

5- LIBERALS

5.1. Formation of the Ottoman Liberalism

5.1.1 Historical Conditions of Ottoman Liberalism

The ambiguity and broad nature of the term Liberalism makes it difficult to define. Liberalism, in the broadest sense is a system of ideas related to the emergence of capitalism. While nineteenth and twentieth century liberalism undervalued political, social and ethical dimensions, eighteenth century liberalism concentrated more on the construction of a new social and political system. Opposition to absolute governments in the political arena and the dominance of religion in the social realm are the two most striking characteristics of liberalism. Because of its optimistic outlook regarding human nature, liberalism is naturally positive about the future. Liberalism, in general, is in favor of the idea of national self-determination as a political philosophy. As a rule, though by no means universally, liberalism has been sensitive to the claims of minority and ethnic groups to self-determination, and the right of free association. Furthermore, liberalism largely sees the attempts to control thought as an act impeding the free activity of individuals. In order to prevent this, liberalism offers a particular state theory, which may be referred to as the contractual state. To make that state feasible, it sought to limit political intervention to the narrowest area compatible with the maintenance of public order. Central to this is the notion that if all pressures and constraints were removed, individuals would choose the best for themselves and society. This optimism implies the necessity of *Rechtstaat*. Therefore, liberalism has supposed social, economical and political development and change.⁵⁵⁷ This chapter aims to provide a framework for the meaning of liberalism in the context of Ottoman intellectual spheres.

⁵⁵⁷ Harold J. Laski, *The Rise of European Liberalism*, Roudledge, 1997, pp. 13-25

Marx stressed in the second preface of *Das Kapital* that political economy had remained a “foreign” science in Germany until 1873. According to him, political economy was for a long time a finished product from England and France for Germans. German economy professors were students of their French and English equivalents and only after the development of modern capitalism in Germany were Germans able to participate in political economy discourse.⁵⁵⁸ The history of economic thought and liberalism in the Ottoman Empire is far more complicated than in the German case. The absence of a developed capitalist economy and industry made the administration of the economy and industrialization in the country two prominent problems for politicians and intellectuals in the last century in the Ottoman Empire. Although the influence of Western philosophy on the economic discussions of Ottoman bureaucrats and intellectuals in the nineteenth century is clearly evident, internal political, social and economic conditions of individuals and society also determined intellectuals’ positions and discussions on these issues.

It is important to evaluate the institutional and the structural modernization experienced during the Tanzimat period to understand the emerging ideological movements at the time of the second constitution. There is some research that investigates the depth of penetration of liberal economic ideas into the Ottoman Empire and studying comparatively the relations between economic, social and cultural conditions and thoughts. The relationship between Ottoman intellectuals and European/Western thought is not one-dimensional, but multi-dimensional and complicated.⁵⁵⁹ The same can be said for the liberal intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire at the dawn of the twentieth century.

Because of the ambiguity of the term of Liberalism, it is difficult to analyze the emergence of liberal philosophy in the Ottoman Empire. Clarification of the meaning and the implications of Ottoman liberalism and liberal reform is one of the main tasks of this project. Nonetheless, through a reading of the historical, economic

⁵⁵⁸ Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, Voltmedia, undated, Paderborn, p. 20

⁵⁵⁹ For a detailed reading on this Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, İstanbul, 1983

and cultural circumstances throughout the relevant period it is possible to provide a general framework for the features of Ottoman Liberalism.

When investigating the origins of an inclination towards liberalism, which appeared in the time of Selim III, the signs of a Western influence or guiding hand cannot be seen. During that time, liberal tendencies can be seen as preventive measures stemming from a necessity that aimed to cope with the political and economic crisis, and the ensuing instabilities. Moreover, it must be emphasized that there was a strong desire for private ownership -and its associated rights and privileges- among Ottoman subjects. Besides, no one was defining liberal reforms as non-Islamic or anti-traditional.⁵⁶⁰ On the contrary, commerce was encouraged by the State in reference to Islamic morality. Consequently, it can be noted that although Selim's reforms were inclined towards liberalism, they did not present a coherent, systematic approach. Reformist public officials were not fully aware of the historical roots and sources of these developments and their genealogy. Because of this deficiency, Selim's reforms did not bring about the economical and social change desired.⁵⁶¹

Throughout Ottoman history, resource production and distribution was shaped by domestic as well as international factors. During the Tanzimat era, in domestic affairs, the state started massive centralization programs, which were actually designed to strengthen and consolidate the control of the government over every element of the Empire. This meant more invasive state intervention in everyday affairs as, paradoxically, laissez-faire emerged to challenge interfering politics. Therefore, financial resources could be appropriated from the mixture of increased revenues from both the economy and debts. The centralization policies challenged the autonomy of influential economic groups, including guilds, notables and tribes, who had gained considerable freedom of action during the preceding century. The production-distribution question had been given a particular twist by the intrusion of the European economy into the Ottoman world. The capitalist and industrial

⁵⁶⁰ S. F. Ülgener, *İslam Hukuk ve Ahlak Kaynaklarında İktisat Siyaseti*, Ebul'ula Mardin'e Armağan, İstanbul, 1944, pp. 1151-89

⁵⁶¹ S. J. Shaw, *History of Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 265-66

revolutions of Western Europe were well underway. Major changes were taking place in European industry, including not only mechanization and large-scale factory building but also a radical acceleration of the work pace due to division of labor. There was a significant intensification of work and greater exploitation of labor that drove down costs and placed very cheap goods on the international market. European mechanization, for its part, came to require ever-greater inputs of capital. During the early nineteenth century, capital needs in European factories equaled several days' wages per worker; by the end of the period, the investments required had soared to hundreds of days' wages per worker. Thus, Ottoman manufacturing during the Tanzimat era confronted a highly efficient, mechanizing rival against whom competition was expensive and difficult.⁵⁶²

There were other competing claims for the wealth generated through agriculture and industry. In agriculture, poor peasants struggled against the rich, while both struggled against tribes and property owners who in turn competed against the state. In manufacturing, guilds fought with one another and with free labor for control of the workplace. Ottoman merchants and entrepreneurs also had economic interests that were significantly different and in sharp conflict with the agrarian and artisan producers. The merchant and cultivator might demand free trade while artisans sought protective tariffs. Among all these conflicting groups, and with its own interests in mind, the state sought to compromise. In addition to these competing groups there were new demands emerging through foreign affairs. As the state sought to re-order its international relations, for example, entering the Concert of Europe, the state often needed to restructure its relationships with the diverse interest groups within the economy. As stated before, *Hayriye Tüccarı* had been created by the state. However, after that, Mahmud II and his successors exposed those merchants to the rigors of free trade through the Convention of 1838 and the reform decrees of 1839 and 1856.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶² Donald Quataert, *Main Problems of Economy During the Tanzimat*, (ed) Hakkı Dursun, p. 212

⁵⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 214

The Treaty of 1838 was a registration of Tanzimat that brought about a structural change and the beginning of the absorption of economic liberalism. It also increased the influence of England in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁶⁴ In fact, before 1838, there were some inclinations towards liberalism. With the spread of private ownership, the *Timar* system was destroyed and the land transformed into the great farms.⁵⁶⁵ Mustafa Reşid Pasha (1800-1858) had already determined the fundamental principle of the eradication of confiscation, before the Treaty of 1838.⁵⁶⁶ However, with the advent of Treaty of 1838 the traditional economic policy of the Ottoman Empire changed dramatically. The Liberal economic policy that destroyed traditional Ottoman industry a few decades later, started to be the official politics of the Empire after the treaty of 1838. However, the crucial damage to commerce brought about by this treaty resulted in many discussions and criticisms of the economy among Ottoman public officials and intellectuals.⁵⁶⁷

After the proclaiming of the Tanzimat, the Ottomans tried to “create” individuals who would participate in economic life as entrepreneurs. In order to achieve these ideas, some legal arrangements were implemented. For example, in 1858, the permission to use state land for private ownership was given. Ottoman public officials who were influenced by Western liberal ideas aimed to achieve more productive use of state lands through these legal arrangements.⁵⁶⁸ Nevertheless, it must be stressed that these inclinations towards liberalism among Ottoman citizens were an important factor that facilitated liberal reforms. For example, when the Ottoman government tried to improve the conditions in the agricultural sector through the new reforms, the main problem was the abundance of uncultivated lands. The centralization and protectionist reforms such as property protection and the abolition of all restrictions on the sale of agricultural products were used to solve the

⁵⁶⁴ Mehmet Beşirli, *Die Europäische Finanzkontrolle im Osmanischen Reich in der Zeit von 1908 bis 1913*, Berlin, 1999, p. 18

⁵⁶⁵ Halil İnalçık, *Tanzimat’ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri*, Belleten, Volume, XXVII, 1963, pp. 624-90

⁵⁶⁶ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 205

⁵⁶⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 204-206

⁵⁶⁸ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi*, İstanbul, 1980, pp. 337-50

difficulties that emerged because of peasants' reluctance to cultivate fertile lands.⁵⁶⁹ However, the failure of the liberal arrangements, after three decades of Tanzimat, paved the way for another economic policy; namely, mercantilism.⁵⁷⁰

5.1.2. The Penetration of European Liberalism into the Ottoman Empire

During the early years of the 1960's, there appeared an academic interest that aimed to investigate the diffusion of economic ideas in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁷¹ After increasing interest in this problem, some academic investigations concentrating on the modernization of the Ottoman economic system emerged. For example, J.J. Spengler's article was referred to as a text that provides the theoretical basis for investigating the changes that occurred in the Ottoman economic mind.⁵⁷² According to this model, the diffusion of economic ideas was made possible through the existence of mediators, means of diffusion, contents of the ideas, and the political, social and economic situation of the receiver country.⁵⁷³

In fact, this formula had been applied to many academic problems in Turkey since 1950, before the formulation of the theory. When nationalism, Westernism or any ideology was investigated, theories similar to the approach mentioned above have been used in Turkish academic circles. For example, Şerif Mardin followed the same theoretical framework in his article in which he investigated the development of economic ideas in Turkey.⁵⁷⁴ Ahmet Güner Sayar, in his important book, arranges

⁵⁶⁹ Bülent Özdemir, *Ottoman Reforms and Social Life*, p. 35

⁵⁷⁰ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 237

⁵⁷¹ J.J. Spengler *Notes on the International Transmission of Economic Ideas*, *History of Economic Ideas*, Volume, 2, 1968. Another well-known article on this matter, Goodwin-Hollis, *Towards a Theory of the Intellectual Transfer of Ideas*, *Southern Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 67, 1968

⁵⁷² Ahmed Güner Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*. For another research, Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye'de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi*, (1838-1914), Ankara, 1962

⁵⁷³ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 35

⁵⁷⁴ Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye'de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi*, (1838-1914), Ankara, 1962. For a similar paper Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiyede Ekonomik Düşünün Evrimi*, *Türkiyede Üniversitelerde*

the methods that had an influence on the transformation of the economic policy of the Ottomans before the Tanzimat:

A- Ottoman Merchants in Europe. B- Ambassador Letters (*Sefaretnameler*). C- Reform Proposals (*Islahat Layihaları*) and Foreign Officials⁵⁷⁵ It is important to examine the influence of these means on the transformation of Ottoman economic policy in order to understand liberalism in the late Ottoman Empire.

5.1.3 Ottoman Merchants, Ambassador Letters and Foreign Officials

Before examining these methods, it should be noted that in the history of the Ottoman Empire there were only a few students sent to Europe by the government to study economics. Moreover, between 1840 and 1880 there were no Turkish students who studied economics at Western universities.⁵⁷⁶ This empirical fact implies that the diffusion of European economic philosophy was actually not achieved by the direct influence of European-educated students. Other important methods that facilitated the diffusion of ideas were the press, books, translations etc. However, there were very few books published between 1729 and 1875 on economics in the Ottoman Empire. Between 1852 and 1899, only ten books were published on economics.⁵⁷⁷ Moreover, many newspapers were subject to censorship by the government. In short, the diffusion of economic ideas was beset by many difficulties. The rest of the paper is going to discuss this arduous process.

As pointed out previously, Selim III and Mahmud II sought to protect their merchants by creating *Avrupa* and *Hayriye tüccarları*. *Hayriye Tüccarları* (Muslim

Okutulan İktisat Üzerine, Ed, Fikret Görün, Ankara: ODTÜ Yayını, 1972,s. 39-55. Besides, Z. F. Fındıkoğlu, Türkiye’de İktisat Tedrisatı ve İktisat Fakültesi Teşkilatı, 1946

⁵⁷⁵ ibid., pp. 171-172

⁵⁷⁶ Ahmet Güner Sayar, Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması, p. 38

⁵⁷⁷ J. Baysal, Mütefferrika’dan I. Meşrutiyete Kadar Osmanlı Türklerinin Bastıkları Kitaplar, İstanbul 1968, quoted from, Ahmet Güner Sayar, Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması, p. 44

merchants) acquired some privileges allowing free trade.⁵⁷⁸ Selim III previously lifted the fixed price on essential commodities, which was enacted by the State. Although the Ottoman state encouraged merchants to trade in Europe and merchants informed the Ottoman governments about the political and social conditions of European countries, there are very few documents displaying the influence of Ottoman merchants on the transformation of the Ottoman economic thought process.⁵⁷⁹ However, there is some evidence that exemplifies and displays the influence of Ambassador Letters on the transformation of Ottoman economic principles. Ratip Efendi, sent by Selim III to Austria in 1791 to investigate and report on the institutions of this country, reported back about the Austrian taxation system, finance, treasury, mines, agriculture, bank bills, lottery, post and roads. He recommended that the flow of national wealth out of the country should be hindered through using clothes, which were produced in the country.⁵⁸⁰ On the other hand, he wrote that a budget surplus was necessary to provide economic comfort. Moreover, there are a few *Sefaretname* from different ambassadors, such as Seyyid Ali Efendi and Azmi Efendi, but their content is not as instructive to the same extent as Ratip Efendi's. In general, it can be said that ambassador letters were not written in the analytical way that investigates political, social, cultural, and economic backgrounds of developments that took place in Europe. Rather, they seem to be written by people who were strangers in Europe, rather bewildered by the new realities. In conclusion, despite the fact that they contain several ideas divergent from traditional Ottoman economic logic, the letters contain only superficial knowledge about the new European situation and they cannot represent a significant "transmitter".⁵⁸¹

These developments created suitable conditions for the discussion of economic matters. The spreading of Western economic thought intensively into the Ottoman Empire can be dated back to the newspapers *Le Spectateur Oriental*, published by a Frenchmen Charles Trikon in İzmir in 1824, before Mahmut II had the official

⁵⁷⁸ Donald Quataert, *Main Problems of the Economy during the Tanzimat*, 150. *Yılında Tanzimat*, Ankara, 1992, (ed by Hakkı Dursun), p. 214

⁵⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p. 172

⁵⁸⁰ F. R. Unat, *Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefaretnameleri*, Ankara, 1968, pp. 155-160

⁵⁸¹ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 175

newspaper *Takvim-i Vakayi* published. However, there are no signs that display the scope and power of the *Le Spectateur Oriental*'s influence on the Ottoman subject until another Frenchman, Alexander Blacque, a representative of French merchants in the Ottoman Empire, took on the responsibility of publishing the newspaper.⁵⁸² When Mahmut established II *Takvim-i Vakayi*, he appointed "Blacque Bey" as editor of French the version. The basic difference between the Turkish and French version was that the French version included several explicit claims that support liberalism. As Blacque Bey was believed to be defending Ottoman interests against Europe, he was considered a reliable and trustworthy person by Ottoman public officials. Hence, his thought had a direct influence on the Ottomans. After his death, an Englishman called David Urquhart gained more prominence in the defending and propagandizing of liberalism among the Ottomans.⁵⁸³ Virtually all studies on the development of economic ideas in the Ottoman Empire mention the role of Urquhart, an English official at the Embassy in Istanbul between 1830 and 1840. It is said he was a prominent figure who introduced and promoted liberal economic ideas in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸⁴

When this newspaper, under the responsibility of David Urquhart, informed readers about Western economics and its institutions, a door opened through which European economic thought penetrated the Ottoman Empire. David Urquhart, in his book "Turkey and Its Resources", published in 1833, argued that "liberalism, appropriate for natural laws and reason, was the best economic policy from which both Turkey and England will benefit." Based on this argument he tried to convince Ottoman and English public officials to apply a liberal economic policy. Urquhart stressed that the Ottoman Empire would be a good market for English industrial products. On the other hand, he considered the Ottoman Empire as a country that could supply England with its agricultural products.⁵⁸⁵ Urquhart had played an important role in signing the treaty of 1838, between the Ottoman Empire and Britain. This treaty

⁵⁸² *ibid.*, p. 189

⁵⁸³ *ibid.*, pp. 189-190

⁵⁸⁴ See; Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye'de İktisadi Düşüncenin Çağdaşlaşması*, A. Güner Sayar, Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması.

