secular intelligentsia in their project of “civilizational conversion.” They were engaged in the intellectual history of France not only to learn the positivist and materialist current which put the emphasis on the progress and order, but also to acquire the spiritualist current such as the views of Henri Bergson. Thus, through the language they use, the western philosophers they cite, they belonged to the secular culture of the Kemalist intelligentsia. While they inherited, more or less, the Islamist criticism of the Ottoman-

⁸⁰ İlder Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”, in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State*, Richard L. Tapper (ed.) London: I.B. Tauris, 1991, 46.

Turkish modernization by the Islamists of the second constitutional period, they were the products of the Republic.

4.7 Formation of an Islamist Intellectual: Necip Fazıl's Political and Intellectual Biography

Born in İstanbul in May 26, 1904, Kısakürek (1904-1983) came from a family which was descended from a branch (Kısakürekler) of Dülkadiroğulları. His father, Abdülbaki Fazıl bey (d. 1921) acted as a public prosecutor and judge and his mother was Mediha hanım (d. 1977) who came from an emigrant family from Crete. His grandfather, Mehmed Hilmi Efendi was a retired president of the Court of crime and appeal in İstanbul and was conferred by a medal of "Légion d'honneur" due to his participation in the committee which composed the Mecelle. Kısakürek attended several schools, including a local school (mahalle mektebi), French and American colleges, Rehber-i İttihad school, Büyük Reşid Paşa school and lastly Heybeliada Numune school in which he completed his primary school education.⁸¹ He completed his high school education in 1920 in Mekteb-i Fünun-u Bahriye-i Şahane (the Naval School), where Nazım Hikmet also received his education. It might be noted that this military education had a great influence on him and constituted a channel through which Kısakürek was tied to the authoritarian and elitist tradition of the civil-military bureaucracy. In other words, the one basic characteristic Kısakürek shared with the Kemalist intelligentsia was that they were trained in the French-type schools of the Empire, which had been constructed for the creation of modern bureaucracy, including the military branch.

⁸¹ *Anahatlarıyla İlk Necip Fazıl Kısakürek Biyografisi* [First Biography of Necip fazıl Kısakürek] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 2000), 2-3. For a good monograph about Kısakürek, see M. Orhan Okay, *Necip Fazıl Kısakürek* (İstanbul: Şule, 1998).

After his enrolment in the department of philosophy in İstanbul Darülfünun, he became successful in the examination that the ministry of education held for sending students to Europe, just after the declaration of the republic. Kısakürek, being among the first group of students who were sent to France, went to Paris, Sorbonne University to study philosophy.⁸² Kısakürek's bohemian life i.e. addiction to gambling, and his intellectual crisis in Paris were complemented by his doubts about the fundamental values of the west. In one of his autobiography, Kısakürek evaluated the West he personally saw from a retrospective glance: "Paris, which with its civilization symbolized the West, exhibited on its front page designs of miraculous refinement which, however, turned out to be etched on a background of plastic, the latter, in fact attracting one's eye by what it disguised, namely, ruin and darkness; a civilization that was condemned to hit its head against one wall after another and play hide and seek from one crisis after another."⁸³

Due to his bohemian life and spiritual crisis in his Paris experience, Kısakürek did not complete his study and was called back to Turkey by the ministry. Upon his return to the country, he found employment in various banks; Felemenk Bahr-i Sefit Bank, Osmanlı Bank and lastly İş Bank where he had worked for nine years and had a personal contact with Celal Bayar. He completed his military service between 1931 and 1933 with intervals. Until 1934 when he met with shaikh Abdul hakim Arvasi, as one member of the newly emerging intellectual class, he published books of poetry, Örumcek Ağı in 1925, Kaldırımlar in 1928 and Ben ve Ötesi in 1933. Kısakürek benefited intellectually from both some Islamists like Ahmed Hamdi Aksekili and İbrahim Aşki Bey who were his teachers in Naval school and some conservative intellectuals like Mustafa Şekip Tunç and

⁸² For the time being, the hat reform was not made yet. Kısakürek hurled his fez into the waters from the ship which took the students to Europe see Kısakürek, *Babıali* [Sublime Port] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1994, 5th edition), 25.

⁸³ Kısakürek, *O ve Ben* (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1987, 5th edition), 64, Mardin's translation, "Cultural," 197.

İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu who were his teachers in the department of philosophy in Istanbul Darülfünun.

Kısakürek published his books of poetry in the formative years of the republic institutionally and ideologically. Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period did not have a political agenda whether preferring to live outside Turkey like Mehmet Akif Ersoy or devoting themselves to the study of religious sciences like Babanzade Ahmet Naim and Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır. Kısakürek's intellectual mind was formed by both the sorrows of the collapsed empire and the republican enthusiasm of the Kemalist intellectuals. This setting provided enough fertile ground for his experience with a metaphysical/intellectual crisis which he regarded as the foremost condition of being a true intellectual.⁸⁴ He described his crisis as a crisis of a vanguard who was a part of the intellectual of the twentieth century and who had lived in a spiritless and aimless society, while talking about the intellectual background of one of his poetry, *Kaldırımlar* (pavements).⁸⁵ This crisis had been closely related both to an individual search for a meaning of existence in the world and to an intellectual quest for establishing a new individual, society and state from the ruins of the old empire. In one of his works on theatre, *Bir Adam Yaratmak*, just before the world war two, he gave a portrayal of a Turkish intellectual who lived a crisis in the face of a westernizing society and who questioned this society's basis of spirit and belief with a special reference to the issues of God, fatality and death.⁸⁶ In Kısakürek's intellectual life, these considerations culminated in an effort to account for the Turkish modernization

⁸⁴ This intellectual crisis was the search for the essentials, basis and reality of things see Kısakürek, *Babıali*. 205; *Batı Tefekkürü ve İslam Tasavvufu* (İstanbul: Büyük Dođu, 1984, 2nd edition),125-6.

⁸⁵ See Kısakürek's poetry, "Kaldırımlar" and "Çile," in *Çile* [Ordeal] (İstanbul: Büyük Dođu, 1998, 34th edition), 156-160 and 16-20; *Babıali*. 20

⁸⁶ Kısakürek, *Bir Adam Yaratmak* [Creating a Man] (İstanbul: Büyük Dođu, 1983, 5th edition).

movement from Tanzimat to the republic in the context of some significant issues such as national history, worldview, the duality of material and spirit, the distinction of east and West, the future of the western supremacy, political ideologies, and lastly religion.

As appropriate to his own statements in *O ve Ben* (He and Me) his intellectual and political life could be classified into two periods: old Kısakürek (1904-1934) before his meeting with Abdul hakim Arvasi, and new Kısakürek (1934-1983), after this meeting. Despite his spiritualist/religious inclinations that came from the influence of his grandfather Mehmed Hilmi Efendi, in the first period, Kısakürek's meeting with sheikh Arvasi constituted a turning point in his life. Through this meeting the bohemian and crisis-ridden life of a republican poet was transformed into an Islamist intellectual who ideologized Islam as an alternative ideology to both western political ideologies of capitalism and communism and to the Kemalist ideology and who shouldered an ideal of reestablishing the Turkish state and society on the basis of Islamic principles.⁸⁷

Kısakürek, in one of his early writings, "Godless world," (*Allahsız Dünya*) pointed to the decline of belief in God and spiritual/religious life in the world. In an existentialist view, he spoke about the absence of any notion of "merveilleux" and infinity. Moreover, the spiritual crisis of humanity was to be related with the fact that God had withdrawn from the world. The way of salvation from this "Angstphilosophie" was to find out a new metaphysic and belief.⁸⁸ After stating that he was a man of cosmos (order), Kısakürek conceived his involvement in politics as the effort to establish his ideal society in his world

⁸⁷ Kısakürek denounced his early writings and poetry that were contrary to sharia and declared that they did not belong to him any more. But his early life had been a subject of matter in the attacks against him. For an example and Kısakürek's defence see Kısakürek, "Cevap ve Tesbit." [Reply and Fixation] *BD*. 14th period, number 7 (December 1969): 19, 32.

⁸⁸ Kısakürek, "Allahsız Dünya." [Godless World] *Ağaç*. 2 (March 21, 1936): 1-2.

of art and idea.⁸⁹ With the aim to know, find and establish the true regime, Kısakürek devoted himself to the salvation of Turkey which had been in spiritual “flames and fumes.” To initiate a great intellectual movement, he published the journal of Büyük Doğu in 1943.⁹⁰

The period from Ağaç (1936) to Büyük Doğu constituted a period of preparation and was much coloured by spiritualist and metaphysical leanings around the issues of existence, belief, death and art. But his ideological makeup was more or less shaped by the context of the late forties and fifties. In an article called “Ben Buyum”, he delineated the major corners of his ideology as nationalist-Anatolist (opposite to imitative Europeanism and European colonialism), spiritualist (opposite to materialism), maveracı (that which was beyond, opposite to fanatic and atheist), personalist-qualitatist (opposite to unlimited freedom), anti-property (opposite to great individual capital), abstractive and essentialist in art, idea and science (opposite to rootless and non-detailed systems), supportive of class in terms of anti-elitism (elitism) in mind and spirit (antidemocratic), interventionist (antiliberal) but also antifascist and anticommunist.⁹¹ Still at this period, he had good relations with the Kemalist establishment and intelligentsia to the extent that he wrote the poem of Büyük Doğu as the new national anthem in 1938 upon the demand of Falih Rıfki Atay to be presented to Atatürk⁹² and wrote a book on Namık Kemal for the Turkish

⁸⁹ See *Necip Fazıl'ın Şiiri* [Necip fazıl's Poetry] ed. Bekir Oğuzbaşaran (Kayseri: Kültür ve Sanat yay., 1983), 23, 26 see also in Kısakürek, *Konuşmalar* [Conversations] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1994, 2nd edition), 185; *Babıali*. 297-298; *Cinnet Mustatili*. [Rectangular of Madness] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1977, 3rd edition), 279.

⁹⁰ Kısakürek, *Çerçeve 3* [Framework 3](İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1991), 60; *Doğru Yolun Sapık Kolları* [Deviant Branches of the Right Way] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1996, 7th edition), 159.

⁹¹ Kısakürek, “Ben Buyum.” [This is Me] (May 1, 1939) in *Çerçeve I*[Framework 1] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1998, 3rd edition), 110-111.

⁹² Kısakürek, “Büyük Doğu.” [Great East] *BD*. 1st year, vol.I, number 4 (October 8, 1943): 12.

Language Institution (Türk Dil Kurumu) in 1940. The minister of education, Hasan Ali Yücel appointed him as a professor to firstly Ankara Yüksek Devlet Konservatuarı and later to İstanbul Academy of Fine Arts.⁹³ According to his statements, he was even offered as a deputy candidate for the parliament by Refik Saydam in the late 1930s and by Memduh Şevket Esenal in 1942 but was vetoed by İsmet İnönü.⁹⁴ In 1941, Kısakürek got married with Fatma Neslihan, a niece of an Islamist of the second constitutional period, Babanzade Ahmed Naim.

Kısakürek started to publish his spiritualist/Islamist ideas in their soft, ambiguous and general forms in 1936 in his journal of Ağaç.⁹⁵ Later, at the time that Kısakürek concretized his Islamist political ideas in general and his anti-Kemalist reading of Turkish history through his journal of Büyük Doğu for the first time in 1943, there were some Islamist intellectuals who survived from the second constitutional period, engaging in the publication of religious books. For example, in 1941, Eşref Edip (1882-1971), who had been the editor of the Islamist periodical Sebil-ür-Reşad, began the publication of an encyclopedia (Türk İslam Ansiklopedisi: Turkish Encyclopedia of Islam) from a Muslim point of view, together with his friends, as reaction to the translation of the Encyclopedia

⁹³ His experience with teaching included being a teacher of literature in Robert College see *Ana Hatlarıyla*. 7.

⁹⁴ Kısakürek, *Babıali*. 296-297.

⁹⁵ Some distinguished writers and poets of the time sent their works to this journal. As Mardin states, these intellectuals were ambivalent in their quest for a new root for the Turkish society. Many of these writers were later to stand in the left or the right, see “Cultural”, 205. Ağaç as a name of journal for art, idea and action, constituted a symbol of intellectual crisis and also of a search for a new spiritual order. Mustafa Şekip Tunç, Ahmet Kutsi Tecer, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Sabahattin Ali, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Sabahattin Rahmi Eyiboğlu, Ahmet Muhip Dranas, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, Fikret Adil, Falih Rıfkı Atay were some of them. Journal of Ağaç might be considered as the forerunner of conservative, nationalist and Islamist journals that were published later, such as Hareket (1939), Büyük Doğu (1943), Türk Düşüncesi (1953-1960), Diriliş (1960), Edebiyat (1969), and Maveria (1976) see Abdullah Uçman, “Necip Fazıl ve Ağaç Dergisi.” [Necip Fazıl and Ağaç Journal] *Maveria Özel Sayı*. 80-81-82 (July-August-September, 1983): 86.

of Islam by the Turkish Ministry of Education, published in Leiden by an international team of European Orientalists.⁹⁶ Nurettin Topçu also began to publish his nationalist/Islamic ideas by issuing the journal of Hareket in 1939. But certainly, it was Necip Fazıl Kısakürek who ideologized the Islamic revitalization in the 1940s and 1950s by transforming Islam publicly into an ideology, namely Büyük Doğu.⁹⁷ This ideologization of Islam meant a presentation of Islam as a worldview/ideology that did not accept any division in the holism of Islam. These two decades were the times of ideologization of Islam in various parts of Islamic world such as the Muslim Brotherhoods (Müslüman Kardeşler) in Egypt and Islamic community (Cemaat-i İslami) in India (later in Pakistan). But what is important here is that Kısakürek presented his Islamist ideas at a time when the translation of the books of Islamists from Egypt, Pakistan and later Iran, had not started yet.

Kısakürek, following the Young Ottomans, used the literature especially poetry as “an instrument of change”⁹⁸ in the creation of a new society and individual. Journalism, which was the intellectual instrument for spreading Islamist ideas in the nineteenth century continued its significance for the Islamist intellectual in the republic. Journal of Büyük Doğu, in its several periods, embraced a wide range of Turkish intellectuals within its

⁹⁶ Lewis, *the Emergence*. 417. Eşref Edip republished the Sebil-ür-Reşat from 1948 to 1966 this time in latinized alphabet. He also wrote a book called as Kara Kitap (Dark Book), explaining injustices of the RPP, see İsmail Kara, *Türkiye’de İslamcılık Düşüncesi: Metinler/Kişiler*, [Islamist Thought in Turkey: Texts/Personalities] vol. III, (İstanbul: Pınar, 1994),13-111. In the 1950s, Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti, Abdurrahman Şeref Laç, Sinan Omur and Cevat Rıfat Atilhan voiced islamist arguments in their periodicals see Sitebölükbaşı, *Türkiye’de*. 168-183.

⁹⁷ This observation has been shared by many Islamists, see Sezai Karakoç, “Büyük Doğu.” *Sabah*. (March 26, 1968); also *Diriliş*. (May 28, 1983); Mustafa Miyasoğlu, *Necip Fazıl Kısakürek* (İstanbul: Suffe, 1985), 25; Erdem Bayazıt, “Üstad,” [The Master] in *Necip Fazıl Armağanı* ed. Musatafa Miyasoğlu (İstanbul: Marifet, 1996), 306-312. Miyasoğlu stated it explicitly that the presentation of Islam as an actionary identity and worldview was firstly initiated by Kısakürek see Miyasoğlu, *Necip*. 151.

⁹⁸ Mardin, “Cultural,” 201.

cadre of writers. Actually, these intellectuals were not only confined to the Turkish right but also to the large spectrum of left and right.⁹⁹ This does not mean that Büyük Doğu and its writers were united. On the contrary, despite of its early rich cadre of writers, in the course of Kısakürek's Islamist and polemical struggle against the regime, the cadre of the journal had changed a lot. Kısakürek made polemical debates with some of these personalities such as Peyami Safa and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın. In some periods, Kısakürek himself, under pseudonyms¹⁰⁰ wrote many articles in the journal. It should also be added that the journal also played a significant role in the creation of a group of Islamist intellectuals by opening its pages to these new writers.¹⁰¹

One may argue that through his journal of Büyük Doğu, his political party under the same name and his conferences in every part of the Anatolia, Kısakürek was a political intellectual who was not only a producer of ideas but also tried to establish a “material source” to embody his political and social ideas in his life.¹⁰² With his insistence on publishing the journal of Büyük Doğu, despite its close down sometimes by the regime

⁹⁹ To give some names might be useful in understanding Kısakürek's intellectual repertoire, Hasan Basri Çantay, M. Şerafettin Yaltkaya, Ali Fuat Başgil, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Asaf Halet Çelebi, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Burhan Toprak, Burhan Belge, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, Peyami Safa, Cemil Meriç, Nurettin Topçu, Eşref Edip (Fergan), Mümtaz Turhan, M. Şekip Tunç, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Oktay Akbal, Taha Akyol, Pertev Naili Boratav, Sait Faik Abasıyanık and Ziya Osman Saba.

¹⁰⁰ Kısakürek used a lot of pseudonyms: Adideğmez, Mürid, Ahmet Abdülbaki, Dilci, Ozan, Adını Vermeyen Profesör, Dedektif X Bir, Zabıt Katibi, M. Sarıçizmeli, Prof. Ş.Ü., Dağların Çocuğu, Laedri, Muhasebeci, Pertavsız, Müstensih, Eski Bir Türk Zabiti, Rıdvan Balkır see Muzaffer Doğan, “Necip Fazıl Kısakürek'in Eserleri,” [Works by Necip fazıl Kısakürek] in *Suffe Kültür Sanat Yılığı: Necip Fazıl Armağanı* (İstanbul: Suffe, 1984), 241-242.

¹⁰¹ To name a few, Sezai Karakoç, Rasim Özdenören, Erdem Bayazıt, Akif İnan, Bahri Zengin, Mehmet Şevket Eygi, Hekimoğlu İsmail, and others.

¹⁰² Jerzy Szacki, “Intellectuals between politics and culture,” in *The Political Responsibility of Intellectuals* ed. Ian Maclean, Alan Montefiore and Peter Winch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 239.

and sometimes by lack of finance, his activities, constitutive of critical discourse against Kemalism, continued in the form of political journalism. Before the liberalization in 1946, the appearance of a political journal, critical of Kemalist reforms was a rare occurrence.

The publication of *Büyük Doğu* might be regarded the start of his Islamist struggle both in terms of the exposition of his ideology in various issues of *Büyük Doğu* and in terms of his opposition to the Kemalist regime. His ideological struggle was in terms of the ideal of Islamic umma and Islamic civilization.¹⁰³ By the publication of *Büyük Doğu*, Kısakürek's way totally departed from Kemalist and leftist intellectuals and he was called as Islamic fascist or Islamic communist or neo-Muslim or ex-poet by these circles in order to point to his ideological way. Trials and prison terms started at the same time. *Büyük Doğu* was closed down by the decision of the committee of ministers in 1944 on the grounds that it incited disobedience to the regime by issuing a tradition of the prophet, stating that there was no obedience to those who did not obey God. In 1946, Kısakürek was tried in courts three times for the similar reasons, and the following year, he was in prison for having insulted Turkishness (*Türklüğe hakaret davası*). Kısakürek was in prison when the DP came to power in 1950 and released by the first Menderes government's law of amnesty.¹⁰⁴ Kısakürek's inclination to political action for the realization of his ideology manifested itself by establishing *Büyük Doğu* Association which called for Muslims to

¹⁰³ Kısakürek denied to meet with his brother who announced publicly that he did not share Kısakürek's ideas. Kısakürek severely criticized his brother by the statement that "you rejected an umma, a civilization in my personality. There could not be any link with a brother who did not share my loft ideal," quoted by his son Mehmet Kısakürek in Mustafa Özdamar, *Üstad Necip Fazıl* [Master Necip Fazıl] (İstanbul: Kırk Kandil, 1997), 83.

¹⁰⁴ *Anahatlarıyla*. 7-9; Kısakürek, *Müdafaalarım* [My Defenses] (İstanbul: *Büyük Doğu*, 1994, 5th edition), 91-92. The trials and prisons had not separated from Kısakürek until his death in 1983. It would be enough to enlist some of his trials by their names and dates: Sümerbank (1946), *Türklüğe hakaret* and *Rejimi Kötüleme* (1947), *Şapka* (1950), Malatya (1952, 1954), 1965, Great East Association (1967), 1968, 1969, 1970 and lastly Vahidüddin (his death) for the details of Kısakürek's defences in these trials, see *Müdaafalarım*.

gather around a view of world, human being and society in 1949. In the same year, like Mustafa Kemal, starting from Samsun, he gave several conferences in various parts of Anatolia in order to ferment a new youth and to put his ideal into an action.¹⁰⁵ As I will discuss in related sections in the following two chapters, Kısakürek gave political support to the leaders of the right, from Adnan Menderes in the 1950s, to Süleyman Demirel in the 1960s and to Necmettin Erbakan and Alparslan Türkeş in the 1970s. This did not mean that he established a stable relation with these leaders. Due to the fact that he tried to persuade these political leaders in implementing the Great East ideology, his political relations had a changing nature. But what had not changed was his insistence on the search for a political reason to realize his political ideas. Until his death in 1983, he continued to give conferences in different parts of Turkey and to publish books and the journal of *Büyük Doğu* despite several interruptions.

Before we start to study Kısakürek's political ideas in the next two chapters, an exposition of his view of the intellectual and his evaluation of the Turkish intellectual might be illuminating for further analysis. Apart from his political struggle, it should be stated that Kısakürek paid significant attention to the discussions of the intellectual and the Turkish intellectual within the framework of the country's salvation. From a Platonian view, he regarded an intellectual as the one who would save his people from the darkness of four or five centuries. What the Turkish society and Islamic world needed was the emergence of a true intellectual who had a true worldview in evaluating world, society and state.¹⁰⁶ Intellectuals as the avant-garde had been always in a position to revolt in their search for

¹⁰⁵ Kısakürek, *Benim Gözümde Menderes* [Menderes in My Eyes] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 3rd edition), 116.

¹⁰⁶ Kısakürek, *Tanrı Kulundan Dinlediklerim* [What I Heard from the slave of God](İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 4th edition), 263; *Sahte Kahramanlar* [False Heroes] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1987, 4th edition), 9-11; *Konuşmalar*. 47; *Doğru*. 147; *Hitabeler* [Speeches] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1985, 2nd edition), 73.

the ideal society and state and could not be satisfied with the existing ones.¹⁰⁷ Looking at the history of the Turkish intellectual, Kısakürek presented a positive picture compared to the medieval intellectual who was in total agreement with his society and civilization. The medieval intellectual stood in a systemized platform which was established by his society and Islamic belief and ideology. Fuzuli, Baki, Nabi, Nefi, Nedim, Şeyh Galip, Sinan, Katip Çelebi and Dede Efendi represented different dimensions of a true intellectual who had: "a view of world, a view of things and events, a decision of what was good and bad, a measure of perfection, a desire for tomorrow, a balance of criticism, a cultural tie, an individual web and a concern of society."¹⁰⁸

But besides the urgent need of a true intellectual/hero, Tanzimat and post-Tanzimat intellectuals could not give a birth to "an evolution of an internal world" in the realization of the new coming world (the supremacy of the West) but adhered to mere admiration and imitation. The West, to this imitative intellectual was not "a problem" to be matured in the national quality but a "phenomenon" to be worshipped.¹⁰⁹ Since Tanzimat, the existence of false intellectuals/heroes who exploited the national will in the service of the enemies of the nation and of Islam had been the vital issue of the Turkish history. All leading statesmen like Mustafa Reşit Pasha, Ali and Fuat pashas and well-known intellectuals like Namuk Kemal and Ziya Gökalp were false heroes/intellectuals.¹¹⁰ Intellectuals of his time,

¹⁰⁷ Kısakürek, *Rapor 7/9* [Report 7/9] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 2nd edition), 204.

¹⁰⁸ Kısakürek, "Manzara 2: Türk Orta Çağ Sanatkar ve Entellektüeline Kısa Bir Bakış." [Scene 2: A Short Look at Turkish Medieval Artisan and Intellectual] *Ağaç*. 5 (April 11, 1936):1.

¹⁰⁹ Kısakürek, "Manzara 3: Tanzimat Sanatkar ve Entellektüeline Kısa bir Bakış." [Scene 3: A Short Look at Tanzimat's Artisan and Intellectual] *Ağaç*. 6 (April 18, 1936): 1-2; "Manzara 5: Büyük Harp Sonrası Türk Sanatkar ve Entellektüeline Kısa Bir bakış." [Scene 5: A Short Look at Turkish Artisan and Intellectual After the Great War] *Ağaç*. 8 (May 23, 1936): 1-2.

¹¹⁰ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 59, 63, 79; "Milli İrade." [National Will] *BD*. (July 10, 1965) in *Çerçeve 3* [Framework 3]. 262-3.

centered around Babıali ¹¹¹ were far from being representatives of the true intellectual. In his book of Babıali, through his intellectual autobiography, he severely criticized the members of Turkish intellectual, from Nazım Hikmet to Peyami Safa. ¹¹² Kadro movement also belonged to the chain of false intellectuals by its futile attempt of providing the National Struggle and Kemalism with a communist ideology and a new nationalism. ¹¹³ In sum, Kısakürek could not see the grand intellectual who combined an idea with an action in neither his own generation and nor in the coming generations of the republic. To Kısakürek, those individuals who gained the status of being intellectual in the context of their support to the imitative modernization process through the institutions of the Kemalist establishment could not be named as intellectuals. To him, in a Mannheimian sense, intellectuals were those individuals who were entitled to present a worldview to their society. ¹¹⁴ An intellectual was, thus, in essence a thinker and a hero whose concern was to create, to explain and, in this way, to help overcome the obstacles barring the way to the attainment of a worldview in general, the ideology of the Great East in particular. The vanguard role in the revolution, putting the ideology into action, was given to the intellectual as well. As such the intellectual became the expected savior (beklenen kurtarıcı) of Turkey and the Islamic world.

¹¹¹ Babıali in its political usage was originally the Subleme Porte, the central office of the imperial government of the Ottoman Empire in İstanbul. But here, Kısakürek enlarged its second meaning (a quarter in İstanbul that had a concentration of publishers) to connote to the Turkish intellectuals, including artists, musicians, writers, poets and journalists.

¹¹² See Kısakürek, *Babıali*. 110, 225, 270, 283-284.

¹¹³ Kısakürek, “Yedinci Mektup.” [Seventh Letter] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number 11 (December 26, 1943): 5, 11 see also *Tanrı*. 190-191; *Hesaplaşma* [Settling Accounts] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1985), 137-138; *Hitabeler*. 34.

¹¹⁴ See Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge, 1936/1960), 10.

4.8 The Relevance of Sufism and Nakshibendi Order as the Spiritual Sources of Islamist Intellectuals

Despite the abolition of religious orders, Sufism and its institution *tariqa* (order) did not lose their hold among the intellectuals and masses in the republican period.¹¹⁵ By its adherence to individual purification and perfection, Sufism meant mainly “an interiorization of Islam, a personal experience of the central mystery of Islam, that of *tawhid*, to declare that God is One.”¹¹⁶ A religious order was the organization that provided the education of perfection for the individual salvation by means of a relationship of a master-an disciple (sheikh and murid). Among many orders who survived in the republican period, here we put the stress on Nakshibendi order¹¹⁷ which influenced many rightist and Islamist intellectuals and political leaders. Nakshibendi order was characterized by “its strict observance of shariah and the normative example of the prophet and his caliphs, compared with other sufi orders’ spiritual exercises,”¹¹⁸ and served well

¹¹⁵ For a general view on orders in the Ottoman empire see articles in *The Dervish Lodge, Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “İslam, Tasavvuf ve Tarikatlar.” [Islam, Sufism and Religious Orders] *Türkiye Günlüğü*. 45 (March-April 1997): 5-10.

¹¹⁶ Annemaria Schimmel, *Mystical Dimension of Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 17. For more on Sufism’s views on universe, man, nature and so on see Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi, *The Doctrine of The Sufis* trans. Arthur John Arberry (Cambridge: The University Press, 1935) and Mahir İz, *Tasavvuf* [Sufism] (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1990, 4th edition).

¹¹⁷ Halidiye, a significant branch of Nakshibendi order that had been influential on Turkey, including Kurdish populated areas of the southeastern region. This branch was tied to the teachings of Mawlana Khalid and represented in the Ottoman empire by Gümüşhanevi Ahmed Ziyaüddin whose influence extended itself to the republic on politicians and intellectuals, for his life and ideas see İrfan Gündüz, *Gümüşhanevi Ahmed Ziyaüddin: Hayatı-Eserleri-Tarikat Anlayışı ve Halidiyye Tarikatı* [Gümüşhanevi Ahmed Ziyaüddin: His Life, Works, Understanding of Religious Order and Khalidiye]. (İstanbul: Seha, 1984).

¹¹⁸ Mardin, “The Nakşibendi Order in Turkish History,” in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State* ed. Richard L. Tapper (London: I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 1991), 124; Hamid Algar, “The Naqshbandi Order in Republican Turkey.” *Islamic World Report*. 1/3 (1996): 51.

for the creation of an Islamist ideology, spiritually based while keeping the compatibility with the literal readings of the Qur'an. Despite their early support to the process of modernization in the reign of Mahmud II, upon a further secularization trend in Tanzimat, the Nakshibendis showed opposition to this process as in the so called Kuleli Incident of 1859. Nakshibendism as a mystic order by its emphasis on sharia might be considered as the most successful synthesis of Gellnerian dual cultural systems of Islam: the High Islam (scripturalist, rule-observant, sober, learning oriented, anti-mediationist, and puritanical) and Low or Folk Islam (ritualistic, hierarchic, magical, ecstatic and saint-mediated).¹¹⁹ Nakshibendism also has become a significant avenue for Islamic revivalist movements, aiming at transforming the Folk Islam in the way of scripture and early "true" Islamic experience.

Due to the Nakshibendi's stress on sharia, Kısakürek did not advocate an approach which allowed a large liberty to the interpretation of Islamic truths. He preferred a blend of mystical and literal interpretations, while the latter was more dominating than the former one. His orthodox Sufi brand of Islam, Nakshibendi order, with its strong advocacy of sharia provided an important key (as a spiritual element) to the foundations of his ideology, the Great East, as well as to its position in relation to Islam. Nakshibendi order, perceived as the threat to the republican regime had "an image of subversion" on the part of the Kemalist intelligentsia.¹²⁰ It was significant that the first Islamist opposition, in the republican period, to the Republican reforms in particular and to the whole process of the Ottoman-Turkish modernization in general, on the grounds that they were imitative and

¹¹⁹ See Ernest Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1992), 9-14.

¹²⁰ Mardin, "The Nakşibendi," 121.

alien to Islamic/national roots of the Turkish nation/society was influenced by a Nakshibendi shaikh, Abdul Hakim Arvasi.¹²¹

The activating force of Sufi orders, especially of Nakshibendism in the nineteenth-century on masses was not new but its employment in the ideologization of Islam by a succesful poet of the republic, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek might be regarded as a novelty worthy to be studied. Seen in his autobiographies, *Babıali* and *O ve Ben*, the Turkish intellectual was in a spiritual crisis in solving the problem of identity against the coming new world and the Kemalist project of civilizational conversion. The crisis of morality in the republic could be solved by a Sufi understanding of Islam which was based on the search of a high standard morality for both individual and society. Kısakürek personally solved his intellectual crisis by the help of a Sufi map of world and universe. In Plotanian sense, Kısakürek as an intellectual/saver came back from the world of ideas (Sufi world) to save the society and individual and threw himself to the public sphere (agora).¹²²

According to Kısakürek, Sufism was the internal side of Islam whereas sharia was its external form. Hence, Islam was the expression of these two orders (rejim) which were organically tied to each other as a non-divisible totality. The Islamic understanding of the spirit, material, morality, this world, other world, meaning of existence, and of the way of eternal life were to be found in Sufism. The view that attached Sufism to the Neo-Platonic

¹²¹ Arvasi came from a Kurdish family of a long-standing Sufi and ‘alim tradition. He came to Istanbul in 1919 and was appointed postnişin at the Murtaza Efendi tekke. He was twice arrested, first in 1925 and then in 1933, and in 1943 he was banished to İzmir. Dying the same year, he was buried in the village of Bağlum in Ankara see Algar, “The Naqshbandi,” 60-61.