⁵⁸⁵ Ahmet Güner Sayar, *ibid.*, p. 192

encouraged European commercial activity in Ottoman lands and led to the suppression of monopolies in trade and the introduction of a more liberal commercial policy under the government's supervision. The question of whether Turkey should become industrialized or remain an agricultural country would be a subject of intense dispute among Ottoman intellectuals in the subsequent periods.

5.1.4 The Contribution of the Ottoman Statesmen and Writers

III Selim (1789-1807) demanded proposals from public officials in order to increase the power of the state, and this effort brought about the emergence of the so-called reform proposals. It is interesting to raise the question, what was the scope and influence of the reform proposals on economic policy at the beginning of Westernization? It can be argued that these proposals prompted some new approaches to the economy, which were quite different from the traditional outlook.⁵⁸⁶ Among the reform proposals, one of them was submitted to III Selim in 1792 by Tatarcık Abdullah Ağa, and represented high quality. Abdullah Ağa carefully researched economic matters, such as the treasury, foreign commerce, tax policy and the importance of the karats of money (*sikke*). The most conspicuous message of his proposal was that if economic problems cannot be solved, it would be impossible to carry out military innovations. Moreover, it includes a particular argument, which could not be seen from the traditional perspective; namely, the idea that economic laws are beyond political power.⁵⁸⁷ However, the economy-related proposals of Abdullah Ağa did not get the attention of the Sultan because the first aim of the state was to strengthen the military. In conclusion, there was virtually no proposal that analytically follows Western economic frameworks.⁵⁸⁸

The recommendations put forth by public officials as early as Selim III's reign (1789-1807) included not only administrative and military reforms but also crucial

⁵⁸⁶ However, Sayar argues that this new approaches did not stem from Western influence nor they contain analytical knowledge about economic problems of the country and situation in Europe. Sayar (2000), p. 176

⁵⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 178

⁵⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 180

economic and financial measures, which were designed to increase production. It was the sum of all these developments that induced the government to issue the Edict of Tanzimat in 1839, in which the Sultan promises to respect his subjects' property, including land, which carried the most importance.⁵⁸⁹ However, there were many Ottoman public officials who resisted confiscation and wanted to protect their property. One of the striking features of this era are the edicts of Selim III, which contain economic ideas and set forth a systematic framework and discourse. The edicts of Selim III implicitly reflect a liberal vision. However, this inclination of the edicts towards liberalism on a large scale stemmed from an internal factor, which consisted of some requests of Ottoman public officials. These innovations were providing Ottoman subjects with economic prosperity.⁵⁹⁰

According to Sayar, the ideas of public officials and authors were influenced by Western ideas, traditional experience and the Ottoman approach to economics. The first group was composed of writings, proposals, and memorandums of the Ottoman Pashas, most of them written after 1850, such as Mustafa Reşid Pasha, Sadık Rıfat Pasha (1807-1857), Ali and Fuat Pashas. Moreover, the "histories" of Ahmed Cevdet Pasha (1822-1895) and Ali Lütfi and literary writings of Namık Kemal and Ahmed Mithat Efendi (1844-1912), most of them written between 1860 and 1875, can be included in this group.

There is a particular discussion on how to identify the economic approaches of Tanzimat Pashas, Sadık Rıfat Pasha and Mustafa Reşid Pasha. Whereas Şerif Mardin asserted⁵⁹¹ that Sadık Rıfat Pasha was a liberal influenced by classical economics, Niyazi Berkes stressed that he was an adherent of the tariff policy, and "protective economy".⁵⁹² These contradictory arguments stem from the pragmatic approaches of the Tanzimat Pashas. Their ideas were a synthesis composed of

⁵⁸⁹ Kemal Karpat, Some Historical and Methodological Considerations Concerning Social Stratification in the Middle East, in, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, selected articles and essays by Kemal Karpat, Leiden, 2002, p. 306

⁵⁹⁰ Selim III remarked in one his edict: "Confiscation is not my issue" quoted; Sayar (2000), p. 182

⁵⁹¹ Şerif Mardin, *Tanzimatın Manası*, V, Forum, volume 17, issue, 91, 1957

⁵⁹² Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, Ankara, 1973, p.177

Western influence and traditional Ottoman culture and the logic of economics.⁵⁹³ The second group consisted of some authors and translators whose ideas were influenced by the Western economic approach directly. Serendi Arşizen, Şehak Abru, Mehmed Şerif Efendi, Portakal Mikael Efendi (1842-1897) composed this second group that shaped Ottoman liberalism.⁵⁹⁴

An Ottoman Armenian, Şehak Abru, translated the first economics book into Turkish in 1852, the book of J. B. Say, *Catéchisme d'Economie Politique* as *İlm-i Tedbir-i Menzil*.⁵⁹⁵ This translation has particular importance because Western economic thought began to penetrate into the Ottoman Empire directly at the hands of Ottoman public officials and intellectuals. The translations of scientific books provided more knowledge of economics and hence became more influential than the recommendations and suggestions of foreign ambassadors. N. Berkes labels this change as the “scientification of Urquhart liberalism”.⁵⁹⁶

After the Tanzimat reforms the economic conditions of the Empire were still not in good shape. The industrial sector remained weak and private entrepreneurship did not emerge. Although some bureaucrats managed to accumulate wealth, they did not use it in a productive way. Non-Muslim Ottomans were dominant in economic life while most of the Ottomans were occupied in the agricultural sector, which was inadequate for a good standard of living. The Ottoman bourgeoisie consisted of bureaucrats who did not have an entrepreneurial spirit.⁵⁹⁷ Armenian and Greek dominance in the economic life of the Empire provided them with an inherent superiority in the teaching of economics, finance and politics in schools. It is not surprising that Armenian professors were the defenders of liberalism.⁵⁹⁸

The professionalization of the education of economics and the increase in the numbers of the published economics textbooks can clearly be seen after the

⁵⁹³ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 222

⁵⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 260

⁵⁹⁵ Mehmed Cavid Bey, *İlm-i İktisat*, İstanbul, 1908

⁵⁹⁶ N. Berkes, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi II*, İstanbul, 1975, p. 332

⁵⁹⁷ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 282

⁵⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 285

Tanzimat, when the number of educational institutions was increased and economics became one of the disciplines taught at the faculties. Especially with the establishing *Mekteb-i Mülkiye*, which was created to educate bureaucrats, the teaching of economics became institutionalized. Although it was not the main object to educate an economist at that school, it paved the way for writing economics textbooks. For example, the books of Mehmed Şerif Efendi, Ohannes and Münif Pashas were written principally to teach economics at the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye*.⁵⁹⁹ It should also be stressed that Mehmed Cavid became professor of economics at this school a few decades later, and he wrote his book, *ilm-i iktisat* as a textbook.

Şeref Efendi is an important figure on the grounds that he started a discussion that shaped future discussions for half a century. According to him, in order to develop the Ottoman economy, industrialization was the most acute necessity, and could affect progress in agriculture as well.⁶⁰⁰ Another important figure was Münif Pasha (1828-1894), a typical Ottoman public official, an eclectic, who published many articles on different subjects and issues of modern science. After learning French in *Tercüme Odası*, he spent three years in Germany where he attended lectures at the University of Berlin. Münif Pasha defended liberalism, open market economy, and private ownership.⁶⁰¹

Between 1839 and 1877 there were very few published books and translations about economics, and an economic tradition did not emerge in the Ottoman Empire. However, the opposition movement against the Tanzimat Pashas, especially Ali and Fuat Pashas, paved the way for a criticism of the economic policy carried out by Tanzimat public officials. Namık Kemal (1840-1883), one of the most important figures of the opposition movement called the Young Ottomans, was interested in economic, social, and political matters. Nevertheless, he could not build a theoretical framework on the economic matters, but used the same methods as his predecessors,

⁵⁹⁹ Aykut Kansu, 20. Yüzyıl Başı Türk Düşünce Hayatında Liberalizm, in; Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyetin Birikimi, İstanbul, 2001, pp. 280-281

⁶⁰⁰ Mehmet Şerif Efendi, Tercüman-ı Ahval, 1863, No; 74-75, Quoted from Sayar, ibid, p. 309

⁶⁰¹ A. Akın, Münif Paşa ve Türk Kültür Tarihindeki Yeri, Ankara, 1999, pp. 80-83

stemming from analyzing concrete problems.⁶⁰² Although he was a liberal politically, he insistently opposed the Treaty of 1838 on the grounds that the Treaty had destroyed Ottoman traditional industry.⁶⁰³ According to him, economic liberalism can be advantageous after solving the economic problems of the state via the existing apparatus.⁶⁰⁴ His criticism of the Tanzimat reforms was not constructed around a discussion on the necessity or otherwise of the reforms, but the insufficient application of innovations such as individual freedom.⁶⁰⁵ Although Kemal studied economics in London in the 1860s, his economic ideas did not reflect a theoretical approach, but originated from experience so that his thoughts were not consistent, theoretically speaking. Consequently, his position is defined in different and conflicting ways, since some defined his position as liberal while some others as a supporter of economic protection⁶⁰⁶

Ohannes Pasha, an Armenian Ottoman, played an important role in the history of economic philosophy in Turkey, both as a thinker and as a bureaucrat. After studying economics in Paris, he returned to Istanbul in 1852. He served as a civil servant in various positions and as an academic for twenty years at the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye*. He published *Mebad-i İlm-i Servet-i Milel*, a book on economics that was later used as a textbook at the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* (1297, A.H). His arguments about whether the Ottoman Empire should industrialize or improve agriculture are especially important since they provide a particular outline for the differentiation of positions between being a liberal or an etatist. Looking through this framework, he can be labeled as an ardent supporter of liberalism. He was vehemently opposed to etatism and tariff policy and a supporter of liberal economic policies.⁶⁰⁷ Subsequently, he was criticized and accused on the assumption that he aimed to protect his *Gemeinschaft*,

⁶⁰² Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 338

⁶⁰³ Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis*, pp. 166-167

⁶⁰⁴ M. N. Özön, *Namık Kemal ve İbret Gazetesi*, Istanbul, 1938, pp. 40-42

⁶⁰⁵ T. Z. Tunaya, *Türkiye'nin Siyasi Hayatında Batılılaşma Hareketleri*, Istanbul, 1960. pp. 60-66

⁶⁰⁶ See; Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, Istanbul, 1975, Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thoughts*, Princeton University Press, 1962, A. G. Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisat Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, Istanbul, 2002, B. S Boran, *Namık Kemal Hakkında*, Istanbul 1942

⁶⁰⁷ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 370

namely the Ottoman Armenian community of the Empire.⁶⁰⁸ However, his ideas nourished the next generation of liberals.

From the Tanzimat until the first constitution (1876) very few newspapers and periodicals were published about economic matters, and in those publications the relationship between economics and society was not sufficiently emphasized with the exception of the debates on agriculture and industry. Even the concept of “Laissez-faire” was not studied or subjected to rigorous analysis. In short, although some economic demands such as the right of private ownership, and inheritance rights were an important part of the discourse of the Ottoman bureaucracy, the discussions about economy policy made between 1840-1870 did not stem from social necessities based on real factual problems but were basically consequences of the adaptation of Western economic thoughts.⁶⁰⁹ Liberalism, at the time of the first constitutional period, was still *a la mode* in the Ottoman Empire.⁶¹⁰ This determining factor would become more convincing as the state policy of the Ottoman Empire since 1839 was to use liberalism as the main tool for modernization.

5.2. Against Liberalism

The Young Turk Revolution of July 1908 was a political movement whose task was to save the Empire from terminal decline, and liberate it from the control of European powers in economic and political spheres. During the first six years of CUP government's, until the outbreak of the First World War, the struggle remained essentially political.⁶¹¹ In fact, the economic policy of the CUP began to change before the First World War. However, until the Balkan Wars of 1911-1912 there existed a liberal political and social condition in the Ottoman State.⁶¹² Nevertheless, it should be added that the members of the first government, founded after the revolution of 1908, was composed of the members of old regimes, known as

⁶⁰⁸ Yusuf Akçura, *Osmanlı Devletinin Dağılma Devri Tarihi*, İstanbul, 1940. p. 58

⁶⁰⁹ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 288

⁶¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 372

⁶¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 330-331

⁶¹² Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi*, İstanbul, 1995, p. 3

liberals.⁶¹³ The members of the CUP and Young Turks did not concentrate on economic problems until 1908, which brought about continuity of liberal economic policy in that era.⁶¹⁴ The failure of Ottoman economic policy between 1850 and 1914 and political events, which resulted in demoralizing Ottoman military defeats, prompted a search for an alternative economic policy. The origins of Turkish nationalism and anti-liberalism in the Ottoman Empire lie in this particular context.

As mentioned previously, the characteristics of Ottoman liberalism can be better delineated through analyzing its antithesis, namely protectionism, etatism and the doubts raised about foreign capital, in the Ottoman context. On the other hand, the development of the antithesis of liberalism could explain the cause of the weakness of Ottoman liberalism. Although etatism and economic protectionism became a more powerful movement after 1914, its background was shaped during the three decades before the First World War.⁶¹⁵ Also, etatist thoughts, which were chosen as state policy by CUP after 1913 and promoted by many intellectuals, have a crucial importance in understanding of the *Zeitgeist* and the conditions in which liberal thoughts developed.

When the first constitution was proclaimed in 1876, the economic situation of the Empire was in ruins. Although Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) behaved as a liberal sultan during the initial period of his sultanate, especially after the war with Russia in 1877-78, which resulted in heavy defeats for the Ottomans, he began to consider political and economic liberalism as a threat to both his sultanate and the Ottoman economy. On the other hand, in 1873 the collapse of the Viennese stock market precipitated a period of world depression that lasted until 1896. The 1873-1896 depression affected countries from Argentina to the Dutch East. In Europe, the price of wheat declined by 30 percent. In the Middle East, the collapse of international

⁶¹³ Mehmet Beşirli, *Die Europäische Finanzkontrolle im Osmanischen Reich in der Zeit von 1908 bis 1914*, Berlin, 1999, p. 74

⁶¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 86

⁶¹⁵ Although Young Turks and CUP's leaders wanted to improve the relations between Ottoman Empire and England, it failed because of England's traditional imperialistic policy in the Middle East. Beşirli (1999), p. 258. One of the cause of etatism and decline of liberalism after 1913 in the Ottoman Empire was the English policy in the Middle East.

trade and commodity prices increased discontent among merchants and farmers. It also resulted in Ottoman and Egyptian bankruptcy and foreign supervision of the finances of both. At the same time, because of the collapse of the international economy, both the Ottoman Empire and Persia experienced increasing political pressures that directly threatened their sovereignty and stimulated an anti-imperialist response. Many historians trace the increase in anti-imperialist rivalries directly to the Depression of 1873. After the onset of the depression, protectionist sentiments challenged free market liberalism, and Europeans and North Americans sought to establish overseas empires from which they could exclude foreign competition. Middle Eastern empires felt the sting of the new imperialism in forms that ranged from debt commissions to increased competition for concessions.⁶¹⁶ This depression caused an economic recession in the Ottoman economy. However, the most terrible consequence of this recession was the inability of the Ottoman Empire to collect foreign debts, which had been crucial for the Ottoman economy since 1850s. Because of the bankruptcy, the Institution of *Duyun-u Umumiye* was founded, controlled by European bankers and financiers, in order to collect Ottoman debts.⁶¹⁷

As a result, Abdulhamid II took liberals Portakal Mikael Pasha and Ohannes Pasha away from the teaching of economics at the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* and appointed them as officials to the treasury. In this way, he tried to hinder the diffusion of liberalism among the students. Then, etatism began to become a dominant issue. The greatest supporter of this policy was an encyclopedist and man of letters Ahmed Mithad Efendi.⁶¹⁸

As mentioned previously, there were some attempts to build an Ottoman industry in the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, a leather industry was founded in 1812 in Istanbul and many others at different times. However, most of them went bankrupt because of competition from Western products, despite the convenient

⁶¹⁶ James L Gelvin, *Modern Middle East, A History*, Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 142-143

⁶¹⁷ Şevket Pamuk, *Kapitalist Dünya Ekonomisi ve Osmanlı Dış Ticaretinde Uzun Dönemli Dalgalanmalar, 1830-1913, Türkiye İktisat Tarihi Üzerine Araştırmalar II*, ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi, 1979-1980 Özel Sayısı, p. 178

⁶¹⁸ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 375

conditions for industrialization.⁶¹⁹ Ahmet Midhat's reference to the Ottoman industrial experience, in his evaluation of economic doctrines is quite important. According to him, Ottoman industrial enterprise had collapsed because of a liberal trade and tariff policy. For him, the construction of an industry and powerful economy and strong tariff policy are indispensable.⁶²⁰ Those remarks clearly show the influence of the German economic school of the 1830s.⁶²¹ In this way, the sides and subject of the main discussion on economic policy became much clearer during the 1880s.