¹²² Kısakürek, *Battı*. 138 and *O ve Ben*.107. Kısakürek’s sensitivity to the classical Sunni beliefs was so apparent that he preferred Imam Rabbani’s vahdet-i Şuhud to Muhyiddin Arabi and Hallac-ı Mansur’s’s idea of Vahdet-i Vücut, see *Battı*. 126, 166, 173; *Tanrı*. 9; *Tarih Boyunca Büyük Mazlumlar* [Oppressed throughout the History] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1985, 3rd edition),153-157.

school of philosophy was rejected by Kısakürek on the grounds that sufism came from an original source, the prophet.¹²³

He attempted to build Islamic bases for an ideology of action from sufism. This fact might be related to Mardin's observation that the Nakshibendi order in Turkey has been able "to change its idiom in accordance with circumstances and mobilize the intelligenti as well as large populations" in a way which western political ideologies like communism and socialism has intended to bring to fruition.¹²⁴ The influence of Nakshibendis in the revival of Islamism in the Republic was mainly due to the fact that after the abolition of the medreses in the very early years of the Republic, they provided the religious learning and education: "in the early part of the republican period, many Naqshbandi shaykhs assumed the task of maintaining Islamic learning in Turkey. Whereas the class of ulama could be dissolved with great ease by the state to which it had always been tied, the tarikats, with their autonomy and closeness to the people, were a different matter."¹²⁵

Kısakürek's meeting with Shaikh Abdülhakim Arvasi¹²⁶ made such a great influence on the young poet that later he attributed all his religious and political ideas, ranging from the glorification of Abdul Hamid II to the strong rejection of Islamist modernists like Afghani

¹²³ Kısakürek, *İdeolocya Örgüsü* [Ideological Web] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1986, 5th edition), 126-127; *Sahte*. 270-271.

¹²⁴ Mardin, "Aspects of a sociology of Islam." *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations*. Annual 2 (1987):151.

¹²⁵ Algar, "The Naqshbandi," 62. The Nakshibendis have always been more willingful in the study of the religious sciences, including many ulema among their ranks, than other Sufi orders.

¹²⁶ Abdülhakim Arvasi's emphasis was on the advocacy to the classical Sunni understanding of Islam. He, like his follower Kısakürek, "waged polemical battles not only against the 'secularism' of the republic, but also against Shi'ism, Wahhabism, the so-called Salafi school of Afghani and Abduh, and any manifestation of what was rather broadly called 'reformism' (reformluk)." Algar, "The Naqshbandi," 61.

and Abduh, to his spiritual master.¹²⁷ True to the fact that the Nakshibendi order had a function in the Ottoman integration of heterodox groups to Sunni orthodoxy¹²⁸, Kısakürek took a positive attitude towards the Ottoman past in general. Although they were not among those orders which obtained Abdul Hamid II's support of Sufism in his reign, the Nakshibendis of Turkey have had a very positive view about the sultan; Arvasi was not an exception to this. Nakshibendism appeared in Kısakürek's ideological framework as the soul and spirit of the ideologization of Islam. Accompanying the Nakshibendi order's role in the creation of a new ideology as an alternative to modern political ideologies, was his presentation of it as the true Islam against the reformist approaches. Its emphasis on the identity of Muslims was linked to the rejection of imitating the western civilization. Sufism also contributed much to the solving of identity and belief crisis at the level of intellectuals. By the accession to spiritual world, Sufism kept its attractiveness for the Turkish intellectual in the secularizing framework of the Kemalist republic.

¹²⁷ This meeting of 1934 was a turning point/a revolution in his ideological makeup. In the book, "O ve Ben", he divided his life into basically two parts: before (1904-1934) and after his meeting with the shaikh (1934-until his death in 1983). Kısakürek later conceived his position in front of Shaikh Arvasi as the position of Platon in the face of Sokrat. He only gave the expression to his master's understanding of Islam. Hence, through sufism he found the most perfect manifestations of spiritual philosophic explanations about the world and the universe, *Konuşmalar*. 81, 84 and Ahmet Kabaklı, *Sultanî's-Şuara Necip Fazıl* [The King of the Poets Necip Fazıl] (İstanbul: Türk Edebiyatı Vakfı yay., 1995), 143.

¹²⁸ Şerif Mardin, "The Nakshibendi Order of Turkey," in *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economics and Militance* ed Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 207.

CHAPTER V

FROM PROGRESS TO IDEOLOGY: ISLAM AS A HARD IDEOLOGY IN KISAKÜREK'S POLITICAL IDEAS

Just as the political writing of the Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek developed his Islamist ideas within the confines of the debate on the decline of the Ottoman state. Expectedly, this debate led him to the critique of the Turkish modernization process and the Republican reforms. With the aim to present an alternative way to the Kemalist modernization project, he, similar to the Islamist emphasis on progress and civilization in the second constitutional period, saw Islam as a “hard ideology” which would determine every aspect of political, social and economic life. His formulation of Great East was derived from Islam in order to save the Turkish nation and the Islamic world from the centuries-old decline.

5.1 Formation of A critical Discourse around the Decline

In the explanation of the reasons why the Islamic civilization declined, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek shared the mainline Islamist conviction that this mainly stemmed from the influence of pre/un-Islamic traditions, like that of Byzantine and Persian impact. Like all the Islamist arguments, the departure of Muslims from the true Islamic principles (sharia) and from the practices of the early Islam constituted the major part in Kısakürek's analysis of the decline. Unlike the Islamist trend in the Young Ottomans and in the second constitutional period, Kısakürek's interest in the discussion of the decline was not directed to prove that Islam was not an obstacle to progress and civilization though he vehemently refused the idea that Islam was the cause of the Muslims' decline.¹

¹ See Kısakürek, *Battı*. 215; *Dünya Bir İnkılap Bekliyor* [World is Waiting a Revolution] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 3rd edition), 23; *Rapor 7/9*. 125.

In the Ottoman Empire² which, in his eyes, was the “realization of true civilization” in the Turkish history, the decline had started in the sixteenth century when the Islamic spirit and ideology (the love and ecstasy; aşk ve vecd) had begun to become frozen in a mood of pride about the greatness of the empire. Due to the absence of a Turkish thinker/philosopher as a saviour in the Turkish history, Islamic spirit and ideology, just after the passing of the great conquests, could not be translated into new interpretations, especially into the “firm and continuous ideal of city” (Site, medine mefkuresi).³ In the centuries that followed the reign of Sultan Suleyman the Lawful, this loss had been complemented by the increasing power of the rude fanatics (kaba softa, ham yobaz) who sacrificed Islam, in the name of sharia, to their self-interests whereas in the same centuries, through the attempt of the Renaissance, the West had been systematically advancing “the domination of reason over the things and events” (şeyler ve hadiselere tahakküm) which was originally an order of Islam. Tied to Kısakürek’s basic conviction that every enlightenment (feyz) belonged to Islam and had to be appropriated by Muslims, similar to the Islamist arguments of the Second Constitutional Period, he argued that the spirit in the Renaissance -the conquest of material and events by human reason which advanced the world of the West- was of Islamic origin not of Christian one. Hence, the Ottoman state should have appropriated the useful inventions of the West which were not contrary to sharia, instead of naming the introduction of the print and Nizam-ı Cedit as a blasphemy.⁴

² Kısakürek gave a special importance to Fatih and Yavuz among the sultans of the classical period. The former tied Europe to the Islamic civilization by capturing Istanbul and the latter followed the policy of Islamic unity by transferring the caliphate to Turks see Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 40 and *Hitabeler*. 166-173.

³ Kısakürek, “Ahlak Sükutumuzun Tarihçesi.” [History of Our Moral Decline] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 16 (December 31, 1943): 5, 16; also in *Tanrı*. 58. Actually, in Kısakürek’s mind, the thinker who Turks needed was a combination of thinker and statesman, a kind of Platonian philosopher-king, see Kısakürek, *Yeniçeri* [Janissary] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1977, 2nd edition), 19.

The “expected revolution” in this age of the Western challenge was to show how this “formalist conservatism” (kışri muhafazakarlık) was against the very ideals of Islam. Within an Islamic rule, the inability in comprehending Islam with its total essence and purity, and the inability in applying the Islamic principles to the new times, spaces and the complexities of the society were accorded as the characteristics of the period which followed Kanuni’s reign. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these fanatics were replaced by another type of fanatics who found the same fanaticism in the imitation of Europe by destroying Islam. That was a “full colonization spiritually” and “semi colonization materially” (or “cultural imperialism”) by the West.⁵

From Ibn Khaldunian understanding of the rise and fall of empires, to Kısakürek, the decline of the “everlasting state” of Ottomans (devlet-i ebed müddet) was inevitable since the law of God that every rise would change into fall was absolute. Therefore, Kısakürek advocated a circular understanding of history rather than a linear one.⁶ To the decline of the Ottoman state, Kısakürek assigned specifically the date as Kanuni’s reign when he appointed the şeyhül İslams, as a civil servant and when he accepted Jews into the empire and the palace. The appointment of şeyhülislam commenced the deterioration of Islamic milieu which had been constructed by the earlier ulema such as Emir Buhari, Molla Fenari, Zenbilli, Ibn-i Kemal and Ebussuud Efendi in the classical period. The Persian and Byzantine state tradition which positioned statesmen above the Islamic principles and

⁴ Kısakürek, “İslam Nasıl Bozuldu? Kanuniden Sonra.” [How was Islam Corrupted after Kanuni?] *BD*. 3rd year, vol. IV, number 81 (February 20, 1948): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru İdeolocya Örgüsü* [Towards Great East: Ideological Web] (Ankara: Hilal, 1959), 150-151 and “Beklediğimiz İnkılap.” [Our Expected Revolution] *BD* 1st year, vol. II, number 37 (July 12, 1946): 2.

⁵ Kısakürek, “Tarih Hükümü.” [Judgement of History] *BD*. 9th year, number 74 (July 30, 1952) also in *Başmakalelerim I* [My Editorials 1] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1990), 128-131; “Ahlak,” 1; “Bizde Buhran.” [Our Crises] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number 11 (November 26, 1943): 2; *Hitabeler*. 254-255.

which controlled the religious men (the ulema) through state apparatus had been the major foreign element responsible for the Ottoman/Islamic decline.⁷ The ulema had also lost their religious and idealistic stands in the course of the time by issuing fetwas in accordance with the whims of the sultans and pashas. The moral decadence emerged firstly in the circles of palace, government and military, being unable to infuse into the Turkish family, village and society for centuries. By taking its morality from Islamic spirit, the Turkish society had secured this spirit as its sacred value for a long time in spite of the contradiction between itself and the ruling mechanism.⁸

The process of decline (or moral decadence) was not a sudden fall but a gradual one which comprised of four stages: from Kanuni to Tanzimat, from tanzimat to Meşrutiyet, from meşrutiyet to the Republic, from republic to now. The speed of the decline increased in every following stage like “a rolling body.” In other words, the line of the decadence had been taken to lower points by the periods of the Tanzimat, Meşrutiyet, and Cumhuriyet since these added new maladies, let alone repairing the defect of the first stage. Instead of reforming old institutions such as medresse and janisaries, they were totally replaced by western ones which had not taken root in Islamic/Turkish society.⁹ His writing on decline was concentrated more on the beginning of the modernization process with the Tanzimat. Under the direction of this basic assumption, Kısakürek insistently read the Turkish history and the process of Turkish modernization as the history of decline and further decline.¹⁰

⁶ Kısakürek, *Konuşmalar*. 211; *Sahte*. 163-164.

⁷ Kısakürek, “İslam Nasıl Bozuldu? Kanuni Devrinde.” [How was Islam Corrupted in Kanuni’s Reign?] *BD*. 3rd year, vol. IV, number 80 (February 13, 1948): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 148-149; *Doğru*. 113; *Hesaplaşma*. 75; *Başmakalelerim* 1. 18.

⁸ Kısakürek, “Ahlak,” 59-60.

⁹ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 275.

¹⁰ He gave a graph of Turkish history, indicating the points of the decline. Tanzimat, Meşrutiyet and the Republic were presented as points of full decline, interestingly at

5.2 A Story of Further Decline: Turkish Modernization Process From Tanzimat to the Republic

Kısakürek criticized Turkish modernization experience from the Tanzimat to the Republic for imitating the West without proper understanding of its foundations and its spirit and without conserving the spiritual roots of the Turkish society. The spiritual crisis through which Turkish society had been passing since the Tanzimat period (early nineteenth century) had reached its zenith in the Republic. At this point, it must be noted that Kısakürek continued the Young Ottoman tradition of criticizing the imitative nature of the Turkish modernization though he treated the Young Ottomans in the same way. As discussed in the preceding chapters, the critical attitude towards Tanzimat reforms was also shared by the Islamists of the second constitutional period. But this time, Kısakürek, faced with the Kemalist official historical writing, tried to present an alternative reading of the history as a manifesto or a framework of a new ideology.¹¹

The main defect which Kısakürek found in the Turkish modernization had been its failure to understand the East and the West properly, culminating in “complexes d’inferiorite” on the part of the political elite. Not only the modernizing pashas of the Tanzimat (Mustafa Reşit, Ali and Fuat pashas) but also their opposition, the Young Ottomans (Şinasi, Namık Kemal, Ziya Paşa), their followers; Midhat Pasha, the Union and Progress were on the

the twenty-sixth anniversary of the declaration of the Republic in 1949 see the cover of *Büyük Doğu* 5th year, number 3 (October 28, 1949): 1. Kısakürek later modified this line of decline in the way that the foundation of the Republic was portrayed as a point of rise but further decline after the foundation, see the cover of *Büyük Doğu* 28th year, 15th year, number 12 (March 24, 1971): 1.

¹¹ His aim was to expose publicly the “false revolutions” from the Tanzimat to the Republic which enslaved the Turkish nation to the executioner, the West, “Tavşanlı Hitabesi.” [Tavşanlı Speech] *BD*. 6th year, number 27 (September 22, 1950): 7, also in *Hitabeler*. 214. Kısakürek voiced his opposition to the official history-writing in one of his poetry; “Muhasebe”: “I do not believe in the history that was taught to me” in *Çile*. 403.

same track.¹² Europeanization as a false state of mind, had taken the sense of destroying the Turkish personality and identity. Turks did not (could not) belong to the Western family in spite of the reforms in this respect, having different historical, civilizational and religious roots, Kısakürek said.¹³ Thus, every revolution of the Turkish modernization since the Tanzimat led the Turkish society not to improvement but to the further decline and regress.¹⁴ These revolutions had constituted a “Felix Culpa (happy guilt), something good in appearance, but disastrous in essence.” Every attempt of reform which did not come from the nature of Turkish society and which did not construct its economic, social, spiritual and political bases within this nature was a Felix Culpa.¹⁵ Tanzimat was a “declaration of the state’s will to slide the Turkish medieval society from an old world (East) to a new, different world (West).”¹⁶

The worst part of the Tanzimat was, to Kısakürek, that it produced a trend which attributed the decline to the customs and roots (read Islam) of the Turkish society. Finding themselves upon the material challenge of the West, the reformers chose the way of “blind imitation” whereas they had to view the new age from the Islamic angle and had to

¹² Kısakürek, *Ulu Hakan II. Abdülhamid Han* [the Great Sultan Abdul Hamid II] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1977, 3rd edition), 41-42; *Rapor 4/6* [The Report 4/6] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 2nd edition), 296. For instance, Namık Kemal was the second false hero (sahte kahraman) after Midhat Pasha. Kemal was far away from being an intellectual who comprehended the reasons for the decline, the question of East-West and so on; see *Ulu Hakan*. 249-250.

¹³ Kısakürek, “Avrupalı Tuzağı.” [European Trap] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 78 (January 30, 1948): 2 also in *İdeolocya Örgüsü*. 72-73.

¹⁴ Kısakürek, “Neye İnanıyoruz?” [What do we believe in?] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 60 (April 25, 1947): 2; also *İdeolocya Örgüsü: Büyük Doğuya Doğru* [Ideological Web: Towards Great East] (İstanbul: Kayseri Yüksek İslam Enstitüsü Talebe Derneği Yayınları, 1968), 95.

¹⁵ Kısakürek, “Felix Culpa-Mesut Suç.” [Happy Guilt] *BD*. 14th year, number 3 (July 1969): 7; *İdeolocya Örgüsü*. 377-378; see also *Rapor 7/9*. 40-41; *Rapor 10/13* [The Report 10/13] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 2nd edition), 72-73.

¹⁶ Kısakürek, “Manzara 3: Tanzimat Sanatkar ve Entellektüeline Kısa Bir Bakış.” [Scene 3: A Short Look at Tanzimat’s Artisan and Intellectual] *Ağaç*. 6 (April 18, 1936): 1-2.

appropriate the good aspects of it. Actually, the imitation was the declaration and acceptance of the defeat against the rival world, removing Islam from being an alternative worldview though Tanzimat stated its allegiance to Islamic principles. Tanzimat had to be made in a greater and fundamental way but in the service of Islam. Deriving its enlightenment (feyz) from the Turkish spiritual roots, the reform movement should have advocated itself to the ideal of a new Eastern civilization which would be an example to the West. The acute shortage of Turkish thinkers (intellectuals) and its substitution by false intellectuals and heroes prevented the real revolution in this period.¹⁷ Rather, they faced the supremacy of the West in a mood of “unconditional imitation, admiration and inferiority complex.”¹⁸

Turkish revolutions had not been able to go beyond the selective combination of the eastern and western civilizations in the Tanzimat and beyond the radical civilizational conversion to the West in the republic due to the national inability in the creation of an intellectual class who comprehended the interplay between two civilizations, and who evaluated the imported products from the West such as democracy, freedom, nation, civilization, revolution and other isms in the light of the Turkish (Islamic) thought.¹⁹ On the issue of westernization, the Tanzimat intellectual was supposed to make “Examen de conscience” (nefs murakabesi) to develop a new worldview from the roots of the Turkish society, but to no avail.²⁰ The question of learning from the West had to be treated in a

¹⁷ Kısakürek, “İslam Nasıl Bozuldu? Tanzimat Devrinde.” [How was Islam Corrupted in Tanzimat Period?] *BD*. 3rd year, vol. IV, number 82 (February 27, 1948), 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 152-153; “Mukaddesatçı Türk’e Beyanname.” [Declaration to a Conservative Turk] *BD*. 14th period, number 6 (November 1969): 8-11.

¹⁸ Kısakürek, “Manzara 3,” 1-2.

¹⁹ Kısakürek, “Asıl İnkılap.” [True Revolution] *BD*. 14th period, number 5 (September-October 1969): 10; *İdeolocya*, fifth edition. 375-377; “Noktalar.” [Points] *BD*. 9th year, number 29 (June 13, 1952): 2; also in *Başmakalelerim I*. 60.

²⁰ Kısakürek, *Konuşmalar*. 193; *Babıali*. 199-200; *Hitabeler*. 235.

non-imitative way that would prevent the feeling of complexity but would select the needed elements such as knowledge from the West. Parallel to the Islamist mainline of the Second Constitutional period, according to Kısakürek, there could not be anything spiritual to be taken from the Western civilization, only “reason” ought to be taken from this civilization.²¹

Describing the process of modernization in anti-colonial terms, Kısakürek stated that the imitative nature of westernization in Turkey might be perfectly explained by the example of the Public Debts of the Ottoman empire (düyunuumumiye):

Every movement of imitation which did not contain national personality (milli benlik) is a spiritual public debt. The Young Turks are the generation of public debts, Edebiyatı Cedide (New Literature) is a literature of public debt. Each influence coming from the West, including professor in the university and artist in the cinema is a kind of spiritual public debt unless the national art, national thinking and national politics are established.²²

The polemical side in Kısakürek’s critique of the imitative nature of the Turkish modernization was sometimes heightened to the extent that he came to blame of Tanzimat, Meşrutiyet and even the Republic as “a product of Jewish and Masonic intrigues.”²³

Meşrutiyet revolution as a second movement of the Tanzimat was directed to demolish the spirit and unity of Islam. Turkism of the Union and Progress, with its desire to place

²¹ Kısakürek, “Program.” [Programme] *BD.* (April 15, 1956) in *Başmakalelerim 2* [My Editorials 2] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1995), 38; La edri, “İrfan Davamız.” [Our issue of Culture] *BD.* number 9 (May 1, 1959): 12; *Benim.* 491.

²² Kısakürek, “Maddi ve Manevi ‘Düyunuumumiye’ler.” [Material and Spiritual Public Debt] (April 24, 1939) in *Çerçeve 1.* 100-101.

²³ Kısakürek, “Kimin Hesabına Konuşuyoruz.” [Whom Behalf are We Talking of] *BD.* 1st year, vol. II, number 44 (August 30, 1946): 2; also in *Çerçeve 2* [Framework 2] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1999, 2nd edition), 89-90; Kısakürek, “Yahudi ve Menderes.” [Jews and Menderes] *BD.* 9th year, number 34 (June 18, 1952): 2; also in *Başmakalelerim 1.* 70; *Hadiselerin Muhasebesi 1* [Evaluation of Events 1] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1999), 288.

nationalism in place of Islam could not bring an ideal to the Turkish society, but destroyed the remaining foundations of the ideal of Islam.²⁴ In the name of liberty, equality and justice, the great sultan (ulu hakan) Abdul Hamid II was dethroned by the revolution of 1908 entirely as the work of a Masonic-Jewish conspiracy. The committee of Union and Progress was helped by Freemasonic lodges that welcomed the idea of overthrowing Abdul Hamid, an Islamist and nationalist sultan.²⁵ Denying to call Abdul Hamid as red sultan (kızıl sultan) due to his despotic rule, Kısakürek came to defend the absolutist rule of the sultan as something inevitable and needed. He actually recreated the image of Abdul hamid who was denounced also by Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period as an unIslamic despot. For instance, the sultan, contrary to the accusation of the violation of the sharia, advocated himself to sharia and Nakshibendism.²⁶ The Islamist argument that the sultan's absolutism was the foremost impediment to progress gave its place in Kısakürek's evaluations, to the claim that the sultan kept the unity of the empire through these centralist and absolutist measures, even doing less of what he had to.²⁷ By this portrayal of Abdul

²⁴ Kısakürek, "Ahlak Sükutumuzun," 5; also *Tanrı*. 230; "İslam nasıl Bozuldu? Meşrutiyet Devrinde." [How was Islam Corrupted in Constitutional Period?] *BD*. 3rd year, vol. IV, number 83 (March 5, 1948): 2; *Rapor 1/3* [The report 1/3] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 2nd edition), 89. Kısakürek's hostile feelings towards the Young Turks was so intense that he visualized the Salaniko as a place where all the minority disorders, Jewish-Masonic plans and the imitative westernists were concentrated against the Islamic and national Anatolia, see *Ulu Hakan*. 420, 449, 563.

²⁵ Kısakürek, *Ulu Hakan*. 248, 440; *Vahidüddin: Vatan Haini Değil Vatan Dostu* [Vahiduddin A Patriot not A Traitor] (İstanbul: Toker, 1968), 47; *Tarih Boyunca*. 522. The incident of 31 Mart was a planned event by the Committee to get rid of the sultan *Ulu Hakan*. 534-536. In Kısakürek's positive evaluation of Abdul Hamid, there was an aspect of his family. His grandfather, Mehmed Hilmi Efendi was a man of Abdul Hamid (a chief of the court of appeal) and opposer to the Union and Progress see *Kafa Kağıdı* [Identity Card] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1984), 63.

²⁶ Kısakürek, *Ulu Hakan*. 326. Abdul hamid burnt the books that were deemed as harmful by the men of religion and science not the Islamic books, see *ibid*, 196-197.

²⁷ Kısakürek, *Ulu hakan*. 378-379. Kısakürek criticized the sultan on some points that he did not use the force of the state, for example, against the Hareket Army in 1909, pp. 198-199; 472. His censorship, secret agency were the correct measures to protect the national body from disasters, pp. 182, 193-4

Hamid, apart from being totally different than the Islamists of the second constitutional period, he accused them of seeing “the false freedom of the Union and Progress as a service to sharia,” and Meşrutiyet as the constitutional regime based on sharia. Additionally, they were also on the wrong side when they called the absolutist measures as despotism (istibdat) and injustice (zulüm).²⁸

To Kısakürek, during the thirty-three years of his reign, except for the Greco-Turkish war of 1887, Abdulhamid II did his very best to avoid wars of any importance. He was the only Ottoman Emperor who had a definite internal and external policy. He postponed the further dissolution of the empire by playing European rivalries off against each other and thus consequently preventing any major European power from attaining too much influence on the empire. Apart from his Islamist policies, he was a nationalist sultan, who concealed his nationalist tendency because of the fear that it might produce divisions in the empire, but of course his nationalism was Islam based.²⁹

Prompted by the desire to portray an alternative modernizer/hero to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk³⁰, Kısakürek made the personification of Abdul hamid as the nationalist and

²⁸ Kısakürek made these criticism about the Old Said Nursi see *Son Devrin Din Mazlumları* [Oppressed Ulema of the Last Period] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1979, 6th edition), 198-200. But his view about other Islamists of the second constitutional period who collobrated with the Kemalist regime like M. Şemsettin Günaltay, M. Ali Ayni, Şerafettin Yaltkaya was more severe than the above evaluation. They were on the same track with the RPP in the hostility towards Islam.

²⁹ Abdul Hamid gave a special importance to Anatolia, *Ulu Hakan*. 339.

³⁰ In fact, Kısakürek’s opposition to the ideological foundations of the Republic firstly centered around the themes of the near Turkish history. The image of Abdul Hamid was the most important part of his counter writing about the official history, from 1943 to 1971 and even to his death. His first prison experience was connected to this effort. In the exposition of his ideal, Kısakürek determined two historical personalities as two different and hostile poles. To concretize an understanding of history, Abdul Hamid was chosen as the positive and friendly personality to Kısakürek’s ideal whereas he could not find the chance to write a book on the major enemy to his ideal. It was not clear who was it, but to the speculative view of anyone, he must be either Mustafa Kemal or İsmet İnönü, see *Ulu Hakan*. 9-10.

Islamist sultan though he was not a kind of the savior whom the Turkish society had been expecting. In the face of the Republic's modernization claim, he depicted Abdul Hamid as a successful modernizer³¹ who brought the seeds of material civilization into the country, such as train, technical schools, industry and so on. The dignified and genuine understanding of civilization found its first expression in the statesmanship of Abdul Hamid who "derived the spirit of this understanding from the East and its reason from the West by appropriating it into the national roots."³² Kısakürek's personified conception of history reminds us the similar themes in the Kemalist understanding of history which had been made by heroes through the struggle between good and evil people or true heroes and false heroes. Indeed, Kısakürek's presentation of İsmet İnönü as a "false hero" who destroyed the very bases of the Turkish society was the manifestation of the same state of mind. Put it differently, it may be correct to argue that the Turkish intellectual mind was dominated by such conceptualization of history in general, in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.

5.3 The Republic: Its Last Stage of the Decline

In his several books and articles, he took every opportunity to discredit the westernization movement which started with the imitation of Tanzimat reforms and culminated in the Republican reforms, furthering the process of imitation and undermining the essence of the Turkish nation. Kısakürek's perception of the Turkish revolution as such was in contradistinction to, for example, a member of the Kemalist intelligentsia; Mahmud Esat

³¹ In one occasion, he stated that in order to progress Turkey in a real sense, it had to be returned to the age of Abdul Hamid where a balance of material and spirit was established; *Rapor* 7/9. 40-41.

³² Kısakürek, *Ulu Hakan*. 255; *Vahidiiddin*. 29; *Son Devrin*. 12; *Rapor* 10/13. 70. Abdul Hamid's politics conformed to the main ideals of the Great East: spiritualist, self-esteem, qualitative, nationalist, moralist, order oriented, see *Ulu Hakan*. 294.

Bozkurt's statements in this respect.³³ Although he paid some merit to the "material" achievements of the National Struggle, Kısakürek actually saw a continuity between the earlier periods of reforms in the Empire and the Turkish revolution. All the periods of reform including the last republican one constituted a line of decline for the history of Turks in the eyes of Kısakürek.

A major area where the damages and falsities to be found in Kemalist modernization, to Kısakürek, appeared in sharp focus was in the writing of Turkish historiography about Tanzimat, Meşrutiyet and especially the National Struggle. By discussing critically the different aspects of the War of Independence in the various issues of *Büyük Doğu*, ranging from Sultan Vahdettin's impeachment to the victory of Lausanne and to the property of Mustafa Kemal, he, in a sense, tried to rewrite the Turkish historiography which has been formed by Atatürk's famous Speech (Nutuk). Kısakürek's early treatment of the Republic was soft to the level that he confined his criticism of the revolution (after stating that he, as every Turkish intellectual, was a follower of the Republican revolution and the National Independence) to the following statement in 1943: the Kemalist revolution could not bring a sense of morality (ahlak telakkisi).³⁴ But four years later, he rejected the basic claim of the Kemalist ideology by his statement that the Turkish nation was not born with the foundation of the Republic, in these words: "the history is not what you teach, the world is not what you show us, the past is not as you denounce, the future is not as you expect.. and the life is not as you live. The history of this nation did not start in 1923. It was not you

³³ M. Esat Bozkurt found similarities between the prophet's work and the French and Russian revolutions see *İlk İnkilap*. p. 55. False heroes of Kısakürek, Mustafa Reşit Paşa, and Midhat Paşa were true heroes of East Bozkurt.

³⁴ Kısakürek, "Ahlakımız 1." [Our Morality 1] *BD*. 1st year, vol. 1, number 13 (December 10, 1943): 2.

who created us from nonexistence.”³⁵ In presenting a critique of the revolution, Kısakürek seemed to be influenced from both the ideas of the internal opposition such as members of the Second Group (Hüseyin Avni Ulaş, the leading deputy of the second group) and the views of the outside opposition such as Mustafa Sabri Efendi’s and Arif Oruç’s writings in the journal of *Yarın*, published in Greece. Arif Oruç described the Kemalist regime and Atatürk’s way of conducting politics as dictatorship and personal despotism in the name of national sovereignty.³⁶ This description was used later by Kısakürek to denounce the RPP and İsmet İnönü though he himself criticized the notion of national sovereignty. The Islamist stand who opposed to the separation of sultanate and caliphate and later to the abolition of the caliphate such as Hoca Şükrü’s (Çelikalay) views, a deputy in the first Grand national Assembly has to be added to this list.³⁷

Kısakürek, with his aim to rewrite the Turkish historiography, denied the Kemalist claim of Vahidüddin’s co-operation with the Greek and Allied Armies, during the War of Independence. Let alone Vahidüddin’s patriotism against the claims of treachery, he was the one who send Mustafa Kemal into Anatolia, financing him with his own personal budget in order to save the country. The idea of initiating the National Struggle originally

³⁵ He wrote these sentences at the anniversary of the Republic’s foundation, see “Artık Bu kadar Yeter.” [It is Fair Enough] *BD*. 5th year, number 3 (October 28, 1949): 2 also in *Çerçeve 2*, 145-146 see also “Asıl Hikaye.” [Real Story] (November 30, 1978) in *Çerçeve 5* [Framework 5] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu,1998), 295-296.

³⁶ Arif Oruç strongly questioned the democratic nature of the Kemalist regime, preferring more the Anglo-saxon type of democracy, see, “Hakimiyet-i Milliye Davası.” [Issue of National Sovereignty] *BD*. 6th year, number 41 (December 29, 1950): 14-15 and “Sen ey Milli hakimiyet Hangi Ellere Düşün?” [You O, National Sovereignty in which hands are you?] *BD*. 6th year, number 40 (December 22, 1950): 7, 11.

³⁷ Şükrü (Çelikalay) was one of the nine members in the general administrative committee of Great East Society (Büyük Doğu cemiyeti) under the chairmanship of Kısakürek see *BD*. 6th year, number 32 (October 27, 1950): 13.

belonged to the sultan Vahiduddin not to Mustafa Kemal who wanted to become a minister of War in the post-Union cabinet after the treaty of Mondros.³⁸

At the treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish delegation by the intrigues of Hayim Naum, a Jew, was forced to make the concession of abolishing the caliphate (Islamic nature of the Turkish state) in return for the Western acceptance of the new state. As a result, the “victory” of the Independence by Mustafa Kemal and his friends was not a real victory and was something given by the West at the expense of the nation’s vital roots: eliminating the Islamic nature of Turkish state and society and replacing it with the principle of laicite (laiklik).³⁹ Kısakürek’s retrospective glance at the Republican political history of the formative years, included, among many aspects, an evaluation of some Islamist and Sufi personalities who were executed or put in trial by the Republican regimes: Şeyh Said, İskilipli Atif Hoca, Şeyh Erbilli Esad Efendi, Said Nursi, Süleyman Efendi, Esseyyid Abdülhakim Arvasi. The most famous event of Şeyh Said, in Kısakürek’s eyes, gave the opportunity to the Kemalist regime to destroy the religious personalities and orders such as nakshibendism through the foundation of the Independence tribunals. After the dissolution

³⁸ This idea firstly appeared in Arif Oruç’s article and later expressed by Kısakürek as well; see taken from Yarı, Arif Oruç, “Birinci Cumhurreisi Meselesi Halledilmeden Bu Memlekette hiçbir Dava Konuşulamaz.” [There is no possibility of speaking something in this country without solving the issue of the First President] *BD*, 6th year, number 36 (November 24, 1950): 11; and see also for Kısakürek’s ideas in this respect, Dedektif X Bir, “Nasıl başlayıp Nasıl Bitirdiler?” [How Did They Start and How did They Complete?] *BD*, 6th year, number 33, (November 3, 1950): 3, 16; *Vahidüddin*, 138-140, 155, 164, 185. Vahidüddin’s dispatch of troops, called as the army of the caliphate against the National Struggle, together with discrediting the struggle as contrary to religion were the crucial points that Kısakürek seemed to neglect in his claims.

³⁹ Dedektif X Bir, *BD*, 5th year, number 3 (October 28, 1949): 3, 16; “Lozan Antlaşmasının İçyüzünü Buyurun.” [Look At the Hiddenside of the Lausanne Treaty] *BD*, number 22 (July 31, 1959): 8-9; “Lozan Zaferinin İçyüzü.” [Hiddenside of the Lausanne Victory] *BD*, number 24, (August 14, 1959): 8-9; Be. De. “Hadiselerin Muhasebesi.” [Evaluation of Incidents] *BD*, 6th year, number 39 (October 15, 1950): 8-9; *Çerçeve 4* [Framework 4] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1996), 264.

of sharia institutions, this order with its strong advocacy to sharia was seen dangerous to the regime in spite of the abolition of dervish lodges.⁴⁰

According to Kısakürek, those who confined the pride of the National Struggle to themselves were a party which showed an unprecedented westernism since the Tanzimat.⁴¹ Seen in his views of Abdul hamid too, Kısakürek had an inclination to evaluate the experience of Turkish modernization through the deeds and ideas of statesmen and intellectuals. As expectedly, he had very harsh arguments about the leaders (Atatürk and his friends) of the westernist movement in the republic and their laicist reforms: “the first two presidents’ policies damaged the roots within the country and enslaved the nation outside by the claim of being a member of the western family.” The West, thus in a sense, colonized Turkey through the Kemalist reforms, without sending an army.⁴² But perhaps at the very beginning because of Atatürk’s high position as saviour of the country and later due to the legal and ideological impossibility of criticizing Atatürk publicly, he chose the way of directing his hostility towards the RPP and İsmet İnönü. His severe critique of the RPP and the Kemalist regime did not include the evaluation of Atatürk as if the new Republic was not basically a product of Atatürk’s ideas and reforms, but rather a product of İsmet İnönü. Despite his (possible) positive attitude towards Atatürk and his good relations with the Kemalist intelligentsia like Hasan Ali Yücel and Falih Rıfki Atay at the end of 1920s and the 1930s,⁴³ he voiced his critical assessment about the

⁴⁰ Kısakürek, *Son Devrin*. 55-57, 87, 132-133. The incident of Menemen too was a plan of the regime to eradicate the religious personalities *ibid.*, 133.

⁴¹ Kısakürek, *Rapor 4/6*. 298-299.

⁴² Kısakürek, “Politika-Tarihimiz boyunca- (3).” *BD*. 9th year, number 102 (August 27, 1952): 1; also in *Başmakalelerim1*. 206.

⁴³ Even in 1937, before the death of Atatürk who was uncomfortable with the Islamic nature of the Turkish National Anthem (İstiklal Marşı) written by Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Kısakürek was encouraged to write a poetry as the Turkish national anthem by Falih Rıfki Atay who beared the duty of presenting this poet to Atatürk.. Kısakürek wrote the

personality of Atatürk in the relatively liberal era of the transition to the multiparty politics from 1946 to the very early 1950s till the promulgation of Law on the protection of Atatürk (Atatürk'ü koruma kanunu) by Adnan Menderes.

In one of few articles about Atatürk, Kısakürek presented him as the enemy of Islam and of the prophet. By making references to the Speech, he came to decide that Atatürk was an ardent materialist, going beyond Marx and Lenin and he was an atheist (Allahsız) who did a lot of things in his fifteen-year performances to eliminate Islam.⁴⁴ Atatürk, in addition to his many policies against Islam and the Turkish nation, was also the first leader of the communist movement in Turkey due to the fact that the Turkish communist party was established upon his order.⁴⁵ After a short period of criticizing Atatürk directly, Kısakürek preferred to confine his criticism to Atatürkism, the RPP and the Republic by separating Atatürk's personality from his main target. Atatürkism of the RPP was an attempt of

poetry of Büyük Doğu (Great East), the name of his ideology as well, for this project, but the death of Atatürk came before the presentation see Kısakürek, "Büyük Doğu." [Great East] *BD*. 1st year, vol. 1, number 4 (September 8, 1943): 12. The early writings of Kısakürek implied positive considerations regarding Atatürk's role as a savior of the Turkish nation: "Atatürk with his superior features of salvation will revive within the soul of the Turkish nation" see Kısakürek, "Atatürk Dirilecektir." [Atatürk Will Revive] *BD*. number 10 (November 19, 1943): 2.

⁴⁴ In 1947, in the trial of denouncing the regime and Turkishness (Rejimi kötüleme ve Türklüğe hakaret), Kısakürek was sentenced to prison because of his articles against Atatürk, see *Dedektif X Bir*, "Allahsız." [Atheist] *BD*. 6th year, number 40 (December 22, 1950): 6, 11 see also *Dedektif X Bir*, "Hakikat için Hakikat." [Truth for the Truth] *BD*. 6th year, number 25 (September 8, 1950): 3, 10, "Müzakere Usulü." [Method of Negotiation] *BD*. 6th year, number 36 (November 24, 1950): 10 and "Millet partisi ve Tezadı." [The Nation Party and Its Contradictions] *BD*. 7th year, number 42 (January 5, 1951): 3, 12. But later, due to the above mentioned reasons, he dropped speaking and writing about Atatürk and even he denied İsmet İnönü's claim that Kısakürek called Atatürk as a false hero see Kısakürek, "Kolpo." [Opportunity] *BD*. number 4 (March 22, 1959): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim* 2. 175-177.

⁴⁵ *Dedektif X Bir*, "İlk." [The First] *BD*. 6th year, number 24 (September 1, 1950): 3, 7.

creating an idol that legitimized this party's unislamic policies and that did not allow any change in the direction of the regime.⁴⁶

The Republican period of the Turkish modernization, despite of its radical and brave attempts of reform, had not changed the westernist tradition of imitation and had not brought a new morality and an ideology which were in accordance with the spirit of the Independence Struggle, Kısakürek wrote. But rather it completed the project of separating Turk from Islam and participating in the western family. That meant saving Turk in material sense but destroying him in spiritual sense.⁴⁷ The spiritual and intellectual crisis or void that the Republican revolutions created in "the minds and spirits of the Turkish people was deeper than the decadence of Sodom Gomore and Rome."⁴⁸ In his analysis of what the Republic brought, he enumerates four basic points as follows: republic as a form of government, as an ideal of reaching at the level of the modern civilization, as a revolution and democracy. Republic as a type of government could not be an ideal but a simple framework that every thing was tied to its contents and meaning. Although Kısakürek considered the goal of reaching at the level of modern civilization as sound, he saw its Kemalist version as a mere imitation. Revolutions, far way from taking root in the Turkish spirit, could not fill the void that emerged by the destruction of old values and institutions.

⁴⁶ Kısakürek, "Bunlar Ne İstiyorlar?" [What Do They want] *BD*. 9th year, number 38 (June 22, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim*1. 77-78; *Rapor 4/6* [The Report 4/6] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 2nd ed.), 298-299.

⁴⁷ Kısakürek, "Teşhis." [Diagnosis] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number 9 (November 12, 1943): 2; "Ve Tarihçe." [And Short History] *BD*. 1st year, vol II, number 30 (May 24, 1946): 11, also in *Tanrı*. 63-64, "İslam Nasıl Bozuldu? Son Devirde." [How was Islam Corrupted in the Last period?] *BD*. number 84 (March 12, 1948): 2 ; *Doğru*. 146; *Tanrı*. 266; *Benim*. 65.

⁴⁸ Adını Vermeyen Profesör, "Türkiyenin Manzarası." [Turkey's Panaroma] *BD*. 12th period, number 2 (September 29, 1965): 2; also Kısakürek, *Türkiyenin Manzarası* (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1985, 2nd edition), 10-11; *Tanrı*. 55, 198. For examples of his poetry that criticized the republican revolution see "Muhasebe." in *Çile*. 402-404; "Destan." in *Çile*. 406-407; "Aman." in *Çile*. 426-428.

Lastly, democracy, in the Turkish experience, took “a form of uncontrolled freedom which was more disastrous than bloody despotic rules.”⁴⁹

The Kemalist goal of the civilizational conversion from the East to the West meant “changing a society’s center of mind and spirit and its focus of culture and civilization” and it had resulted in the search for a new essence for Turks and thus had produced a crisis of personality and identity.⁵⁰ The republican revolutions, as rootless revolutions, resembled to the “spurious fruits of the Tree of Christmas” (Nobel Ağacının yemişleri) which did not grow up from the roots.⁵¹ Looked at from this perspective, the six principles of the Republican regime seemed to him as full of foreign and cosmopolitan influences: “ the six arrows of the People’s Republican Party resembles to the six fingers that hit the head of the nation. The republican finger was an instrument of the Pharaoh’s despotism while the nationalist finger was of the imitation of the West. The statist finger was an instrument of a group’s sovereignty while the revolutionist finger was of corruption’s conservatism.”⁵² Following the same line of thinking, the secularizing reforms of the Kemalism, ranging from laicism to the alphabet, hat, civil law reforms were also regarded as the acts of eliminating Islam from the Turkish roots and of deteriorating the individual’s spirit and the society’s culture. To give an example, the language and alphabet reform, for Kısakürek, constituted one of the major failures which could not open the way towards the

⁴⁹ Adımı Vermeyen Profesör, “İdeal.” [Ideal] *BD*. 15th period, number 16 (April 21, 1971): 3; also in *Türkiyenin*. 33-34; see also “Bekliyoruz.” [We are waiting] *BD*. number 9 (July 2, 1954): 2; *Rapor 1/3* [The Report] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993, 2nd ed.), 90.

⁵⁰ Kısakürek, “Abdülhak Hamid ve Dolayısıyla.” [On Abdülhak Hamid] (1938) in *Hitabeler*. 65; *Tanrı*. 266; “Ayasofya.” [Hagia Sophia] *BD*. number 6 (April 10, 1959): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 183.

⁵¹ Kısakürek, “İnkılap Dedikleri.” [The So Called Revolution] *BD*. 9th year, number 31 (June 15, 1952): 1; also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 63; *İdeolojya* 5th edition. 83.

⁵² Kısakürek, “Altıparmak.” [Six Fingers] *BD*. 6th year, number 16 (January 27, 1950): 2; also in *Çerçeve 2*. 157.

Latin and Greek culture while disrupting the connection with the basic (Islamic-Turkish) culture and creating a further decline of national spirit.⁵³ Kısakürek's declaration of the failure on the part of the secular reforms made it certain that he could not actually see any positive reform in the Kemalist project of modernization.⁵⁴ Even, the Republican "revolution" was not successful in bringing up its cadre to formulate an intellectual and ideological framework for the reforms. The Kemalist intelligentsia centered around the RPP was a cadre which did not have any idea but just their self interests and their institutions of educating people such as Köy Enstitüleri (village institutes) and Halkevleri (people's houses) functioned as the places in which the Anatolian youth were taken away from the Turkish values and in which the youth's minds were filled by atheism, communism, materialism and non nationality (milliyetsizlik).⁵⁵

⁵³ Kısakürek, *Babıali*. 147.

⁵⁴ See Kısakürek, "Artık Bu Komedyaya Yeter." [Enough! This Comedy] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 41 (August 9, 1946): 2; also in *Çerçeve 2*. 84-85; "24 Maddede 24 Yıl." [24 Years in 24 Points] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 70 (October 31, 1947): 2; also in *Çerçeve 2*. 105-107.

⁵⁵ Dedektif X Bir, "Köy Enstitüleri." [Village Institutes] *BD*. (5th year, number 5 (April 8, 1949): 1, 4; "Bugünün Aktüalitesi Dünkü Köy Enstitüleri." [Today's Actuality: Yesterday's Village Institutes] *BD*. Vol. II, number 26 (August 28, 1959): 8-9; "Köy Enstitülerinin İyüzünden Örnekler." [Examples from the Hiddenside of the Village Institutes] *BD*. vol. II, number 27 (September 4, 1959): 8-9; "Yine Köy Enstitüleri İfşaatımız Devam Ediyor." [Our Disclosure of Village Institutes is continuing] *BD*. vol. II, number 28 (September 11, 1959): 8-9; Kısakürek, "Kadro." [Cadre] (October 20, 1977) in *Çerçeve 4*. 140-141; "Köy Enstitüleri." [Village Institutes] *BD*. (March 22, 1962) in *Başmakalelerim 3* [My Editorials 3] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1995), 50-51; *Çepeçevre Sosyalizm Komünizm ve İnsanlık* [Socialism, Communism and Humanity] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1985, 2nd ed.), 108; *Hesaplaşma*. 138. The Republican regime also prevented a counter-revolution against itself by exploiting the nation's sense of unity see Kısakürek, "İhtilali Nasıl Önlediler?" [How Did They Prevent Revolution?] *BD*. 9th year, number 32 (June 16, 1952): 1; also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 65-66.

5.4 His Ideology: The Ideal of Great East (Büyük Doğu)

Necip Fazıl sought to create a new truly Islamic community and state through social engineering. With the aim of proposing a “manifesto” (ideolocya örgüsü) for both the Turks and the People of the East (read Islam), Kısakürek redesigned every aspect of life through the idea of ‘true revolution’ (inkilab) from the organization of state to the creation of a “new generations” (yepyeni nesiller yaratmak). His ideological formulation might be considered as the first case of “repoliticization of Islam” which called for the foundation of an Islamic state, though indirectly, in the republican Turkey. His Islamist reading of the concepts of west and east culminated in the creation of a new entity of civilization and identity, named as Büyük Doğu, as well. Islam was rediscovered by Kısakürek as a major marker of identity and as a major source of a political ideology. Since its persistent seek for an ideology, this rediscovery of Islam and the ensuing criticism of Kemalism were formulated in modern/western modes. Everything that Turkey had, ranging from east, west, spirit, material, yesterday, today, tomorrow, religion, language, history and politics had to be rediscovered in the light of Islam.⁵⁶ The mission of constructing a new worldview and an understanding of societal system belonged to the great artisan/thinker (büyük sanatkar) and as a covetious (muhteris) artisan, he took the Great East on his shoulders.⁵⁷ That was to bring an evaluation of Turkey and the world that any Turkish intellectual, including Mehmet Akif, could not achieve.⁵⁸ Certainly, this radical state of

⁵⁶ Kısakürek, “Yeniden Keşfolunmak.” [to be Rediscovered] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number 13 (January 25, 1946): 2; also in *Çerçeve I*. 46. Kısakürek’s over emphasis on religion led Elisabeth Özdalga to see Kısakürek as an example of Mircea Elida’s homo religiosus, who had areligious belief that made meaningful all being see “Tasavvuf Bahçelerinde Dolaşan Bir Milli Kahraman: Necip Fazıl Kısakürek,” [A National Hero Walking in the Gardens of Sufism] in *Cumhuriyet, Demokrasi ve Kimlik*, [Republic, Democracy and Identity] Nuri Bilgin (ed.) (İstanbul: Bağlam, 1997), 191.

⁵⁷ In 1941, Kısakürek, *Konuşmalar*. 43.

⁵⁸ Kısakürek, *Hitabeler*, 127.

mind was contrary to the incrementalist and evolutionist attitude of Islamists in the Second Constitutional Period.

The names of his ideology, journal and party, *Büyük Doğu*, interestingly were the title of his poet, written as a national anthem in 1937 to be presented to Atatürk. The Great East as a totalistic belief and view connoted to the reemergence of the East. The concept of the East was not connected to any geography and race considerations outside the boundaries of the fatherland of Turkey. The significance of the Turkish fatherland in his early formulations of the Great East, was apparent by placing the map of Turkey within the motto of his journal of *Büyük Doğu*. Despite the fact that Kısakürek's early ideological formulations contained territorial features, whether in the form of *Anadoluculuk* or in the form of Great East⁵⁹, he later presented the central theme of its ideology; Great East as an abstraction: "we are seeking for the Great East within the boundaries of today's and tomorrow's fatherland at a plan of spirit and quality. It wishes to realize itself not at the level of place or space but at the level of time."⁶⁰

A symphony which stemmed from the spiritual roots of the East and which fostered the tree of western "material achievements" was playing to spring up the ideal of Great East from within the East. The symphony and worldview of the Great East was consisted of the true and pure Islamic spirit which embraced both the eastern and western worlds, together with their pasts, todays, tomorrows, truths and experiences. Inspired much from the distinction between the spiritual and material, he connected this distinction to another dichotomy of West-East. In this sense, the Great East had been the synthesis of the East

⁵⁹ In the 1940s, the Great East was depicted as an emergence within the boundaries of Turkish fatherland with the national cadres see Kısakürek, "Büyük Doğu'ya Doğru." [Towards Great East] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number 1 (September 17, 1943): 2.

⁶⁰ Kısakürek, "Büyük Doğu." [Great East] *BD*. number 2 (March 13, 1959): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*, 1.

who neglected the material of the West who had not cared what was spiritual.⁶¹ The Islamist content of this ideology had been expressed in many times by Kısakürek also as follows: “the Great East is the adjutant of Islam (İslamın emir subaylığı). The Great East is neither a new religious sect nor a new gate of ijihad. It is only the gate of opening the way for Islam within the absolute and unbargaining framework that expressed by the term of Sunni (Sünnet ve Cemaat Ehli).. the affair of applying an authenticity that has been lost for a long time, to the things and events in the treshold of the twenty-first century.”⁶²

Since the place where the Great East would flourish was seen as Turkey, he took the issue of the Turkish modernization as the major problematic of his ideology in reaching the synthesis of the East-West. Therefore, his intellectual zeal was concentrated on the establishment of an ideological framework in which the spiritual and material life of Turk would be reinstated by evaluating, at the level of universe, the false revolutions since the Tanzimat.⁶³ The implication of Kısakürek’s critique for the imitative nature of the Turkish modernization was not that learning from the West had to be totally left aside, but that “selective appropriation” of the good aspects of the West was the appropriate way through which to have a “Turkish culture” (irfan) or “culturalization” (kültürlenme). It is clear that Kısakürek in this sense shared the Islamist idea of taking “good sides of the western civilization” while leaving its bad sides. Learning from the foreign sources, namely the West could be regarded as a gate to the goal of creating the Turkish own culture or culturalization. By mentioning the two dimensions of national and international (human) aspects of culture (modernity), he spoke of putting the “essential roots” (öz kökler) in “an

⁶¹ Kısakürek, “Orkestra, Senfonya ve Biz.” [Orchestra, Symphony and Us] *BD*, number 22 (July 31, 1959): 2; *Konuşmalar*. 89-90.

⁶² Kısakürek, *İdeolocya* 5th edition. 10.

⁶³ Kısakürek, “Büyük Doğu,” 2; *Konuşmalar*. 57.

action of culturalization” (kültürlenme aksiyonu).⁶⁴ That was indeed tantamount to the call of modernization from within.

Kısakürek signified basically three sources for the issue of Turkish culturalization: 1) the essential root from the foundation of the Ottoman empire to tanzimat; 2) the Eastern root from Arabs to Persians, Indians and Chinese; 3) the western root, absorbing the good aspects of the west; positive sciences and ideologies.⁶⁵ Like Islamists of the second constitutional period, by quoting the prophet’s tradition (stating that ‘Hikmet müminin kaybolmuş malıdır, nerede bulursa alır’ ve ‘ilmi çinde bile olsa isteyiniz’) he called for the appropriation of the “accepted efforts of progress” in order to establish a new (ideal) city of Baghdad.⁶⁶ To his mind, revolutions were against the nature of society and the rule, but at the same time, every revolution had to base itself on the essential roots of their own culture as the French revolution, the Bolshevik revolution, Fascism and Nazism did in their countries. Unfortunately, the Turkish revolution, by the change of language and alphabet, ruptured its link with the Turkish essential roots.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Kısakürek, “Türk İrfanı.” [Turkish Culture] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number 14 (February 1, 1946): 11; also in *Tanrı*. 112-115; “Kültürlenme Davası(1).” [Issue of Culturalization 1] (May 3, 1939) in *Çerçeve I*. 107-108; “Kültürlenme Davası(2).” [Issue of Culturalization 2] (May 4, 1939) in *Çerçeve I*. 108-110; “Kültürlenme Davası(4).” [Issue of Culturalization 4] (May 6, 1939) in *Çerçeve I*. 111-113; “Kültürlenme Davası(5).” [Issue of Culturalization 5] (May 7, 1939) in *Çerçeve I*. 113-115.

⁶⁵ This third root in the culturalization included many things in Kısakürek’s early writings; renaissance, arts, greek philosophy, literature and theatre and so on. The common name for things that had to be taken from the west was the term of the good aspects (müsbet taraflar) in his thought during all his life.

⁶⁶ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 56.

⁶⁷ Kısakürek, “Kültürlenme Davası(3).” [Issue of Culturalization 3] (May 5, 1939) in *Çerçeve I*. 110-111; “Yine Türk İrfanı.” [Again Turkish Culture] *BD*. 1st year, vol. I, number15 (February 8, 1946): 11; also in *Tanrı*. 119-121.

Another goal of the Great East, though less emphasized, was the unification of the Islamic world in two ways: 1) escalating the Islamic world in thought and material at a high level that dominated the things and events; and 2) more specifically, establishing the great Islamic shura (Büyük İslam Şurası) among Islamic nations in Medina.⁶⁸ The enemies of Great East were those people who were rootless, atheist, cosmopolitans and false revolutionaries whereas its friends were all conservatives (mukaddesatçılar), nationalists, true Turks and Anatolians.⁶⁹

The Ideology of Great East was typically elitist. This elitist feature in Kısakürek's political ideas constituted a paralel positioning to the elitist political culture of Turkish elite and intellectuals. As Frederick W. Frey wrote that "One of the central problems of Turkish politics is and has long been the problem of elitism. By this term, I mean the tendency of a small privileged sector to dominate society and consciously or uncounciously, to regard its domination as legitimate and desirable because of the cultural or intellectual inadequacy it attributes to nonelite elements."⁷⁰ One may argue that Kısakürek, through his elitism and his insistence on the necessity of having a totalistic social program to be implemented in the recreation of the society and individual was typical of the Republican elite. Put it differently, an obvious manifestation of the Jacobin element in Kısakürek's ideology was his insistence on presenting a totalistic solution to Turkish Society's ills.

⁶⁸ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 57.

⁶⁹ Kısakürek, "Adnan Menderes'e Hitap (1)." [Adress to Adnan Menderes 1] *BD*. (May 7 1956) in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 64-65. It should be stated that Kısakürek wrote less on the possible unification of Islamic world; he rather focused on the Islamic revolution that would start from Turkey. His nationalist inclination and the realities of a nation-state was clear enough in this situation.

⁷⁰ Frederick W. Frey, "Patterns of Elite Politics in Turkey," in *Political Elites in the Middle East*, ed. George Lenczowski (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975), 43.

Another important element in Kısakürek's ideological makeup was its salvationist and personalistic inclination. As discussed in the following sections, the decline of the Muslim world and the Ottoman empire was analyzed in terms of ideas and thoughts but not in terms of the socio-economic parameters. The idea of salvation whether in the form of expecting a heroic statesmen /political party or in the form of creating a new ideology/true revolution was also linked to the evaluation of Turkish modernization process from this perspective. The Turkish nation had been expecting a savior since the sultan Suleyman the Magnificent. This savior would give an end to the imitation of the West by comprehending the internal crisis of the West and the weaknesses of the East. Salvation entailed the rejection of all western imported political ideologies such as democracy, capitalism and communism and the acceptance of Islam as the ideology which had what the other ideologies tried to have.⁷¹ Certainly his expectation of a super man/hero (üstün insan/kahraman) who went beyond his society, but who shaped his society was closely related to the institution of the prophethood and to the Islamic tradition of renewal (tecdid). The absolute heroes were prophets whereas the relative heroes were the ones who changed the human history by establishing new ideologies.⁷² It has to be added that this heroism also reminds us the republican exaltation of Atatürk as the savior of the Turkish nation.⁷³

What Muslim countries and Turkey lacked and needed for centuries was precisely the emergence of a hero who would put an end to the decline and who would bring the greatness once achieved in the glorious days of the golden age. And what the Islamic world and the Eastern world in general had been expecting was the emergence of a

⁷¹ Kısakürek, "Beklenen Kurtarıcı." [Expected Saviour] *BD*. 22nd year, 12th period, number 3 (October 6, 1965): 1; *Hitabeler*. 178-180; *Türkiyenin*. 175-176. The expected savior was a theme of his works on literature as well; see *Para* (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1993), 185.

⁷² Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 13-14; *Rapor 1/3*. 137.

⁷³ See for this, Parla, *Türkiye'de*, vol. 2. 233-264.

thinker/intellectual who combined idea with action.⁷⁴ From a civilizational perspective, he worded his claim that all those who aspire for civilization were in the crisis in the second half of the twentieth century and all the humanity was waiting for a savior. The absolute savior who represented the real civilization was certainly Islam, bringing the cure to the humanity.⁷⁵ The expectation of a savior was also expressed in terms of a modern construction, a revolution. The world was waiting for a revolution, recognizing that all human institutions and ideologies failed with the exception of Islam. This “revolution” would rescue humanity from the domination of machine by finding the lost spiritual essence and would be realized in the three circles: the external circle (world), Islamic world within the external circle and the center (Turkey), under the leadership of Turkey.⁷⁶ It is obvious that this expectation of a hero/intellectual and revolution was a new element which could not be found in the political ideas of the Islamists in the Second Constitutional Period.

For Kısakürek, the art, including poetry was a tool in the exposition of the truth as well as an important element in the discovery of this truth. In his poetica, Kısakürek made it clear that art/poetry was the search of the absolute truth, God through the way of beauty and secrecy, for the sake of society, not for art. By the claim that there could not be anything without religion, he stated that all sections of art were inspired from the senses of beyond, death, love and pain which belonged to religion. State had been under the duty of institutionalizing art and poetry by supporting the artist and poet unless he/she injured the

⁷⁴ Kısakürek, *Hacc* [Pilgrimage] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1992), 114-115.

⁷⁵ Kısakürek, “Medeniyetlerin Hali.” [Situations of Civilizations] *BD*. 7th year, number 42 (January 5, 1951): 2 also in *Çerçeve* 2. 182-183.

⁷⁶ Kısakürek, “Kurtuluş.” *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 59 (April 18, 1947): 2; *Dünya*. 8, 38.

ideological bases of the state.⁷⁷ It is to be noted that as Kısakürek moves from his nonpolitical, art-engaged position to the problems of the republican regime he is more and more inclined to be concerned with the daily politics and to lay the blame for the further decadence of Turkish nation on the republican reforms and the RPP's role in this respect. For this purpose, Kısakürek did not hesitate to deal with many subjects ranging from politics, economics, art to religion, without having specialized knowledge about some of them.

Similar to the Kemalist positivist faith in the power of education in the creation of a new society and individual, but certainly partly inspired by the classical Islamic sources' emphasis on the importance of education for the perfection of man, Kısakürek considered the education as the main vehicle to the realization of the true revolution: " what is to be done is the emergence of a great movement of thought (fikir hareketi) that would live the essence of the revolution not its word... This could be done by a movement at a level of state by the imposition of National Education [ministry]."⁷⁸

Like the Kemalist elite and even the Islamists of the second constitutional period, Kısakürek with his tendency towards centralization and order, did not adhere to the liberal ideas of Prince Sabahattin (1877-1948), a supporter of individual initiative and decentralisation. He also propogated the view that the downward trend of Islamic history was about to end and that it would return to its original condition by means of the realization of the Great East ideology. The fact that the distinction between West and East was perceived in absolute terms and that this became the primary preoccupation of the

⁷⁷ Kısakürek, *Çile*. 473-474, 490, 495. Kısakürek's poetry was western by its emphasis on existential subjects such as being, death, crisis and conflict see Mehmet Kaplan, *Şiir Tahlilleri: Cumhuriyet Devri Türk Şiiri* [Analyses of Poetry: Turkish Poetry in the Republican Period]vol. II. (İstanbul: Dergah, 1988, 4th edition), 69-80; Okay, *Necip*. 31-65; Kabaklı, *Sultanü* 'ş.17.

Great East, promoted the aspiration for the leadership of the Eastern civilization. As a characteristics of the Turkish modernization, Kısakürek, like the sultan Mahmud II and Atatürk, entrusted his ideal of the Great East to the youth. Again as a reaction to Atatürk's speech to the Turkish youth, he wrote an alternative speech to the youth.

In sum, Islamist ideology of the Great East had the following characteristics: 1) an account of the universe 2) considering this world and the other one 3) framing the absolute and true pole (Islam); embracing the spirit of construction and destruction that western ideologies could not reach at, 4) putting the material in the service of the spirit, 5) classifying the Turkish history into five periods as the rise (*vecd ve aşk*), return and stagnation, decline, lost of identity in the Tanzimat, eradication of spiritual roots in the Republic, 6) showing the true and false heroes, 7) glorifying the notion of revolution, 8) understanding nationalism in the spritual sense, 9) accepting freedom as being voluntary slaveness to the truth and defining democracy as a facit circle which allowed all wrongs in order not to be a victom of a wrong, 10) situating justice in accordance with the measues of God, 11) searching for the new, right, good and beautiful in every breath.⁷⁹

Kısakürek wanted to arrive at a formulation which would do justice to the urgent need of having a comprehensive ideology in the modern age in order to provide a map of meanings for religiously oriented people and also to the realization of Islamic ideals in Turkey. In his early literature based writings, which were of a Bergsonian and spiritualist nature, he considered Büyük Doğu (or nationalism) in the context of Anadoluculuk (Anatolism), a kind of Turkish nationalism around the concrete territory of Anatolia rather than the abstract idea of Turan. But in the course of the time, his ideology became crystallized around Islamic discourses. His later political and ideological writings exposed

⁷⁸ Kısakürek, in 1981, *Konuşmalar*. 229.

⁷⁹ Kısakürek, *Rapor 4/6*. 75-77

more openly his Islamist solutions as directly inspired by the strong influence of a Nakshabendi shaikh, Abdül Hakim Arvasi. His nakshabendism based ideology was contrasted with Westernism in general and Kemalism in particular and was proposed as the way of a salvation for humanity, Muslims and especially for Turks.

Kısakürek's attempt in carving out an ideological space for Islam among the contemporary ideologies was not a new endeavor but a new version. The Young Ottomans ideologized Islam to direct the political mind and to mobilize masses in the path of progress and constitutionalism whereas Kısakürek derived an ideology from Islam to provide the Muslims with "a map of action" to understand and to explain the modern world.

Kısakürek's ideological web (ideolocya örgüsü) did not only entail the political questions of a Muslim individual, but also his social relations and his "everday." The term "day" that Mardin adopted from Michel de Certeau is one which might manifest the comprehensiveness of Kısakürek's ideology in presenting "a map" to Turkish individual and society. "The web of every day which creates the material of people's lives, and creates every day, are the hundreds of particles of place, behaviour, conduct, aesthetics, and morality."⁸⁰ Like Ghazzali, Kısakürek, by drawing basically on sufism and other schools of Islamic tradition (fikh, hadis and siyer), tries to formulate a map for Muslims' "rules of social behaviour" and daily life, especially in his book, İman ve İslam Atlası which was a modern form of İlmihal (a book of religious and social rules). Although it is correct to say that Kısakürek was not only directed towards filling the void which Kemalism left in

⁸⁰ Şerif Mardin, "Kollektif Hafıza ve Şuur," [Collective Memory and Consciousness] *in İslam Düşüncesinin 20. Asırda Yeniden yapılanması ve Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*, [Reconstruction of Islamic Thought in the 20th Century and Bediüzzaman Said Nursi] ed. Mehmet Paksu (İstanbul: Yeni Asya, 1992), 15-16 and "The Nakshibendi Order of Turkey," in *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economics and Militance*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 224.

ethics and daily life, he, like other Islamists underlined this void in order to strengthen his basic claim that Kemalism was neither a worldview nor an ideology. The role of religion as a “soft ideology, the much more diffuse, unfocused and amorphous cognitive and belief systems of mass publics”⁸¹ became concretized and became a kind of “hard ideology” in Kısakürek’s formulation, determining every aspect of political, societal and individual life.