One of the arguments of anti-liberals was that non-muslims were a part of foreign interests. However, Kasaba suggests that considering the non-Muslim merchants as only a part of foreign interests and capital in the Ottoman Empire is a weak argument. According to him, by the 1850s, the intermediaries, most of them non-Muslim merchants, were rooted in the local network so firmly that when world market conditions improved for Ottoman products, they were able to exploit these favorable conditions for their own benefit and to the exclusion of foreign and domestic competitors. In subsequent years, foreigners and the local intermediaries often found themselves in competition more than in cooperation with each other. By looking at the type of inter-relatedness that was sustained between Western Anatolia and the core areas of the capitalist world economy, and at the effect of the growth in production and trade on the region, the development of the Ottoman Empire during the middle decades of the nineteenth century was peripheral in character, and that non-Muslim intermediaries were the main brokers and beneficiaries of the peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire.⁶²² But as we will see in the case of Cavid Bey, Ottoman non-Muslims in Salonica profited from the liberal economic policy and were against the national economic policy.

⁶¹⁹ Sadun Aren, *L'industrialisation dans L'Empire Ottoman*, in; *Economie et Sociétés dans L'Empire Ottoman*, (ed), Jean-Louis Bacqué and Paul Dumont, 1983, Paris, pp. 451-455

⁶²⁰ A. Mithat, *Ekonomi Politik*, Istanbul, 1881. (1296. A.H.), pp. 130-132

⁶²¹ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, pp. 380-383

⁶²² Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy-The Nineteenth Century*, State University of New York, 1988, p. 114

It should be also considered that Until the Balkan wars, the state ideology of the Ottoman Empire was Ottomanism. Although there were some ideologies such as nationalist movements, Islamism and so on, most of the members of the governments and intellectuals promoted Ottomanism, which aimed to unite all Ottomans, Muslims and non-Muslims. However, liberal policies increased the economic gap between Muslims and non-Muslim merchants in favor of non-Muslims. Feroz Ahmed describes the non-Muslim bourgeoisie as comprador. Most of the non-Muslim merchants profited from capitulations and retained foreign citizenship in order to acquire the privileges of the capitulations and the protection of their embassies and consulates.⁶²³ Neither the Greeks nor the Armenians considered the Ottoman State the representative of their interests. This becomes very clear from their relationship with the constitutional regime after 1908. They waged a determined struggle against it in defence of the traditional privileges granted to the millets, which they considered as sacrosanct as the capitulations. They were therefore openly against the national and centralized state and the members of CUP who were trying to it set up. Seen from their perspective, it is easy to understand why. Most Ottoman Greeks, with their deep emotional and cultural ties to Athens, had found it difficult to identify with Istanbul. The Armenian case was more ambivalent; a small group prospered under Ottoman rule, yet in the age of nationalism it also yearned for national autonomy if not total independence.⁶²⁴ All these developments obstructed the dissemination of liberalism among the Ottoman intellectuals.

5.3. The Discourse of Anti-Liberals

Anti-liberal and protectionist positions emerged at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire. The work of German economist Friedrich List (1789-1846) influenced the standing of protectionism as an economic theory. List had become convinced that Europe under

⁶²³ Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of a Nascent Bourgeoisie: The Social and Economic Policy of the Young Turks 1908-1918*, *Türkiyenin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi 1071-1920* (ed), Osman Okyar and Halil İnalçık, Ankara: Meteksan Limited Şirketi, 1980. p. 332

⁶²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 331

Napoleon had benefited from internal freedom of trade, with external protection against England's more highly developed industry. This, he thought, had provided a much-needed stimulus to German manufacture. He therefore advocated the abolition of the import duties of separate states and the establishment of a customs union within Germany, protected by a moderate tariff for the nation as a whole. List's ideas of a German customs union was put into effect in 1833 under the leadership of Prussia and became a basis for the later unification of Germany under the Hohenzollern Empire. According to him, the classical prescription was merely to let private enterprise spread; it would automatically do so as every nation concentrated on what it was best fitted to produce and sell. He added then that this doctrine was very good for England, since England was the first nation to industrialize. He suggested that a nation in its early stages of industrialization needed to protect the industries required for a harmonious productive complex.⁶²⁵ Ahmed Midhat Efendi examined the thoughts of List firstly in 1880s in the Ottoman Empire.⁶²⁶ Ahmet Mithad Efendi was satisfied sprinkling his economic ideas over his romans so he wrote a book on the economy with the title of *Ekonomi Politik* in the early years of the 1880s.⁶²⁷ His book is quite important since it influenced the anti-liberal ideas that appeared after the proclamation of the Second Constitution. He criticized the economics taught at the Ottoman schools because it was limited to Smithian liberalism as a *science economie*. Furthermore, he did not consider *économie politique* as a science similar to natural sciences, so he then criticized the intellectuals who considered liberalism to be constructed from universal laws. Therefore, he demanded a curriculum for economics, which was written in accordance with the realities of the Ottoman situation. According to him, the best economic policy for the Ottoman Empire was to protect the economy and to restrict imports. On the other hand, he emphasized the necessity of native merchants and the bourgeoisie on the grounds that foreigners and levantine had controlled both

⁶²⁵ George Soule, *Ideas of the Great Economists*, Mentor Books, New York, 1952, p. 75-77

⁶²⁶ Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisadi Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, p. 392

⁶²⁷ Ahmed Midhat Efendi, *Ekonomi Politik*.

domestic and foreign trade of the Empire.⁶²⁸ However, with the proclamation of the second constitution liberalism was again *a la modé*. Nevertheless, it was short-lived.

Before the proclamation of the Second Constitution, there were two important economics lecturers and both of them wrote economics textbooks. They were Mehmed Cavid Bey and Akyiğitzade Musa. Mehmed Cavid Bey, whose ideas will be discussed in the next chapter, was a prominent liberal. Akyiğitzade Musa, a Russian Turk, was a mercantilist and supporter of a strong tariff policy. The most interesting point is that their books were published in the same year, in 1900.⁶²⁹ Akyiğitzade Musa was again expressing the ideas of Ahmet Mithad Efendi with a much stronger emphasis. According to him, the most important problem of economics was to define a particular foreign trade policy.⁶³⁰ A. Musa, against the position of M. Cavid Bey, criticized liberal economic doctrine and tried to prove the validity of a protectionist economic policy. His critiques against liberalism can be summarized as follows: A- Homo-economicus, the opinion of classical economists is a fallacy since people have different motivations, which form their behaviour. B- The premise that a liberal economy prevents wars is a factual mistake and this can be seen from the history of England C- The protection of some products does not increase price. It is decreased by competition. D- The protection and promotion of some sectors does not hinder dissemination of capital.⁶³¹ While M. Akyiğitzade defended the ideas, which were stressed by A. Mithad twenty years ago, at the same time, he was expressing an old desire of the Ottoman administrators. For example, he was a committed supporter of development of industry in the Empire. He asserted that one country could be both agricultural and industrial contrary to the pretension of Ottoman liberals. Therefore, he supported a protectionist economic policy. According to him, liberal economic policy can be realized by protectionism for non-industrial countries. In order to protect Ottoman industry against Western finished products, Ottoman industry and

⁶²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 110-120

⁶²⁹ Akyiğitzade Musa, *İlm-i Servet ve yahut İlm-i İktisat*, İstanbul , 1316, Mehmet Cavid Bey, *İlm-i İktisat*, (Four Volume) İstanbul, 1315- 1316-1317. But Akyiğitzade wrote an pamphlet two years ago with title of “İlm-i İktisat yahut İlm-i Servet; Azadeği Ticaret ve Usul-ü Himaye in 1898 /1314

⁶³⁰ Akyiğitzade Musa, *İlm-i İktisat yahut İlm-i Servet; Azadeği Ticaret ve Usul-ü Himaye* İstanbul, 1314, p. 7

⁶³¹ Tefik Çavdar, *Türkiye’de Liberalizm, 1860-1990*, Ankara, 1992, p. 130

products should be protected and promoted against the Western competition.⁶³² Certainly, these remarks were representing Ottoman experience and a desire for industrialization.

The outbreak of the Turco-Italian war in Libya in September 1911 followed by the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, put pressure on the programme of economic reform. Unionists mobilized all the resources of the country at the beginning of the war, especially its human resources. They became aware of their isolation and reacted by turning inwards towards the “people” (*Halka Dođru*). Furthermore, they started to promote a national consciousness in order to fight for the very existence of the Empire and the Ottoman State. Following the example of the French revolutionaries, the Unionists formally inaugurated the Committee of National Defence on 31 January 1913. The economy could hardly be isolated from this national mobilization and one of the functions of this unofficial body was to raise money from the public.⁶³³ This national excitement increased and expanded the activities of a Turkish group among the Unionists, articulating its views in the periodical, *Türk Yurdu*. Nationalist intellectuals were clearly determined in their economic policy. Parvus (Alexander Helphand), a socialist who fled from Russia, influenced the thoughts of nationalists. He indicated the importance of peasants and the financial clamp of European states.⁶³⁴ On the other hand, Russian Turkish bourgeoisie who immigrated to the Ottoman Empire gave inspiration to Turkists. They developed the ideas of economic nationalism and the policy of étatism, in order to combat the economic bondage of the Turkish masses to the European economy, and to foster the economic growth of a middle class, which would be the carrier of the economic interests of the Turkish nationality within the Ottoman Empire⁶³⁵

National economy was the most dominant ideology after 1914 among the Ottoman intellectuals. The slogan of the periodical of *İktisadiyyat Mecmuası*, first published in

⁶³² *ibid.*, pp. 131-137

⁶³³ Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of a Nascent Bourgeoisie: The Social and Economic Policy of the Young Turks 1908-1918*, *Türkiyenin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi 1071-1920* (ed), Osman Okyar and Halil İnalçık, Ankara: Meteksan Limited Şirketi, 1980. p. 336

⁶³⁴ Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi*, pp. 82-83

⁶³⁵ Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of Nascent Bourgeoisie*, pp. 336-337

1915, was “towards national economy” and it became an institutional organ of national economists. Tekin Alp (1883-1961), a Turkish nationalist with Jewish origin⁶³⁶ and supporter of national economic doctrine, was one of the most important figures at this time. He suggested that Turks should take Germany as a model in order to become a developed country. He implied this alongside a desire to construct a national consciousness.⁶³⁷ In the same way, another Turkish nationalist, Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924) supported national economy vehemently. According to him, the success of the Germans laid in ensuring continued economical, cultural and political unity. He claimed that the logic of economy of the Manchester school was concerned with the economy of England, which is a developed country acquiring more profit from the *laissez faire laissez-passer*. He defines the removing of capitulations and strong tariff policy, foundation of a national bank, and nationalization of railways as crucially necessary actions to construct, stimulate and to improve a national economy.⁶³⁸ German influence on the writers of *İktisadiyyat Mecmuası* was clearly evident. Even some German academics were suggesting economic policies for the Ottoman Empire in the pages of this periodical.⁶³⁹

Nationalist economists criticized liberals by considering the science of economics as an abstract, universal science. Nationalists alleged, on the contrary, that a science of economics depends on definite conditions, which make a national political economics possible. According to them, classical economic thought cannot be put into practice in every society and country universally. In order to construct a national

⁶³⁶ “In contrast to the Greeks and Armenians, the Ottoman Jews remained and intimate part of the traditional, non-capitalist, socio-economic structure. They derived no benefit from the domination of the Ottoman economy by Europe and suffered the consequence of the Empire being converted into a semi-colony. The Jews were in partial competition with the Greeks and Armenians, competition that, since in contrast to their opponents they seldom enjoyed foreign protection, was seldom crowned with success. For that reason, the Jewish community from Salonika to Baghdad supported the Unionists wholeheartedly”. Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of a Nascent Bourgeoisie: The Social and Economic Policy of the Young Turks 1908-1918*, *Türkiyenin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi 1071-1920* (ed), Osman Okyar and Halil İnalçık, Ankara: Meteksan Limited Şirketi, 1980. s 331. However, there were some socialist non-Muslims as Zohrab Efendi. He was a fervent supporter of protective economy policy. A. Cerrahoğlu, *Türkiye’de Sosyalimin Tarihine Katkı*, İstanbul, 1975, pp. 225-227

⁶³⁷ Tekin Alp, *Mecmuamızın Mesleği: Milli İktisada Doğru*, *İktisadiyyat Mecmuası*, No, 1, (8. Februar 1331), p. 2

⁶³⁸ Ziya Gökalp, *İktisadi Vatanperverlik*, *Yeni Mecmua II*, 1918, p. 322

⁶³⁹ See; Geheimrat Schmidt, *Volksbildung und Volkswirtschaft*, *İktisadiyat Medjmouassi*, Jargang 1, no: 24, Donnerstag 17, İstanbul, 1916

economy, the realities and history of the country and its concrete development need to be taken into consideration. However, they believed that a national economy could not be achieved just by economic accomplishment. National consciousness and ethics were also considered crucial factors for the establishment of a national economy.⁶⁴⁰

One of the main themes of the nationalist economists was the construction of a self-sufficient economy. They believed that remaining an agricultural country or becoming an industrial country without agriculture was a threat for the very existence of a state. Another argument was the necessity of industrial investments and the realization of social equality. Ziya Gökalp was arguing that the same ethnic group and division of labor between them could build a national economy. In this way, he encouraged the creation of a Turkish bourgeoisie. According to him, the lack of a Turkish bourgeoisie was the main problem of the Turkish state. A powerful government could only be possible with the existence of a prosperous society. Another Turkish nationalist Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935), similar to Gokalp, concentrated on the Turkish bourgeoisie as well.⁶⁴¹

The politicians implemented these arguments immediately. In February 1916, the Turkish parliament passed legislation which made use of Turkish obligatory in commercial matters and began discussing new customs tariffs, which would protect local industry by placing a high excise duty on imports. Deputy Minister of Finance, Hasan Tahsin, explained the government's aim as follows:

- a) Objects that can be easily manufactured in this country because of the presence here of the requisite raw materials are entitled to protection and a heavy duty has been levied upon imported goods of this sort.
- b) Manufactured articles where production here is capable of development are likewise taxed in order that local industries may meet foreign competition (30% on cotton thread)