5.5 The Analysis of His Expected Islamic Revolution (İnkılab)

Kısakürek’s formulation of an ideology, of course, aspired for a revolution to realize its implementation on state and society. Though the idea of revolution had been famous since the July revolution of 1908, it gained its overarching significance in the minds of the Turkish intellectuals within the context of Kemalism’s republicanism and the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Hence, one might say that the notions of ideology and revolution took the place of progress which dominated the writings of all schools of thought in the second constitutional period. Kısakürek’s attitude of finding everything in Islam did not miss the word of revolution. Accompanying the existence of the real form of revolution in Islam was the rejection of the revolutions in the process of Turkish modernization such as Tanzimat, Meşrutiyet and the Republic. The Turkish nation had been expecting “an Islamic revolution” since the reign of Kanuni. The twentieth century would see the coming of this revolution and actually the Great East could be regarded as the first voice of this coming revolution in this century.⁸² After stating his intellectual responsibility of delineating the ideological web of Islamic revolution, firstly he underlined the point that he

⁸¹ Şerif Mardin, “Religion as Ideology,” in *Yavuz Abadan’a Armağan* (Ankara: Ankara Üniv. Siyasal Bilgiler Fak. Yay., 1969), 194.

⁸² Kısakürek, “Beklediğimiz,” 2. The expectation of an Islamic revolution in Turkey continued its vitality in Kısakürek’s mind up to his death, for existence of this idea see *Rapor* 4/6. 89.

was not in a position of presenting and propagating an ideology against any regime (implying the Kemalist regime). But rather he defined his goal as “a pure idealization and ideologization of Islam” beyond any national and historical consideration, for the Islamic world, including Turks, Arabs, Persians, Indians, and non-Muslims. Islam, in the personality of each intellectual (münevver), had been under the duty of establishing its ideology of revolution which was above space and time but for the application to the all times and spaces. But despite of his rhetoric as such, it was certain that the target was Kemalism.

Kısakürek classified revolutions into two: absolute revolutions like prophets’ revolution (Islam); and relative and land based revolutions like Renaissance, the French Revolution and the Communist revolution. That classification came to mean that there was only one revolution: Islam which, by cihad-ı ekber (the great warfare i.e, the struggle in one’s own heart to reduce it to meek submission to the divine ordinances) prepared human being spiritually as well. In the search of an “ideal heaven”, human being was in a state of revolution within himself and his own society.⁸³ Kısakürek enumerated some characteristics of a revolution as followed: a worldview which had an evaluation of world and universe, science and art, leader and cadre, self-sacrifice, courage, morality of action and ideal, order and discipline, technic and method.⁸⁴ To Kısakürek, all revolutions were based on a book or a written work like French and Bolshevik revolutions, implying the significance of the Book, the Qur’an, in the expected Islamic revolution.⁸⁵ Upon the

⁸³ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 20-22; *İhtilal* [Revolution] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1997, 6th ed.), 7-8, 56. Interestingly enough, some members of the Kemalist intelligentsia regarded the early Islamic practice as a form of revolution, see M. Esat Bozkurt, *İlk İnkılap*. 51-53.

⁸⁴ Kısakürek, *İhtilal*. 336-347

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 336.

advancement in the weaponry, he state that there was no any more possibility of revolution in the sense of people's movement.⁸⁶

He enumerated several groups in his discussion on the issue of a cadre of the revolution who would build the web of Islamic revolution: reformists (röformacılar), those who remained in the crust of sharia (ham yobaz ve kaba softa), false sufis (sahte sofiler) and true and deep Muslim (derin ve gerçek müslüman). The expected Islamic revolution could only be made by the last group; the true Muslims.⁸⁷

Revolution had to be considered as a means to reach a certain goal, not vice versa. Change in the name of change was nonsense. Revolution was not a metamorphosis but an ideal of establishing any idea's society in the future.⁸⁸ Closely tied to his understanding of Islam, Kısakürek inevitably felt the necessity of determining a framework for a revolution. Hence, if revolution was depicted as an endless search of truth around the unchanging and absolute axis for rediscovering, rechanging and developing without staying at any stop, this existed in Islam in its true form. The unchanging and absolute axis in the search of the truth was Şeriat in Islam. Those things that were not deemed as forbidden by Şeriat were free in Islam.⁸⁹ The truths that the great French revolution and the following revolutions (socialist movements, the communist revolution, fascism, Nazism, liberalism and capitalism) tried to attain without a success found their expressions in Islam. Revolutionism was to find/follow the way of the great prophet.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Ibid., 348.

⁸⁷ Kısakürek, "İslam İnkılabı-Giriş." [Islamic Revolution-Introduction] *BD*. 5th year, number 1 (October 14, 1949): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 68-69.

⁸⁸ Kısakürek, *Konuşmalar*. 116; *Sahte*. 271.

⁸⁹ Kısakürek, "İslam ve İnkılab." [Islam and Revolution] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 64 (May 23, 1947): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 66-67.

⁹⁰ Ibid.; *Sahte*. 272.

The subjection of Islam to modern ideologies in the form of Islamic socialism and communism, Islamic fascism, Islamic liberalism or Islamic democracy could not be thought. Islamic revolution, perceiving Islam as a totality was in a position of correcting all wrongs and corruptions and of answering all the questions without losing any one's right. The ruling ideologies of liberalism, socialism and fascism would reach at their common balance in Islam after they sacrificed their names and bodies to Islam. They would see the right of property for individual, the economic and social equalization and cooperation, and the order of the truth in Islam in their perfect forms. Thus, Islamic revolution would mean the synthesis of these ideologies' thesis and anti-thesis.⁹¹

The expected Islamic revolution would not be an affair of static and piecemeal reform, but rather an affair of dynamic and absolute change. The revolution would be realized in the minds and spirits by means of expression (söz) and pen(kalem). The place for this revolution was Turkey with her big cities and towns and its cadre was the conservative and nationalist youth (mukaddesatçı ve milliyetçi gençlik).⁹² In addition to the internal instruments which had to be matured in the spirit of individual, such as love, discipline, aesthetic, dialectic, rhetoric and tactic, the external channels to reach at the expected revolution were the following items: arts (especially, literature, theater, cinema), publications (newspaper, journal, book), ways of persuasion (conference, sermon, talks), cultural establishments (clubs everywhere) and directing the Islamic capital.⁹³

⁹¹ Kısakürek, "İçtimai Mezhepler." [Social Sects] *BD*. 6th year, number 16 (January 27, 1950): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 87-89; see also "İktisadi Nizam." [Economic System] *BD*. 5th year, number 22 (August 18, 1950): 2.

⁹² Kısakürek, "Usul." [Method] *BD*. 21st year, number 2 (October 7, 1964): 2; *İdeolocya* 5th edition. 175-177.

⁹³ Kısakürek, "Vasıta." [Means] *BD*. 21st year, number 5 (October 28, 1964): 2; *İdeolocya* 5th edition. 181-184.

Politics in the Islamic revolution was a way of concretizing the ideological composition that its every point and line was completed. Internal politics of the Islamic revolution, through the inclination of “enemy and friend” was dichotomized into two poles, the side of enemy where the atheists, westernists, masons, cosmopolitans, ignorants and fanatics (ham ve kaba softalar) came together and the friendly side which comprised of the new generations who took the early practice of Islam as their example, nothing any more.⁹⁴ The external policy of the Islamic revolution contained two dimensions: a) taking the good aspects of the West to create a new composition from the East, though the west would not allow such an emergence; b) feeding the revolution and salvation of the East against the material and spiritual imperialism of the West but having still good relations until the maturation of this emergence. Hence, this salvation might take a period of 50 or 100 or 300 years.⁹⁵ At this point, Kısakürek’s conceptualization of Great East geographically gave its framework: Asianism (Asyacılık); the Great Asia, including Africa but excluding Europe, America and Australia as the opposite and enemy.⁹⁶

His ideal formulation of the Islamic politics and society had been concerned with explaining of what the Islamic revolution would do in political, social, economic and cultural fields ranging from the question of state, politics to the place of women in the new regime. The portrayal of the dimensions of the expected Islamic revolution was so totalistic that it included village, city, family, school, youth, positive sciences, arts, court of law, health and beauty, army and reproduction.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Kısakürek, “Siyaset.” [Politics] *BD*. 5th year, number 14 (January 13, 1950): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 90-92.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*.

⁹⁶ Kısakürek, “Asyacılık.” [Asianism] *BD*. 6th year, number 31 (October 20, 1950): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 93-95.

⁹⁷ Kısakürek, *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 87-143.

By the emergence of a great personality who would save the Turkish society (not the ordinary people), Kısakürek often stated that he did not mean an Islamic revolution similar to the revolutions of idea (the French and communist ones), since the possibility of such a revolution did not have any chance in the twentieth age. The emergence of a great personality (hero/thinker) might come from an organized and actionary idea which would penetrate into the Turkish people. By the will of people, thus, the Great East ideology might take the power.⁹⁸ But that does not mean that Kısakürek did not consider anti-democratic measures as sound such as military intervention, in the realization of his ideal. In one occasion, he put his mind into words in the following way: “ the folowers of an ideal that has a true aim, has to be fascist as a method if it is needed. An ideal should be evaluated by its essence (quality), not by its method.”⁹⁹

5.5.1 Islamist Reproduction of the Kemalist Political Mind

An observation of Kısakürek’s involvement in daily politics and his relations with political leaders might be useful in explaining how this revolution would take place within the present parameters of Turkish polity. Being aware of the nonexistence of a great personality who combined idea with action, he tried to convince political leaders either a president/prime minister or a leader of an opposition party to implement his ideological principles in the life of state. His call for this job actually included many famous politicians and parties of the right in Turkish politics, from Celal Bayar in 1943 and Menderes (the DP) in the 1950s to Süleyman Demirel in the 1960s and 1970s, and to Necmettin Erbakan (the MSP) and Alparslan Türkeş (the MHP) in the 1970s. His hostile feelings towards the RPP often determined his direction of support to these politicians as he severely criticized

⁹⁸ Kısakürek, “Ne Bekliyoruz.” [What are We Waiting?] *BD*. (July 3, 1965) in *Çerçeve* 3. 250-251.

⁹⁹ Kısakürek, *Rapor 7/9*. 92.

Erbakan for his decision of forming a coalition government with the RPP in spite of his early support to the MSP. In this way, as seen in his advice to Fevzi Çakmak, the chief of General Staff in the late 1930s and later to Adnan Menderes in the 1950s to close down the Republican People's Party, he perceived military solutions as appropriate in the true hands in order to attain a particular goal, the ideal of the Great East.

In order to put the ideal of the Great East into action, he personally determined two ways: publishing a newspaper and establishing a political party.¹⁰⁰ His experience with a political party was a short one though he continued to publish his journal/newspaper *Büyük Doğu*, interruptedly from the early 1940s to the late 1970s. First in the form of an association (*cemiyet*) in June 28, 1949 and two years later as a political party, Kısakürek established a political organization in order to realize his ideal.¹⁰¹ The effort of manipulating the rightist parties through his political support in the journal, in the way of the Great East constituted the main line for his involvement in politics.

Kısakürek, as Kemalists did, believed that political power was the main instrument to carry out a real revolution namely, an Islamic revolution which would save both the Islamic world and the Turkish nation. On the one hand, for Kısakürek, just like the other so called

¹⁰⁰ Kısakürek, "Mukaddesatçı Türk." [Conservative Turk] *BD*. 7th year, number 58 (June 1, 1951): 2, 7, 16; "Sonsöz." [Last Word] *BD*. 7th year, number 62 (June 29, 1951): 2, 16.

¹⁰¹ The program of the association and the party were a summary of Kısakürek's ideology see "Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti Ana Nizamnamesi." [Great East Association and Its Regulations] *BD*. 5th year, number 17 (July 1, 1949): 2-3. Among the members of the General Administrative Committee of *Büyük Doğu* Association, there were some Islamist personalities of the time; Şükrü Çelikalay, an Islamist deputy in the First Grand National Assembly, Cevat Rifat Atilhan, and Abdürrahim Zapsu see *BD*. 6th year, number 32 (October 27, 1950): 13. The effort of establishing a political party with the aim of getting the power in the elections was not realized. see "Büyük Doğu partisinin ana Nizamname projesi." [A Project of the Great East Party's Programme] *BD*. 7th year, number 60 (June 15, 1951): 8-9, 16; and 7th year, number 61 (June 22, 1951): 14-16. Later, he rejected to consider as a political organization but as a cultural association, *Konuşmalar*. 60.

revolutions of the Turkish history, the Kemalist revolution could not be called as a revolution simply because it did not contain the essential feature of a revolution: the evaluation of universe and world.¹⁰² But on the other hand, he was not uncomfortable with the further centralization and bureaucratization of the republican reforms by social engineering (from top to bottom) but its further secularization policies irritated him. In the same line of thinking, Kısakürek's conceptualization of politics hardly comprised participation of societal groups in the process of political decision making and responsiveness to the demands of interest groups as such.

Kısakürek's totalist and forceful Islamic revolution shared the Kemalist wish of reshaping the state and society from all institutions to daily life through an intellectual/social engineering.¹⁰³ The Kemalist engineering was based on reason and knowledge whereas Kısakürek's formulation put the emphasis on Islam and sharia. The significance of law/legal issues both in the Kemalist creation of a Turkish nation-state and Kısakürek's formulation of Islamic revolution might be connected to the nomocratic tradition of the Ottoman state, which I have discussed in the first chapter. For both Kemalists and Kısakürek, the vehicles of the revolution were the state, the law and the education, the new society/nation was to be created through these vehicles.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Reminding Lenin's word in this respect, he claimed that since Kemalism could not bring a cadre, except a leader, it was not a revolution see Kısakürek, *İhtilal*. 325-327, 332-333, 338.

¹⁰³ See for Recep Peker's views on the importance of idea and the totalist nature of the Kemalist/Turkish revolution, *İlk İnkilap*. 212.

¹⁰⁴ For the Kemalist tendency to see socio-political issue as legal problems see Kazancıgil, "the Ottoman," 52. Kısakürek saw education as the basci instrument of an Islamic revolution (a great movement of idea) in 1981, see *Konuşmalar*. 229.

5.6 Rejection of Religious Modernism and Reformism

In Kısakürek's epistemological framework, a quest for knowledge was not a reaching at the unknown but a discovery of the known, Islamic truths. The knowledge to be discovered was not conceived of as changing but as given, certain and eternal by God. This understanding of knowledge had clearly an aspect of Sufism. Since the truth (hakikat), he wrote in several articles, had existed in Islam, the only thing required was to discover (keşfetmek) it. Nevertheless, the discovered nature of knowledge in Kısakürek included a conception of "knowledge for power," which W. Montgomery Watt thought it as peculiar to a western man for controlling nature, man and society.¹⁰⁵

Kısakürek applied his conceptualization of knowledge to Islam as a religion: "we will discover Islam as what it is, without sacrificing a point from Sharia.. but we don't accept Islam as we found [in the present]."¹⁰⁶ That was to say that purification or renewal of Islam as a discovery but not as an invention would be realized by an emergence of the saviour (kurtarıcı) whom the Islamic world and even the whole world was expecting for centuries. This actually constituted the expected revolution as well.¹⁰⁷ Again, Islam was perceived as an ideology for power in order to shape individual and society, added to its control over the nature.

Not unexpectedly, this understanding of religion could not feel a sympathy towards the idea of reform in Islam. According to Kısakürek, the word "reform" meant restructuring something that had lost its form, by adding some parts to its body. This meant the destruction of its essence. The renewal in Islam would be limited to discovering and comprehending Islam with its essence and purity without losing any roots of it, in order to

¹⁰⁵ Watt, *Islamic*. 13.

¹⁰⁶ Kısakürek, *Hesaplaşma*. 91.

¹⁰⁷ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 51; *Konuşmalar*. 235 and *Doğru*. 163.

clear it up from the dust which had been collected by the centuries.¹⁰⁸ On the issue of the reformation in Islam, Kısakürek felt himself to battle on two fronts: Kemalists and modernists.

Despite of its hesitant nature, the Kemalist intention of reforming the religion, like other social institutions, on scientific and national lines by a committee of the theological faculty, under the chairmanship of professor Köprülüzade Mehmed Fuad was the first front he attacked by calling this project as “an attempt of destructing Islam.” The basic conviction of the committee’s report that religion, like all other social institutions ought to satisfy the exigencies of life and pursue the process of development was a “sign of unbelief.” Turkification of the language of worship and the introduction of musical instruments into the mosques were aimed at the invention of a new religion from within Islam. But the attempt failed due to the fact that RPP did not want to tolerate an existence of a reformed religion, even a “christinized religion” in Turkey.¹⁰⁹ Kısakürek also heavily criticized the reformist attitude of the nationalist intellectual who accepted the significance of the religion (the belief in God) for the society and the individual, but who regarded the forms of worship as primitive and the application of sharia as unacceptable.

One might remind here that the reformist portrayal Kısakürek gave was similar to the understanding of religion by Kemalism, with its Durkheimian conception of religion. To Kısakürek, since Islam was a totality, the selection of some parts of religion and its

¹⁰⁸ *Doğru*. 158; *İman ve İslam Atlası* [Atlas of Belief and Islam] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1985, 2nd edition), 33.

¹⁰⁹ Dedektif X Bir, “İslamı İlk İmha Davranışı.” [The First Movement to destroy Islam] *BD*. 28th year, 15th period, number 13 (March 13, 1971): 12-13 and “İslam Katliamının Devamı.” [Continuity in the Massacre of Islam] *BD*. 28th year, 15th period, number 14 (April 7, 1971): 12-13, 16. He also criticized, with less emphasis, the reading of the Qur’an in Turkish in worship by the courage of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, see Dedektif X Bir, “(O) ve Olanlardan Biri.” [He and One of the Incidents] *BD*. 6th year, number 23 (August 28, 1950): 3, 11.

adaptation to the modern needs, with the claim that the essence of religion was kept while renewing it, constituted an attempt of changing Islam from its very centre.¹¹⁰

The second front, perhaps the dangerous one in his eyes, was the understanding of religion by some Islamists like Afghani, Abduh, Seyyid Kutup and Mevdudi, who took place within the reformist current through their “distortion of Islam from its essence.” According to Kısakürek, this reformist attitude started with Ibn al-Taymiyyah who was the first example of seeing Islam in a materialistic way. Al-Taymiyyah’s emphasis on reason and his interpretation of Islam (and Sharia) in accordance with the mere appearance (zahir) of Islamic truths without accepting Islam’s inner dimension (batın), namely Sufism (tasavvuf), was an attempt of bringing a kind of materialism and of mere rationalism (kuru akılçılık) into the very heart of Islam. Certainly, the most unacceptable side of this line in his eyes, was its discrediting attitude towards Sufism, alongside the unficiation of schools of law.¹¹¹

Upon the challenge of the Europe’s domination over the material, to Kısakürek, Afghani-Abduh line failed in finding the reasons of the decline and thus could not advance the idea of applying Islam to the new life at the level of the universe. Without being able to examine the West and the East, this line, by the desire of reforming Islam, followed a way of unbelief that made Islam dependent on its hostile worldview. What was to be done was opening the age of true Islam (gerçek İslam çağı) but rather, they tried to adapt Islam to the

¹¹⁰ “Röformacılar.” [Reformists] *BD*. 5th year, number 2 (October 21, 1949): 2; see also *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 74-77.

¹¹¹ Kısakürek, *Doğru*. 103-107; *Türkiye’nin*. 131-138 and *Hesaplaşma*. 90-91. His harsh treatment of these Islamists were basically inspired by his nakshabendism and his shaikh’s ideas, see *Türkiye’nin*. 138.

age which was destined to decadence.¹¹² To Kısakürek, Islam could not be thought as a passive entity in the face of the Western challenge, one whose role in the relationship between West and East was limited to reaction, but rather it was a dynamic factor both in creating a new society, individual and state and in solving the crisis of humanity in general.

The true Islam of Kısakürek, if elaborated in relation to the religious understanding of the Islamists in the second constitutional period, contained: 1) the idea that there could not be a contradiction between Islamic principles and reason 2) no need for an opening of the gate of interpretation but the rediscovery of the Islamic truths 3) the strong rejection of the unification of schools of law 4) rediscovering the true nature of the all religious schools without trying to adopt to the necessities of the modern times. On the issue of the compatibility between the true Islam and modern civilization, Kısakürek had a conservative tendency by claiming that all the good aspects of the western ideologies (liberalism, socialism and democracy) were given in their most perfect forms, in Islam. What was to be done was not an adaptation of Islam to the rationality and progress of the modern civilization but rather a discovery of these principles in Islam. Kısakürek's portrayal of Islam as an ideology and a source of action went beyond its reconstruction as a dynamic force in the minds of the earlier Islamists to acquire progress.

Unlike Afghani and Abduh, rediscovering Islam, for Kısakürek, was not aimed at the restoration of early origins. Renewing Islam and the return to the early Islam of the prophet and the four caliphs, for Kısakürek, did not mean the removal of medieval formulations in the cognition of Islam. Although the present religious understanding of the Muslims was

¹¹² Kısakürek, *Doğru*. 150. He criticized Mehmet Akif, who has been a source of inspiration for the Islamists in the republican Turkey of following Afghani's reformist thought and of not comprehending the significance of sufism, though Akif constituted the only voice of belief against the westernists see *Edebiyat Mahkemeleri* [Courts of

distorted by the external factors and by the loss of aşk and vecd, and was the major reason for the decline of Muslims, the spritual essence (vecd) of Islam had to be rediscovered for the Islamic revival. True to Kısakürek's dedication to the orthodox Sunni Islam and Nakshibendism, he stongly rejected the Islamist argument that the medieval religious understandings caused Muslim's decline and called this line of thinking as reformist. As a sincere representative of Sunni Islam, Kısakürek accepted the religious interpretations of the medieval ulema, especially that of al Ghazzali while criticizing the understanding of Islamic ideals as just forms and imitation by reactionaries (ham yobaz ve kaba softa).

Kısakürek was cautious about the late nineteenth century Muslim reformist thought and its tendency to reinterpret the principles of Islam in the light of modern civilization (the compatibility between the dominant ideas of Europe and the traditional islamic principles), fearing that this approach would distort the meanings of Islamic values and would lose what distinguished Islam from other religions and ideologies. He seems to be aware of the fact that once the orthodox understanding of religion was abandoned, it was difficult to say what was truely Islamic and what was not. He was trying to close the door to the reformation of religious understanding by his insistence on the impossibility of making ijtiħad in the present time, as the great founders of law schools did in the past. Yet, the great ulema of the medieaval age did what had to be done in the best way. Hence, the gate of ijtiħad was closed but there still remained something: Evaluating all the values derived from the progress of the humanity in accordance with Islam and that was tantamount to a new ideological emergence, only Islam. The place of this expected emergence was Turkey.¹¹³

Literature] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1997), 60-61; *Doğru*. 147; *Dünya*. 51; *Hitabeler*. 127.

¹¹³ Kısakürek, *Doğru*. 98-99; *İman ve İslam*. 34-35; *Dünya*. 53-55. Since Muslims became corrupted in Turkey and then later in the rest of the Islamic world, this

His closure of the gate of ijihad reminds us Mustafa Sabri's views as such. Indeed, He had a contact with Mustafa Sabri Efendi who sent his photograph to Kısakürek.¹¹⁴ Mustafa Sabri both in his writings in Beyan-ül Hak and in his writings of the exile in Egypt and Greece, presented a wide range of arguments against the Islamist and nationalist circles that urged the opening of the gate of ijihad.¹¹⁵ But on the other hand, in spite of his orthodox understanding of Islam, Kısakürek could not achieve to run away from the same 'naive' position of the reformists while considering good elements of modern ideologies as the characteristics of true Islam such as the nonexistence of private life, as enunciated by Lenin.¹¹⁶ Kısakürek belonged to a trend of thought which had concentrated on Islam while stressing those features which distinguish it from other ideologies. This line of thinking also paid attention to more universal problems of ideologies and find their solutions in the rediscovery of Islam.

ideological emergence would take place in Turkey and the ideal of the Great East would provide the fifteenth-century renewer with a framework, see *Rapor* 1/3. 137.

¹¹⁴ This contact, according to Kısakürek's statements occurred in 1945, see *BD*. 28th year, 15th period, number 6 (February 10, 1971): 5.

¹¹⁵ See Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Dini Müceddidler* [Religious Renovators] (İstanbul: Sebül Yayınevi, 1977).

¹¹⁶ Kısakürek, by making an analogy from Lenin's statement that there could not be a private life for a communist, claimed that there was no private life for a Muslim. Lenin's statement was something lost by Muslims and ought to be acquired wherever it was found, as the prophet's tradition stated, see *Batı*. 91 and "Müslüman ve Hayat." [Muslim and Life] *BD*. (May 6, 1965) in *Çerçeve* 3. 191.

CHAPTER VI

DEMOCRACY, STATE AND NATIONALISM FROM NECİP FAZIL KISAKÜREK'S ISLAMIST PERSPECTIVE

“Ne mutlu müslümanım diyene” Kısakürek.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how the concepts of state, democracy and nationalism were formulated in Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's ideological and political discourse. Specifically, it seeks to investigate, at practical level, his evaluations of the transition to democracy in Turkey, the RPP, İsmet İnönü, the DP and Menderes. In this regard, this chapter also deals with how he addressed theoretically democracy, the idea of opposition, Islam and state and his ideal state (başyücelik devleti). Integral to our analysis of the various dimensions of Kısakürek's conceptualizations of democracy are the issues of Turkish nationalism and the role of military in the Turkish democracy as well.

6.1 Introduction: Transition to Multi-Party Politics (1946-1950)

The transition to competitive politics in Turkey started in 1945, when the Republican People's Party (RPP) allowed the establishment of the Democratic Party by some members of the RPP- Adnan Menderes, Celal Bayar, Fuat Köprülü and Refik Koraltan- as an opposition party. Following its representations in the parliament in the 1946 national elections with a minority, in the 1950 elections, the DP came to power, easily mobilizing such peripheral elements like peasants. As a result this election was described as “victory

of the periphery over the center.”¹ Although there was not a great ideological difference in relation to the Kemalist principles between the two parties, their relations quickly deteriorated to the extent that the successive DP governments resorted to anti-democratic, authoritarian measures against the opposition. True to the observation that “opposition groups in Turkey had always been libertarian out of power and autocratic once in power,”² the DP leadership became authoritarian in power while the RPP voiced the demand for the freedom. Such state of affairs paved the way to the military intervention of 1960.

The cultural legacy of the single party period continued to influence the understandings of democracy and opposition on the part of the political elite and intellectuals in the 1950s. Certainly, this is not the proper place for discussing the relations between the political power and the opposition in the period in detail. What is relevant for our purpose is that Kısakürek expressed his political ideas mainly in this period by publishing his journal *Büyük Doğu* from 1943 to 1960 with intervals. This fact compels us to determine Kısakürek’s attitudes towards the DP in power and the opposition by outlining his evaluations of the DP (and Adnan Menderes) and the RPP (and İsmet İnönü).

In analysing the transition of multiparty politics in Turkey, Kısakürek drew the attention to one major point: democratization from above which is granted by the Kemalist elite with the limitation of democratic politics as a product of external influence, even by the force of the West. Democratic institutions were not established by the real, sincere intentions of Kemalist elites, but were imposed by the changing conjunction of the outside world which

¹ Ergun Özbudun, “State Elites and Democratic political Culture in Turkey,” in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed. Larry Diamond (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), 255.

² İlkay Sunar and Sabri Sayari, “Democracy in Turkey: Problems and Prospects,” in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule in Southern Europe*, ed. Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Leonard Whiteheads (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 166.

then had started to polarize between the democratic regimes and communist ones. By signing the United Nations Charter in San Fransisco in 1944 under the dictate of the USA, the RPP and its chief, İsmet İnönü accepted this transition to adjust the regime to the world which had been shaped by the victory of the democracies.³ Despite of this nature, the transition to democracy and the DP's coming to power was saluted as the people's revolution though a cheap one, against the RPP's twenty seven despotic rule.⁴ As all Islamist circles from 1945 to 1960, supported the transition to democracy and the Democratic party with the hope that some Islamic demands might be met and some secular reforms might be returned back by the party, Kısakürek also expected that Menderes would reverse back the republican reforms and advocate a kind of Islamist position in relation to Turkey's position in the Islamic world. While some Islamist journals in the 1950s like *Sebil ü Rüşat*, edited by Eşref Edip advanced the view that early Islamic political practice was an example of "a democratic republic"⁵, as I have discussed in the following sections, Kısakürek did not establish such equivalence between democracy and Islam though he often claimed that the real democracy was given by Islam. In other words, he did not try to give an Islamic legitimation to the transition to competitive politics in 1946.

6.2 The RPP and İnönü as the Counterpart of Sultan Abdulhamid

Since the Young Ottomans, the Islamist criticism against the Ottoman-Turkish modernization process had found its severe manifestation in Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's

³ Kısakürek, "Artık Anlaşıyor mu?" [Is it Understood Finally?] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 42 (August 16, 1946): 2 also in *Çerçeve* 2. 86; *Benim*. 114; *Hesaplaşma*. 140; *Rapor* 1/3. 107; *Para*. 176.

⁴ Be. De, "Hadiselerin Muhasebesi." [Evaluation of Incidents] *BD*. 5th year, number 22 (August 18, 1950): 8-9, *Benim*. 131.

⁵ Tunaya, *İslamcılık*. 198-199.

attacks to the RPP and İsmet İnönü. As a Republican Islamist, Kısakürek was very discomfited about the direction and nature of the RPP's secular reforms. Firstly, these reforms did not meet the Islamist expectations of establishing a new Islamic state from the ruins of the Ottoman empire. On the contrary, the RPP's reforms were directed to a more radical westernization than what the Tanzimat and Meşrutiyet periods achieved. Secondly, the RPP regime was considered by Kısakürek as the main obstacle to the realization of the Islamist ideals. As such, the RPP and its reforms were seen as the false productions of what the Turkish people had been expecting for centuries. Hence, it must be noted that Kısakürek's involvement in daily politics whether in the form of supporting the rightist parties, the Democratic Party in the 1950s, the Justice Party (AP) and other small ones national Salvation Party (MSP), National Action Party (MHP) in the 1960s and 1970s or in the form of establishing his party Büyük Doğu in 1949 was directed to one basic goal: the destruction of the RPP and its regime.

Naturally, Kısakürek's early statements about the RPP and İsmet İnönü in 1946-1950 period were rather soft in its tonation of critique. In his article, "To our President", he urged the President İnönü to reevaluate the Republican revolution which saved he fatherland in material sense but lost this victory at spiritual level by its inability in bringing an ideology and worldview to the new generations in place of the older one. During its twenty three years rule, the RPP had lost its respect in the eyes of the nation and what remained as a choice for the party was to chose one of the two: "to be or not to be." The option of "to be" meant reversing the way of the Kemalist regime back and reevaluating what was taken from the West and what was eliminated. To his call, Kısakürek added the statement that there was no anyone who would realize the true revolution, with the exception of İnönü.⁶ Certainly, despite such writings in the period of 1943-1950,

⁶ Kısakürek, "Cumhur Resimize." [To Our President] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 62 (May 9, 1947): 2 and "Cumhur Reismimize." [To Our President] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III,

Kısakürek did not expect anything from the RPP and İnönü in this respect. The DP's capture of the power in 1950 elections was also a starting point in Kısakürek's writings that denounced the RPP, its ideology and leadership, ranging from critiques of Turkish modernization process to the more polemical and insulting essays in his journal.

His conceptualization of politics showed one important aspect of elite political culture: the "tendency to view the world in group versus outgroup terms."⁷ In Kısakürek's daily political essays in the journal of *Büyük Doğu*, through the inclination of "us against them", the arena of Turkish political system was dichotomized into two basic political positioning, the side of the RPP where the enemies of the nation and false heroes came together and the other side which was under the duty of abolishing the all elements of the RPP regime and ideology in order to meet "the expectations of the nation" in this respect. In fact, there had been many illustrations of this tendency in Kısakürek's political ideas:

In this world, one's domination is standing with the subjection of other. No share for darkness where the light entered. Opposing worldviews are the same... Did Islam recognize a right of life and idea for the unbelievers when it became dominant?... did the French revolution accept a right of existence for whom from the king's rule? What did the communism do? How did Fascism and Nazism conduct the affairs? Did they allow their enemies to the struggle around the people's will? No. The notion of the right of life between two parties can exist if they agree on the principles but only differ in small reform and program details. Can the RPP be one of them? It is a pure enemy of the fatherland but in the claim of creating this country from nonexistence. Since it was knocked down by the hands of the people, it must be thoroughly destroyed... The Democrat Party! Your foremost duty is to kill this mouse of pestilence [the RPP] through the legal ways in order to represent the national will who elected you for taking the revenge from this mouse.⁸

number 63 (May 16, 1947): 2. See also, "C.H.P.'ye Hitap." [Adress to the RPP] *BD*. 1st year, vol.II, number 38 (July 19, 1946): 1 also in *Hücum ve Polemik* [Attack and Polemic] (İstanbul: *Büyük Doğu*, 1992), 62-68.

⁷ Frey, "Patterns," 65.

⁸ Kısakürek, "Bu Sıçanı Gebertiniz." [Kill this Mouse] *BD*. 9th year, number 55 (July 11, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim I*. 101-102.