⁶⁴⁰ Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi*, 1995, pp. 15-16

⁶⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp. 18-19

c) Agriculture in general is protected.

d) Agricultural products are specially protected (100 % on canned vegetables)⁶⁴²

During this period, the CUP began to play a more direct and open role in the economy. At the 1916 congress, which opened in Istanbul on 28 September the CUP reported the tremendous effort that it was making to uplift the Turkish economy in the field of industry and the actual accumulation of capital. The CUP even tried to draw the minor bureaucrats into commercial activity by setting up an organisation for officials known as the Memur'in Şirketi.⁶⁴³

The implementation of these decisions was attempted by the organizing of small-scale tradesmen and artisans. At the same time, building a national artisan organization was an important theme of national economists. This policy was supported by solidarist thoughts versus individualism. Populists (*Halkçı*) ideas were the ideological basis for this policy.⁶⁴⁴ However, these arguments were not just expressed by the nationalist intellectuals. Several of the Islamist intellectuals were supporting the same framework. Nonetheless, the criticism and suggestions of Islamists basically stemmed from religious sentiments rather than a particular economy-related outlook. They supported their arguments with religious sentiments and information. When they criticized the economic situation or proposed an economic policy, they suggested virtually identical political and economic arrangements as CUP leaders and nationalists.⁶⁴⁵ The similarity was caused by the social, economic, political and cultural conditions of the state and especially of the Muslim masses. Both nationalists and Islamists encouraged Muslims' participation in trade. There were approximately 100 retailers, which employed more than 10 workers, and most of them were in big cities such as Istanbul, İzmir and Salonica. Most of the owners of these factories were either foreigners or non-Muslims. Another reason that enhanced nationalist, Islamist and anti-liberal discourse was the

⁶⁴² Quoted, Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of a Nascent Bourgeoisie*, p. 340

⁶⁴³ *ibid.*, pp. 342-344

⁶⁴⁴ Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat Milli Burjuvazi*, p. 21

⁶⁴⁵ Esther Debus, *Sebilürreşad, Eine Vergleichende Untersuchung zur islamischen Opposition der vor- und nachkemalistischen Ära*, p. 156

comprador characteristic of the Ottoman bourgeoisie. The Ottoman bourgeoisie was mainly composed of non-Muslims and they avoided encouraging the establishment of an Ottoman national industry.⁶⁴⁶

The domination of financial circles by European businesses in the Ottoman economy was considered an obstacle for Ottoman industrialization and trade. Duyun-u Umumiye, founded in 1881 in order to collect Ottoman debt, was a major impediment for industry in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁴⁷ Foreign trade companies that have trade conditions advantageous to them through capitulations were another theme for anti-liberals. Nonetheless, Ottoman governments had been trying to remove capitulations since the 1840s.⁶⁴⁸ Foreign companies could continue their activities in the Ottoman Empire without the permission of the Ottoman governments until the removal of capitulations. The removing of capitulations at the beginning of the First World War was celebrated by “Chamber of Trade and Industry of Istanbul”, claiming that henceforth they could compete under equal conditions.⁶⁴⁹

The necessity of foreign capital for Ottoman economic development was stressed in the magazine of the CUP.⁶⁵⁰ The influence of Russian intellectuals, who lived in Istanbul between 1911 and 1915, in the nationalist periodical *Türk Yurdu*, facilitated the opposition to foreign capital. According to Parvus, foreign loans and debts caused the economic defeat of the Ottomans and the loss of Ottoman economical independence.⁶⁵¹ Although the members of the CUP placed great importance on foreign capital, they refused to accept it with strings attached, especially if the strings attached to the loans were political and hampered the sovereignty of the State.⁶⁵² With the outbreak of the First World War, emphasis on “national capital” began to increase. This was the historical, social and economic context of Ottoman liberalism.

⁶⁴⁶ Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, pp. 68-69

⁶⁴⁷ Sadun Aren, *L’industrialisation dans L’Empire Ottoman*, in; *Economie et Sociétés dans L’Empire Ottoman*, (ed), Jean-Louis Bacqué and Paul Dumont, 1983, Paris, p. 455

⁶⁴⁸ Tahir Taner, *Kapitülasyonlar Nasıl İlga Edildi*, Muammer Raşit Seviğ’e Armağan, İstanbul: Hukuk Fakültesi Yayını, 1956, p. 624

⁶⁴⁹ Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat Milli Burjuvazi*, p. 54

⁶⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 64

⁶⁵¹ Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi*, pp. 82-83

⁶⁵² Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of Nascent Bourgeoisie*, p. 333

The Empire supported Ottomanism that can be considered a liberal policy from the political and economic point of view until the Balkan Wars in 1912. The political, social, cultural and economic conditions that shaped Cavid's liberalism were still apparent until the Balkan Wars.

The Ottoman liberals of the second constitutional period did not write philosophical works. Especially, Mehmed Cavid Bey was interested in purely economical problems and debates. The discourse of anti-liberals will be helpful in illuminating his liberal thoughts. However, before to beginning to evaluate his ideas, it is necessary to look at the periodical of *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye*, which is known as the first liberal Turkish periodical and appeared first in 1908 and was published by Mehmed Cavid, Ahmet Şuayip and Rıza Tevfik.

5.4. The Periodical of Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye

The Periodical of *Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye* has been considered as a liberal periodical of the second constitution by virtually all academics.⁶⁵³ This argument can easily be approved through a discussion of the manifesto of the periodical⁶⁵⁴, which was written by Mehmet Cavid, Ahmed Şuayib and Rıza Tevfik, and published in the first issue of the journal in 1908. The manifesto begins with a criticism of the “ancient regime” which is taken as an obstacle to the economic development of the Empire. After praising economic improvements in Germany, discussion and comparison of the economic developments in different countries was declared one of the most crucial issues that would form the focus of inquiry in the journal.⁶⁵⁵ As pointed out previously, discussions about the place of industry and agriculture in the economic development of the Empire was the most striking theme for the Ottomans.

⁶⁵³ For example, see; Tevfik Çavdar, *Türkiye’de Liberalizm, 1860-1990*, Ankara, 1992., Feroz Ahmad, *Vanguard of a Nascent Bourgeoisie: The Social and Economic Policy of the Young Turks 1908-1918*, *Türkiyenin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi 1071-1920* (eds), Osman Okyar and Halil İnalçık, Ankara: Meteksan Limited Şirketi, 1980., Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi, (1838-1918)*, *Siyasal ve Sosyal Bilimler, Makaleler II*, İst. 1990., Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, İstanbul, 1975., Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi*, İstanbul, 1995

⁶⁵⁴ Mukaddime ve Program, Ahmed Şuayib, Mehmed Cavid, Rıza Tevfik, 1324 (1908), no.1, pp. 1-10

⁶⁵⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 1-3

It was stressed in the manifesto that industrial development was one of the natural inclinations of all nations. However, it was added that there were economic rules which determine the economic policy of countries. A particular sentence in the manifesto “there are many minerals, rich source and fruitful lands in the Ottoman Empire which necessitates priority of agricultural economic policy” got much attention because it was believed that Ottoman liberals were against the industrialization.⁶⁵⁶

However, the manifesto, stressed that they were not against industry. Besides, they claimed that the raw material for industry is present in the territories of the Empire and they could easily be produced in the country, if it is encouraged. However, it was stressed as well, that it would be very big mistake to promote industry that had no chance for improvement and financial success in the Empire, and they declared that they would be against such attempts.⁶⁵⁷ The writers of the manifesto emphasized that investigations in trade and the promotion and encouragement of trade in the Ottoman Empire are part of their projections and aims. Then, we see the most striking aspect of the manifesto as they declare that they defend international free trade, which is defined by them as a natural rule.⁶⁵⁸ The theories of A. Comte and Le Play were described as “Philosophy of society” and “Science of Society” respectively. It was remarked that the interpretation of these theories would be one of the main themes of the articles to be published.⁶⁵⁹ Another important feature of this periodical is its anti-socialism. Because of this anti-socialism, several articles were published that claimed socialism had lost its meaning.⁶⁶⁰

The periodical *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye* published 27 issues between the 28 December 1908 and the 14 March 1911. Twenty-four different authors wrote for the periodical. However, Mehmed Cavid, Ahmed Şuayib and Rıza Tevfik, wrote most of the articles. While Mehmed Cavid was writing mostly on economical matters,

⁶⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 3

⁶⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 4

⁶⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 5

⁶⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 9

⁶⁶⁰ For example, see; Aynızade Hasan Tahsin, *Yirminci Asırda Mesele-i İktisadiye, Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye*, Volume 3, 1325, pp. 113-128

Ahmed Şuayib and Rıza Tevfik's articles were more on social and political problems. As it can be seen clearly, the main themes of the periodical, such as the defense of free trade, and the investigation of social theories, were defined and clarified by the aforementioned person.

Rıza Tevfik (1868-1949) has not been considered among Turkish liberals. He declared himself as an apprentice of Spencer, Darwin and John Stuart Mill.⁶⁶¹ His articles, published in the periodical of *Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye*, mostly concentrate on the work of John Stuart Mill and Spencer.⁶⁶² Nonetheless, his influence on the intellectuals and discussions remained quite limited, because of his political career. He was sent to exile after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923.

On the other hand, Ahmed Şuayib has been defined, in many studies and by several academics as one of the first liberals in Turkish intellectual history.⁶⁶³ There are certain particular reasons for this claim. His endorsement of the liberal manifesto of the *Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye* and his writings on social issues provide an empirical support for this argument. Furthermore, the claim is also a result of his eclectic thoughts and the diversity of the themes about which he wrote. During the project-phase of this study, he was one of the liberal figures to be examined closely in the study. However, having read his studies -books and writings- I intend not to discuss him in detail, and only under a particular sub-title because of the different and insufficiently consistent character of his writings. Nevertheless, the absence of a discussion on his position, while simultaneously being considered as a liberal,

⁶⁶¹ Murtaza Korlaelçi, *Pozitivist Düşüncenin İthali*, in; *Tanzimat ve Meşruyetin Birikimi*, İstanbul, 2001, p. 219

⁶⁶² For example, *Hürriyet-İngiliz Hakimi Meşhuru John Stuart Mill Hürriyeti Nasıl Anlıyor*”, *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası*, Volume II, No; 5, Volume II, No, 6., *Hükümet Hürriyet Hakkında Spenser'in Felsefesi*, Volume II, No; 7, Volume III, No; 10. He published a few articles with the same title in the subsequent issues.

⁶⁶³ See; Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye'de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi*, (1838-1918), in; *Siyasal ve Sosyal Bilimler, Makaleler II*, İstanbul. 1990. Aykut Kansu, 20. *Yüzyıl Başı Türk Düşünce Hayatında Liberalizm*, in; *Tanzimat ve Meşruyetin Birikimi*, İstanbul, 2001, Tevfik Çavdar, *Türkiye'de Liberalizm, 1860-1990*, Ankara, 1992. However, Tevfik Çavdar points out the contradictions and influence of different ideas in his thought, see; *ibid.*, p. 149

persuaded me to discuss his position. A discussion on such an eclectic writer might reveal some hints that enable us to understand the content of the Turkish liberalism.

Ahmet Şuayb was born in 1876 in Istanbul. His mother raised him because of his father's early death. After elementary school, he was registered to *Vefa İdadisi* where he was acquainted with Cavid Bey who would become finance minister three decades later. He was fond of literature when he was a young man. On the other hand, he was a subscriber to some forbidden publications of the Young Turks when he was 18.⁶⁶⁴ As stated by Yalçın, he was not a member of a rich family. When he was studying law, he became acquainted with the literature circle, *Servet-i Funun*. His articles, published in *Servet-i Funun*, were collected in a book in 1913 after his death. However, he built his career as a lawyer and was interested in social science. Ahmet Şuayb died on 2 December 1913 when he was 35. His early death did not give him time to develop his thoughts even though he was one of the most productive writers of the *Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye*.⁶⁶⁵ He concentrated in those articles on the French revolution, and social history of Russia. Besides, his articles that were published in *Servet-i Funun*, a foremost literature periodical during the last decade of the Ottoman Empire, were collected under the title of *Hayat ve Kitaplar*, published in 1329 (1913).⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶⁴ Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Edebi Hatıralar*, Istanbul, 1935, p. 33-8. Besides, Hüseyin Cahit remarks in his memoirs that the publications which Ahmet Şuayb brought to them was *Mizan*, published by Mizancı Murad, a liberal Ottoman thinker.

⁶⁶⁵ His articles that published in this periodical are respectively ; *Yirminci Asırda Tarih* (1324-1908)) volume I, no. ., *Devlet ve Cemiyet*, Volume 1, no. 1, *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume I, no. 1., *Hürriyet-i Mezhebiye*, volume 1, no. 2., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume, 1, no. 2., *Düvel-i Mütemeddinenin Siyaset-i Mezhebiyeleri*, volume, 1. no. 3., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume, 1, no. 3., *Hürriyet-i Mezhebiye*, volume 1. no 4., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 1, no. 4., *Avamil-i İçtimaiye*, volume 2 (1325), no. 5., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 2, no. 5., *Avamil-i İçtimaiye* volume 2, no. 6., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 2, no. 6., *Avamil-i İçtimaiye*, volume 2, no. 7., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 2, no. 7., *Viyana Mutemeri*, volume, 2, no. 8., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 2, no. 8., *İkinci Philip*, volume 3 (1326) no. 9., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 3, no. 9., *İkinci Philip*, volume 3, no. 10., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 3, no. 10., *Rusya*, volume 3. no. 10., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 3, no. 11., *Rusya*, volume 3, no. 12., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri* volume, 3, no. 12., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume I (new volume 1326) no. 1., *Rusya*, volume, 1, no. 2., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 1, no. 2., *Rusya*, volume 1, no. 3, *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 1, no. 3., *Rusya*, volume 1, no. 4., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 1, no. 4., *Rusya*, volume 2, no. 5., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume 2, no. 6-9., *Rusya*, volume 3, no. 10., *Fransa İhtilal-i Kebiri*, volume, 3, no. 10

⁶⁶⁶ Ahmet Şuayib, *Hayat ve Kitaplar*, Matbaa-i Hukukiye, Istanbul, 1329, (1913)

Because of being labeled as a liberal, it is quite easy to discern certain liberal arguments in his writings. However, this attitude carries the danger of preventing a deep and objective evaluation, and the undervaluation of different elements in his ideas. The studies that have suggested that he was a liberal did not evaluate all of his writings.⁶⁶⁷ For this reason, the real character of his writing has not become widely known in academic circles. Here, his works will not be evaluated in detail. Rather, through considering all of his writings, it is the intention to investigate and describe the character of his writings in general.

In his book, *Hayat ve Kitaplar*, Şuayib evaluated the studies of Taine, Ernest Lavisse, Niebuhr, Ranke, Mommsen and Gustave Flaubert. His aim was, on the one hand, to criticize them from the point of view of literature on the other hand, to introduce these writers and their thoughts to Turkish readers. In the first part of this book, he concentrated on the life and works of Taine.⁶⁶⁸ In the rest, He solely concentrates on the importance of the historians in France and Germany. This book can be described as a monograph of the aforementioned thinkers. Apart from this book, he wrote a textbook about jurisprudence published in 1327 (1911).⁶⁶⁹ However, his books do not follow a particular, concrete ideological discourse. One can even argue that the claim that defines him as a liberal cannot be based on these books, since the discussions on European literature and social science were the most important subjects in which Turkish intellectuals, regardless of ideology, were interested. In other words, these books were simply reflecting Ottoman intellectual tradition and tendencies in the nineteenth century.