Kısakürek often stressed the claim that although the RPP came to power after the victory of the Independence War, it turned into a group who exploited the spirit of the Independence. This party tried to take the revenge that the West had been unable to take from Islam for a thousand years and undermined the roots of the nation: history, custom, language and family.⁹ The despotic and oligarchic rule of the single party era and the ideology of the RPP were likened to the communist party's rule and ideology, as expressed in the following words:

Except its so called nationalism, which one of the RPP's six principles was contrary to communism? The RPP's conceptualization of laicism was on the same track with communism in the enmity towards Islam though real laicism connoted to a total and absolute freedom and to a separation of religion from government. The rest of the principles are not in tight share with communism but also they are not contrary to each other. Communists are also republican, revolutionist, statist and populist.

Even, the RPP's despotism went beyond the totalitarian regimes by its claim that sovereignty belonged to the nation.¹⁰ The spiritual, intellectual and moral void was the greatest product that the RPP gave to this country. There existed two fashionable principles in the Republican world: Islam was reactionism and the Western civilization was the master.¹¹ The similarity established between the RPP and communism was complemented by the said spiritual void that the party created. Hence, the responsibility of the communist movement in Turkey completely belonged to the RPP which provided a fertile ground for the blossoming of communism. The Republican regime and communism were indeed, in

⁹ Kısakürek, "Kement." [Losso] *BD.* number 13 (May 29, 1960): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim* 2. 199-202. In his late writings, Kısakürek called the RPP as the internal agency of the West see *Rapor* 4/6. 112.

¹⁰ Be. De. "Hadiselerin Muhasebesi." [Evaluation of Incidents] *BD.* 6th year, number 24 (September 1, 1950): 9; Kısakürek, "Ve İsmet İnönü'nün Suratı." [And İsmet İnönü's Face] *BD.* 22nd year, 12th period, number 2 (September 29, 1965): 1; *Başmakalelerim* 3. 129.

¹¹ Kısakürek, "CHP Vebali." [Responsibility of the RPP] *BD.* 22nd year, 12th period, number 1 (September 22, 1965): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim* 3. 125-126.

cooperation in the destruction of religion such as the examples of communist cadres at high offices of the state, village entitutes and Kadro movement.¹² The rightist parties had to wage a new independence war against it.¹³ It was not possible to think of any revolution or opposition in Turkey without eliminating the RPP totally.¹⁴

Kısakürek's attacks to the Kemalist regime focused on the personality of İsmet İnönü who had become, in a sense, the questionable and fragile symbol of the Kemalist ideology. After the death of Atatürk, İnönü, being elected as the RPP's permanent chairman at the party's extraordinary congress on December 26, 1938, also adopted the title of National Chief. In Ahmad's words, Kemalist regime assumed "the fascist form aptly described by the party's slogan 'one party, one nation, one leader'."¹⁵ In those years, Kısakürek was writing on the exemplifying position of the national chief to be loved by the nation.¹⁶ But with the transition, İnönü and the RPP had become a main target to be attacked. Expectedly, İnönü was portrayed as the atheist, anti-Islamic, non-Turkish personality¹⁷, reminding us the portrayal of Abdul Hamid as the red sultan in the second constitutional

¹² Dedektif X Bir, "Türkiye'de Komünizma." [Communism in Turkey] *BD*. 5th year, number 4 (April 1, 1949): 2; "CHP ve Komünizma." [the RPP and Communism] *BD*. vol. II, number 30 (September 25, 1959): 8-9; Kısakürek, *Hitabeler*. 32-35; *Rapor 10/13*. 50.

¹³ Kısakürek, "Manalandırma," [Interpreting] *BD*, June 23, 1965 in *Çerçeve*, 2, 33; "Yeni İstiklal Savaşı," [New Independence War] June 23, 1980 in *Rapor 10/13*, 20-22.

¹⁴ Kısakürek, *Rapor 4/6*, 192.

¹⁵ Ahmad, *The Making*. 69.

¹⁶ See Kısakürek, "Millet Şefi, Örnek Şef." [National Chief, Exemplary Chief] (February 29, 1939) in *Çerçeve 1*. 49-50; "Şef Niçin Sevilir." [Why is Chief Loved?] (March 5, 1939) in *Çerçeve 1*. 53.

¹⁷ Kısakürek, "Sağır." [The Deaf] *BD*. 6th year, number 29 (October 6, 1950): 8-9 also in *Hücum*. 137; "İsmet İnönü ve Türklük." [İsmet İnönü and Turkishness] *BD*. 6th year, number 41 (December 29, 1950): 8 also in *Hücum*. 141-142; "İsmet İnönü ve Müslümanlık." [İsmet İnönü and Islam] *BD*. 6th year, number 41 (December 29, 1950): 9 also in *Hücum*. 143; "Ben Senden Niçin Nefret Ediyorum?" [Why am I hating you?] *Hücum*. 153-155 and 156-157.

period. In that way, İnönü and the RPP constituted the republican counterpart of the despotic sultan in Kısakürek's ideology. His hostility towards the RPP and İnönü had continued to colour his political writings even until his death.¹⁸

6.3 Islamist Effort to Manipulate the Political Power (1950-1960): Adnan Menderes and Kısakürek

Actually, Kısakürek had a two sided approach towards the Democrat Party. On one level, from its foundation to the 1960 intervention, he regarded it as another manifestation of the RPP, not having the intention of changing the very basis of the Kemalist ideology. In its oppositional years (1946-1950), he expected the Democrat Party to behave as the Free Republican Party had done in 1930. According to Kısakürek, the DP was founded by some members of the RPP as a "token opposition" which would keep the government on its toes without actually challenging its legitimacy. That was why İnönü pressed Celal Bayar to become the leader of the opposition even though Bayar was uncertain of the outcome.¹⁹ The group who made the Republican revolution could not allow any opposition based on any worldview since they did not see any manifestation of something good or right outside of themselves. The performance of the Kemalist modernization could not be evaluated since the matter of the first president was out of the subject of any questioning.²⁰ The liberal and democratic ideas of the DP did not mean a departure from

¹⁸ See Kısakürek, *Çerçeve 4*. 198; *Türkiyenin*. 86-87.

¹⁹ Be. De., "Hadiselerin Muhasebesi." [Evaluation of Incidents] *BD*. (March 12, 1948) in *Hadiselerin* 1. 244; "Muhasebe." [Evaluation] *BD*. (June 24, 1949) in *Çerçeve 2*. 136-137; Dedektif X Bir, "Muhalefet." [Opposition] *BD*. 5th year number 15 (January 20, 1950): 3, 16; *Benim*. 48. The RPP, the DP and the Nation Parti, (Millet Partisi) were visualized as coming from the same root: Kemalism, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, see the cover page of *Büyük Doğu*, 6th year, number 35 (November 17, 1950): 9.

²⁰ Dedektif X Bir, "Serbest Fırka: Bizde Muhalefet Komedyasının Bir Numaralı Kahramanı." [The Free Party: The First Actor in the Comedy of Opposition] *BD*. 5th year, number 21 (March 3, 1950): 3, 7.

the RPP's ideology, including its conceptualization of laicism. What the DP was trying to do was not becoming an opposition to the RPP but rather becoming a better example of the RPP. They agreed on the principles but on some applications they differed.²¹

On the other side, during all the period of 1950-1960, he urged the DP, especially Menderes to be the expected saver of the Turkish nation by eliminating the "ancien regime" of the RPP. Kısakürek's harsh statements about the RPP during the Menderes governments suggests that he advised Menderes to pursue a path that should lead to a return to authoritarianism by punishing the RPP for "the creation of the old period" (*devri sabık yaratmak*) because of its policies in the single-party era.²² The nation gave its support to the DP in return for the total destruction of the RPP. Menderes had to act as "a government of revolution" (*ihtilal hükümeti*) by eradicating the all spirit, reforms and cadres of the "ancien regime", as the French revolution did to the royalists or Hitler did to Jews or the Bolshevik revolution did to the supporters of the Tsar; otherwise he would be toppled down by those who were allowed to survive by Menderes himself.²³ That was the call for a counter-revolution, but without success. Kısakürek often tried to persuade Menderes to accept and implement his ideology of the Great East in order to realize a worldview that had been expecting since 1839.²⁴ The expectations from Menderes led him to hope for an Islamic goal of cooperation among Islamic countries in foreign policy. For

²¹ Kısakürek, *Benim*. 59.

²² Kısakürek, "Kabahat," 22.

²³ Kısakürek, "İhtilal Hükümeti." [The Revolutionary Government] *BD*. number 9 (July 2, 1954): 2; Prof. Ş. Ü., "Kurtarıcı İhtilal Hükümeti." [Saviour Revolutionary Government] *BD*. number 14 (June 5, 1959): 2; "Oluşa Davet." [Invitation to Being] *BD*. number 6 (April 10, 1959): 2; Kısakürek, *Benim*. 131, 194.

²⁴ Kısakürek, "Gözümüzün İçine Bak." [Look into Our Eyes] *BD*. number 25 (August 21, 1959): 1; "Adnan," 64-66; "Ko-va-dis?" [Where to Go?] *BD*. number 3 (March 20, 1956): 1. It is obvious that Menderes did not pursue an Islamist policy, but he gave financial help (from hidden amount, *gizli ödenek*) to Kısakürek in order to publish his journal, *Büyük Doğu*.

example, the establishment of the Bagdat Pact was such an attempt of spiritual unification among some Islamic countries and a declaration of identity and personality against the West.²⁵

Kısakürek shared the basic notion of the political culture of the single-party period that those who gained political power could exercise it without restraint. This understanding of political power in absolute terms was accompanied by the consideration that the institutions of the state were under the unqualified command of the ruling party.²⁶ Kısakürek persistently stated the view that the DP and Menderes had the right to monopolize and to use power for destroying the RPP and its regime totally by reminding that the DP had the mandate of the “national will.”²⁷ His conviction that the DP in power had to act in the totalistic way (hepçi olmak) that the RPP did in the past mainly came from his hostility towards the Kemalist reforms. The notions of democracy, party and opposition were mere instruments for the search of an ideology and its application by the state institutions. To recognize the right of opposition to the old despot RPP meant allowing a harmful freedom for the destruction of the DP government. To Kısakürek, the construction of the real freedom necessitated the use of power to give an end to the exploitation of freedom.²⁸ His criticism of Menderes for respecting democracy too much might be linked

²⁵ Kısakürek, “İran Seyahati.” [Trip to Iran] *BD.* (April 23, 1956); “Şehinşah.” *BD.* (May 17, 1956); “Türkün Haysiyetinde Adnan Menderes.” [Adnan Menderes in Turkish Honour] *BD.* (May 18, 1956) in *Başmakalelerim 2.* 45-47, 87-88, 89-90, respectively.

²⁶ İlder Turan, “The Evolution of Political Culture in Turkey,” in *Modern Turkey: Continuity and Change*, ed. Ahmet Evin (Leske Verlag+Budrich GmbH: Opladen, 1984), 98.

²⁷ Kısakürek, “Açık Hükümet Gizli İktidar.” [Open Government. Secret Power] *BD.* 9th year, number 114 (September 11, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1.* 231-233.

²⁸ Be. De, “Vicdanlı Şiddet.” [Conscientious Violence] *BD.* number 11 (May 15, 1959): 9; Kısakürek, “Demokrasi Derdi.” [Problem of Democracy] *BD.* 9th year, number 87 (August 12, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1.* 164-165; “Hep’çi Olunuz Muhterem Başvekil.” [Be Totalist, Dear Prime Minister] *BD.* 9th year, number 19 (June 3, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1.* 40-41; “O’na.” [To Him] *BD.* (April 3, 1954) in *Başmakalelerim 2.* 18-20.

to his legitimization of Abdul Hamid's suspension of Meşrutiyet until the conscience of constitutional democracy (Kanun-i Esasi), in accordance with Islam, emerged in the minds of the nation.²⁹

He disregarded the democratic principle that state institutions ought to be neutral in relation to political parties and the opposition for the case of the RPP. Because the RPP used all the state institutions in the service of the party while in power, then there could not be a right of opposition for the RPP. For instance, he supported the confiscation of the RPP's properties and the formation of Parliamentary Investigation Committee to examine the subversive activities of the opposition, namely the RPP in these words: "You [the RPP], the cadre of Nimrods! You have robbed the nation completely from its belief and religion to its last shoe for twenty seven years and ... you undermined the right, justice, conscience, morality and belief and then now you demand them!"³⁰ There could not be a chance of becoming an opposition for the RPP which ruled the country despotically for twenty seven years.³¹ He even regarded the formation of the investigation committee as a political weakness. Rather, Menderes had to destroy (close down) the RPP by the claim of provoking a military revolution.³² According to Kısakürek, the Democratic Party was not committed to dismantling the reforms of the RPP's one-party regime by destroying all the basis of this party though it gained the nation's support through promising to abolish the

²⁹ Menderes ought to be advocated to a higher ideal than the stroy of freedom and democracy *Benim*. 265, 267 see also *Ulu Hakan*. 104, 459.

³⁰ Kısakürek, "İlk Tedbir Budur." [This is the first measure] *BD*. 9th year, number 21 (June 5, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 44-45; see also "Kabihat." [Fault] *BD*. (April 6, 1956) in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 21-23.

³¹ Kısakürek, "Tek Çift Oynayanlar." [Players of Odd or Even] *BD*. 9th year, number 50 (July 6, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 99; "Palyaço." *BD*. number 22 (July 31, 1959): 1, 16 also in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 235-238.

³² Kısakürek, "Adnan Menderes." *BD*. (November 25, 1951) in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 5-6; *Benim*. 420-421; *Cinnet*. 292. Menderes was killed because of the fact that he did not destroy the RPP.

RPP's reforms.³³ In February 1959 when Menderes survived an airplane crash in which most passengers were killed in London, Kısakürek interpreted this event as a divine mercy but also as the last chance to be or to be killed (ya ol, ya öl). Kısakürek gave a date for Menderes's fall from power by force: 1959 and 1960 were the last dates.³⁴ By leaving aside the use of state institutions, Menderes's establishment of a mass organization (called as Vatan cephesi, Fatherland Front to face the growing opposition of the RPP, media, and universities) was seen by Kısakürek as a sign of further weakness.³⁵ To Kısakürek, the main factor that brought the demise of Menderes was his hesitation in using the political power in the way that Atatürk and İnönü used.³⁶ According to Kısakürek's statements, he urged Menderes to close down the opposition parties and eliminate the RPP totally from the motto in the Assembly that sovereignty belonged to the nation to its all reforms, in 1960, in his last meeting with Menderes.³⁷

On many occasions, Kısakürek spoke of his disillusion with Menderes and the DP governments because of their reluctance of becoming the true party of the nation and their anti-islamic policies. For example, he criticized the DP's implementation of the Article of 163 (in the Turkish criminal code) which was about the outlawed organizational activities aimed at changing the structure of the government on the basis of religious principle.³⁸

³³ Kısakürek, "Beklediğimiz İnkılap ve Yeni İktidar." [Our Expected Revolution and New Power] *BD*. 9th year, number 6 (May 21, 1952): 1.

³⁴ Kısakürek, "Kement.," 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 199-200; *Benim*. 408.

³⁵ Kısakürek, *Benim*. 398.

³⁶ See An opposite explanation in this regard was given by a hard line Kemalist, Metin Toker. He argued that the demise of the DP leaders was because of their consideration of themselves as Atatürk and İnönü of the 1930s, see *İsmet Paşayla On Yıl*, [Ten Years With İsmet Pasha] vol.1 (İstanbul: Akis yay, 1966, 3rd edition), 140.

³⁷ Kısakürek, *Benim*. 338, 428-429.

³⁸ Kısakürek, "Milletçe Ağlıyoruz." [As A Nation We are Crying] *BD*. number 1 (April 23, 1954): 3; "163. Madde." [Article 163] *BD*. 9th year, number 24 (June 8, 1952): 1

6.4 Kısakürek's Concept of Democracy: A Schumpeterian or An Islamic View?

In analysing the democratic experience in the Ottoman-Turkish history, Kısakürek underlined the fact that freedom and democracy had been imported from outside with the influence of the French revolution, without being able to internalize their real senses. Rather, the experience of democracy had constituted a mask for the domination of some groups from Meşrutiyet to the republic. Every group demanded freedom just for themselves and for their oppression but used it to accuse other group of ruling despotically.³⁹ By the slogan that the sovereignty belonged to the nation, the despotic regime of the RPP identified its own will with the national will though it conducted an oppressive rule, similar to the communist party's rule in Russia. During the RPP governments, the national will had not been represented by the Assembly, rather it was in the hands of the national chief (implying both Atatürk and İnönü).⁴⁰ Kısakürek's this argument about the RPP's attitude towards democracy reminds us of Said Halim Pasha's claim that the bureaucrats demanded a constitutional regime for themselves but in the name of people.

According to Kısakürek, the transition to democracy in 1946 was also achieved by the imposition of the western democratic regimes in San Fransisco, but was not a product of good intentions on the part of the Kemalist regime. Basically emanated from this observation, Kısakürek did not regard the democratic institutions as the ultimate criterium

also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 51; "Dünya ve Biz." [World and Us] *BD*. number 4 (May 28, 1954): 2. In fact, Islamists had always been critical of this article until its annulment. For the Islamist arguments in the 1950s on this article see Sitembölükbaşı, *Türkiye'de*. 52-56.

³⁹ İsmini Vermeyen Profesör, "Türkiye'nin Manzarası." [Turkey's panorama] *BD*. 12th period, number 1 (September 22, 1965): 2; also see Kısakürek, *Türkiyenin*. 8-9; "İrzına Geçilen Hürriyet." [Raped Freedom] *BD*. June 25, 1965 in *Çerçeve 3*, pp. 237-238; *Ulu Hakan*. 424.

⁴⁰ İsmini Vermeyen Profesör, "Türkiye'nin Manzarası." [Turkey's panorama] *BD*. 12th period, number 2 (September 29, 1965): 2 see also Kısakürek, *Türkiyenin*. 86-87.

in shaping the future of Turkish state and society. In this way, as seen in his advice to Fevzi Çakmak to make a military intervention against İsmet İnönü in the late 1930s and the early 1940s and to Adnan Menderes in the 1950s to close down the Republican People's Party, democratic institutions would be easily sacrificed for the aim of constructing a "true"/Islamic system in Turkey.⁴¹ Regarding the Turkish experience of democracy, Kısakürek's critique of republican governments contained itself to the point that their practice was not related to the true democracy of the West and did not concentrate on the point that they had not implemented democracy with its all ideas and institutions.

The magical word of freedom was, to Kısakürek, not an end (gaye) by itself, but a means (vasıta)/a condition for the realization of an ideal and for finding the truth. After the devotion to the truth, human beings became a slave to the truth, and that was the meaning of the true freedom.⁴² Kısakürek's conceptualization of freedom had a Sufi nature that reality became apparent after you dropped your claims by a submission to the truth. Here, similar to the subjection of reason to the (divine) truth, freedom also had to be understood in a limited way that it was fulfilled within the eternal principles of Islam.⁴³ If the anti-thesis of abstract freedom was despotism, its illness was freedom for the sake of freedom or unlimited freedom (başiboş hürriyet= animal freedom, hayvani hürriyet) which would be detrimental to the truth. To Kısakürek, such corrupted understanding of freedom had been the reason behind the failure of the Turkish modernization process. The search for

⁴¹ Be.De, "Hadiselerin Muhasebesi." [Evaluation of Incidents] *BD*. 6th year, number 23 (August 25, 1950): 8-9; Kısakürek, "Yaşamak ve Yaşatmak İsteyenler, Öldürmek İçin Yaşamak İsteyeni Öldürürler." [Those who want to live others have to kill those people who live to kill someone else] *BD*. 9th year, number 119 (September 16, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 242-243.

⁴² Kısakürek, "Hürriyet." [Freedom] *BD*. vol. II, number 31 (October 2, 1959): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 268-271; "Hürriyet." [Freedom] *BD*. 15th period, number 15 (April 14, 1971): 2.

⁴³ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 299-300; *Dünya*. 72.

freedom for the sake of freedom had culminated in a crisis in Europe in the form of fascist and Nazist ideologies as well.⁴⁴

Following a critique of European's unlimited freedom, Kısakürek gave his opinion about the very essentials of democracy:

indeed, there is no distinct (mahsus) word for everyone, no distinct idea for everyone, no distinct decision for everyone, and no distinct preference for everyone. The truth is one (Hakikat birdir). One person finds the truth and makes it confirmed by one million people. Thus, order and harmony emerge [from this confirmation]... If this person's truth was wrong, another person comes to find the truth and makes it confirmed by the people, again by himself.

Similarly, all revolutions with their truths and wrongs, had been made by one person who erected from the sleeping society.⁴⁵ The talk of freedom in his mind was closely connected to the word of order (nizam) and an analogy that gained much frequency in the political writings of Kısakürek concerning state and democracy was the relationship between a doctor and his patient, between a commander and his soldier. He claimed that the relationship between state and individual was not dissimilar. The responsibility of the doctor was to cure his patient and, thus, there could not be a preference of any drug by patients.⁴⁶ In order to establish the true freedom, there would be a need of using force when necessary.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Kısakürek, "Hürriyet," 1959, 1.

⁴⁵ Kısakürek, "Başiboş Hürriyetçilik." [Unlimited Libertism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 32 (May 31, 1946): 2; *Rapor* 7/9. 215-6.

⁴⁶ Kısakürek, "Başiboş Hürriyet ve Gerçek Sistem." [Unlimited Freedom and Real System] *BD*. 9th year, number 62 (July 18, 1952):1 also in *Başmakalelerim I*. 107-108, see also *Rapor* 10/13. 228.

⁴⁷ Be. De, "Vicdanlı," 9.

Parallel to the general trend in Islamic political thought which has been elaborated in the preceding chapters, Kısakürek put emphasis on the issue of who rules rather than the form of government. “Constitutional regime, republic and democracy are only the methods through which ideologies can be applied”, he wrote. By the claim that democracy was not an ideal, he perceived democracy as a mechanism/method in order to attain a particular goal/worldview, the ideal of the Great East, in his case.⁴⁸ Put it differently, it would be correct to argue that he made a Schumpeterian conceptualization of democracy; a type of government and procedure in electing those who ruled the people, certainly with some defects. Similar to Schumpeter’s elitist and technocratic vision of democracy, Kısakürek regarded democracy as an institutional arrangement which provided the selection of the intellectuals by the people in order to realize the truth (Islamic ideals). Kısakürek condemned democracy (as a procedure) of preferring the ‘ignorant’ fifty-one people to forty-nine ‘wise’ people. To him, ruling was a matter of virtue and for that reason, the rule of the true intellectual aristocracy had to be established. For his elitist outlook, it was not possible to accept the principle of democratic equality that equalized al-Ghazzali’s view with that of a garbage collector.⁴⁹

Similar to Schumpeter’s democratic elitism, in Kısakürek’s başyücelik state, the role of the leaders (başyüce and the members of başyücelik kurultayı) is very large. In Kısakürek’s formulation, a society is better off if its people participate merely in a moral way by electing leaders. The leaders have discretion to do what they think is best without much regard for what people want. The major point to be respected by the leaders is the moral standards of Islam, not the wishes of the people. Kısakürek’s formulation, like Schumpeter’s “democratic method,” seems to be discomfited by the idea of an extensive

⁴⁸ Kısakürek, *Benim*. 119.

⁴⁹ Kısakürek, “İşçi ve Patron.” [Worker and Patron] (March 26, 1978) in *Çerçeve* 5. 30.

participation of the people in a political system to reflect their self-interests. Both Kısakürek and Schumpeter tend to believe that ordinary people are easily manipulated by powerful interests or demagogues. In addition to this minimal role of the people, both Kısakürek and Schumpeter assign a minimal responsibility of legislators to the people. All in all, it should also be stated that Kısakürek's ideal political system which is expected to include the good sides of democracy is, unlike Schumpeter, far from acknowledging the importance of competition in politics.

Kısakürek also denied the idea of popular sovereignty on the grounds that sovereignty belonged to God, not to people. If the sovereignty belonged to the nation, Islam could not be declared by the prophet in Mecca.⁵⁰ As an extension of his conviction that history was made by great personalities/heroes like Alexander the Great, Ceasar, Jenghiz Khan, Timur, Yavuz and the like, he advanced the view that national superiority/inferiority came from superior/inferior personalities and ideologies, not from types of rule/government which might only create proper grounds as a secondary factor.⁵¹

Democracy, like the western philosophy, was everyone's right of searching for the truth among falsities. Democracy was a right to speak and do all forms of wrongs in the name of finding the truth. Since the truth was one, democracy was the name of a system which looked for the truth among the numberless things.⁵² Kısakürek was certain about the fact that there could not be such a right where the truth got the power because freedom of democracy was "a kind of freedom that idolized the whims of human being." The truth

⁵⁰ Kısakürek, "Ne İstiyoruz." [What do We Want] *BD.* 9th year, number 11 (May 26, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1.* 27; *Konuşmalar.* 225; Kabaklı, *Sultanî 'ş-Şuara.* 121.

⁵¹ Thus, the expected hero would not be a writer of constitution but only a great personality who could heal the action of revival to the nation. *Ulu Hakan.* 69-70.

⁵² Ne. Fe. Ka, "Musaviler." [Equals] *BD.* number 18 (July 3, 1959): 8.

might not emanate from the conflict of ideas but might disappear within “the conflict’s cloud of dust.” What was to be done was the establishment of “the truth’s authority by determining the rights of individual within the focus of justice.” Political power should be given to the hands of an aristocracy of idea/intellect (fikir aristokrasisi) who would determine the rights of the society better than society itself. Sovereignty belonged to the Right, not to people. “Who were the people?”⁵³ and he continued: “democracy was the will of the people but what would happen if the people wanted the evil... a Right above the people, there is no such thing in democracy.”⁵⁴ With regard to the theory of democracy, Kısakürek seemed to learn democracy basically from the Social Contract of J.J. Rousseau. In his differentiation of liberalism and democracy, he traced back the idea of democracy to Rousseau while tracing back liberalism to Montesqieu. In democratic regime, the people’s rule could be imposed upon individual whereas liberalism put the emphasis on the freedom of individual by refusing the despotism of the society. To him, the proper balance between these two could only be established in an Islamic system.⁵⁵

Freedom and democracy could only be understood as a method/procedure to attain the right and truth otherwise democracy would be inclined to exploitation and despotism of one falsity in the name of the truth.⁵⁶ The notion that any idea was respected (fikir muhteremdir) could not be accepted because not any understanding of freedom might concede that its opposite was right. Every truth was excused in its contempt and hostility towards its opposite. According to Kısakürek, the absoluteness of any claim to the truth would be in suspicion of itself if it allowed and respected wrongs, thus not every idea was

⁵³ Kısakürek, *Batı*. 211-212.

⁵⁴ Kısakürek, *Hesaplaşma*. 17.

⁵⁵ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 279-280.

⁵⁶ Kısakürek, “Hizaya Gel.” [Get into Line] *BD*. May 20, 1956 in *Başmakalelerim 2*. 91-92; *Türkiyenin*. 29; *Konuşmalar*. 179.

respected.⁵⁷ Hence, any possibility of minimum share (asgari müşterek) between the truth and falsities was out of discussion but instead, maximum share (azami müşterek) had to be established: “is there any agreement (muvazaa) between day and night?...one of them dominates over the other.”⁵⁸

Kısakürek’s reservations about democracy reminds us the Islamists’ similar statements about freedom. Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period underlined the idea that unlimited freedom would corrupt the constitutional regime and its institutions. By the same way, Kısakürek also regarded democratic regime as the lesser of the evils (ehven-i şer) or a system in reserve (ihtiyati sistem). Allowing both the good and the evils at the same time, democracy was good of its permission to the realization of the truth among many evils. But on the other hand, democracy was not acceptable because of its permission to the destruction of itself and to despotism of the evil such as communism. The chaotic regime of democracies supplied a ground for the flourishing of communism which would not allow even the talk of democracy in its own regime.⁵⁹ In addition to communists, cosmopolit groups like Masons, Jews and Westernists and the enemies of Islam had different views of democracy and regarded governments that did not rule in accordance with their interests, as undemocratic and despotic.⁶⁰ Seen from this perspective, mainly resulted from the fact that it did not have a peculiar ideological/philosophical system,

⁵⁷ Kısakürek, “Muhterem-Muhakkar.” [Respected-Contemptious] (December 21, 1977) in *Çerçeve 4*. 199-200; see also *Sahte*. 282-283.

⁵⁸ Kısakürek, “Asgari Müşterek.” [Minimum Shared Belief] (November 21, 1978) in *Çerçeve 5*. 283-284.

⁵⁹ Kısakürek, “Tek ve Mutlak.” [One and Absolute] *BD*. (March 3, 1965) in *Çerçeve 3*. 112-114; “Ukde-i Hayat.” [Tie of Life] *BD*. 9th year, number 43 (June 29, 1952), 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 88-90; “Musaviler,” 8; *Konuşmalar*.179.

⁶⁰ Kısakürek, “Demokrasi Anlayışları.” [Understandings of Democracy] *BD*. 9th year, number 88 (August 13, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 166-168.

democracy was destined to exploitation that would culminate in its total destruction in the hands of its enemies.

Despite of his all reservations on democracy, like his inclusive attitude towards the ideals of modern political ideologies, Kısakürek claimed that Islam/the Great East embraced the democratic ideals of freedom and justice but in their real senses. Given the example of the early Islamic practice by shura, Kısakürek mentioned a free atmosphere of the shura in front of the head of the state for the search of the truth and thus: “the truth of freedom, individual right, democracy and the republic were in Islam.”⁶¹ Contrary to the Islamist thinking in the second constitutional period, Kısakürek did not express Islamist legitimation of democracy and its institutions through identification of shura and ijma with democracy and parliament. Instead, in line with the dominant aura of the time, the creation of an ideology/worldview, seen as the salvation of Islamic world/Turkish nation, gained priority over the issue of democracy. The grand narratives of the early decades of the twentieth century had been totalitarian political ideologies such as communism and fascism, not democracy.

The victory of the western democracies over the fascists and Nazis in the second world war did not put an end to the suspicion about the performance of liberal democracies. Certainly, after the war, the advance of the communist movements in Europe and in the third world was a factor that inhibited the emergence of more positive grounds for the evaluation of democracy. The perceived threat of communism in Turkey had produced the

⁶¹ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 301, 304; *Mümin-Kafir* [Believer-Infidel] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1986), 141. In one of his scenario novels, the worst boss (En Kötü Patron), Kısakürek presented a story of an unknown country Tarkistan (implying Turkey) and spoke about the needed rule in this way: “within a democratic order, a government and state which were established on the basis of national spirit,” see in *Senaryo Romanlarım* [My Scenario Novels] (İstanbul: Büyük Doğu, 1986), 478.

negative result that the transition to democracy had not been internalized by Islamists, including Necip Fazıl Kısakürek.

It is important to discuss his view of “national will” (milli irade) which had been a crucial notion of the debates on democracy in the 1950s and further. Denying to understand the concept of national will in an abstract way, Kısakürek expressed his deep suspicion about the existence of free will on the part of the nation: “nation did not and could not want anything, in every place of the world, ... nation is made wanting and embracing something.. like a doctor and his patient. There existed nothing for the patient to demand, but the doctor had something to give [him].”⁶² National will was an abstract concept which had always been a toy of some major classes and groups in practice though it was the great power within the whole fatherland.

Since the Tanzimat, the dominant group that exploited the national will by trying to take its place had been the “rootless, cosmopolit and false intellectuals.” They represented the destructive interests of communists, capitalists, and imperialists but did this in the name of national will as well. The class of great capital and the reactionaries of the revolution (inkilap yobazlığı) were to be added to those who exploited the national will, being in the service of international Jewish capital.⁶³ The reflection of this situation on the state pyramid was the reversal of the democratic principle that the assembly was subjected to nation, government to the assembly, executive to the government. By this reversal, the nation had lost its sovereignty to the assembly and to the governments.⁶⁴

⁶² Kısakürek, *Hesaplaşma*. 37.

⁶³ Kısakürek, “Milli İrade, Zıt Kutuplar, Menderes.” [National Will, Opposite Poles, Menderes] *BD*, August 17, 1952 in *Başmakalelerim 1*, 176-177; “Milli İrade,” [National Will] *BD*, July 10, 1965 in *Çerçeve 3*, 262-3.

⁶⁴ Kısakürek, *Rapor 1/3*. 71-3.