The readings that define his position as a liberal make particular attribution to his article, *Devlet ve Cemiyet* (State and Society) in order to prove his liberalism.⁶⁷⁰ However, this interpretation seems to be coercive and constrained. Whereas Mardin

⁶⁶⁷ See; Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi*, (1838-1918), *Siyasal ve Sosyal Bilimler*, Makaleler II, ist. 1990., Aykut Kansu, 20. Yüzyıl Başlı Türk Düşünce Hayatında Liberalizm, in, *Tanzimat ve Meşrutetin Birikimi*, İstanbul, 2001, Tevfik Çavdar, *Türkiye’de Liberalizm*, 1860-1990, Ankara, 1992

⁶⁶⁸ Ahmed Şuayib, *Hayat ve Kitaplar*, Matbaa-i Hukukiye, İstanbul, 1329 (1913), pp. 10-15

⁶⁶⁹ Ahmed Şuayib, *Hukuk-u İdare: İkinci Sınıf Dersleri*, Hacı Hüseyin Matbaası, İstanbul, 1911 (1327)

evaluates Şuayb's criticism of the Ottoman failure in industry, agriculture, art and science as a request for a liberal economy⁶⁷¹, Çavdar shows his remarks-"political institutions are aim rather than tool"- as a proof for his liberalism.⁶⁷² It can be argued that his liberalism is an attributed one, since these claims do not display persuasive reasons to assume his position as a liberal.

Şuayib, in his article, "State and Society", emphasized the close relationship between the law, the individual, and society. According to him, the conditions of a society constitute general rules of moral and spiritual life. There is a close affinity between biology and sociology, which composes the sum of all sciences. To him, sociology proved that the form of a nation's government depends on both the historical and the temporal conditions.⁶⁷³ This analogy between sociology and biology depicts the influence of Darwin. This influence can also be seen in his insistence on the evolution of institutions.

There are political institutions in every society whose origins lie in history... The change in institutions does not take place radically. Even with revolutions, it is possible to change institutions fundamentally. Social change must be implemented considering general features of society... Radical movements cannot provide changes. The laws, which manage the life of animate, govern societies as well.⁶⁷⁴

He refutes Rousseau's social contract since he claims that it is not scientific. According to him, the concept of the sovereignty of people is a dream. Nonetheless, he also says the principle must, at least, be attempted in practice. The social contract can emerge only after people constitute a society. In other words, the social contract emerges through evolution.⁶⁷⁵ In his opinion, evolution is the most important characteristic of societies in history.

⁶⁷⁰ See; Şerif Mardin, Türkiye'de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi, (1838-1918), in; Siyasal ve Sosyal Bilimler, Makaleler II, İstanbul. 1990, p. 81. Tefik Çavdar, Türkiye'de Liberalizm, 1860-1990, Ankara, 1992., pp. 147-152

⁶⁷¹ Mardin, Türkiye'de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi, p. 81

⁶⁷² Çavdar, Türkiye'de Liberalizm, p. 147. However, Çavdar stresses his eclecticism.

⁶⁷³ Ahmed Şuayib, Devlet ve Cemiyet, 1324, volume 1, no, 1, p. 54

⁶⁷⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 55-56

⁶⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 67

Şuayib alleged that humans have a wicked personality and individuals are bad and fallible by nature. Furthermore, he believes that physiology and psychology proved that human nature is not good “an sich”. He harshly criticized Rousseau’s reading of human nature.⁶⁷⁶ These criticisms can also be interpreted as arguments that reveal his strong belief in evolution and science. Another claim in an article by him displays the influence of the environment on societies. However, he criticizes economic determinism. For him, while economic structure has a crucial influence on the formation of society and its institutions, this formation cannot be reduced to it, as there are numerous other determinants.⁶⁷⁷

He stressed that the division of labor is the most important thing that forms a society. At this point, he speaks using an analogy that he makes between the functions of human organs and division of labor in a society. However, by mentioning the name of Spencer, he betrays the source of these thoughts. As is well known, the most crucial aspect of Spencer’s thought is his belief in evolution. Through constructing an analogy between society and biology, he tried to show the phases of human society that evolved from the simplest towards the complicated. In addition to that, his differentiation of societies based on military and industry is another constitutive argument in Spencer’s sociology.⁶⁷⁸ The same classification of this can be seen in Şuayib’s article as well. In short, one could easily argue that rather than presenting any original arguments, what Şuayib did was just a translation and “transferring” of Spencer’s argument.

Another article by him, which seems to carry some potential for the formation of a liberal position, is also futile. The article is entitled *Hürriyet-i Mezhebiye*.⁶⁷⁹ (Freedom of Denomination) and it is on the meaning of freedom. After an evaluation of political and social freedom in classical Greece and Rome, the article concentrates

⁶⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p. 58

⁶⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 62

⁶⁷⁸ Ferdinand Fellmann, (ed) *Geschichte der Philosophie im 19. Jahrhundert*, Hamburg, 1996., pp. 69-71

⁶⁷⁹ Ahmet Şuayib, *Hürriyet-i Mezhebiye*, *Ulumu-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye*, 1324, volume 1, no 2, p. 145-162

on the forming of the Church in the middle Ages and the emergence of Lutheranism. The rest is an attempt at displaying the tolerance of Muslim states and societies by quoting Le Bon, a French sociologist.⁶⁸⁰ He concluded that religious difference should be tolerated, but religious belief should not determine state policy.⁶⁸¹ Another article by him is on the development of European law and the contradictions between church and state in European history.⁶⁸² These articles exemplify his interest in the development of European law.

In conclusion, it is quite difficult to define Ahmed Şuayib's position as a liberal. Although he published his articles in liberal periodicals, he did not promote liberalism specifically. Ahmet Şuayib was part of the intellectual tradition of "Young Turks". Şerif Mardin emphasizes that Young Turks were interested in the ideologies that the Ottoman social and political structure attempted to import. Therefore, most of them maintain a positive attitude towards positivism, materialism and corporatism.⁶⁸³ In short, Ahmet Şuayib was a positivist, a pupil of Spencer, and a transmitter of modern Western science and literature rather than a liberal. However, it should be mentioned that it is virtually impossible to find pure liberals in philosophical terms during the second constitutional period, which was characterized by "political freedom" among the authors of the *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye*, the only liberal periodical of the time of "freedom". The writers of these periodicals who wrote about social, political and historical matters represented a *Zeitgeist* that necessitated rapid solutions, and an inclination towards positivism and Western science. Mardin alleges that almost all Young Turks were conservative rather than revolutionary.⁶⁸⁴ As a member of the Young Turk generation, Şuayib accepted evolution as ideology. In fact, as it is mentioned previously, Ahmed Şuayib did not have a social, cultural and economic background, which might lead him to demand liberal reforms. The only exception among the writers of the journal was Mehmed

⁶⁸⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 145-151-160

⁶⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 161

⁶⁸² *Düvel-i Mütemeddinenin Siyaseti Mezhebiyeleri*, *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye*, volume 1, no. 3, 1324

⁶⁸³ Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, p. 219

⁶⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 220

Cavid Bey, editor of the periodical of *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye*, who examined pure economic matters and supported economic liberalism.

5.5. Mehmed Cavid Bey

Cavid Bey is one of the most important figures in the tradition of Turkish liberalism. Although there are many discussions on the subject of Turkish liberalism and Cavid Bey, there is insufficient academic research about the origins of his ideas. One of the reasons for the absence of study in this area can be attributed to the weakness of the Turkish liberal tradition and thoughts. After Cavid Bey, there has been no strong political and intellectual support for liberalism in Turkey until 1950. It is exactly this lack that further increases his importance in Turkish intellectual history. The failure of liberalism, which occurred during the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire, hindered the spread of liberal ideas between intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, it is key to our understanding that we examine the social, cultural, economic and individual factors that influenced the formation of the liberal mind of Cavid Bey.

Mehmet Cavid was born in Salonica in 1875 as a child of the *Dönme* family, nominal converts to Islam. His father, Recep Naim Efendi, was a merchant.⁶⁸⁵ He studied firstly in Salonica, and then graduated from political science in Istanbul. In 1896, he began to work at the *Ziraat* Bank and then taught economics at colleges in different cities. He received a position at a high school, *Darulmuallim*, but because of his political activities, he was obliged to leave this position. Therefore, he returned to Salonica where he worked as a teacher at another high school.⁶⁸⁶ He became a member of the Committee of Union and Progress in 1907 in Salonica.⁶⁸⁷ After the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908, he returned to Istanbul and commenced work as an economics professor at the School of Political Science

⁶⁸⁵ Polat Tunçer, İttihatçı Cavid Bey, in; Liberal Düşünce, no; 34, 2004, p. 215

⁶⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 216

⁶⁸⁷ İslam Ansiklopedisi, no;7, İstanbul, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1993, p.175

(*Mektebi Mülkiye*). During the same period, he became a member of the Deputies Assembly (*Meclisi Mebusan*) and served three periods as a deputy, twice from Salonica and once from Çanakkale. He became minister of finance on the 26 July 1909 and served in this position intermittently until the end of First World War. After escaping the leaders of the Progress and Union Party at the end of the war, he was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment with hard labor, but fled the country. He attended the London Conference in February 1921 as an adviser of the new National Assembly of Turkey but then he left this position because of a clash of opinions. Cavid Bey was accused of having been involved with the attempt to assassinate Atatürk in 1926 and then sentenced to death. He was executed on August 1926.⁶⁸⁸ Because of the direct influence of his background on the formation of his ideas, it might be useful to examine social, economic and political situation in Salonica.

5.5.1. Economic and Social Life in Salonica

The Young Turks were very active in Salonica before the proclamation of the Second Constitution. The bourgeoisie of Salonica were against the despotic rule of Abdulhamid II and they played an important role in the proclamation of the constitution.⁶⁸⁹ Even in 1908, some merchants demanded a liberal economic policy from the government via newspapers. In fact, as mentioned previously, the Young Turks were not against economic liberalism during the initial phase of the second constitutional period. From one of the articles by Cavid Bey, we know that during that time, there was a daily newspaper, *Progrés de Salonique*, which publishes articles in which liberalism is promoted and a protective economic policy was sharply criticized on the grounds that it would harm the economy of the country. Cavid Bey examined this article in his writings and declared that he supported all the

⁶⁸⁸ F. Hasan Arol, Mehmet Cavid Bey, in; *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce, Liberalizm*, İstanbul, 2005, p. 64

⁶⁸⁹ See; İlhan Tekeli-Selim İlkin, *İttihat ve Terakkinin Oluşumunda Selanik’in Toplumsal Yapısının Belirleyiciliği*, in; *Türkiye’nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi (1071-1920)*, Ankara, 1980, pp. 351-382

arguments carried by the article.⁶⁹⁰ One can easily see the influence of his background, being born in Salonica and serving as a deputy of the city, over the formation of his thoughts. Furthermore, it should be added that his father was a merchant in Salonica. Because of these reasons, one can claim that the city of Salonica has a special importance for a better examination and understanding of his thoughts.

The presence of Muslim people in the Salonica region dates back to the initial Ottoman conquest of Salonica in 1392. According to the well-known Ottoman settlement system in the Balkans, nomadic Muslim populations from Saruhan and Konya were settling all over the region in places such as Drama, Kavala, Kelemeriye, Serres, and Kozani. Because of the continued settlement of Muslim Turks in the region subsequently, especially during the fifteenth century, and through the small numbers of conversions to Islam, a new ethnic, linguistic and religious group emerged in the already ethnically diverse and complex social structure of the region. The Muslim population of the region occupied a central place within the established socio-economic and cultural strata of the region in the next five-hundred year period until 1912. While the Muslim population of Salonica in the first Ottoman census of 1831 was about 10,000, it increased in the 1840s to 15,000 -excluding about 5000 *Dönmes*, nominal converts to Islam- because of continued immigration to Salonica. Contrary to the prevailing view in literature concerning Muslim occupations in the Balkan cities as government officials and military men, the Muslims of Salonica in the 1840s were involved in every sphere of city life ranging from rich merchants to peasants and porters.⁶⁹¹

There were vivid economy-related activities in Salonica in the 1840s. Both import and export merchandise were brought to Salonica's markets and then traded domestically and to the outside world. The fairs in the region allowed the exchange of export and import goods and their distribution all over the country. Both the

⁶⁹⁰ Cavid Bey stated that these articles written by "Marbo Medyano". The writer was a non-muslim that shows cosmopolitan atmosphere of the city. See; Mehmed Cavid, *Neşriyat ve Vakayi-i İktisadiye, Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye Mecmuası*, volume 2, 10 Kanunisanı 1324, p. 272

⁶⁹¹ Bülent Özdemir, *Ottoman Reforms and Social Life*, pp. 177-178

increase in local agricultural production and the close contacts with the European capitalist economy stimulated the importance of the Ottoman fairs in the Balkan. By the 1840s, Salonica had already started to play a role in the international market as a source of various agricultural products, mainly grain, cotton, silk, tobacco and wool. Such products of Salonica were exported to a wide range of places. The import trade of Salonica consisted mainly of European industrial and colonial export goods, which had aimed directly to change or to channel the consumption habits of people in the region. Cotton goods, yarn, and copper among the imported goods were the first preferences of every family.⁶⁹² At the beginning of the twentieth century Salonica was among the most developed, wealthy and cosmopolitan cities of the Empire.⁶⁹³

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were thirty-five industrial enterprises, which employed about 2500 workers. However, trade was more important for the inhabitants. The city became one of the economic, intellectual, and political centers of the Empire during the last four decades of the nineteenth century. Salonica developed and prospered after the Tanzimat period. Foreign investments were one of the most important causes of this development in the city. After permission was given to foreign investment, Salonica developed even more rapidly.⁶⁹⁴ Most of the merchants and industrialists of the city were non-Muslims.⁶⁹⁵ The bourgeoisie of Salonica had a different agenda from the nationalist economists. However, it should not be forgotten that the administrative center of the CUP was in Salonica, and most of the members of the Young Turks supported a liberal economy at the beginning of the second constitution. The new elites of Salonica were composed of big merchants, bankers, lawyers, doctors etc and most of them were non-Muslim. However, Muslim administrators and high-ranking soldiers were

⁶⁹² *ibid.*, p. 232

⁶⁹³ Merapi Anastassiadou, *Salonique, 1830-1912; Une ville Ottomane a l'age des Réformes. "Tanzimat Çağında Bir Osmanlı Şehri; Selanik"*, (translated by Işık Ergüden), Istanbul, 1998, p. 9

⁶⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 302-304-315,. For the role of foreign capitals see; *ibid.*, p. 373

⁶⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 320

members of these societies as well.⁶⁹⁶ Thus, the European way of life was disseminated among the inhabitants, particularly among the bourgeoisie.⁶⁹⁷

In light of these facts, it can be clearly asserted that there were enough social, political, intellectual and economic reasons to foster liberalism at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire, at least for the inhabitants of Salonica. The Ottoman Empire would lose most of the Balkan cities during the first decade of the twentieth century. There were nationalist movements among non-Muslims, and the economic and political crises agitated most of the Ottoman Muslims. However, because of the quietness of Cavid Bey on these issues, it is impossible to find an opinion on these difficulties in the thoughts of Cavid Bey.

5.5.2. Cavid Bey's Liberalism

His works can be classified into three groups. He wrote in some periodicals such as *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye Mecmuası*, *Servet-i Fünün*, *Mülkiye Mecmuası*, which were the pre-eminent periodicals of the second constitutional period. Moreover, he published articles in many newspapers such as *Tanin* and *Sabah*. Among these, his four-volume book *Science of Economy* (ilm-i iktisat 1316-1900), and the articles published in *Ulumu İktisadiye ve İctimaiye Mecmuası* (1908-1911-1324-1327) are the most interesting for us in terms of their subject matter. These are studies in which he tries to construct his ideas in a theoretical framework, which is shaped by a liberal vision.⁶⁹⁸ Furthermore, in my reading, I will also concentrate on his other articles, books, and memories that were published after the 1940s, and speeches he made in the assembly. There is approximately eight years between the publication of his book and his other writings in different periodicals, newspapers and speeches. However, in order to avoid repetitions, his discourse on particular themes will be examined by considering all of his works.

⁶⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 322

⁶⁹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 320-325

⁶⁹⁸ Deniz Karaman, *Cavid Bey ve Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye Mecmuası*, İstanbul, 2001, p. 7

İlm-i İktisat (Science of Economy) is composed of 4 volumes and 1476 pages. It was written as a textbook for university students. He took Charles Gide's book on economy as a model, but his book is not a simple translation. On the contrary, he tried to understand the economic problems of the Ottoman Empire, and to propose solutions to the problems in the light of modern liberal frameworks. While he divided his book into four main chapters, namely, production, change, distribution and consumption, the themes such as money, loans and foreign trade is investigated in different chapters.⁶⁹⁹ In addition to that, he published another book with the same title in 1910 (1326) for colleges.⁷⁰⁰ However, the content of the book is quite similar to *İlm-i İktisat*.

In the initial pages of the book, he starts with a claim that economic activities have always been around, long before the emergence of the science of economics. With this claim, he implies that there are certain universal laws in economics, which do not change across time and space. Furthermore, he argues, that despite the lack of knowledge of these laws, they could be effectively applied to the economy. These arguments are mainly reflections of the nineteenth century's classical liberalism.⁷⁰¹ He defines economics as general laws, which designate the activities of human being that are necessary to benefit from production laws.⁷⁰² Cavid Bey stresses that economic laws are not changeable across time. His definition of liberalism (*Meslek-i Serbesti*) reflects that he was a compassionate adherent of liberalism.

They trust in individual freedom more than governmental penetration. They are aware of that, the effort that aim at lessening affectivity of natural laws will be unsuccessful and their object for eliminating the factors, which hinder functioning of economic rules, will cease. They expect from the governments to solve the disagreement between social classes, and they believe that general benefit can be provided just in this way. If government protects one social class, it would be harmful for public interest...They do not think that this inequality is natural and origin of every development. Once again, they do not consider that capital has

⁶⁹⁹ Tevfik Çavdar, *Türkiye'de Liberalizm*, p. 85

⁷⁰⁰ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisad, Mekteb-i İdadiyeye Mahsus, Matbaa-i Amire*, 1326.

⁷⁰¹ Mehmet Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat, İstanbul, 1316 (1900), Volume I*, pp. 2-3

⁷⁰² *ibid.*, p. 22

been in the most primitive stage and it is the most important element for economic progress.

703

The criticism of socialism is a constitutive characteristic of his books and thought. He criticized socialism's approach to economic laws saying that "socialists aim to provide equality in wealth so that, they accept that economic laws are temporary. However we will see in this book on the contrary their belief that economic laws are continual."⁷⁰⁴ Besides that, Cavid Bey alleged that individualism, a crucial component of liberalism, is among one of the most detrimental elements for socialists. Nevertheless, he believed that individualism was a natural behavior, which allows for the progress of societies. He added that while individualism was related to freedom and independence, socialism produced captivity. Cavid Bey also seems to be familiar with certain conceptual transformations and developments in the socialist theory. He says;

Whereas utopic theories collapse, new socialist theories of Marx, which called as a scientific socialism, increase. However, Marx' theory does not contain scientific elements. They cannot agree about the way, which go to a socialist system. In other words, socialists are not of the same opinion and do not have a plan to organize desired society.⁷⁰⁵

His criticism of state socialism and the promotion of individualism also continued in the constitutional period. He wrote;

Some people accept a method, which called state socialism. State has been interested in some issues, which can be carried out by individuals. However, the experiences show that in the realms in which states are active, effectivity of individuals has been restricted. Individualism is to trust in power of persons and against socialism. Whereas the first related to freedom, the second means captivity. Because of affinity of people towards freedom, s-he chooses the first. Individuality lets person know about his worth. On the contrary, socialism leans social laws against individuals. However, the reason, which drives someone to work, earn, save, which resulted in progress, is the aim increasing of the profits which s-he would earn in works.⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰³ *ibid.*, pp. 51-54

⁷⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 38

⁷⁰⁵ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume I, p. 57

⁷⁰⁶ Mehmed Cavid, *Ticaret Şirketleri, Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası*, volume, 2, no; 6-9 (1326), 1910, pp. 777-778

Mehmed Cavid Bey defended liberalism on a philosophical basis too. He asserted that the criticisms of liberalism are mostly constructed around the reading of egoism. However, in his opinion, the “science of economy” does not recommend egoism, but rather it advises a realization of self-interest. The search for self-interest, he says, is not against altruism. Another reason that led him to present a liberal position is his belief in the necessity of competition. According to him, the removal of self-interest would cause a halt to progress.⁷⁰⁷ Further to that, he claimed that individuality is not an obstacle to economic cooperation. He found the criticisms of socialist viewpoints meaningless and asserts that the establishment of an economic partnership is a natural right of everyone. This right, he said, was applied in England and America quite perfectly.⁷⁰⁸ By these claims, he aimed to show that economic individualism was not against common benefit. In addition, he continued criticizing the socialist approach to capital by stressing that capital had been misinterpreted by the socialists. He claimed that capital is not acquired by exploitation or slavery, but by working, talent and ability.⁷⁰⁹

Following the liberal premise, he was against any intervention of the state in economic life. When he discusses state socialism, this point is made explicitly. He defined state socialism as an economic system between socialism and liberalism. Then he began to evaluate Germany’s economic program, which he called state socialism. He asserted that the German experience has shown that state socialism was detrimental for social justice, and in this system, the state would be an apparatus used by one social class to exploit other social and economic classes. Furthermore, he criticized the thoughts of List, the most important economist who influenced the ideas of anti-liberals in the Ottoman Empire. According to Cavid Bey, whereas List defended the view that a country should be both agricultural and industrial at the same time, List promoted an impossible situation from an economic viewpoint.⁷¹⁰ Cavid Bey built his thoughts on the premise that the countries that dominated

⁷⁰⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 779-780

⁷⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 784-785

⁷⁰⁹ Mehmet Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume I, p. 188

⁷¹⁰ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, volume, III, p. 301

international trade were not the countries that out-produced all others. According to Cavid Bey, the most important point was to produce the best goods with the best prices.⁷¹¹ However, it must be mentioned that he was not completely against tariffs. According to him, if the imported goods could be produced in the country, it should be protected by tariffs.⁷¹²

As mentioned, the discussion on whether the Ottoman Empire should become industrial or remain agricultural was one of the most hotly debated discussions during the second constitutional period. Mehmed Cavid Bey was an advocate of industrialization, which could be realized by private enterprise. On the other hand, he emphasized that an underdeveloped state such as the Ottoman Empire should not try to build big industry but support foreign entrepreneurs, who had enough experience to be successful. In his opinion, goods cannot be produced for production's sake. Industry, trade and agriculture do not have a value in themselves. Their importance emanated solely from the profits they provided. Therefore, the production of goods in the country, which can be imported with a more competitive price from other places, would be nothing but a waste of capital and manpower. Wealth and civilization can be provided through division of labor but not through building more industry.⁷¹³

He supposed that, in the light of all these arguments, the Ottoman Empire, as an agricultural country, should avoid building big industry. According to him, there was no adequate capital, technology or work force. In the case of importing all these, the produced goods would be too expensive.⁷¹⁴ He remarked that there was vast space, low wages and a low land price in the Ottoman Empire. Foreign and domestic capital should make investment in this realm. He claimed that;

For these reasons, governments should not invest in industry and collect tax for it. Capital should have permission what it makes and where it goes. Governments should invest in

⁷¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 302

⁷¹² *ibid.*, p. 297

⁷¹³ Mehmed Cavid, *Memleketimizin Vesait-i Serveti*, *Mülkiye Mecmuası*, no: 1, 1324(1908), p. 26

⁷¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 26

agriculture...I repeat again that our future lies in agriculture and trade not in industry. We should use advantages of our country instead of trying to follow impossible-dream.⁷¹⁵

On the one hand, he emphasized the inclination of big industries towards monopolization, which carries certain risks for the well-being of society; on the other hand, he claims that big industrial companies are more productive and more advantageous than small workshops.⁷¹⁶ It explicitly appears that he was a supporter of the industrialization of the Ottoman Empire but against state-controlled, state-led industrialization.

5.5.3. Liberalism versus Protectionism

Mehmed Cavid Bey stressed the importance of free trade in almost all studies.⁷¹⁷ In his book, *İlm-i İktisat*, he enumerated the discourses of anti-liberals. According to him, anti-liberals were against free trade, because they thought free trade would damage the interests of one country in favor of others. Another argument presented by anti-liberals was to the claim that free trade would demolish domestic industry. Thereafter, it would cause unemployment, migration, and a decrease in capital. Against these arguments, Cavid Bey gave Portugal and Spain as examples. He stated that, if anti-liberal economic policies could have promoted industry, capitalism would have emerged in Portugal and Spain. Then, he concluded that, anti-liberalism could not promote domestic industry. In his opinion, industry could be promoted just by knowledge, education and capital.⁷¹⁸

As remarked earlier, Cavid Bey criticized the protective economic policy. He claimed that the prohibition of imported goods for the sake of the protection of domestic goods would lead to nothing but an increase in the price of industrial

⁷¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 29

⁷¹⁶ Mehmed, Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, volume I, pp. 299-301

⁷¹⁷ Falih Rıfkı Atay, *Çankaya*, İstanbul, 1984, p. 381

⁷¹⁸ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, volume III, pp. 296-300

production. Because of the removal of competition, domestic production would lose the challenge of and for innovations. Therefore, the producer would prefer to depend on state rules, not on their own economic and productive strength. Another form of the protectionist policy could be either to increase the import tax or to promote domestic goods. According to him, while the first would increase the price the second would waste public money.⁷¹⁹ Cavid Bey summarized his thought about these matters as following.

After examining how protective economy policy can be carried out and proving which detriments have it, and after understanding the utility of liberal economy policy, we should answer the question whether it is acceptable to leave it. The explanations, which were stressed in those books, show the necessity of promotion of liberal tariff policy and international free trade.⁷²⁰

Cavid Bey insistently emphasized, in a speech held in the assembly that a protective tariff policy was the biggest enemy of workers and progress. He then added that with a strong tariff policy, people were cheated because this would lead to the establishing of a few industries that could not provide any utility. With this method, to him, a few people would be rich but thousands of others would suffer from it. He pointed out that the most important thing that could bring progress was self-interested individuals. Therefore, in his opinion, the state should encourage trade.⁷²¹ In his opinion, “trade is the most crucial servant of civilization.”⁷²² These arguments are quite important since they reveal how much Cavid Bey was against any protective policy during the time in which several intellectuals were in favor of protectionism. He further asserted that economic protection and an increase in tariffs cannot foster economic development. According to him, “what undeveloped countries need is not the protection policy but spreading capital, science and education”.⁷²³ He also criticized German economist F. List by asserting that a country cannot be industrial,

⁷¹⁹ Mehmed Cavid, Memleketimizin Vesait-i Serveti, Mülkiye Mecmuası (1324), no; 1, pp. 26-29

⁷²⁰ Mehmed Cavid, İlm-i İktisat, İdadiye Mahsus, İstanbul, 1324, pp. 394-395

⁷²¹ Mehmed Cavid, Neşriyat ve Vakayi-i İktisadiye, Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası, volume: 1, no;2, pp. 272-273

⁷²² Mehmet Cavid, İlm-i İktisat, Volume III, p. 300

⁷²³ ibid.

agricultural and trade-based at the same time. In his own words, “it is not necessary to increase the variety of industry. It is more beneficial to increase the variety of necessity. If industrialization can be realized by one industry branch, it is more convenient not to try to build another industry”⁷²⁴

However, as mentioned previously, Mehmed Cavid was not against the tariff policy or protective economic policy in every context. Since in the same chapter, he mentioned that in the case of the presence of a contingency for the development of domestic industry, a tariff policy could be carried out temporarily.⁷²⁵ These sentences also can be read as a defensive position against the anti-liberals.

Cavid Bey divided science into two categories. Whereas the first depended on theory, the second is based on practice. According to him, science shows us the right way; which is, for him, embodied in the liberal economic policy. He suggested that after careful consideration of the conditions of the domestic and international political and economic situation, tariffs should be decreased systematically and free trade must be encouraged.⁷²⁶ At this point, there is a striking matter, which was always stressed by Cavid Bey in different studies. He emphasized insistently that any industry that could not be developed in the Ottoman Empire should not be promoted and encouraged. According to him, this would result in more damage than profit. In fact, this argument reflects both Ottoman historical experience and his opposition to the national economy. As remarked before, at the beginning of the Tanzimat period, the Ottomans tried to build an industrial complex, which soon failed. It can be said that this experience constituted a basis for his self-reliance. On the other hand, there were liberal supporters of free trade who benefited from capitalist developments in the Ottoman Empire, even in the constitutional period, as stated in the chapter on Economic and Social Life in Salonica.

⁷²⁴ Mehmet Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume III, pp. 301-302

⁷²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 395

⁷²⁶ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume III, pp. 312-314

5.5.4. An Ottoman Ideal; Private Ownership

As remarked before one of the crucial aspects of the Tanzimat Edict was to guarantee the right of ownership. In fact, Islamic law protects the right of ownership / private property in the Ottoman Empire. However, the Sultan, in principle, had the right of confiscation whenever he found it necessary. This rule had been implemented many times in the history of the Ottoman Empire. However, the new bureaucracy and its elites who emerged through modernization at the end of eighteenth century tried to guarantee the right of ownership in modern law. As we will see soon, this anxiety continued until the second constitutional period. Mehmed Cavid Bey was one of those who praised the right of ownership with liberal arguments.

His thoughts on private ownership are important in the Ottoman context, especially when we consider that Cavid Bey published his book, *İlm-i İktisad*, during the reign of Abdülhamid II. He asserted that the removal of private ownership leads to a decrease in production, which brings despotism since there would be no cause for people to work. According to him, humanity needs freedom to succeed.⁷²⁷ His emphasis on private ownership and freedom reveals his support of the Tanzimat reforms. The defense of private ownership by him in the first article of *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İctimaiye*, reflects the importance that was given to this theme by him. He welcomes the constitution on the grounds that it guarantees private ownership.⁷²⁸

According to Cavid Bey, the inheritance right made legal by the Tanzimat reforms in the Ottoman Empire is an important factor in the producing and accumulating of capital. In fact, the "absence" of private ownership and inheritance rights in the Ottoman Empire were subjects acutely expressed by many Ottoman intellectuals and statesman before Cavid Bey. However, he stated his argument in a theoretical frame alongside a disciplinary language. He alleged that traditional artisan guilds had hindered the accumulation of money by the restrictions on free commerce, which

⁷²⁷ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume I, p. 55

⁷²⁸ Mehmed Cavid, *Kanun-ı Esasimizin Maliye Kanunu Hakkındaki Mevaddı, Ulumu İktisadiye ve İctimaiye Mecmuası*, volume:1, no; 1, p. 26

resulted in negative consequences such as the restriction of tax incomes. He argued that in the case of the removal of the inheritance right, there is no more possibility of forming a family since one of the fundamentals of forming a family and kinships is the inheritance.⁷²⁹ To him, another traditional institution, which had impeded economic development, was the *Gedik* system.⁷³⁰ According to him, the *gedik* system, on the one hand obstructed money accumulation, and on the other hand hindered free trade and industrialization so that capitalism did not emerge in the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, he continued to analyze the cause of the absence of capitalism in the Ottoman Empire by arguing that regulations on some branches of industry, which did not permit private investment, were the most striking obstacle. Thus, he emphasized the crucial importance of the activities of entrepreneurs in economic life.⁷³¹

He expanded his criticism of the traditional Ottoman economic structure by arguing that the places for craft were very limited and by this, trade rights were restricted. He further clarified his arguments saying that;

“it was impossible to open everywhere a barbershop, grocery or bakery. A Baker or barber should had purchased a *gedik* to work. However, too much money was required to buy a *gedik*. Because of limited *gedik*, they became a monopoly. To hinder monopoly and misuse, putting official price on an essential commodity by governmental authority was inevitable.”⁷³²

5.5.5. Foreign Capital

The supporters of a national economy and several Ottoman intellectuals were quite suspicious of the desires of foreign capital and companies at the beginning of the twentieth century. There were some intellectuals who spoke about the necessity of

⁷²⁹ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, volume:1, p. 435

⁷³⁰ *Gedik* system was constructed at the end of 18 century to control trade and production. A *Gedik* was being constructed by way of putting tools, which are necessary for artisans in a certain place. Every craft could be done just in that place. Tradesmen were not free for opening a shop or atelier.