One specific issue to test Kısakürek's understanding of democracy was to examine his attitude and ideas with regard to the growing influence of communism on Turkish youth in the 1950s and 1960s. The "near threat of communism" to Turkey was a subject that he often underlined to denounce the secular reforms of the RPP and its will to educate the youth through Köy Enstitüleri (village institutes). Apart from the fact that the Turkish communist party was established in the early days of the republic, a manifestation of communist movement, the Kadro movement led by Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), Yakup Kadri (Karaosmanoğlu), Burhan Belge and Vedat Nedim (Tör) was also backed by the RPP (İsmet İnönü) in their endeavour to form an ideological framework for the revolution: a historical materialism (tarihi materyalizm).⁶⁵ Within the political setting that the 1960 military intervention brought into Turkey, the communist movement had achieved its aim of positioning communist cadres in the strategic places of state and society, including publications, universities, ministry of national education and TRT (Turkish radio and television). Its legal political organization was the Turkish Worker's party which was flourished by the RPP's "left of the center" (ortanın solu) policies.⁶⁶ After stating that it was only Islam that could eradicate a dynamic system of communism, Kısakürek called for the total destruction of the communist movement in Turkey and supported the rightist parties, the DP and AP in this respect though he found their measures against the movement too soft. Every deliberate government which really wanted to destroy communism in this country had to make a coalition with Muslim-Turks and nationalists of spiritual essence. Before the 1980 military intervention, Kısakürek's support

⁶⁵ Dedektif X Bir, "Türkiye'de Komünizmanın Hikayesi." [Communism's Story in Turkey] *BD*. 28th year, 15th period, number 16 (April 21, 1971): 12-13; Kısakürek, *Hitabeler*. 32-34.

⁶⁶ Kısakürek, "Komünizma Geliyor." [Communism is Coming] 1962 in *Hitabeler*. 42-45.

to nationalists (ülküçüler) took the form of demanding a cooperation between nationalists and state to destroy totally the communists in order to put an end to the anarchy.⁶⁷

For the struggle against communism, he proposed to establish two state intitutions: an administrative institution, a department of struggle with foreign ideologies tied directly to prime ministry (yabancı ideolocylarla mücadele dairesi) and courts of national protection (nanevi korunma mahkemeleri). These institutions would control all publications, art activites like theatre and cinema, social and economic associations such as labour organizations⁶⁸, and state departments and would clear up “the microbe of communism” from the mentioned places.⁶⁹ Those people who were suspected of communism had to show their “devotion to the national spirit.” In contrast to the basic logic of laws, these people had to prove their innocence in the courts since on the issue of communism, sentence (mahkumiyet) not freedom from guilt (beraet-i zimmet) was the essential principle to be applied. Communists had to be treated like an harmful insect, without allowing their exploitation of the weaknesses of democracy and of the chastity of the rule of law. To overcome the terror agains the state, state’s terror was the only way to be followed by state institutions.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid., 49; *Türkiyenin*. 93, Be. De. “Hadiselerin Muhasebesi.” [Evaluation of Incidents] *BD*. 34th year, 16th period, number 1 (May 8, 1978): 9.

⁶⁸ Kısakürek also regarded strike, lockout, labour organization and federations as the abuse of the rights and confusion see Kısakürek, “İşçi,” 30.

⁶⁹ Kısakürek, “Komünizma Geliyor,” 49-51.

⁷⁰ Kısakürek, “Tedbir.” [Measure] *BD*. (February 22, 1967) in *Çerçeve 4*. 64-65; “Huruç.” [Exodus] *BD*. (February 15, 1967) in *Çerçeve 4*. 57-58; *Rapor 7/9*. 93, 98, 148-149, 173; *Rapor 10/13*. 69. His offer of harsh measurements against the communists did not lose its harshness in the 1970s. He even mentioned the need of determining communists by a list which was filled by head men of districts (mahalle muhtarları) and by their residents, or the establishment of a secret agency (hafiyete teşkilatı) who controlled all the sectors of the society see *Rapor 7/9*. 93.

It is high time to dwell on Kısakürek's ideas regarding the institutions and subjects of democracy, like political party, opposition and the role of military in Turkey.

6. 4.1 Expecting An Ideological Party : The Party of Right (*Hak Partisi*)

A political party, to Kısakürek, emerged in this country as an alien institution with an aim of imitation, imported from the West since its first establishment by the Young Ottomans. In every part of the world, a political party was entitled to create “a native synthesis from its own fatherland's ideals by kneading them within all human problems.”⁷¹ Not being derived from the national roots, Turkish political parties served the function of destroying the country as a result of western material and spiritual imperialism.⁷² In addition to their responsibility regarding the failures in the Turkish history, from the Union and Progress to the RPP and to the DP, no one of the Turkish political parties had a worldview and ideological web in comprehending things and events. The Union and Progress had lost a huge Ottoman empire without having any idea of society, individual and world. Hürriyet ve İtilaf party who opposed the National Struggle was not able to bring any worldview as well. After saving the country materially, the RPP killed it spiritually by its oppression and imitative westernization. The DP as a reaction to the RPP could not materialize a passive revolution of people against the Kemalist regime and was destroyed for this reason. Opposition parties had not emerged from a positive/a thesis as an independent center but rather they were formed by a reaction and settled themselves in the already established center.⁷³

⁷¹ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 81; “Partide İnkılap.” [Revolution in the Party] *BD*. 34th year, 16th period, number 2 (May 15, 1978): 3

⁷² *Ibid*.

⁷³ Kısakürek, “Parti.” [Party] *BD*. 21st year, number 7 (November 11, 1964): 3; İsmiini Vermeyen Profesör, “Partilerimiz.” [Our Parties] *BD*. 12th period, number 7 (November 3, 1965): 2; Kısakürek, *Türkiyenin*. 80-81, 83.

All the political parties of Turkey had been foreign/opposite to the Turkish nation's spirit, essence, roots and unity. None of them had acquired conditions of being a real party; grasping an ideology like other political parties in the world. For a century, the Turkish nation had been expecting a real political party; "an ideological party."⁷⁴ Actually, these parties were supposed to pick their inspiration from Turk's spiritual roots and to synthesize it with the western positive sciences in order to give a birth to a new Eastern civilization which would be an example to the west.⁷⁵ Kısakürek's negative assessments on party were related to partly its call for unlimited freedom (başiboş hürriyetçilik) and to partly its effects of divisiveness on the nation. The West exported the institution of political party to Turkey simply with the aim to destruct the eternal truth while it had formed political parties to search for the truth within its own democratic system. Therefore, in the Turkish-Islamic setting the institution of party could only exist as the Party of Right (Hak Partisi), being devoted to the totality.⁷⁶

Regarding the issues of political power and opposition, Kısakürek did not see a real appearance of political power and opposition who had a worldview/thesis/antithesis in the history of Turkish politics from Tanzimat and its opposition to Abdul Hamid II and his opposition (Union and Progress) to National struggle and its opposition (the palace and Hürriyet ve İtilaf) and to lastly the DP and its opposition (the RPP and the Nation party). Tanzimat movement was stuck with the imitation of the western civilization without comprehending the crux of modernization issue while its opposition, reactionaries (kaba softa, ham yobaz) was far from understanding the reality of applying sacred principles

⁷⁴ Dedektif X Bir, "Parti." [Party] *BD*. 7th year, number 62 (June 29, 1951): 3, 16.

⁷⁵ Kısakürek, "Mukaddesatçı Türk'e Beyanname." [Declaration to A Conservative Turk] *BD*. 14th period, number 6 (November 1969): 8-9.

⁷⁶ Kısakürek, "Konuşma." [Talk] *BD*. 28th year, 15th period, number 2 (January 13, 1971): 15; *Rapor 4/6*. 13; *Rapor 10/13*. 231.

(read Islam) to space and time. The young Ottomans as an opposition to the sultan Abdulaziz served the function of destroying all the basis of the Turkish nation. Union and Progress's opposition to Abdul Hamid II could not bring a real worldview but just the words of freedom, equality and justice and the copied ideal of Turkism.⁷⁷

As shown in the preceding sections, Kısakürek shared the basic notion of the political culture in the single-party period that those who gained political power could exercise it without restraint. This understanding of political power in absolute/totalist terms could not allow actually a suitable space for an opposition. His constant call for the destruction of the RPP (opposition party) by the DP in power and his support to the antidemocratic measures of the Menderes governments seemed enough for the clarification of Kısakürek's negative attitude towards opposition. Sometimes, this negative attitude towards opposition had a claim of representing the national will as he saw a right for the DP to close down the RPP, but basically it was related to his evaluation of Turkish modernization process in ideological terms. The notions of democracy, party and opposition were mere instruments for the search of an ideology and its application by the state institutions. The words of freedom and democracy could not be understood in a way that an opposition might change the policies of a "true" political power.⁷⁸

In this way, the idea that the press represented opposition was not acceptable simply because of the fact that opposition could not be continuous, professional and interest-based. Publishing a newspaper had to be controlled by an academic commission which

⁷⁷ Kısakürek, "Ahlak Sukutumuzun Tarihçesi." History of Our Moral Decline] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 16 (December 31, 1943), 5, 16 also in *Tanrı*. 228-231; "Muhalefette Haysiyet." [Honour in Opposition] *BD*. number 3 (May 21, 1954): 3 also in *Başmakalelerim I*. 265-268.

⁷⁸ In the earlier sections, his views on the RPP had been discussed in detailed ways. They might be taken as an example that shows his attitude towards opposition and political power.

would give the permission of publication to those who had intellectual capability and works. In the case of press, opposition had a strong tendency of making an opposition for themselves and for their interests. However, any opposition had to rely on an idea and if any opposition emerged not for the sake of the truth (hakikat adına) but for their interests, it had to be destroyed totally.⁷⁹

6.4.2 Militarism and the Role of Military in Turkey

As he discussed every issue of the Turkish politics, Kısakürek studied the subject of military in relation to the Ottoman past and its change/continuity in the republic. Paralleling to the general decline of the empire since Kanuni's times, according to Kısakürek, the institution of military had lost its order and Islamic love (vecd ve aşk) until the reign of Abdül Hamid II. Janissary who was an ideal soldier in the classical times had become corrupted into a revolting and destroying form due to the system of devşirme (recruiting of christian boys for the Ottoman army) which recruited foreign and hostile elements to the Turkish muslim army.⁸⁰ In its corrupted form, the janissary came to represent a kind of soldier that was defeated by the enemy in the borders but victorious over its own nation within the fatherland as an occupation force.⁸¹

In the republican period, military had a system, submission and order but without any belief and worldview (ideal) that would complement the military order. Military, as the instrument of the strong state had to be in the service of an ideal/an idea that was best

⁷⁹ Be. De. "Vicdanlı," 9.

⁸⁰ İsmi Vermeyen Profesör, "Ordu." [Military] *BD*. 12th period, number 10 (November 24, 1965): 2; Kısakürek, *Yeniçeri*. 11, 13-14, 328. In the periods of Meşrutiyet and the republic, military like this janissary had been in a position that occupied its fatherland instead of conquering hostile countries, see *Yeniçeri*. 13.

⁸¹ İsmi Vermeyen Profesör, "Fikir Ordusu." [Army of Idea] *BD*. 15th period, number 13 (March 31, 1971): 3, 16.

illustrated by the armies of the prophet's companions otherwise it became a mere force, destroying all the things.⁸² By the command of holy war (cihad) as the duty of Islamic state, Islam embraced the ideals of Turks' "Golden Horde" (Altın Ordu) and Germans' "Great army" (Büyük Ordu) in their real senses since its aim had been the salvation of all societies and individuals by reaching them at the eternal state (ebedi devlet, high level of sufi perfection) without leaving to themselves. Thus, the sword in Islam came to constitute an instrument of mercy and benevolence to save patients by force like the surgeon's lancet.⁸³ Declaring its militarist aspect, Kısakürek gave a significant place to military in his Islamist ideology in these words: "the ideal of the Great East can not separate from its militarist mentality in the sense of an army of idea (fikir ordusu)." This military would not be in conflict with its society's rule and will and would serve for an eternal idea (ebedi fikir) not for a transitory person (fani bir şahıs).⁸⁴ Kısakürek's Islamist positioning of military can be best found in his glorification of a Turkish soldier, Mehmetçik who was the representative of Islamic/Turkish spirit. In the ideal of spreading the religion of Islam, military and Mehmetçik were important to the extent that mehmetçik exemplified the Islamic spirit within the nation which had been strongly devoted to the Prophet.⁸⁵

Militarism of the Great East was not supporting a mere force, based on weapons and material power like the corrupted janissaries of the empire. Militarism in the sense of glorifying the institution of military for the sake of its own existence was not acceptable since there could not be a military for military (ordu için ordu yok) but military for the

⁸² Ibid., 3, 16; Büyük Doğu, "Ordu ve İnkılap." [Military and Revolution] *BD*. 5th year, number 8 (April 29, 1949): 2.

⁸³ Kısakürek, "İslam ve Ordu." [Islam and Military] *BD*. 2nd year, vol. III, number 72 (November 14, 1947): 2.

⁸⁴ Kısakürek, "Anladığımız Ordu," [Our Understanding of Military] *BD*. 15th period, number 13 (March 31, 1971): 2.

⁸⁵ Kısakürek, *Hitabeler*. 143.

nation (millet için ordu). Military was an instrument or a fist (yumruk) of the nation/society, submitting to the spirit and head (baş) of this nation/society. In the age of civilization, tied to the notion of civil rule, there could be nation-army (millet-ordu) but not army-nation (ordu-millet).⁸⁶ In the expected Islamic revolution, military, not being involved in daily-politics, would not be an instrument of any group/faction. It, as a great tool of action against the external enemies, had to be submitted to the center of idea and spirit with its advocacy to Islamic martyrdom and holy war.⁸⁷ Based on his observation that all revolutions in Turkey whether good or evil had been made by relying on the military, he argued that any revolution/Islamic revolution could not be achieved without taking military on its side.⁸⁸ His method of revolution while speaking about the need of a surgical intervention (cerrahi müdahale) for the country, seemed to share some militarist elements though he stated that it would not be a military movement. The spirit of military could exist in every place and in every group and therefore, the surgical operation “was the imposition of an intellectual group’s brain who owned the spirit and order of the ideal military through the legal possibilities... by force but through law.”⁸⁹

In endeavouring to describe further Kısakürek’s opinion about the military in relation to his conceptualization of democracy we must turn to explain his interpretations of the military interventions in Turkey. Certainly, the Young Turk revolution of 1909 which dethroned Abdul Hamid II and the 1960 intervention which hanged Menderes were not acceptable to Kısakürek who perceived them as the examples of the revival of janissaries. Destroying the false balance in the political system, the 1960 intervention which did not

⁸⁶ Kısakürek, “Millet ve Ordu.” [Nation and Military] *BD*. 14th period, number 2 (June 1969): 7.

⁸⁷ Kısakürek, “Ordu,” [Military] *BD*. 6th year, number 17 (February 3, 1950): 2.

⁸⁸ Kısakürek, “Ordu ve İnkılap.” [Military and Revolution] *BD*. 9th year, number 25 (June 9, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 52-54; *İhtilal*. 353.

⁸⁹ Kısakürek, *Rapor 1/3*. 102, 104-5.

have any ideal to be implemented, created a fertile ground for communism, atheism, hostility towards belief and order, self-interest and corrupted partisanship. Again expectedly, Kısakürek stated that if this intervention took place against İsmet İnönü, it could not be called as a revival of janissary.⁹⁰ In fact, this country had deserved a true revolution for two centuries, especially in three periods: the reign of the sultan Abdulaziz, of the Union and Progress and of İsmet İnönü. Revolutions ought to burst as a revolution of idea in these periods.⁹¹ Apart from the fact that he gave a full support to the 1980 military intervention, Kısakürek offered some measures to be taken by the new regime. He perceived this intervention as “a state intervention within state” in order to reform the spoiled state apparatus, otherwise there would not remain neither nation nor state, but the total collapse of Turkey. The targets of the intervention were correctly corrupted political parties, the assembly, separatism, communism and exploitation of religion in the name of religion (like the National Salvation party’s Jerusalem meeting in Konya).⁹²

The 1980 intervention, different from the 1960 and 1971 interventions seemed to him as acting in the way that determined the problems correctly and showed a tendency of establishing the truth (their solutions).⁹³ Expecting a change in the conceptualization of secularism (laiklik) from the new regime, he proposed twenty points to be regarded as the

⁹⁰ Kısakürek, *Yeniçeri*. 355, 362, 366-367; *İhtilal*. 82; *Türkiyenin*. 18-21. At the very first moments of the 1960 intervention, Kısakürek was happy by the suspicion that Menderes made a state intervention within state. Moreover, he accused Alpaslan Türkeş of not his participation in the intervention but of his failure in eliminating those who eliminated him see *Babıali*. 369-372.

⁹¹ Prof ?, “İhtilalin Otopsi.” [Autopsy of Revolution] *BD*. 14th period, number 1 (May 1969): 4-5.

⁹² Kısakürek, “Umumi Muhasebe.” [General Evaluation] (September 14, 1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 192-194 see also Kabaklı, *Sultanî’ş-Şuara*. 120.

⁹³ Kısakürek, “Düşünen İnsan.” [Thinking Human Being] (November 10, 1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 210; “Umumi,” 195. For instance, Turgut Özal’s employment in the field of economics was an appropriate decision see “18’inci Günde.” [In the 18th day] (September 21, 1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 196.

recipe for the salvation, some important ones as follow: bringing a despotism of justice and an authority of right that would control all aspects of the societal order, even by determining hours of sleep for individual; initiating a struggle of culture (irfan), conscience (idrak), belief and morality, by every means, including the stick (sopa); leaving the word of democracy aside until its time and true version would come and preventing its exploitation by cosmopolitians and westernists; closing down all political parties, labour organizations and associations; trying to unite Islamic community on one focus though they were separate in the forms of different nations and states; forming an assembly from intellectuals (idrak soyluları) and leaving the decision to them; establishing an academy from intellectuals (fikir çilekeşleri) who would decide the matters of culture, language and alphabet.⁹⁴ Moreover, for the construction of a new regime he argued that the senate was needless and Court of Constitutional Law was preventive. University's autonomy, TRT's privileges, exploitation of labour organizations and associations emanated from the weakness of democracy beside its good aspects.⁹⁵

In legitimating the military intervention in politics, Kısakürek stated his deeply rooted suspicion towards democracy, similar to the state elites who put the emphasis on the vertical dimension of democracy. As Heper argued, state elites (civil and bureaucratic elites) conceived democracy as a matter of "enlightened debate", aimed at determining the one best way" to solve any given problem. The politicization of sectoral and group interests in the hands of irresponsible politicians were often regarded as occurring at the expense of the general (national) interest.⁹⁶ Kısakürek attributed the notion of

⁹⁴ Kısakürek, "Beklediğimiz." [What we are waiting] (November 24,1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 215; "Kurtuluş Davasında Reçete." [Prescription for the Salvation] (November 21, 1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 216-218.

⁹⁵ Kısakürek, "Meseleler." [Problems] (October 13, 1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 199.

⁹⁶ Metin Heper, "Consolidating Turkish Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 3:2, April 1992, 105-117.

irresponsibility not only to politicians but also to the very nature of democracy. Democracy was open to being paralyzed by some major groups and classes for their interests as contrary to Turkish unity but in the name of national will. Thus, democracy was a medallion, its one side was death while its other side was life. Military by the 1980 intervention as a movement of salvation, brought the life side to the forefront.⁹⁷

6.5 Kısakürek's Conceptualization of State

Politics was “a subaltern,” subjected to the service of an ideal/ideology. Politics for politics meant a profession/institution of deceiving people. But politics in the sense of implementing the ideal of belief on events and things through its ideological web had been the affair of heros and might be named as a great politics, or in Islamic terms, as 'Siyaset-ül-Medine.'⁹⁸

Kısakürek showed a general characteristic of Turkish intellectuals who, as Frey stated, preferred “organic theories of state and society” and who looked for “strong men” if they leaned toward the right or looked for “strong ideology” if they leaned towards the left.⁹⁹ But Kısakürek seemed to look for both strong man/hero and strong ideology to save the country. That was actually the combination of personal aspect with an abstraction such as an idea. This aspect of Kısakürek's thought reflected itself on his understanding of state as well. On the one side, he gave some ideological principles for the construction of a state

⁹⁷ Kısakürek, “Madalyonun Tersisi.” [Other Side of the Medallion] (October 30, 1980) in *Rapor 10/13*. 200-201. For the true way of Turkish modernization, Kısakürek expected a needed center of idea and force from military since he did not see the word of democracy as an ideal and was open to militarist solution in the realization of his ideology, see *Rapor 1/3*. 100.

⁹⁸ Kısakürek, “Politika-Bence- (2).” [Politics in My Opinion] *BD*. 9th year, number 101 (August 26, 1952), 1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 202-203; “Sen Nerdesin.” [Where are you?] *BD*. 9th year, number 25 (June 9, 1952); 2 also in *Çerçeve 2*. 207; “Küçük Politika.” [Little Politics] *BD*. (April 23, 1965) in *Çerçeve 3*. 169-170; *Tanrı*. 257.

⁹⁹ Frey, “Patterns,” 70.

but on the other side, he envisioned a perfect personality such as başyüce as the head of state who was expected to have some ideal/superior features.

In Kısakürek's Başyüce state, society was considered to be composed of occupational groups, such as businessmen, workers and farmers, interdependent to each other, not seeking for their self-interests. This understanding of classes was in parallel to the Kemalist principle of populism which did not recognize classes as having conflicting economic interests.¹⁰⁰ Kısakürek's conceptualization of state in general contained Kemalist features by seeing the state as the instrument that imposed the social change upon the society from top to bottom until the nation matured enough. He also seemed to share the basic mission of the Kemalist intelligentsia that was to enlighten people in the way of development and innovation.¹⁰¹ In this way, Kısakürek did not understand the role of the state in a liberal way but rather in an interventionist way to create a new individual and society. State was held responsible from the way of life that its people followed and from directing its people to the truth. As an expression of discipline like a worship, state had to be totalitarian in determining every aspects of societal and individual life.¹⁰² He gave De Gaulle as an example of the head of state who laid his one hand upon democratic order and his other hand upon authoritarian order when necessary. The head of state as a personality of focus had to know how to be totalitarian in the name of the truth and to be libertarian when needed.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ For the Kemalist principle of populism see Karpat, *Turkey's*. 51-52.

¹⁰¹ For the above mentioned aspects of Atatürk's conceptualization of state see Metin Hepar, "Atatürk'te Devlet Düşüncesi," [The Idea of State in Atatürk] in *Atatürkçü Düşünce* (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1992), 513-514.

¹⁰² Kısakürek, "Disiplin Nefreti." [Discipline Hatred] (February 12, 1939) in *Çerçeve 1*. 23; *Rapor 7/9*. 119-120.

¹⁰³ Kısakürek, *Rapor 7/9*. 114.

6.5.1 *Islam and State: The Hidden Supremacy of Sharia*

He was firmly attached to the idea that the real Islam and its fundamental values prescribed as Sharia must form the basis of the state and society in the new worldview of Great East. Sharia in appearance and sufism in spirit were regarded as the essential foundations for the conceptualization of state and political regime, certainly with a reference to the early Islamic practice.¹⁰⁴ It was not possible to think of any area that was out of Sharia's consideration because Islam determined the areas that were not related to sharia, by giving a spirit to the sound reason (*selim akıl*) in its conduct in these areas. Therefore, sharia as the name of Islam constituted an absolute divine institution that could not accept any independence outside of its area. There could not be anything, limiting God's determination and will in the world that He created.¹⁰⁵

Kısakürek, as the first person who voiced the demand of sharia, took a position on the significance of *Şeriat* clearly and diametrically opposed to the secularist Kemalist intelligentsia. However, he often rejected the understanding of sharia as the formal legal principles to be applied, but rather "sharia's principles are fine, boundless and secret codes. Sharia is not only a composition of measures to be applied, but also a divine institution to be devoted with love."¹⁰⁶ Kısakürek's sometimes usage of sharia as an abstraction did not mean that he advocated a reformist view to reinterpret the strict commands of sharia such as cutting a thief's hand. In this way, he advanced the view that a Muslim was inevitably a

¹⁰⁴ Kısakürek, "İslam İnkılabı: Hülasa ve Netice." [Islamic Revolution: Summary and Result] *BD*. 6th year, number 33 (October 3, 1950): 2.

¹⁰⁵ Kısakürek, *İman ve İslam*. 27-28.

¹⁰⁶ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 12; "Ne mi Lazım?" [What is needed?] *BD*. 3rd year, vol. IV, number 83 (March 5, 1948): 2 also in *Çerçeve 2*. 120-121. Kısakürek's advocacy to sharia was so total that he argued in one of his literature: "if sharia was consisted of crucifying, staring at one point without departing your eyes, leaving to eat and drink and even staying even without dying, I would again devote myself to sharia, and I would not accept any truth except from it" *Mümin-Kafir*. 76; see also *Babıali*. 6.

follower of sharia. Moreover, he embraced theocracy by the claim that it came to connote to sharia in Turkey.¹⁰⁷ As I have explained in the section related to Kısakürek's understanding of Islam, he rejected to reinterpret sharia even through opening the gate of *ijtihad*. His emphasis on sharia was so strong that his proposals regarding both Turkish daily politics and his idealized politics and state had been coloured by the principles of sharia though he did not mention directly the name of sharia in this respect, due to the illegality of calling the application of sharia in the Turkish law.

A theme, directly related to his emphasis on sharia was laicism/laicite and its place in both his conceptualization of state and his critique of the Republican state. The separation of state and church in Europe was dissimilar to the relationship between state and Islam. The removal of the Christian church which did not have any rules of shariah about state and worldly affairs, from its medieval dominating position through the principle of laicite was forcing the church to its right place. But a similar thing could not be thought for Islam which had a sharia regarding all worldly affairs. Since Islam prescribed the principle of all issues, it was not possible to marry Islam with a laicite.¹⁰⁸ The experience of laicite in Turkey had taken a nature of destroying Islam and its all manifestations though the European experience contained itself to the separation of church and state, allowing the appearance of religious ideas and movements in the public sphere. Even, the clergy took place in the education and foreign policies of the European laic state since Europeans knew that laicism was to be free of the obligation of obeying to the clergy. Moreover, the principle of laicite did not prevent the church from criticizing state and announcing its

¹⁰⁷ Kısakürek, "İktidar Bizde Olsa Ne Olur?" [What would happen if we were in Power?] *BD*. 3rd year, vol. IV, number 84 (March 12, 1948): 2; *Hesaplaşma*. 41; *Son Devrin*. 306-7.

¹⁰⁸ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 27-28, *Ulu Hakan*. 268-267.

views to influence the political process whereas in Turkey, laicism directed itself to the separation of Muslim Turks from Islam.¹⁰⁹

Adhering to the Ottoman principle of *din ü devlet* (religion and state), Kısakürek saw the state as a composition of order and institutions which were established in accordance with the believed religion. To him, a state that separated from beliefs (religion) could not be thought and there was no any example of this nihilistic, not laic understanding.¹¹⁰ On the issue of the interplay between state and Islam, he was also certain that there would not be any separation between these two. Simply because of the organic togetherness between Islam and state, Islam could not leave aside an institution which meant the will of society. People was the appearance (*zahir*) of the right (*hak*) and the right was the hidden (*zahir*) of people in Islam; therefore, the only criteria for the Islamic state was the Right (God). Sovereignty belonged to the Right not to the people.¹¹¹ The freedom of people in Islam could be realized by the submission to the Right in its most perfect form. Islam combined the most developed statism with the most advanced freedom within the same place and time. Regarding the forms of government, Kısakürek made it clear that “there is no any type of rule in Islam but the spirit of rule. Lofty and freed Islam has no connection with the simple and primitive types of rule...such as sultanate, republic and so on.”¹¹² Islam prefers one individual’s sovereignty who became enslaved to the Right to the rule of unlimited

¹⁰⁹ Kısakürek, “Evvela Laik Olmanın Çaresi.” [Firstly, Solution to become a Secular] *BD*. 9th year, number 85 (August 10, 1952): 1 also in *Başmakalelerim I*. 159-161; “Ölçü.” *BD*. number 11 (May 15, 1959): 1; “Laiklik.” [Laicism] (January 15, 1978) in *Çerçeve 4*. 233-235. The article of 163 came to forbid all Islamic manifestations and was detrimental to the very existence of religion see Prof. Ş. U., “Bu Kanun.” [This law] *BD*. 5th year, number 15 (June 17, 1949): 2; Kısakürek, “163. Madde,” 1; “163.” *BD*. 12th period, number 10 (November 24, 1965): 1, 16.

¹¹⁰ Kısakürek, *Rapor 4/6*. 108, 252.

¹¹¹ Kısakürek, “İslam ve Devlet.” [Islam and State] *BD*. number 12 (October 4, 1967): 19; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 50.

¹¹² *Ibid*.

freedom. But of course, the rule of meşveret (shura), composed of the society's outstanding representatives was perceived as superior to others.¹¹³

From the spiritual foundations of rule in Islam, the main principle was an ordered system under the leadership of a great and central personality who was selected by all the nation and the society, like the order of praying. The state under the leadership of this personality, who called as “ulü-l emr” was the most advanced form of rule in respect to other types of state and rule, being alien to personal despotism (nefsani saltanat). The head of Islamic state was the most perfect and developed Muslim personality within the society, lower than the prophet.¹¹⁴ This description of a head of Islamic state had a close resemblance to both Mawerdi's theory of caliphate and al-Farabi's head of virtuous city.¹¹⁵

The form of state and rule to which the Great East ideology advocated itself was the most advanced version of republic. Despite of his reservations and critiques on democracy, Kısakürek repeatedly expressed his positive view about republic as a type of state.¹¹⁶ The same attitude can be seen in his presentation of an ideal state, Başyücelik devleti which constituted indeed a republican reading of the jurisdic theory of caliphate. Here, an Islamist attitude of Islamizing western concepts by the usage of classical terms worked and Kısakürek argued that republic in the sense of people's rule was an order of God by the

¹¹³ Kısakürek, “İslam ve Devlet.” see also *İdeolocya* 1st edition. 109.

¹¹⁴ Kısakürek, *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 50-51.

¹¹⁵ Similar to al-Farabi's example, he gave the analogy of body regarding the relationship between head of state and people. Head of state was the heart while the people were body. If the heart was good then the body was okey as well see Kısakürek, *Mümin-Kafir*. 163.

¹¹⁶ See, “Büyük Doğu partisinin ana Nizamname projesi.” [A Project of the Great East Party's Programme] *BD*. 7th year, number 60 (June 15, 1951): 8-9, 16; and *BD*. number 61 (June 22, 1951): 14-16; “Cumhuri ve Şahsi İdareler.” [Republican and Personal Rules] *BD*. 9th year, number 65 (July 21, 1952):1 also in *Başmakalelerim 1*. 112-114; *Rapor 1/3*. 207-225; *Rapor 4/6*. 20.

verse of shura. But this republic might take a form of the despotism of intellectuals' shura (entellektüeller şurası) for the rule of the truth.¹¹⁷ His Islamist conceptualization of republic that contained some anti-democratic features also put the stress on order and devotion to an idea. As a continuation of his belief that Islam inherited good aspects of all political ideologies, he came to regard the Fascist and Nazist emphasis on the order, tied to the superior idea (üstün fikre bağlı nizam) as Islamic in nature though he denounced the violence of these regimes in the practice.¹¹⁸ State was an institution of people in a truly Islamic country, but it did not take people's opinion with regard to the application of Islamic principles, since the sovereignty belonged to the God and the people submitted to Him as well.¹¹⁹

In his novel, *Aynadaki Yalan*, he gave an application of Sufism into the society in order to reach at the expected order of humanity. First step was the (spiritual) annihilation of people in superior human beings while the second step was the establishment of a new order of state and rule which might be called as the aristocracy of intellectuals (münevverler aristokrasisi).¹²⁰ On the issue of human being's caliphate to God, he connected the Sufi understanding of reaching spiritual perfection to the modern view of dominating over nature. Human being was the caliph of God both materially (in dominating over nature) and spiritually (in reaching at God through spiritual perfection).¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 302, 304.

¹¹⁸ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 309.

¹¹⁹ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 31.

¹²⁰ Kısakürek, *Aynadaki*. 101-2.

¹²¹ Kısakürek, *Battı*. 120-121.

6.5.2 Nine Principles: Ideological Framework of an Ideal State

Kısakürek's ideology of the Great East rested on the nine basic principles which constituted the major ideological principles of his ideal state; Başyücelik state: spiritualism (ruhçuluk), qualitativism (keyfiyetçilik)¹²², personalism (şahsiyetçilik)¹²³, moralism (ahlakçılık), nationalism (milliyetçilik)¹²⁴, regulationism in capital and property (sermaye ve mülkiyette tedbircilik), communitarianism (cemiyetçilik)¹²⁵, orderism (nizamcılık), interventionism (müdahalecilik). Although Kısakürek's formulation of Büyük Doğu was initially more imbued with the spiritualist leanings but he did not pursue his emphasis on spiritualism very far and directed his mind to the task of reviving Islamism in a new epoch, spiritualism, among these nine principles, had been the most significant one in his ideological system. Interestingly enough, the spiritualist attitude in his ideology could explain both the development of Islamist discourse from Sufism and the western influence on his ideas. For the first observation, it is true to say that before his meeting with the Nakshibendi shaikh, Abdülhakim Arvasi in 1934, Kısakürek had a religious/mystical/spiritual sensitivity.¹²⁶ His deep involvement with Sufism led him to the formation of a new ideology, the Great East by ideologization of Islam.