⁷³¹ Mehmet Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume II, p. 145

⁷³² Mehmet Cavid, *İlm-i İktisat*, Volume I, p. 472

creating a domestic capital and national bourgeois and some of these figures demanded the prohibition of the activities of foreign capital. Yet, Mehmed Cavid Bey defended the necessity of foreign capital consistently. He remarked that the capital that poor nations held was not enough to build the institutions that were required by civilization. Therefore, to him, it was impossible for poor nations to build railroads, canals, ports etc. This means, he claimed, foreign capital is indispensable for them.⁷³³ However, Mehmed Cavid Bey was also a supporter of national capital. He encouraged the domestic capital in the areas in which foreign capital was not needed. When the leaders of the CUP began to nationalize some enterprises and encouraged domestic capital by the new arrangements, Mehmed Cavid Bey, as a minister of finance, tried to convince the European financial circles about the good intentions of the government. At the time of First World War, Cavid Bey increased his support for domestic capital. However, even at that time, he was still referring to the importance of foreign capital.⁷³⁴

In conclusion, Mehmed Cavid Bey was representative of the few Ottoman liberals at the beginning of the 20th century. It was peculiar to be liberal in the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire, especially when macro-sociological conditions are considered. However, there were some special traditions, economic, social conditions and an ideological background that provided a basis for his liberalism.

Cavid Bey's books reflect the Ottoman economic textbook tradition. Since the beginning of the Tanzimat Period, virtually all studies on the economy were prepared with the guidance of the classical economic school as a model. The distinctive feature of Cavid Bey's books is that when they were published, there were other textbooks which were pro-protectionist and against liberalism. Ahmed Mithad Efendi criticized liberalism during the 1880s and Akyiğitzade Musa Bey wrote his anti-liberalist textbook at the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, it can be alleged that Mehmed Cavid Bey's preference was not simply a practical policy matter but a more conceptual and philosophical preference.

⁷³³ Mehmed Cavid, *Ecnebi Sermayeleri 2*, Sabah, (15 Teşrin-i evvel 1908), p. 1

⁷³⁴ See; *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, 1333 Bütçesi Münasebetiyle Maliye Nazırının Beyanatı, 8. March 1917, p. 1

Another important factor, which produced a fruitful context for his liberalism was his background. Mehmed Cavid Bey was born and grew up in Salonica, in which a trading bourgeoisie lived and profited from liberal economic policies. In addition to that, to be liberal at that time meant also to have a closer relationship with European powers. The inhabitants of Salonica, which was the most cosmopolitan city of the Empire, preferred to continue their relationships with Europe. Salonica became an economic, social, cultural and political center via liberal economic relations and a pro-Westernist Tanzimat policy. It is possible to find traces of these factors in the thoughts of Cavid Bey. This point comes to prominence again in the discussion of foreign capital, when it is considered that a few Ottoman cities prospered through railroads, ports etc., which were mainly built using foreign capital. In other words, there were many “factual, persuasive and real” reasons to be “a liberal”. Another important factor that shaped his thinking was the anxiety of the Tanzimat bureaucrats and tradesmen to preserve the right of ownership through liberal political reforms. This was one of the reasons that facilitated liberal policies or the liberal case.

5.6. Sabahaddin Bey*

5.6.1. The Origins of the Opposition

Sabahaddin Bey has long been considered one of the most important figures of the Young Turks and Turkish liberalism in Ottoman-Turkish history. Despite the presence of several studies on his thoughts and legacy, it is difficult to find any study that discusses Sabahaddin Bey through a historical, cultural outlook and a sociological framework. Similar to the case with Mehmed Cavid Bey, it is quite

* Sabahaddin’s real status is Bey. Sabahaddin Bey wrote his name as Sultanzade Sabahaddin Bey (Sabahaddin Bey, the son of a sultan), or as Mehmed Sabahaddin. The foreign press wrote his name as “prince”. It was supposed as the translation of his dynastic status. Ottomans and Turks also used this title and it became a sort of nickname of Sabahaddin. But we used the title of Bey.

important to examine the sociological background of Sabahaddin Bey in order to understand his thoughts and the origins of Turkish liberalism.

Sabahaddin Bey was born in 1879 in Istanbul. His mother was a sister of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Sabahaddin was a quite well educated figure. His education included the learning of several languages, Arabic, Persian, French, and the systematic learning of several different subjects; history, art, music, biology, and natural science.⁷³⁵ He translated “Jocelyn” from Lamertine when he was twenty. He was home-schooled by prominent teachers of the time. It is interesting to note that he studied Ibn-i Khaldun who may have fostered in him an interest in sociology.⁷³⁶ At the same time, his interest in natural science and biology influenced the formation of his thoughts continuously. Even in later life, his strong belief in social science exemplifies how natural science and positivism had always been influential in his thoughts. Throughout his entire life, Sabahaddin Bey stuck firm to his belief in the adequacy of scientific investigations in coping with social problems.⁷³⁷

In late 1901, Sabahaddin Bey joined the movement along with his brother Lutfullah Bey and his father Damat Mahmud Pasha (1853-1903). They organized a congress to unite the various factions of the Young Turks, which had connections with the CUP, and different political organizations of various Ottoman ethnic groups. At the first congress of Ottoman opposition parties, held in Paris in February 1902, the leaders of the Young Turks movement debated for the first time a number of substantial political issues. Among them, the most important subject was whether they should accept the Great Powers’ assistance in bringing down the Hamidian regime. The congress functioned as a catalyst that caused the emergence of various political positions among Young Turks, which, in the previous intellectual discussions, could not be identified easily. Because of the referendum on the issue of assistance from the Great Powers, two major fronts emerged; the majority and the minority. In

⁷³⁵ Nezahet Nurettin Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin; Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaaları*, Istanbul, 1977, p. 6-7. His interest in natural science and medicine continued when he was in exile in Paris. He was attending anatomy lessons at the university. See; Ege (1977); p. 34

⁷³⁶ Cavid Orhan Tütengil, *Prens Sabahaddin*, Istanbul, 1954, p. 18

⁷³⁷ Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin, Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaaları*, p. 35

addition to the present diversity of opinions and groups at the congress, the result in the congress led many small Young Turk groups and individual leaders to decide to pursue their particular agendas independently.⁷³⁸

At this point, in order to understand the formation of Sabahaddin's thoughts it is necessary to mention the activities of Damat Mahmut Pasha. Damat Mahmut Pasha was the son of Halil Rifat Pasha whose father also served at the palace. After receiving a good education, he joined the bureaucracy. Then he served at the Ottoman embassy in Paris as a civil servant in order to improve his French. After returning to Istanbul, he got married to the sister of Sultan Abdulhamid II. He became minister of justice at a young age, when he was 24. However, in 1878, Abdulhamid II broke up the relationship with Damat Mahmut Pasha by accusing him of being involved in activities against the government.⁷³⁹ Economic activities and the struggles of European power in the Ottoman Empire must be mentioned here since these issues negatively influenced the relationship between Abdulhamid II and Damat Mahmut Pasha.

The special relationship of Abdulhamid II with the new German state is a well-known fact and is mentioned by both Turkish and foreign researchers. Germany's economic interest in the Ottoman Empire was increasing in the period of Abdulhamid's rule. For the Ottoman leadership, it was a positive rapprochement since there had never been a war with Germany and they did not even have a shared border. German investments in the building of new railroads were much appreciated by the Ottoman Government as the railroads were giving Ottoman's troops speedy access to different territories of the Empire. The Germans even seemed to be more reliable in comparison to the Empire's non-Turkish Muslims, chiefly Arabs. However, it could be claimed that the Sultan's policy decision was mainly the result of the fact that Germany, in comparison to Britain, France, Russia and even Austro-Hungary, had fewer Muslims under its rule -chiefly in East Africa-, which give the

⁷³⁸ Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 178

⁷³⁹ Ahmed Bedevi Kuran, *İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler*, Istanbul, 1945. pp. 20-24

chance of flexibility to the Sultan.⁷⁴⁰ Germany started training a small number of Turkish officers. In 1898, Wilhelm II made an official visit to Abdulhamid in Istanbul. During the realization of German's Baghdad railway project, the Anadolu Demiryolu Company whose partner was Duetsche Bank started the construction of the railway between İzmit and Ankara in 1888. Nonetheless, there was a great rivalry between France, Germany, Russia and Austria in acquiring the privilege of the railway construction contract.⁷⁴¹ For example, an English company proposed a project including a railway construction between İskenderun and Basra. Damad Mahmud Pasha was a supporter of this project.⁷⁴²

Against the intensification of the positive relationship between Germany and Abdulhamid's regime, friends of English interests and the Ottomans who allied with England began contra-activities in order to realize their aims. In 1899, Tunalı Hilmi Bey (1871-1928), who a decade later, became a well-known Young Turk, established a Young-Turk center in Cairo. Meanwhile the members of the Egyptian dynasty became more interested in the Young-Turks movement. Taking English control over Egypt into consideration, the reason of this interest is quite visible. Before escaping from Istanbul, Damat Mahmut Pasha supported the English railway project against the German Baghdad railway project. However, Abdulhamid II rejected the English railway project and the mediation of D. Mahmud Pasha. Thereafter, Mahmud Pasha escaped to Europe in order to build an opposition against Abdulhamid's regime.⁷⁴³ Not surprisingly, the representatives of the English capital group financed his escape.⁷⁴⁴ His arrival in Paris was celebrated by most of the Young Turks outside of

⁷⁴⁰ İlber Ortaylı, İkinci Abdülhamit Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nufuzu, pp. 15-20

⁷⁴¹ Ulrich Trumpener, Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire, in; The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire, (ed) Marian Kent, pp. 112-115

⁷⁴² Sina Akşin, Jön Türkler ve İttihat Terakki, İstanbul, 1987, p. 42

⁷⁴³ A. Bedevi Kuran, İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler, p. 67

⁷⁴⁴ Sina Akşin, Jön Türkler ve İttihat Terakki, p. 42. However, Kuran refuses the relationship between D. Mahmut Pasha's escape and English railway interests. However, he accepts his mediation in this issue as well. See; A. Bedevi Kuran; İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler, p. 66-67. The most important works about Sabahaddin Bey were, Ercümen Koran's, İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jöntürkler, İstanbul, 1946 and Nezahet Nurettin Ege's Prens Sabahaddin; Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaaları, İstanbul, 1977. Sabahaddin Bey's own articles clearly shows that he was a supporter of the English policy and against the German interests in the Ottoman Empire. For example, Prens Sabahaddin, Almanya İmparatorluğu'nun Türkiye Hakkındaki Planları, Nezahet Nurettin Ege, Prens Sabahaddin; Hayatı ve İlmi Müdafaaları, İstanbul, 1977, p. 90

the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turks were in need of a leader and Mahmud Pasha was considered an alternative to Ahmed Rıza Bey.⁷⁴⁵

After fleeing, some years later he tried to return to Istanbul and he was in negotiations with Abdulhamid about some private privileges. However, the English tried to persuade Damat Mahmut Pasha to abandon his decision to return to Istanbul, via an English diplomat Sir Smith Barlett. Further to that, Pasha's sons were against his return to Istanbul. His sons, Sabahaddin and Lutfullah, published a declaration for a gathering of a Young-Turk congress in 1901 in order to prevent their return to Istanbul. According to Akşin, the congress of 1902 was financed by England.⁷⁴⁶ Most of the participants of this congress were followers of Sabahaddin but there were representatives of Ottoman ethnic minorities too. The conflict between Abdulhamid II and Mahmud Pasha was an important factor of their opposition against the regime. However, it should be expressed that Mahmud Pasha demanded the proclamation of the constitution, and the removing of arbitrary confiscations and the release of political prisoners.⁷⁴⁷

5.6.2. Exploration of Holy Knowledge

Following the failure of a coup d'état against Abdulhamid II, realized with the help of England in 1902 and 1903, Sabahaddin Bey did not appear on the political scene for a while. Meanwhile, the Young Turks could not persuade Sabahaddin Bey to be an ally with them. Sabahaddin had no desire to work with the members of the CUP. In the meantime, he became interested in the doctrine of *La Science Sociale*, established by French sociologist Le Play and improved by Demolins (1852-1907). As mentioned previously, Sabahaddin unflinchingly believed in the application of natural science's methodology to social matters. In order to understand and "solve"

⁷⁴⁵ Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat Terakki.*, p. 91

⁷⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 43

⁷⁴⁷ A. Bedevi Kuran, *İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jöntürkler*, p. 98

the problems of the Empire, he got interested in the latest sociological trends in France.⁷⁴⁸ Later, he recounts his exploration.

One day I was strolling along one of the renowned streets of Paris extremely tired and very upset, when Edmond Demolins' book, *A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons*, caught my eye in the window of a book shop. I entered the bookshop and bought it immediately, whenever I saw it. I read the book in a one sitting that night. In the response given by the author to the question "What is the reason for the Anglo-Saxons' superiority?" I noted the existence of a scientific method similar to the methods of the natural science that I had never experienced in the sociological literature. The next day I went to the same bookshop and bought all the works of Edmond Demolins. Upon reading these with great attention and interest, my conviction gained strength and I became certain that these studies follow a scientific train of ideas and possess a method of observation like that of the natural sciences. In the meantime, I was honored with the friendship of the great thinker Edmond Demolins...and I was convinced that it was feasible to make a sociological analysis of Ottoman society and to prepare the necessary reform program.⁷⁴⁹

After his discovery of a scientific social theory, Sabahaddin Bey believed that the causes of the problems of the Ottoman Empire lay in its social structure, with the terms of Demolins "*Formation Communautaire*".⁷⁵⁰ Sabahaddin Bey constituted an alternative program, which is modeled on the *Science Sociale*. When Edmond Demolins' *A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?* came into his hands, he felt that his prayers for guidance had been answered. In this book, first published in 1897, Demolins, a disciple of Le Play, alleged that education in the Anglo-Saxon countries had not, as in France, become a stereotyped preparation for the examinations leading to the inevitable civil service positions, but produced individuals capable of grappling with the social problems.⁷⁵¹ This book attracted a good deal of attention and aroused the interest of modern intellectuals and reformers looking for an explanation for the backwardness of the Muslim societies. The book was also published in Egypt.⁷⁵² There is no doubt that Demolins pro-British views

⁷⁴⁸ Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 82

⁷⁴⁹ Quoted; *ibid.*, p. 82. Also Nezahat Nurettin Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin*, p. 36

⁷⁵⁰ Nezahat Nurettin Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin*, p. 36

⁷⁵¹ Ernest E. Ramsaur, *The Young Turks*, 1957, p. 82

⁷⁵² Lewis, *The Emergence*, p. 199

likewise impressed many Young Turks who had similar opinions on the same issues, such as the Transvaal War and its consequences.⁷⁵³ Despite his failure to persuade his Young Turks friends of the benefits that would ensue from using the theories of Demolins in their propaganda, Sabahaddin Bey did not abandon his ideas of preparing a reform program based on this “scientific method”. In order to overcome it, Sabahaddin Bey decided to frame a new program based on decentralization.⁷⁵⁴ The thesis of the *science sociale* literature in general, and the studies of Demolins in particular was that the superiority of Anglo-Saxons rested in their education, which developed personality and individual initiative.⁷⁵⁵ Besides, the school considered decentralization to be one of the main reasons for the alleged Anglo-Saxon superiority. According to Demolins, all centralised states were exposed to many social problems. Sabahaddin Bey authored his first detailed essay on the subject in late 1905, under the title “*Historical Analysis of Turkish Progress*”: *Demolins’ Comment la route crée le type social* heavily influenced his argument in the essay. He maintained that the Westernized Turkish elite had transformed Turkish society and lifted it to a new social stage, and that now at this stage a new generation of Westernized Ottoman intellectuals could solve the Eastern Question by implementing a decentralized administrative system. Later Sabahaddin Bey claimed that decentralization would also secure political unity alongside social diversity in the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁵⁶ On the other hand, it should be considered that Sabahaddin’s desire was to “save” the Empire and to unite all Ottoman subjects taking their thought, social, political and economic demands into consideration. When he modeled the party program, he consulted with non-Muslim subjects of the Empire as well.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵³ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 87

⁷⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 37

⁷⁵⁵ Lewis, *The Emergence*, pp. 199-200

⁷⁵⁶ Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 83

⁷⁵⁷ Sabahaddin Bey, *Türkiye Nasıl Kurtarılabilir?*, İstanbul, 1334, *İttihat ve Terakkiye Açık Mektuplar*, İstanbul, 1327.