The idealist and spiritualist philosophers and themes of the West found an access to Kısakürek's ideology via the same spiritualist aspect: Socrates, Plato, Henri Bergson,

¹²² Kısakürek, "Keyfiyetçilik." [Qualitativism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 24 (March 24, 1944): 2.

¹²³ Kısakürek, "Şahsiyetçilik." [Personalism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 22 (March 10, 1944): 2.

¹²⁴ Since his understanding of nationalism has been discussed in a separate section, it is omitted here.

¹²⁵ Kısakürek, "Cemiyetçilik." [Communitarianism] *BD*. 1st year, vol II, number 23 (March 17, 1944): 2.

¹²⁶ M. Orhan Okay, *Konuşmalar* [Conversations] (Ankara: Akçağ, 1998), 89.

Maurice Blondel, action, existensialism, symbolism, mysticism. The western influence on Kısakürek was apparent especially in his works regarding literature and poetry.¹²⁷ The early spiritualist element of resisting to the positivist and materialist mind left its place, in Kısakürek's ideas, to the attempt of combining the material with the spiritual in the optimum of Islam. Later, the spiritualist discourse constituted a mantle to his Islamist ideas.¹²⁸ Actually, the influence of the above mentioned western philosophers and schools on Kısakürek did not take the form of following one philosopher or one school but rather in the form of selective appropriation of some concepts and ideas to be used in the construction of his Islamist ideology. For example, Blondel's concept of "action"¹²⁹, the notion of existence and Bergson's¹³⁰ definition of nationalism and spiritualism/mysticism were employed but could not colour all the ideological system of Kısakürek. Here, it would be correct to argue that one might not find Kısakürek's ideas as greatly inspired from one philosopher or school. Rather, it is true to say that similar to his exposition of Islamic ideology as the combination of the good aspects of modern ideologies, he tended to take what seemed to him appropriate for his purposes.

¹²⁷ For these themes, see *Sahte*. 98-100, 103, 123, 161-163, 201; *Çepçevre*. 65, 113; *Konuşmalar*. 46-47, 84-85, 114-115. In one occasion enumerated the names of Socrates, Plato, al-Ghazzali, Pascal, Bergson and Blondel as the greatest spritualists see *Dünya*. 90.

¹²⁸ See Kısakürek, "Adnan Menderes'e Hitap (2)." [Adress to Adnan Menderes] *BD*. (May 8, 1956) in *Başmakalelerim* 2. 69.

¹²⁹ See Kısakürek, *Bati*. 88; *Hesaplaşma*. 45. In one speech, he made resemblanbe between Blondel who revived French catholicism and himself who revived Islam see *Dünya*. 91. One of the modern philosophical concepts that Kısakürek enjoyed much was the notion of action. For example, Islam was consisted of "an unending action," the God being the "absolute actioner," *Sahte*. 104-105.

¹³⁰ See Kısakürek, *Bati*. 92-3; *Çepçevre*. 113. Bergson's philosophical influence on Kısakürek was apparent especially in the field of art (poerty) through his interrupted study of philosophy in Paris and through his good relations with his teacher, Mustafa Şekip Tunç; see Okay, *Kültür*. 141, 148.

Given the pivotal role of Islam, spiritualism connoted the religious spiritualism which has its “line of horizon” (ufuk çizgisi) in Islamic “conceptualization of God” (Allahçılık). The spiritualist attitude which drew attention to the limitations (insufficiency) of observation and experience by the five senses were tied to the existence and supremacy of a higher being, God and his religion, Islam. This kind of spiritualism was a total submission to God and to his prophet. In the age of spiritual crisis in the world, Kısakürek was offering an Islamic spiritualism as the way of salvation to all humanity.¹³¹ His spiritualist principle did not omit the issue of the machine which gave its name to the twentieth century. He denounced the dominance of machine/material over the spiritual, seeing the world war two as the manifestation of the crisis which emanated from the glorification of the machine. But on the whole, Kısakürek did not oppose to man’s control over nature through technology since human being was created by God as his caliph in the earth to dominate things and events. Seen from this angle, the machine and technology were deemed as useful if they were in the service of the spirit or Islam. Learning from the West in this respect, had to be in the nature of comprehending this western crisis and appropriating the institutions that made the machine. That was making the machine which produce machine.¹³²

Moralism, by defining the crisis of humanity as a crisis of morality was the glorification of Islamic morality by an emphasis on Sufism’s search for a morally perfect man.¹³³

¹³¹ Kısakürek, “Ruhçuluk.” [Spiritualism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 19 (January 18, 1944): 2. According to Kısakürek, the notions of fatherland, nation, family, love, mercy, honor, heroism were the goods of the spiritualist cadres.

¹³² Kısakürek, “Makine ve Harp.” [Machine and War] (June 29, 1939) in *Çerçeve 1*. 146-147; “Kurtarıcı Hikmet.” [Saviour Wisdom] *BD*. 6th year, number 29 (October 6, 1950): 2; “Makine ve İslam.” [Machine and Islam] *BD*. 28th year, 15. period, number 14 (April 7, 1971): 2 and “Makineyi Anlamak.” 14; *Türkiyenim*. 62-65.

¹³³ Kısakürek, “Ahlakçılık.” [Moralism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 20 (January 25, 1944): 2.

Rejecting unlimited, excessive individual capital and property, the principle of regulationism in capital and property would allow the right of property to individual in every field of work but on the condition that it would not exploit other labour measures. This economic understanding constitute the elimination of the evil sides of socialism and capitalism while appropriating their good sides.¹³⁴ The sense of order, partly inspired from modern ideologies and partly inspired from the Ottoman-Turkish state tradition, had a significant place in Kısakürek's ideological expositions. His ideal state and society showed a high level of orderism. Order was not an aim but a means that had a dominating power over the aims. From a Sufi perspective, he found an order in every part of the universe and came to conclude that: "in the world, we can accept neither a single order without idea and movement nor a single idea/movement without order." Order was a manifestation of the spirit upon the material.¹³⁵

The last of the nine principles, interventionism was an individual's submission of his right of supervision (murakabe hakkı) to the instrument of a community which would secure him more perfectly than himself. By a more advanced form of statism (devletçilik), interventionism was to believe in the superiority of father in competence over his son, husband over wife, doctor over patient and society over individual and was also to institute the instrument of the competence of social supervision in an organic way that established a balance between society and individual.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Kısakürek, "Sermaye ve Mülkiyette Tedbircilik." [Regulationism in Capital and Property] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 35 (June 28, 1946): 2.

¹³⁵ Kısakürek, "Nizamcılık." [Orderism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 25 (March 31, 1944): 2. The idea of order coloured Kısakürek's mind to the extent that he, in one occasion, said: "My adherence to order is comparable to nothing...Islam is totaly an order" quoted by Kabaklı, *Sultanü 'ş-Şuara*. 133.

¹³⁶ Kısakürek, "Müdahalecilik." [Interventionism] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 26 (April 7, 1944): 2.

Kısakürek's interventionism was an attempt to clear up the spirit of democracy who had been depressed by the excessive individual freedom, from all negative poles. This kind of interventionism had the claim of both escalating individual authority and enslaving it to the ideal through intervening in every field of the individual life. This organic understanding envisioned the supremacy of two things; true freedom (being a slave to the truth) and absolute submission of the individual to the eternal divine laws, while denouncing two things; unlimited freedom and despotism.¹³⁷ Indeed these moralist and elitist principles were concretized in his formulation of an ideal state: *Başyücelik Devleti*.

6.5.3 *Başyücelik Devleti as an Islamic Nation-State*

In a similar vein to the Islamist emphasis on the moral purposes of the state, as discussed in the previous chapters, Kısakürek put the stress on the goals of any rule not on its form. Any rule that committed to the Islamic principles could be a form of state in the Islamic revolution whether it was a sultanate or republic.¹³⁸ Kısakürek's own formulation of an ideal state, *Başyücelik devleti* was a type of state which represented a perfectness by embracing the good aspects of three types of state: absolute rule (*mutlakiyet*), republic and one party dictatorship; while leaving their bad aspects aside. In other words, *Başyücelik devleti* would comprise the good aspects of Plato's "Republic," Nietzsche's "superman," Aristo's state and Marx's classless state but would exclude their harmful dimensions.¹³⁹ *Başyücelik Devleti* was heavily centralized and totalistic, which implied that not only the distribution of political and economic resources within the polity but also the social,

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Kısakürek, "Devlet." [State] *BD*. 5th year, number 11 (December 23, 1949): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 104-106. Kısakürek also regarded *başyücelik devleti* as the most advanced form of republic by denying any accusation of being a supporter of sultanate regime.

¹³⁹ Kısakürek, "Teşkilat ve İdare." [Administration and Rule] *BD*. 6th year, number 32 (October 27, 1950): 2, 11; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 102-103.

cultural, artistic and moral life of society should come under the scrutiny of the state. One may find many similarities between Kısakürek's idealization of state and society in *İdeolocya Örgüsü* (ideological web) and Plato's ideal state in the 'Republic.' In Popperian sense, like Plato's republic, Kısakürek's conceptualization of ideal state and society offered a version of a closed and totalitarian system. In addition to the paramount influence of western totalitarian conceptions of state, Kısakürek's *başyücelik devleti* bore marks of both jurisdic theory of caliphate and al-Farabi's ideal city.

True to his strong reservations on the notion of national sovereignty, in Kısakürek's opinion, the political hegemony belonged to the aristocracy of intellectuals while the sovereignty (in absolute terms) belonged to God. In order to elevate people to the level of "real sovereignty" which went beyond selfish considerations, sovereignty had to be subjected to the truth and had to be tied to the will of intellectuals in *Başyücelik devleti* otherwise there was no way out of the crisis which human being had been experiencing in the twentieth century.¹⁴⁰

Başyücelik devleti was consisted of mainly six parts: *Yüceler Kurultayı*, *Başyüce*, *Başyücelik hükümeti*, *Yüce Din Dairesi*, *Halk Divanı*, *Başyücelik Akademyası*. *Yüceler Kurultayı*, which might be called as "the authority of true intellectuals" was situated in a position that national assemblies occupied in democratic regimes. Similar to a parliament, *Yüceler Kurultayı* had been the place where the all decisions of political community were taken in accordance with laws. But every law as a practical edict of an ideological mind, had been connected to the main principle, implying sharia. Tied to the notion that "sovereignty belonged to the Right," this assembly would be the enslavement to the truth in the hands of "superior human beings" who never had selfish interests and who were

¹⁴⁰ Kısakürek, "Teşkilat," 2, 11.

faithful to God and His sharia.¹⁴¹ Since it rejected unlimited freedom, Yüceler Kurultayı could not accept the claim that “nation wishes it in this way” and could not allow the despotism of quantity/majority over the quality.¹⁴² His elitist conceptualization of the parliament was similar to the Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period who thought legislation as the work of the most competent and learned men. Both the Islamists and Kısakürek seemed to translate the medieval notion of ehl-i hal ve'l akd into a modern institution; a parliament. But the limitations of the medieval formulation were still there: morality, learning and competence.

Like the qualifications of an ideal authority in the caliphate theory, Başyüce was the prime example of his nation, being at a higher level of morality, knowledge and intelligence. Given his non-selfish attitude, he was entitled to a high level of authority which did not contradict with the laws, prescribed by Yüceler Kurultayı. By a reference to the concept of “Ulülemr” in Islamic political terminology, Kısakürek envisioned başyüce as “an ideal person.”who was not only the executive but also the judiciary. He could change governments by his one command since all government officials acted in his name. Justice was also distributed by his name.¹⁴³

Reminding the office of şeyhül-islam within the structure of Ottoman state, in Kısakürek's başyücelik devleti, there existed another institution, called as Yüce Din Dairesi which voiced the knowledge and conscience regarding government policies and which was selected by başyüce. Apart from its duties of internal and external propaganda, religious education, cadres and waqfs, this department, would act as a major center of consultation

¹⁴¹ Kısakürek, “Yüceler Kurultayı.” [Assembly of Exalted] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 38 (July 19, 1946): 2; *İdeolocya*, 1st edition. 253-256.

¹⁴² *Ibid*.

¹⁴³ Kısakürek, “Başyüce.” [HeadExalted] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 40 (August 2, 1946): 2; *İdeolocya*, 1st edition, 258-260.

for the state. In fact, this place given to the religious men was complemented by the necessity that the spirit of this institution would be internalized by all state and government institutions as well.¹⁴⁴

Kısakürek envisioned a highly ordered and disciplined state that had a complex and penetrating organization into every sides of societal and individual life. State had to create and impose on society and individual what was good and had to remove totally what was evil. Moreover, society and individual were depicted as morally ordered and disciplined entities. In other words, societal and individual life were full of morality, prutanism, principles and ideals. Every aspect and institution of life from city, mosque to schools, highways, army and to courts were portrayed as being in the perfect forms.¹⁴⁵ Kısakürek's ideal formulation of state were strictly based on the Orthodox reading of sharia, especially for measures of punishment without mentioning its name.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Kısakürek, "Hükümetin 11 Davası." [Eleven Issue of the Government] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 42 (August 16, 1946): 2; *İdeolocya* 1st edition. 263-266.

¹⁴⁵ See Kısakürek, "Başyücelikte Umumi Manzara." [General Panaroma in Başyücelik] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 47 (September 20, 1946): 2; *İdeolocya* 1st edition. 276-278. Moral duties of state was emphasized by Kısakürek to the extent that he even offered an establishment of police institution for pleasure, beauty and training (terbiye ve zevk zabıtası) see, "Başyücelik Emirleri-Terbiye ve Zevk Murakabesi." [Commands of Başyücelik: Good Manners and Control of Pleasure] *BD*. 7th year, number 45 (January 26, 1951): 2.

¹⁴⁶ Punishment was strict and severe. For example, in every kind of theft, measure of punishment was to cut the handle of thief, or those who made adultery were punished in a public arena, changing according to the marital status; or murderer who killed someone intentionally was quickly executed by the principle of retaliation. The punishment for blasphemy and treachery to the belief of political community and to the fatherland, including communists was execution. In Kısakürek's mind, the implementation of legal punishments was so strict and severe that he even argued that in order to create the ideal society, if needed, the whole society might be destroyed as the manifestation of justice and mercy until there remained a nucleus of one ideal man and woman; see Kısakürek, "Başyücelik Emirleri-Kanun Esaslarımız." [Commands of Başyücelik: Our Principles of law] *BD*. 7th year, number 46 (February 2, 1951): 2 and "Başyücelikte Ceza Ölçüsü." [Measure of Punishment in Başyücelik] *BD*. 1st year, vol. II, number 46 (September 13, 1946): 2; *İdeolocya* 1st edition. 273-275.

The commands of Başyücelik devleti Each command started with the sentence that “after issuing this command it would be like that” and so on. In general, these commands included prohibitions and Islamist interpretations of the nation-state institutions. Every forms of gambling, drinking alcohol and drug, adultery, interest, dancing, statue were prohibited by başyücelik devleti. Women were to be dressed according to sharia principles.¹⁴⁷ The press, cinema, radio and TRT and university were taken into the close scrutiny of başyücelik devleti by abolishing their autonomies and freedom. In the ideal society, there could not be any classes like working/capitalist classes and any antagonism between workers and patrons. Rather, society was regarded as a moral family in which workers and patrons came together by the help of Islamic spirit.¹⁴⁸ Lastly, the ideal society/fatherland would be comprised of only Turks and Muslims, expelling Jews, Greeks, Armenians and *dönmeler* (member of Jewish community who were converted to Islam in the 17th century) from the country.¹⁴⁹

In order to observe a transformation of the caliphate into an Islamist conceptualization of a modern/totalitarian nation-state in the hands of Kısakürek, the above analysis of his

¹⁴⁷ See Kısakürek, “Başyücelik Emirleri-Kumar.” [Commands of Başyücelik:Gambling] *BD*. 6th year, number 34 (November 10, 1950): 2; “Başyücelik Emirleri-İçki ve Zehir.” [Commands of Başyücelik: Drink and Poision] *BD*. 6th year, number 36 (November 24, 1950): 2; “Başyücelik emirleri-Zina ve Fuhuş.” [Commands of Başyücelik: Adultery and Prostitution] *BD*. 6th year, number 35 (November 17, 1950): 2; ”Başyücelik Emirleri-Faiz.” [Commands of Başyücelik:Interest] *BD*. 7th year, number 52 (March 16, 1951): 2; ”Başyücelik Emirleri-Dans.” [Commands of Başyücelik: Dance] *BD*. 7th year, number 48 (January 16, 1951): 2; “Başyücelik Emirleri-Heykel.” [Commands of Başyücelik:Statue] *BD*. 7th year, number 51 (March 9, 1951): 2; “Başyücelik Emirleri-Kadın Kılığı.” [Commands of Başyücelik: Women Dressing] *BD*. 7th year, number 43 (January 12, 1951): 2.

¹⁴⁸ Kısakürek, “Başyücelik Emirleri-İşçi.” [Commands of Başyücelik: Worker] *BD*. 15th period, number 4 (January 24, 1971): 2; “Başyücelik Emirleri-Sermaye ve Patron.” [Commands of Başyücelik: Capitan and Patron] *BD*. 15th period, number 5 (February 3, 1971): 2.

¹⁴⁹ Kısakürek, *İdeolocya* 1st edition. 314-316.

başyücelik devleti might be followed by a glance to his attitude towards nationalism and Turkish nationalism.

6.6 Turkish Nationalism and Turkishness in the Service of Islam

The political ideas of Kısakürek, though couched in nationalist terms and related, sometimes with visible effort such as the use of a pre-Islamic symbol; grey wolf, to Turkish nationalism, are of Islamic origin and express nationalist adoption of the medieval caliphate theory (başyücelik=halife). Kısakürek's terminology and concepts such as fatherland, Turkey, Turks, Anatolia, grey wolf¹⁵⁰, language and culture were expressed within the confines of nationalist framework but with the Islamist connotations. For example, he was clear on the vitality of Turkish language when he voiced his criticism about both the dominance of Arabic and Persian words over Turkish and the attempt of language purification in the Republic (uydurukça).¹⁵¹ Like Kemalist nationalism, Kısakürek's nationalism, at the beginning more clearly by placing the map of Turkey within the motto of his journal of Büyük Doğu¹⁵², contained territorial features, whether in the form of Anadoluculuk or in the form of Great east. The Ottoman empire was portrayed

¹⁵⁰ His writings are full of this symbol, for instance see *Hitabeler*. 139-141. The symbol of the grey wolf (bozkurt) was denounced as pre-Islamic by the Islamists of the Second Constitutional period, see *SR*. "Bozkurt Kafası." [Head of Grey Wolf] XXIII/584 (17 Kanun-i Sani 1340/10 Cemaziyelahir 1342): 190. Bozkurt as a mythological element of central Asia was transformed into willow (söğüt ağacı) after the Turkish acceptance of Islam in Anatolia, and that was the beginning of Turkish life as well. "Mehmetçik." [Turkish Soldier] *BD*. (March 22, 1965) in *Çerçeve* 3. 136-138.

¹⁵¹ Kısakürek, "Uydurma Dil Felaketi." [Disaster of Invented Language] *BD*. 15th period, number 15 (April 14, 1971): 2; also *İdeolocya* 5th edition. 386-387. Kısakürek kept its sensitivity towards the Turkish language and in one occasion, he said that "I give my speeches in Turkish and tomorrow when I die I will want my forgiveness in Turkish as well," quoted by Kabaklı, *Sultanü'ş-Şuara*. 105.

¹⁵² See the issues of Büyük Doğu in 1943, 1945 and 1946.

as the Turkish empire when he blamed the Tanzimat and Meşrutiyet for destructing the national unity of the Turkish nation.¹⁵³

Kısakürek, after quoting Bergson's sentence that nationalism is not a mind (or conscience) but a mental state (Bir şuur değil, bir haldir) came to conclude that nationalism was a psychology, not an ideology, since a system that did not have something to say for every nation and for all the humanity could not be an ideology.¹⁵⁴ He defined nationhood as being derived from a nation's (kavim) spiritual essence within the framework of its own unique and intellectual disposition (or nature). This spiritual essence was certainly Islam for Turks. Nationhood was nationhood if it was based on Islam. Since the values of spiritual contents (a Durkheimian notion), or religion and worldviews could be an ideology whereas their forms; ethnicity (kavm) and devotion to an ethnicity was a psychology, not an ideology.¹⁵⁵ In this way of putting the matter, Kısakürek attacked Ziya Gökalp's reading of Durkheim on the issue of nationalism. Gökalp became unsuccessful even in copying Durkheim's conceptualization of nationalism that was concentrated on the spiritual contents namely religion. But Gökalp tried to transplant the love of race (kavim sevgisi) in place of the religious emotion (dini heyecan; Islam). The true reading of Durkheim had to give the importance to Islam in the formation of the nation whereas Gökalp was an enemy of Islam because of his attempt to replace nationalism with Islam.¹⁵⁶ According to Kısakürek, Gökalp's nationalism was not an ideology but a

¹⁵³ Kısakürek, *Dünya*. 72-3. His counter-revolution to the republic did not entail the removal of Turkishness from its foundations: "This house [the Republic] must be destroyed and restructured from its cellar to its roof, except its foundation: the Turkishness" see *Rapor 1/3*. 22.

¹⁵⁴ Kısakürek, *Konuşmalar*. 109-110; *Sahte*. 295.

¹⁵⁵ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 295.

¹⁵⁶ Kısakürek, "İdeal." [Ideal] *BD*. 15th period, number 16 (April 21, 1971): 3; *Türkiyenin*. 33; *Bati*. 77-78; *Hesaplaşma*. 92; *Son Devrin*. 6. Kısakürek named Gökalp's ideas on turkicization of worship as unbelief after quoting the famous poem, "A land where the

psychology based on racism while his ideal of Turan also had the defect of attributing a mystic identity to the fatherland which was in reality a concrete space.¹⁵⁷

Nationalism could be positive only if it was placed in the service of Islam or if it emanated from Islamic essences. Racism (kavmiyetçilik or ırkçılık) of any kind had to be rejected. His argument that someone was a Turk only if he/she was a Muslim had been the favorite one for decades in his writings on nationalism.¹⁵⁸ He did not attribute a supremacy to the Turkish race and even on another occasion he was more explicit: “there can not be a claim of racism for the moralist Turkish youth (mukaddesatçı Türk gençliği) and if I have to choose a supreme race, I would prefer Arabs of the past.”¹⁵⁹ Kısakürek warned that the concept of the nation originally meant the followers of a belief in general, the followers of Islam in particular. Seen from this perspective, there was only one Islamic nation, composed of different races such as Turks and Arabs.¹⁶⁰

“True nationalism” of the Great East, one of its basic nine principles concentrated on the spirit and essence of a community by going beyond the conditions of race and land. Turk

call to prayer from the mosque is recited in Turkish...” see *Sahte*. 87-88. Kısakürek also criticized Nihal Atsız because of his special attention to the pre-Islamic origins of Turks, see *Babiali*. 393-394. Moreover, Kısakürek tried to transform the Turkish nationalism represented by the Nationalist Action Party (MHP). Upon the advice of Kısakürek, Alparslan Türkeş declared publicly his party’s commitment to Islam based Turkish nationalism before 1977 elections in order to get Kısakürek’s support.

¹⁵⁷ Kısakürek, *Bati*. 79; *Rapor 1/3*. 89. Kısakürek’s early evaluations of Ziya Gökalp were actually positive. Gökalp had been the first and only Turkish thinker who understood the West and tried to present a system of thought, since the Tanzimat. Although he differentiated his understanding of nationalism from Gökalp’s one, Kısakürek, in this period, seemed more inclined to nationalism than his later Islamism. He spoke of Gökalp’s place in the creation of a “consciousness of Turk, Turkish and Turkey,” see “Manzara 5.” *Ağaç*. 8 (May 23, 1936): 1, 3.

¹⁵⁸ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 311-312. In this way, he also stated that “we are Turkist of Turks whom accepted Islam” *Biz İslamı kabul ettikten sonra Türkün Türkçüsüyüz*, *Bati*. 79.

¹⁵⁹ Kısakürek, “Beklenen Zuhur.” [Expected Emergence] 1975 in *Hitabeler*. 257.

was consisted of a spiritual tissue with one character within the peculiarities of a certain belief, devotion, thinking, intuition, remembrance, impression, behaviour and indication. It was a unity built around a certain belief, morality, thinking, quality, imagination, memoirs, character, manner and language. The cover of this “absolute and independent spiritual tissue” was Anatolia.¹⁶¹ Hence, Turkish nationalism contained two elements: Islam and the Turkish race. The former one was universal and dominating while the latter was dependent and valuable if it was in the service of the spiritual element, Islam like in the metaphor of crescent (Islam) and star (Turk) in the Turkish flag.¹⁶² Kısakürek, in the exposition of his utopia, the expected Islamic revolution, regarded nationalism as a matter of spirit, essence and time but not as a matter of form, material and space. In Islamic revolution, nationalism had to confine itself in accordance with the limits of Islam, that was to say that it was a “limited nationalism” (sınırlı milliyetçilik) or “permitted nationalism” (izinli milliyetçilik). The nationalism of the revolution, after accepting Islam as the source of spirit for humanity was an idea of superiority as a sign of merit in the competition of realizing this spirit among the ethnicities.¹⁶³

Nationalism was not an institution (müessise) that to be rejected in Islam. By reference to the prophet’s saying that people could not be blamed for the love he/she felt towards his/her ethnicity (kavm), Kısakürek gave a significant place to the reality of race or ethnicity simply because it was the race, Turks that would reflect and realize the ideals of

¹⁶⁰ Zabıt Katibi, “Din-Millet-Şeriat.” [Religion-Nation-Sharia] *BD*. 28th year, 15th period, number 16 (April 21, 1971): 5.

¹⁶¹ Büyük Doğu, “Milliyetçilik.” [Nationalism] *BD*. number 24 (August 14, 1959): 2. see also *İdeolocya* 1st edition. 334-336.

¹⁶² Kısakürek, *Hitabeler*. 184-186.

¹⁶³ Kısakürek, “İslam İnkılabında Milliyet.” [Nationality in Islamic Revolution] *BD*. 5th year, number 13 (January 6, 1950): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 113-114.

Islam.¹⁶⁴ Kısakürek emphasised the special attributes of Turkish race (as pure race, saf ve temiz ırk) and sometimes spoke of Outside Turks (Dış Türkler) without panTurkist appeals but with a view to Turkism in the service of Islam, demonstrating much concern on the leading role of Turkey within Islamic world in the past and in the future as well. Islam after the decline of Arabs, regained its brightness in the hands of a pure race, called as Turks.¹⁶⁵

He frequently spoke and wrote of Turks as the representative of the East (especially in the personality of the Ottoman Empire) upon the challenge of the West or as the people who would achieve the revival of the Great East. The Turkish nation was expected to find a way to save firstly itself, and in the second stage, all the East and lastly all the humanity simply by the advocacy to Islam. That was indeed the way of the divine fate whether Turks were aware of this fact or not.¹⁶⁶ It was a just dream to expect the Islamic revival from other Muslim countries. Given the historical privilege to Turks by the divine will, other muslim countries had been in a position of recognizing Turks as their model without being able to establish a state since the fall of Islamic Arab empire. It was only Turks who showed the ability of establishing the everlasting state (devlet-i ebed müddet) and it had survived until the seventeenth century.¹⁶⁷

In fact, Kısakürek's Islamism was coloured by the supremacy of Turks and Turkey (hakim millet) among Islamic nations by a reference to the leading role of the Ottoman state. The western attack over the Ottoman empire in the world war one destroyed more or less

¹⁶⁴ Kısakürek, *Sahte*. 311-312.

¹⁶⁵ Kısakürek, *Doğru*. 161-2,

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁷ Kısakürek, "Ancak Burada Düzelirse." [If only it is Put into right here] *BD*. (April 7, 1978) in *Çerçeve 5*. 47; see also *İdeolojya* 5th edition. 420-2. His attribution of the leading role to Turkey in the revival of the East reminds us the Kemalist

achieved unity of Muslims under the leadership of Turks through the caliphate. The destruction of Islamic unity had been furthered by Turkey's abolition of caliphate and secularizing reforms. Thus, the revival of Islamic world would start from Turkey where Muslims' position deteriorated and then would spread to the rest of the Islamic world.¹⁶⁸ The development of Islam had to commence by movements of idea and action in every Islamic country. The next step was the spiritual, social, economic and political unity of the Islamic world against the West.¹⁶⁹ It was clear that this way of thinking accepted the necessities of nation-state system in envisioning an Islamic unity. But what was more important to our purposes here was the openly spoken supremacy of Turks in the expected unity of Muslims. One might note that this mood was different than the Ottoman sense of superiority in the service of Islam but it contained marks of nationalist thinking.

The Turkish acceptance of Islam was the exit from the darkness of the history and the Ottoman Empire, in his eyes, came to constitute "the most perfect balance between Islam and national structure", or the "realization of true civilization". Only after Islam, Turks were able to institutionalize their nation, society, state and human being.¹⁷⁰ On the other hand, he mentioned one essential failure for the Turkish nation: not being able to create a Turkish thinker, or philosopher (mütefekkir) at a level of the world, like Muhyiddin-i Arabi, Al-Ghazzali, Imam Rabbani.¹⁷¹

intellelligentsia's perception of Turkey as the source of inspiration for the liberation of the Third World countries.

¹⁶⁸ Kısakürek, *İdeolocya* 5th edition. 420-422; *Rapor* 1/3. 137.

¹⁶⁹ Kısakürek, *Rapor* 7/9. 127.

¹⁷⁰ Kısakürek, "Oluş." [Being] *BD*. 1st year, number 7 (October 29, 1943): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 35-36; "Tarih," 1.

¹⁷¹ Kısakürek, "Sebepe." [Reason] *BD*. 1st year, number 8 (November 5, 1943): 2; *Büyük Doğuya Doğru*. 37-38.

Kısakürek persistently expressed in his belief in the wisdom of Turkish nation that was more advanced than its false intellectuals (sözde aydınlar). This populist element in Kısakürek's nationalism led himself to the conclusion that the secret nation (gizli millet) who had the order of good, truth and beauty in her spirit and who must be trusted in this respect, understood him and his ideology.¹⁷² This trust in the nation was complemented by his ideas on Anatolism. In his early literature based writings, which were of a Bergsonian and spiritualist nature, Kısakürek considered Büyük Doğu (or nationalism) in the context of Anadoluçuluk (Anatolism), a kind of Turkish nationalism around the concrete territory of Anatolia rather than the abstract idea of Turan. Given the spiritualist tendency in his early writings (poets, plays such as Tohum), Anadoluçuluk constituted a transitional ideological period¹⁷³ in Kısakürek's search for the ideology of the Great East. To him, Anadoluçuluk, as a narrow view, was an expression of the hatred which stemmed from being deprived and from simple emotional devotion to the land.¹⁷⁴ This did not mean that he dropped the terms of Anatolism in the expression of his understanding of nationalism; rather he incorporated the term Anadolu into the general framework of the Great East. The dichotomy of Rumeli and Anadolu gained a significance in explaining the betrayal of Anatolia by the false heroes of Rumeli, beyond Selaniko. Anatolia had been exploited and enslaved by these false heroes since the Tanzimat.¹⁷⁵ The real Anatolism which was far from being a matter of land, signified the internalization of Anatolia's spirit in the individual, society and state.¹⁷⁶ Anatolia was depicted firstly as the

¹⁷² Kısakürek, "Burdur'dan Mektup." [Letter from Burdur] *BD*. (March 17, 1965) in *Çerçeve* 3. 130-131.

¹⁷³ He published his early poets in the journal of Anadolu see Ülken, *Türkiye'de*. 479.

¹⁷⁴ Kısakürek, *Kafa*. 193.

¹⁷⁵ Kısakürek, "Anadolu ve Anadoluçuluk." [Anatolia and Anatolism] *BD*. number 21 (July 24, 1959): 1, 16 also in *Başmakalelerim I*. 230-234 and *Para*. 145-146.

source of the spiritualist revival (War of Independence) against the encroachments of the Western “machine civilization,” later as the land where the Islamic revival would flourish. In other words, the ideology of the Great East would find its land in Anatolia and would bring back the personality, will and “true civilization” to Turks.¹⁷⁷ Despite being a land of many different civilizations, Kısakürek Islamized the sense of Anatolia to the extent that it was a land of martyr and saints. Anatolia, defined as the bed of Islamic umma represented the real element which followed the mission of Islam as an action all over the world.¹⁷⁸ Kısakürek’s combination of Islam and Turkishness, as Özdalga¹⁷⁹ perceptively states, might be regarded a forerunner of Turkish-Islamic synthesis despite the very early signs of this synthesis in the Second Constitutional Period, as I exposed in the previous chapters.

In Kısakürek’s conceptualization of political community, Turkishness, with its language and culture and the Sunni Islamic faith were among the dominant elements of membership in this respect. In the era of transition to multiparty politics in 1950 when Kısakürek presented a wide range of counter-arguments to the Kemalist historical writing, he denounced the Kemalist oppression of Zazas who were of Turkish origin, in Dersim.¹⁸⁰ The reduction of Kurds to a branch of Turks came to recognize the existence of a Kurdish ethnicity at the end of 1970s. There had remained nothing except from the state’s police power in the region since religion has been left aside in the Republic: “those who say I am Turk by leaving Islam give the right to Kurds to say I am Kurd”. The question of Kurdish

¹⁷⁶ Kısakürek, *Kafa*. 194.

¹⁷⁷ Kısakürek, “Anadolu,” 1.

¹⁷⁸ Kısakürek, “Harim-i İsmet.” [Innermost Shrine] *BD*. 6th year, number 37 (December 1, 1950): 2 also in *Çerçeve 2*. 176-177.

¹⁷⁹ Özdalga, “Tasavvuf,” 190.

¹⁸⁰ People of Dersim came from Akkoyunlu descent were pure Turks, but wrongly called as Kurds see Dedektif X Bir, “Doğu Faciası.” [The Eastern Calamity] *BD*. 6th year, number 18 (February 10, 1950): 3, 15.

community broke out at a time when the total failure of the “story” of Turkish revolution became clear.¹⁸¹

Kısakürek’s attitude towards Alevi community was an illustrative example of his orthodox Sunnism and reminded us the classical attitude of the Ottoman “center” towards the “periphery.” Unfortunately, in the Sunni Ottoman empire, it did not become possible to get rid of the heretic religious movements such as Alevis, Durzis and Yezidis, despite the Islamic attempts of the three sultans; Fatih, Yavuz and II. Abdul hamid.¹⁸² Alevis as a heretic sect had always been open to the exploitation by the anti-religious movements. Alevis, like in the destruction of Islamic principles by the so called revolution, had not shown any direct or indirect reaction to this destruction but rather they had remained indifferent to their exploitation. What was to be done was to sunnify the Turkish Alevis through culture and persuasion.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Kısakürek, *Rapor 4/6*. 109.

¹⁸² Kısakürek, *Doğru*. 109, 77.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 77.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have argued that Islamism constitutes a spectrum that covers different positionings in relation to the conceptualizations of state and democracy from authoritarian/totalitarian tendencies to democratic interpretations. That is to say that there are many Islamist discourses within an ideological spectrum called as Islamism, given their specific historical, local, political, socio-economic realities. Islamism as an ideology or a wide set of political discourses is derived from different particular/specific understandings of Islam, being open to reformulations. That is, an ideological material for the Islamist constructions are provided by different readings of the Islamic text/tradition and history of Islamic civilization to meet the needs of the time. Hence, both modern and medieval conceptions of Islam and Islamisms are based on some specific readings and translations of the text and the Islamic historical experience into contemporary notions.

Following this line of thinking, I claim in this dissertation that the major problematic of the Islamist intellectuals is how Muslims could be authentic/Islamic and modern at the same time. Islamist aspiration for the golden age of the early Islam is not a will to return back to the past, but rather it might be understood as an intention of joining with the adventure of modernity by advancing a specific/native version of modernity, Islamic modernity. With the urgent need of responding to the challenge of the West, they urged for the revitalization of Islamic civilization. The notion of Islamic civilization has constituted a useful framework for coping with the challenge of modernity and for meeting the need of a true Islamic life as connected with the necessity of a meaningful response to the western

supremacy (modernity). Moreover, Islamists intellectually embraced the concept of civilization not only to criticize the modernization movements in the Islamic world and to underline the moral decadence of the West but also to express their quest for a new paradigm. In other words, the employment of the civilization concept aims to go beyond western modernity and to find an alternative to it. Seen in this light, indeed, the concept of Islamic civilization contribute not only to the ideologization of Islam but also to learning from the West without losing authentic features of Islam. I have also suggested that Islamist discourses around the concept of Islamic civilization could be seen as attempts of recreating/reinventing an Islamic tradition/traditions and as a contribution to a plural conceptualization/internalization of the experience of modernity.

As delineated throughout the thesis, Islamist intellectuals mainly argued that Islam was not an obstacle to progress and civilization but on the contrary, Muslims were backward since they had lost the true nature of Islam and departed from the true Islamic principles (sharia) and from the early practice. The influence of pre-Islamic traditions (superstition) and abandonment of *ijtihad* should be added to the list of the reasons for the decline of Islamic civilization. In explaining the reasons for the decline, a Republican Islamist, Kısakürek also shared the mainline Islamist conviction that this mainly stemmed from the influence of pre/un-Islamic traditions, and the departure of Muslims from the true Islamic principles (sharia) and from the practices of the early Islam. Unlike the Islamist trend in the Young Ottomans and in the second constitutional period, Kısakürek's interest in the discussion of the decline was not directed to prove that Islam was not an obstacle to progress and civilization but rather to the presentation of Islam as containing the positive sides of the modern political ideologies.

Again, to criticize Tanzimat reforms as the superficial westernization without understanding fully Western civilization has been a common theme in the history of

Turkish intellectual thought, starting from the Young Ottomans to Ziya Gökalp¹ and to Islamists both in the second constitutional period and in the republican period. The imitative nature of Ottoman-Turkish modernization movement without taking into account the Ottoman/Turkish nation's own hars (culture) was presented by Islamists as an illness which would have resulted in further decline. Reading the process of Turkish modernization as the history of decline and further decline, Kısakürek also criticized it for imitating the West without proper understanding of its foundations and its spirit and without conserving the spiritual roots of the Turkish society. Certainly this time, Kısakürek, faced with the Kemalist official historical writing, had to present an alternative reading of the Turkish modernization process as a framework of a new ideology.

But on the other hand, it is also true to say that Turkish intellectuals, on the whole, accepted the Tanzimat's basic conviction that Turkey should learn from the West, certainly differing on the vital issue of what should be taken from the West according to their ideological stand as Islamist, Turkist or Westernist. Nineteenth century's dominant concepts of "civilization" and "progress" were conceptualized by Islamists in a way that might be instrumental in adopting the positive (good) sides of the Western modernity which were seen in accordance with the Islamic principles. The necessity of learning from the West was justified by the conviction that modern western civilization was the inheritor of Islamic civilization. Their response to the Western challenge was romantic that they presented true Islam as something containing all the "good" elements that were operative in the rise of the West. They were keen to use Western political institutions as a lever for the revitalization of Islamic civilization. The narrative on "civilization" provided a terrain for Islamists to present Islamic civilization as a real and universal civilization which was immune from the shortcomings of western civilization. Islamic civilization was, prescribed

¹ See Heyd, *Foundations*. 74-78.

by sharia, based on cooperation, right, justice and virtue whereas the western one was established on might and interest. All in all, it might be said that Islamist intellectuals shared the belief that Islam and modernity are compatible, once both are properly understood. The compatibility of religion and science, the concept of ijihad as to pave way for the adoption of new ideas and institutions was a manifestation of the Islamist desire to advance an Islamic modernity.

From Islamizing “Progress” to the Ideologization of Islam: Necip Fazıl Kısakürek

Kısakürek stood in the same Islamist line that had spoken the need of a selective blending of Islamic values and some modern notions and he gave basic lines of how this selection was to be made and to be imposed upon society. Like Islamists of the second constitutional period, he called for the appropriation of the accepted efforts of progress in order to establish a new (ideal) city of Baghdad. Selective appropriation of the good aspects of the West was regarded as the appropriate way for the goal of creating the Turkish own culture or culturalization (the call of modernization from within). Reminding the Islamist admiration of the western material progress, Kısakürek often paid attention to the western domination over nature and development of positive sciences as a duty of Muslims to be accomplished. The place given to the idea and science by the West was highly appreciated. Both Islamists in the second constitutional period and Kısakürek stated that Islamic civilization was the major sources of inspiration for the European Renaissance by being the channel of transfer for the Greek classical texts to Europe.

A major point of difference between Islamists and Kısakürek appeared in the conceptualization of the true Islam. As a result of the emphasis on the compatibility between Islam and reason and progress (Islam as a natural religion), Islamists of the second constitutional period tried to clear up the distorted understandings of Islam by reconstructing all the religious schools of Islam through opening the gate of ijihad.

Although Kısakürek also spoke of rediscovering the true understanding of Islam in order to reactivate Turkish Muslims, he rejected the idea of opening the gate of interpretation and the unification of schools of law, but thought that the rediscovery of the Islamic truths was enough. To do this, he conducted a two-fold campaign: on the one hand, he tried to prove that Islam contained, in essence, all the good aspects of modern political ideologies such as liberalism, communism and fascism; on the other, rejected modernist and reformist interpretations of Islam as depicted by Afghani-Abduh line, fearing that this line would distort the authenticity of Islamic beliefs and principles.

On another level, Kısakürek's emphasis on human domination over the nature as something Islamic was indeed very much in the spirit of the Enlightenment. One may say that despite his insistence on a classical Sunni understanding of Islam which subjected reason to the text, Kısakürek, by his effort to present Islam as a coherent ideology to offer solutions for all problems, contributed more or less to the rationalization of religion which is a part of modernity. Thus, in Kısakürek's Islamism, a modernist approach was subjected to his traditionalist sensitivity of keeping the medieaval, Sunni orthodox understanding of Islam intact both by defending it against the reformist attacks and by presenting it as a new ideology which would save all the humanity.

Significantly, an important matter of difference between the Islamists in the empire and in the republic was also the attitude taken towards Sufism. In contrast to Islamists of the Second Constitutional period who saw sufism as a source of passivity, docility and contentment, it appeared in Kısakürek's political framework not only as the ideological symbolic resources for the ideologization of Islam but also as the "true Islam" against the reformist approaches. As the present thesis has manifested, in the reemergence of both Islamic revival in general and particularly of Islamist intellectual thought in Turkey (including Kısakürek, Nurettin Topçu and Sezai Karakoç), sufism served as an alternative

base of socialization through which they have kept an interactive relations with the Ottoman and Islamic tradition. Deriving an ideology of action from Nakshibendi understanding of Islam, Kısakürek presented an Islamist opposition to both the Republican reforms and to the whole process of the Ottoman-Turkish modernization. Kısakürek had internalized a mystical/sufi understanding of Islam. This Sufi/Nakshibendi background facilitated his advocacy of sharia- the strict observation of sharia principles and the rejection of Islamic reformism. In the presence of Republican challenge, the tension between two intellectual traditions within Islam, the ulama and the sufis was to be resolved by an intellectual; Kısakürek who felt deeply the need of finding a base of morality and ideology. He employed Sufism to establish a type of personality/identity that was actively interested in the rediscovery and supremacy of Islam as an ideology/worldview and in the reconstruction of society, state and individual along Islamic lines. Kısakürek wanted to revive a kind Islam wich created a revolution in history through the struggles of prophets and which would solve the problems of humanity.

The Supremacy of Sharia as the Framework for Islamist Conceptualizations of Democracy

The supremacy of sharia was so significant that the juristic theory legitimized the sultanate so long as it ruled in accordance with the stipulates of the shari'a and the value of state was evaluated in terms of realizing this moral purpose. This nature of the Islamic polity reflected a conceptualization of state with the transcendental reference of the supremacy of the shari'a which is regarded as coterminous with "good" and "just." The supremacy of sharia as prior to the state and the community enables us to call an Islamic polity as nomocracy which does not name a governmental system, but designates a certain kind of placement of the ultimate source of state authority, regardless of the form of government. Islamic law, though divine in its origin, is human in its matters, its promulgation, its

implementation and its end: the welfare of man or public wealth (*maslaha*). This nomocratic element in the conceptualization of state coloured all theories of Islamic political thought, including the literary one. The Ottoman state tradition as an example of blending the sultanate and caliphate included a nomocratic element (supremacy of shari'a and its conciliation with the kanun) alongside a patrimonial principle and a centralist bureaucratic principle.

The abolition of caliphate did not mean the end of the jurisdic theorization on state and government but rather, various Islamist movements and intellectuals tried to revitalize the theory of caliphate either by adaptation to the requirements of the nation-state in the form of a call for an Islamic state. That was an attribution of personal aspects of a caliph to a modern construction, namely nation-state. Hence in a paradoxical way, despite their ideological rejection of nationalism and nation-state as a harmful importation from the west, Islamists at the same time, accepted the nation-state as their operational framework and many of them were strongly attached to the notions of territory, nationhood, nationalism and a modernizing national state and its way of conduct (reform from above) which was seen as necessary to bring about the creation of a new Islamic society and individual.

Keeping in mind the fact that the worldly and relativistic roots of democracy's philosophy which contradicts any religious claim to a monopoly over the absolute truth is a point of tension in the discussions on the (in)compatibility between Islam and democracy (a Schumpeterian and moralized conception) in the writings of these intellectuals, one may argue that these discussions have to escape from a naive position of taking Islam and democracy as ideal types. Rather, it is more meaningful to study Islamist positionings and conceptualizations of state and democracy with a reference to specific historical conjuncture and intellectual/political trends. By this way, in the present study, I have

argued that the question of whether Islam is compatible with democratic values should be reworded in the way that whether Islamist interpretations/reconstructions of Islamic tradition were/are compatible with democratic values or not. It should also be stated that the absence of democratic rules in Islamic countries could not be properly analyzed by focusing only on the political cultures of these countries though we, in the present thesis, have studied the Turkish Islamist political thought in relation to their conceptualization of state and democracy. It is obvious that the experience with democracy and elite's attitudes in this respect are also significant for the establishment and consolidation of democracy in the Islamic world in general and in Turkey in particular.

In fact, Islamist ideology in general does not seem to be compatible with the idea of democracy. When they voice positive comments on democracy, Islamists are basically keen to see democracy as the limitation of an arbitrary/despotic rule and as the establishment of the rule of law, implying a rather Schumpeterian conceptualization of democracy: a type of government and procedure in electing those who rule the people. But Islamist positionings regarding democracy should not be conceived without paying attention to the political and intellectual settings of the time. In the light of my examinations of Islamist intellectuals, it might be concluded that the totalitarian nature of Islamist ideology/discourses have had a close tie to the dominant ideological atmosphere in the West and to the modernizing mind in their relevant countries. Islamist depictions of state and democracy whether in the Ottoman Empire through Islamist identification of shura with constitutional regime or in the Republican period through Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's totalitarian Başyücelik State, seem to be influenced by the political ideologies of their times such as liberalism, communism, fascism, and Kemalism. Any possibility of Islamist adoption(s) of democratic values and institutions in the Islamic world is also related to another possibility: the establishment of a democratic political tradition on the parts of the ruling elite. Nevertheless, one could also express the view that the guidance of

sharia for a Muslim individual and society would continue to constitute a source of Islamist demands and further Islamist revitalization of the idea of an Islamic state. The supremacy of sharia in the minds of Islamists constitutes a major point of the difficulty for the adoption of democratic values and institutions in order to create democratic inclinations in the future formation of Islamic political thought.

Transformation of Caliphacy into a Totalitarian Nation-State: Başyücelik Devleti

Islamists urged Muslim masses to participate actively in politics in order to force their rulers to accept “democratic” institutions and in order to oppose the imperialist encroachments of the Western countries against the Islamic world. Complemented by the publicized discussions on the necessity of getting a true understanding of Islam, Islamist intellectuals popularized the agenda of elite regarding the state affairs by rejecting the traditional dichotomy of different systems of value for the elite and the people in their journal articles. The word revolution (inkilap) as something positive was incorporated into Islamist discourse(s) by the July revolution and continued to be used in that way in the Republican period.

Indeed, both in the empire and in the republic Islamists gave their support to the political groups which aimed to change the nature of the political regime (the Young Turks, Kemalists during the war of Independence and the Democrat party) certainly with the expectation that a more Islamic regime would settled instead of an old one. But with no exception, the performance of these groups in power defeated Islamists’ expectations by not carrying out Islamization policies. For instance, the Grand National Assembly appeared to Islamists as the proper basis in order to establish the Islamic state and in order to Islamicize not only the secularist policies of the Young Turks but also the reforms that had been made through the process of Tanzimat-Islahat Edicts. Thus, it was inescapable that Islamists had been in a conflict with different political powers on how to define the

ideological features of the future Turkish state and society on the direction of the Ottoman-Turkish modernization process.

As this thesis indicates, one striking feature of Kısakürek's exposition of his Islamist ideology was the language in which he wrote. Islamists of the second constitutional period expressed their ideas in the language of the classical theories, that of the jurists and philosophers-using notions such as shura, caliphate, and ijma, citing Qur'anic verses and Prophetic sayings. But Kısakürek's political writings did not contain the political language and terms of the medieval age and of the Islamists of the second constitutional period either, with the exception of the notion of Şeriat. Rather, he preferred creating new terms to express the classical notions of ruler, government and state: başyüce for a caliph, başyücelik state for a caliphate, kurultay for shura and so on.

Islamists translated the jurisdic theory of the caliphate into a positive constitutional system and the sultan-caliph conceptualization of the Ottoman classical times into the sultan as the head of executive, who were under the duty of sharia's application. Consultation (meşveret), perceived as the core value and institution of Islamic political theory took the central place of the caliphate in the jurisdic theory. Therefore, Islamist identification of modern democratic institutions with the classical theory of caliphate weakened the authority of the caliph. Seeing the caliph only as the head of government, this line of thought transferred the representation of the national sovereignty from the caliph to the assembly when the abolition of the caliphate was discussed in the First Grand National Assembly. Certainly, the Assembly inherited the moral purpose of the caliphate which was ensuring the application of the stipulations of the shari'ah. The insistence on the enforcement of sharia represented a major difference between Islamists and other ideological positionings, including conservatism and Turkish-Islam synthesis. In order to defend the enforcement of the sharia, Islamists made a reference to national will or to

people's government against the further secularization policies of the newly emerging Kemalist regime. Islamist arguments about nativity and conservatism were directed to the preservation of the present Islamic characteristic of the national culture from further secularization in the hands of Kemalists. In this vein, to them, the republic indicated the total sovereignty of the nation's spirit, will and beliefs. With the weakening of the institution of caliphate, the first glimmerings of the idea of Islamic state, based on sharia, manifested itself in the second constitutional period and the idea of caliphate was transferred to the parliament in the early 1920s.

Kısakürek's Başyücelik Devleti constituted indeed a republican reading of the juridic theory of caliphate. On the one side, he regarded some ideological principles for the construction of an Islamic state as a type of nation-state; but on the other side, he envisioned a perfect personality such as başyüce as the head of state who was expected to have some ideal/superior features. His description of a head of Islamic state had a close resemblance to both Mawerdi's theory of caliphate and al-Farabi's head of virtuous city. Like the Islamist identification of meşrutiyet with shura, Kısakürek argued that republic in the sense of people's rule was an order of God by the verse of shura. But his conceptualization of republic was a form of the despotism of intellectuals' shura (entellektüeller şurası) for the rule of the truth, putting the stress on order and on devotion to an idea. Both Islamists of the empire and Kısakürek were firmly attached to the idea that Sharia must form the basis of the state and society. As a manifestation of the ideological influence, coming from the totalitarian ideologies of the time, Başyücelik Devleti was heavily centralized, disciplined and totalistic to the extent that the social, cultural, artistic and moral life of society was determined by the state. State had to create and impose even perceptions of good and bad on society and individual. One might say that like Plato's republic, Kısakürek's conceptualization of ideal state and society offered a version of a closed and totalitarian system.

Generally, it might be concluded that Islamist conceptualization of state had two dimensions: a) state as a transcendental and abstract entity and 2) state as body politics, the level of rulership. In the first meaning, state was necessary and good while in the second sense, it had to be corrected by bringing good rulers to the power. The form of government for the Islamic state was open to the good aspects of the modern state, paying attention to its essence (the rule of sharia), not to its form.

Contrary to the literature on Pan-Islamism, in this dissertation, I have found that in the second constitutional period, İttihad-ı İslam were concerned much with the revival of Islamic civilization in its religious and cultural dimensions to advance Muslims rather than with the political unity of all Muslims around the world. Although Islamists advocated the idea of the umma, they also accepted the reality of different ethnic groupings or nationalities. The recognition of the emerging nation-state system in the Islamic world continued in the republican period in Kısakürek's construction of the Great East which envisioned the spiritual, social, economic and political unity of different Islamic nation-states against the West as the last stage of the unification of the Islamic world. The acceptance of different ethnicities/nations in the empire later turned into an advocacy of Turkish nationalism in Kısakürek's formulation in the form of a limited and permitted nationalism in the republican period. Islamist appropriation of the idea of fatherland in the empire transformed into a nationalist imagination around the territory of Anatolia in Kısakürek's ideas, despite of his Islamic union through idea of the Great East. Nevertheless, a negative view on nationalism due to its racist/secular nature did not lose its significance even in the republican period.

The emphasis on Turkish ethnicity, as the leading element of the Ottoman and Islamic nation during the second constitutional period gained strength in Kısakürek's writings as the supremacy of Turks and Turkey among Islamic nations by the belief that the revival of

Islamic world would start from Turkey. Expressing Islamist ideas under the cloak of Turkish nationalist/conservative discourse, Kısakürek often defended nationalism but colouring it with Islamic tones and values. In this combination, there was certainly a desire of desecularizing Kemalist principle of nationalism as well. On the other hand, perhaps, the most noteworthy ideological influence of Kemalism on Kısakürek might be seen in his acceptance of Turkish nationalism and nation-state though nationalism, to him, could be positive only if it was placed in the service of Islam or if it emanated from Islamic essences. In Kısakürek's conceptualization of political community, Turkishness, with its language and culture and the Sunni Islamic faith were among the dominant elements of membership in this respect. In sum, as long as the Ottoman imperial system survived, the Islamists found it difficult (problematic), to combine nationalism with Islamic principles. But with the establishment of the Republic, it became possible (easy) to designate the locus of sovereignty to the people (nation) in the way required for development of a nationalist polity (nation-state) along modern lines.

From “Islamizing” Democracy to the “Malaises” of Democracy

Islamists of the Second Constitutional period like the Young Ottomans, had the inclination of adopting modern democratic institutions and notions for the cause of adopting good aspects of Western civilization by translating European liberal constitutionalism into medieval/traditional jurisdic theory: shura and meşveret turned into national sovereignty or parliament (hakimiyet-i milliye ve meclis-i Mebusan), the shari'ah into the constitution (Kanun-i Esasi). In this way, Islamists also tried to transform the Islamic legal conceptions of hürriyet, müsavat and uhuvvet into political ideas as something similar to the democratic political concepts of freedom, equality and fraternity.

In Islamist definition, meşrutiyet denoted a contract, a social contract, between the nation and the government on the condition that the nation had the right of controlling the

government. Meşrutiyet, being defined in contradistinction to despotism was composed of justice, meşveret (shura) and limitation of power in law. Islamist discourse envisioned a very close and organic tie between meşrutiyet and sharia by regarding meşrutiyet as a form of government that would realize the goals of sharia such as unity, progress and religiosity. Islamists of the second constitutional period, differing from the Islamic medieval theorization on politics which underlined values such as justice and the application of sharia, laid a great emphasis on the necessity of institutionalization (a Schumpeterian notion) such as constitution and parliament. The acceptance of the compatibility between constitutional rule and meşveret by Islamists of the second constitutional period took a different form in Kısakürek's argumentation. He argued that everything good, including positive aspects of democracy and political ideologies were contained within Islam. Although he accepted democratic institutions such as constitution and parliament as given, Kısakürek presented a wide range of arguments against democracy. Democracy by giving a right of speaking and doing all forms of wrongs and to truth in the name of finding the truth was an imperfect regime since the truth was the one. By this nature, to Kısakürek, democracy was open to the exploitation and despotism of one falsity in the name of the truth. Kısakürek also criticized democracy, as a procedure, for preferring the 'ignorant' majority to 'wise' minority. To him, ruling was a matter of virtue and for that reason, the rule of the true intellectual aristocracy had to be established. These arguments remind us al-Farabi's statements on the fragile nature of democracy towards the dominance of wrongs over the good.

Unlike the Islamist thinking in the second constitutional period, Kısakürek did not try to justify the adoption of democracy and its institutions through their identification with shura and ijma. Instead, in line with the dominant aura of the time, the creation of an ideology gained priority over the issue of democracy. In line with the general trend in Islamic political thought, the issue of who rules rather than the form of government was important

to his political mind. Constitutional regime, republic and democracy were only the methods through which ideologies could be applied. By the claim that democracy was not an ideal, he perceived democracy as a mechanism/method in order to attain a particular goal/worldview, the ideal of the Great East, in his case. Democracy was seen in the same light as political ideologies of liberalism, communism and fascism and considered as a manifestation of Western decadence and corruption. Kısakürek's suspicion towards democracy was clear enough in his justification of the 1980 military intervention in politics as a movement of salvation. Kısakürek attributed the notion of irresponsibility not only to politicians but also to the very nature of democracy. Democracy was open to being paralyzed by some major groups and classes for their interests as contrary to Turkish unity but in the name of national will.

Freedom was understood by both the Islamists and Kısakürek, as a means for the realization of an ideal and for finding the truth. They, on the whole, suggested the idea that freedom had to be settled within the sphere of sharia otherwise an unlimited freedom which might take a form of despotism or slavery to selfishness. Freedom in their mind was closely connected to the idea of order (nizam). Islamist understanding of limited freedom, both while accepting the constitutional regime (Islamists of the Second Constitutional period) and while rejecting national sovereignty (Kısakürek) seemed to be coloured by an elitist understanding of democracy like the Schumpeterian one. Hence, any accepted form of democracy had to be structured in accordance with the ultimate values of Islam (sharia). National sovereignty was evaluated in positive terms by Islamists of the second constitutional period because they believed that the Islamic nation, not a caliph had a right of control and sovereignty over the early Islamic government for realizing the ideals of sharia; shura and justice. Kısakürek denied the idea of popular sovereignty on the grounds that sovereignty belonged to God, not to people.

In the eyes of Islamists, the shura represented an indigenous principle of representative or constitutional government in Islam or a check on the ruler's authority or power. The inclusion of non-Muslims into the circle of meşveret, was also closely related to the imagination of Ottoman citizenship by enlarging Islamic brotherhood to non-Muslims. But in the republican period, Kısakürek's yüceler kurultayı was exclusionary to the extent that communists, non-muslims and even immoral people could not be thought as a part of the nation or the parliament. The qualifications to be elected as a member of the parliament (the most wise, religious and learned) were defined by both Islamists of the second constitutional period and Kısakürek in a way that actually described the characteristics of the ulema in the jurisdic theory or the philosopher king in the theory of Muslim philosophers. Certainly, according to those Islamists who accepted the legislative power of the parliament, it had to make laws which were in accordance with sharia. Kısakürek seemed to accept implicitly the supremacy of sharia in legislation even though it was very difficult to name it openly at the time.

Islamist conception of parliament in general presumed that the political and social conflicts that occurred among Europeans would not take place in Islamic societies; if any conflict arose, it would be resolved by the application of sharia or virtue. This understanding does not seem to be open to the articulation of different political, economic and social interests/conflicts and to the recognition of differences as to religions, ethnicities in any Islamic(ized) society. Furthermore, it was not very easy to say that Islamists were not discomfited with the idea of opposition to power, simply because of the quest for unity and solidarity in the empire (to keep the unity of Ottoman state) and in the republic (to prevent the communist threat). The idea of political party and opposition was recognized by Islamists of the second constitutional period as something legitimate with reservations about its harmful results such as hatred and division, while Kısakürek regarded political party as an alien institution with an aim of imitation, imported from the West. In the

Turkish-Islamic setting the institution of party could only exist as the Party of Right (Hak Partisi), being devoted to the totality. For Kısakürek, the notions of democracy, party and opposition were mere instruments for the search of an ideology and its application by the state institutions. Democracy could not be understood in a way that an opposition might change the policies of a “true” political power.

Two Conflicting But Paralleling Worlds: Kemalism and Islamism

Perhaps, a rather interesting aspect of the present study has been its aim to understand the interplay between Kemalism and Islamist intellectuals. It is obvious that within the intellectual setting of the Republic which discussed the formation of a new regime, Kısakürek’s political thinking went beyond the agenda of the Islamists of the Meşrutiyet by his quest for the realization of the ideal state, community and individual. It would be beneficial to conclude with some major commonalities and differences between Kemalism and Kısakürek’s political ideas. To begin with the second aspect, unlike the influence of positivism on Kemalism, Islamist intellectuals and Kısakürek were inspired by the spiritualist and idealist traditions in the West. Indicative of this spiritualist influence, Kısakürek employed the spiritual-versus- material dichotomy in his opposition to the Kemalist reforms as well as and in his ideological formulation.

But on the other hand, like Kemalist ideology, Kısakürek had a solidaristic perception of society uniting without any privileges and classes as an aspect of the organic nature of the umma structure. Politics was seen not as a process of accommodating and aggregating diverse demands and interests of social groups but of moralistic discovering what was right for the entire society. As a consequence of this conceptualization of democracy and politics, the parliaments of Kemalist regime and Kısakürek’s yüceler kurultayı were composed of selected intellectuals, educating and enlightening the people without representing any societal interests. Parliament was a place of the enlightened and rational

legislation for a supreme end (the interests of the nation). Similar to the Republican positioning of intellectual as the educator of the people and the civilizer of the country by representing the basic goals and values of the regime, Kısakürek visualized intellectuals as thinkers/heroes whose basic duties were to provide a worldview to the masses. The vanguard role in the revolution, i.e. putting the ideology into action, was given to the intellectuals as well. As such intellectuals became the expected savers of Turkey and the Islamic world. Kısakürek desired to reconstruct Turkish society along the lines of his own idealism: the Great East. But this reconstruction, he argued, could be fulfilled only at the hands of a hero/intellectual who was inspired by high ideals and who did not have self-interests.

Given the supremacy of social engineering in his ideas, Kısakürek's conceptualization of state in general contained Kemalist features by seeing the state as the instrument that imposed the social change upon the society from top to bottom until the nation matured enough. In this way, Kısakürek did not understand the role of the state in a liberal way but rather in an interventionist way to create a new individual and society. State was held responsible from the way of life that its people followed and from directing its people to the truth.

Moreover, with Kemalism, Kısakürek shared the authoritarian bureaucratic-intellectual paradigm, which underlined the idea of the strong/transcendental state since the Ottoman times. Kısakürek's early life was very similar to that of Kemalist intelligentsia. The elitist feature in Kısakürek's political ideas constituted a parallel positioning to the elitist political culture of Turkish/Republican elite and intellectuals. His insistence on the necessity of having a totalistic social program to be implemented in the recreation of the society and individual was typical of the Republican elite. His expectation of a super man/hero who shaped his society was not only related to the Islamic tradition of renewal. It also reminds

us the republican exaltation of Atatürk as the savior of the Turkish nation. In this context, it should be also stated that the sultan Abdul Hamid, perhaps constituted an interesting personality who aroused different perceptions in the minds of Islamists in the empire and in the republic. Islamists of the second constitutional period without exception pictured Abdul Hamid as a selfish and unjust despot who was seeking to fulfill his desires and interests at the expense of the nation's interests, while Kısakürek came to see the sultan as an Islamist/nationalist sultan who modernized the empire successfully by bringing the seeds of material civilization into the country. But here the more interesting point is that the major stimulus behind Kısakürek's positive picture of Abdul Hamid was the desire of portraying an alternative modernizer/hero to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The need for an enemy/the other seems to give way to Kısakürek's portrayal of İsmet İnönü as an atheist, anti-Islamic, non-Turkish personality in response to the picture of Abdul Hamid as the red sultan in the republican period. In that way, İnönü and the RPP constituted the republican counterpart of the despotic sultan in Kısakürek's ideology.

Finally, Kısakürek, as Kemalists did, believed that political power was the main instrument to carry out a real revolution namely, an Islamic revolution, which would save both the Islamic world and the Turkish nation. The Kemalist engineering was based on reason and knowledge whereas Kısakürek's formulation put the emphasis on Islam and sharia. The significance of law/legal issues both in the Kemalist creation of a Turkish nation-state and Kısakürek's formulation of Islamic revolution might be connected to the nomocratic tradition of the Ottoman state. For both Kemalists and Kısakürek, the vehicles of the revolution were the state, the law and the education, the new society/nation was to be created through these vehicles. Kısakürek had a totalistic vision, through which a new political ideology (Islam) against the capitalist and communist ones was made available. In contrast to the Kemalist conceptualization of modernity as a civilizational conversion into the West, Kısakürek had the desire of rediscovering/reinventing the great days of the

Islamic/Ottoman past. Nevertheless, Kısakürek's Islamism produced a type of weak historicity by its strong rejection of Kemalism which had important effects on the formation of his political mind as well.

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- Beyanü'l Hak, 182 numbers (1324/1326-1328/1330).
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