5.6.3. The Activities of Sabahaddin Bey in the Opposition

Sabahaddin Bey presented a declaration, which was published previously in Cairo in 1901, at the meeting of 1902 in Paris when he was 23. In this declaration, after an evaluation of the concept of despotism, he asserted that the removal of despotism and the building of a proper education system could provide wealth and peace to the Ottomans. According to him, there was only one way to realize this aim; the representatives of Ottoman nations who demanded freedom should be unified and fight against the regime of Abdulhamid II.⁷⁵⁸

With this declaration, he refused the independence demands of non-Turkish nations of the Ottoman Empire by claiming that the progress of the Empire and its development would be beneficial to all groups in the Empire. He then claimed that, despite the differences among them, the aim of all Ottomans, including Turks, Arabs, Albanians, Armenians, Macedonians, Greeks, Kurds, and Jews are quite the same. He required the participants of the Young Turks congress in Paris in 1902 to work for the realization of these aims. The most important decision that was reached in this congress was the acceptance of revolutionary methods to overthrow Abdulhamid II. However, simultaneously, it was announced that there is no representative relationship between the Ottoman people and Ottoman governments. However, they did not aim at removing the Ottoman dynasty. The approval and demand of European intervention to overthrow Abdulhamid II by the groups of Sabahaddin, divided the Young Turks into two main camps.⁷⁵⁹ As noted earlier, the main consequence of the first Young-Turk congress was the revealing of the differences among the Young-Turks.

In late 1905, when Bahaddin Şakir (1874-1922), a prominent Young Turk, led an attempt to establish a common front against the regime of Abdülhamid II, he

⁷⁵⁸ Paris'te Osmanlı Hürriyetperveran Kongresi, Osmanlı, no: 104, p. 7. 1902

⁷⁵⁹ A. Bedevi Kuran, *İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler*, p. 152. Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat Terakki*, p. 45

appealed to Sabahaddin Bey. The latter responded by sending him the political program of his so-called committee, which had originally been written in French, adding that he would join a common front only if this program were accepted. This reply indicates that Sabahaddin Bey did not consider the program, which *Terakki* published in its first issue, as his real political agenda.⁷⁶⁰

While the CUP tried to win the supports of the intellectuals, bureaucrats, and most importantly, military officers, Sabahaddin Bey's league targeted provincial leaders, through whom they hoped to persuade the masses to support their political program. Sabahaddin Bey wanted to use the masses as a wild card, and he blamed the regime's treatment of them. He warned the masses against an alliance of notables and government officials and he decried heavy agricultural taxes. Sabahaddin Bey reiterated that one of their main goals was to give the local people the right to administer their provinces. In addition, the little known network of Sabahaddin Bey's league desired to build up an organization starting from the smallest administrative levels, villages, and small towns, in the provinces.⁷⁶¹

Although Sabahaddin Bey had started to pay more attention to the creation of a serious organizational structure, it nonetheless remained a secondary issue to him. This was because he never wanted to seize power through a popular revolution. His intention was rather to use revolutionary activity as a device to secure foreign intervention.⁷⁶² Therefore, he discussed the matter of cooperation with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and decided to join forces with them.⁷⁶³

Following his failure to carry out his eccentric coup d'état plan in 1903, Sabahaddin Bey continued pursuing high politics by establishing relations with prominent foreign diplomats. His disappointing early relationship with the British Foreign Office compelled him to establish ties with politicians and eminent political figures in France. He became a close friend of the former French Minister of the Navy Jean

⁷⁶⁰ Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution.*, pp. 89

⁷⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 93

⁷⁶² *ibid.*, pp. 94-96

⁷⁶³ Aykut Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey*, p. 78

Marie Antoine de Lanessan, who was the political editor of the influential daily *le Siécle*, and he succeeded in obtaining financial aid from the famous French financier Baron de Lormais in order to pursue his decentralization program.⁷⁶⁴ With the assistance of his influential French benefactors and of his secretary, Sabahaddin Bey became a well-known figure in Paris.⁷⁶⁵

In 1905, some Young Turks attempted to unite the Young Turks and asked for Sabahaddin's programme. Nevertheless, there was never reconciliation between the two Young Turk groups.⁷⁶⁶ The issue of decentralization in particular emerged as the main problem. After a long polemic, as noted earlier, Sabahaddin Bey founded his own league, and began to publish his own periodical, *Terakki*. Sabahaddin Bey published twenty issues, until the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908.⁷⁶⁷

5.6.4. The Thoughts of Sabahaddin Bey

As noted earlier, Sabahaddin Bey published a newspaper called *Terakki* in 1906. The aims of the periodical were stated in its first issue as follows;

- 1- To promote *science sociale* in the Ottoman Empire, and translate its literature into Turkish.
- 2- To unite the Opposition fractions, comprising all Ottomans.
- 3- To preserve justice.
- 4- To create orderly organizations in the needy regions of the Empire.⁷⁶⁸

As mentioned previously, one of the main demands of the Young Turks was the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. However, the form of government was not so important from the *science sociale* point of view. This aspect of the school provided for an interesting distinction between Sabahaddin Bey and other Young

⁷⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 124

⁷⁶⁵ Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 124

⁷⁶⁶ *ibid.*, p. 88

⁷⁶⁷ Kuran, *Inkılâp Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler*, p. 219. Also see; Nuray Mert, *The Young Turk Journal*, p. 63

⁷⁶⁸ *Terakki*, no; 1, p. 1, 1906

Turks. Sabahaddin saw no difference between constitutional regime and despotism as long as they were based on the same social structure. Taking the administrative apparatus of every social structure as one its basic determinants, he claimed that centralization's pervasive nature would inevitably lead to despotism. Decentralization on the other hand, would produce a more effective and just rule. Sabahaddin argued that centralization, and the absence of private initiative were the main causes of Ottoman decline. Hence, decentralization and private initiative would be the basic incentives for social development.⁷⁶⁹

After 1908 Sabahaddin carried on his political activities, which were sharply criticized by other Young-Turks groups and by the CUP. In particular, his "decentralization" concept received harsh criticism because this concept was reminiscent of autonomy. In order to make his thoughts clear he held a conference in 1908. He stressed at this conference that he was against the idea of autonomy and his intention was harmonious with constitution of 1908 and building assemblies in which people can participate. However, this principle was expressed in the Constitution of 1908. One of the conspicuous concepts of Sabahaddin Bey was *teşebbüs-ü Şahsi* (private entrepreneurship). However, it did not imply just economic matters. It also consists of political, social, cultural activities too. At the conference of 1908, Sabahaddin stressed that only the restoration of the constitution could bring peace and wealth to the Ottomans and hinder despotic rules.⁷⁷⁰ According to Sabahaddin Bey *Teşebbüs-ü Şahsi* means looking for achievement in yourself and self-confidence and not relying on family or state. He concluded his speech as follows;

Living with personal effort needs much virtue. However, we do not have such qualities because of our raising and education style. We want to live without working, we demand wealth without giving effort therefore we aim to become civil servant at the state. Explicitly, our present poverty stem from our educational system.⁷⁷¹

⁷⁶⁹ Nuray Mert, *The Young Turk Journal Terakki and a Young Turk*, p. 65

⁷⁷⁰ Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *Prens Sabahaddin*, Istanbul 1954, p. 34

⁷⁷¹ Prens Sabahaddin, *Teşebbüs-ü Şahsi ve Tevsii Mezuniyet Hakkında Bir İzah*, Istanbul, 1908 (1324) p. 20

On the other hand, he stressed that the salvation of the country depends on the amelioration of the educational system. According to him, family and school, which are the basics of education, have not functioned in the Ottoman state. He criticized theoretical education that did not include practical instruction. Another important thing for him was morality. “A nation which has not morality can carry on his existence. The solution is private enterprise (*teşebbüs-ü Şahsi*)”.⁷⁷²

Sabahaddin Bey, however, was left with no alternative but to present decentralization as a privilege to be accorded to the non-Turkish groups of the Empire who are seeking autonomy. This was quite different from what Demolins had defended in his works.⁷⁷³ In the realm of politics, however, Sabahaddin Bey’s position provided a platform for the defense of the rights of the Ottoman Empire’s non-Turkish elements. Sabahaddin Bey tried to clarify his position and explain what he meant by decentralization. According to Sabahaddin Bey, his decentralization policy did not mean federalism or autonomy; it implied just increasing administrative ability and rights of the provinces.⁷⁷⁴

Sabahaddin published a brochure in order to shed some lights on his thought in 1910 in Paris. The defense against the accusation of CUP members and the matter of education was stated again in this brochure. According to him, despotism was still the main problem of the Ottomans even after Abdulhamid II. His reaction against the regime of the CUP was as follows; “This despotism stems from our education style. We must improve our social abilities and constitute private entrepreneur in economic means.”⁷⁷⁵ Here he stressed that after the proclamation of the second constitution no real changes occurred in the political structure of the Ottoman Empire, since economic and social structure remained unchanged.

⁷⁷² *ibid.*, p. 21

⁷⁷³ Some works of Demolins’ were translated into Turkish and published at the newspaper of Sabahaddin Bey’s, *Terakki*. Ege republished these articles in his book. See; Nezahat Nurettin Ege, *Prens Sabahaddin; Hayatı ve İlmî Müdafaaları*, İstanbul, 1977, p. 117

⁷⁷⁴ Sabahaddin Bey, *Teşebbüs-i Şahsi ve Adem-i Merkeziyet Hakkında İkinci Bir İzah*, İstanbul, 1908, pp. 35-38

⁷⁷⁵ Sabahaddin Bey, *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyetine Açık Mektuplar, Mesleğimiz Hakkında Üçüncü Bir İzah*, İstanbul, 1327 (1911), p. 24

One of the most important publications of Sabahaddin Bey is *Türkiye Nasıl Kurtulabilir*. (How can Turkey to be saved?)⁷⁷⁶ written in 1329 (1913) and published in 1334.(1918) The book consists of three parts. The first section includes the theoretical basis of his discourse. While the title of the second section is *Teşekkül-ü İctimaimiz* (Formation of our Society), the third chapter's title is *Yeni İstikamette Hayatı Umumiye Islahatı- Hayatı Hususiye Islahatı* (Improvement of General Life-Improvement of Private Life on the New Way). The rest of the book was composed of previously written articles. Sabahaddin Bey, as remarked early, was an adherent of a sociology school whose founders were Le Play, Hendri de Tourville, E. Demolins. Based on their ideas, Sabahaddin Bey defined sociology as an abstract philosophical speculation in contrast to “*İlm-i İctimai*” (science sociale), which is defined as a science. As this science follows a biological model, its investigations are, believed to be, and based on scientific methods. The difference between them, he claims, derives from the methods of Science Sociale, which is based on observation, and the discovery of social laws. Sabahaddin Bey believed in the possibility of classification of societies on a scientific basis and recognizing the main problems of a society through analysis, observation and comparison.⁷⁷⁷ Through these methods, he believes, the problems of the society could easily be solved.

This celebration of natural science as a basic model was popular at the time and it can be found in the thoughts of many Ottoman intellectuals. Even when Ahmet Rıza, an opponent of Sabahaddin Bey, criticized sociology and psychology as being less scientific than physics and chemistry, Ahmet Rıza reproduced the same logic from a different position.⁷⁷⁸ Both of them were looking for a saviour in science.

Sabahaddin criticized the changes and transformations that took place after the Tanzimat by claiming them they were not adequately scientific but deriving from

⁷⁷⁶ Sabahaddin Bey, *Türkiye Nasıl Kuratılabilir?*, İstanbul, 1334

⁷⁷⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 17-18

⁷⁷⁸ Rıza Tevfik, *İbn-i Haldun'dan-3*, Maarif, No, 188, 22 June 1311, Quoted from Ş. Hanioglu, *Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, İstanbul, 1981, p. 11. Abdullah Cevdet, one of the most prominent figures of Young Turks, was an adherent of Gustave Le Bon who tried to explain social matters using mathematical methods. Ş. Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, p. 12

ordinary speculations. He argued that while the figures of the Tanzimat believed that freedom, constitution, education, and, morality could solve the problems, all their efforts had failed. According to him, in order to carry out and realize reforms, first, the structure of society should be defined scientifically. The improvement and spreading of education alone cannot cure the disease. Ottoman society is not constructed around individuality (*Teşekkül-ü Tecemmüi*) but solidarity (*Teşekkül-ü İnfiradi*). He asserts that a society based on solidarity steers individuals to indolence, contrary to the societies which are formed through individuality, and produces successful individuals. According to him, the “obstacle for our progress is not religion, but structure of our society.”⁷⁷⁹ Another interesting point in his thinking is his critical reading of intellectuals who considered Westernization as a solution to the Ottoman’s decline. He asserted that the problems lay in the Ottoman way of life and social structure. He stressed that the meaning of Westernization must be understood properly. Neither a direct imitation of any society nor the radical protection and insistence on the traditional can solve the problems and secure the State.⁷⁸⁰ In other words, he offered to change the substructure and material conditions of Ottoman society. However, this does not mean that he was against Westernization. He just wanted to delineate his “scientific” methodology.

He stressed that the appearance and formation of thoughts depends on social life, and social institutions are constituted by material conditions and production forms. Thereafter, he concluded that science in the non-Western world could not be developed because of the social, geographical, and material conditions.⁷⁸¹ However, he believed in the ability of transformation of social and material conditions through the means of production, education etc.⁷⁸² The development and salvation of the Ottoman State, in his opinion, depended on the construction of a consumer class whose members would raise according to the principle of private enterprise, initiatives and self-condition.⁷⁸³

⁷⁷⁹ Sabahaddin Bey, *Türkiye Nasıl Kurtarılabilir?*, p. 27-28

⁷⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p. 27

⁷⁸¹ *ibid.*, pp. 31-32

⁷⁸² *ibid.*, pp. 30-31

⁷⁸³ *ibid.*, pp.47-48

Afterwards, he arranged his proposals. According to him, Turks must try to transform their social structures into a society that is formed through individuality. Another important necessity, claimed by him, is the promotion of the private ownership. According to him, this was especially important for the improvement of agriculture. The state should be organized on the principle of decentralization in order to enable the participation of the people in the administration. He stressed that the main source of progress, improvements and developments are not the regimes or governments, but private enterprise.⁷⁸⁴ It should be remembered that these sentences included an opposition to the CUP, which governed the Ottoman Empire with a constitutional regime. In spite of the existence of a parliament and constitution, the main problems of the State could not be solved; on the contrary, they increased after the proclamation of the constitution. This situation provided a basis for the discourse of Sabahaddin Bey. He was explaining the role of the army in the government by applying the same logic. Because of the absence of a powerful society that is composed of members that have private initiatives and enterprise, the army was a natural force. Nevertheless, the dominance of the army, in his opinion, was proof of the communitarian character of the Ottoman society.⁷⁸⁵

It is hard to differentiate Sabahaddin Bey's political activities from his thoughts. His thoughts cannot be understood without considering his political activities. However, after recounting his political activities, it is better to summarize his ideas in general, in order to examine his thoughts as a whole, at the cost of making repetitions. As mentioned previously, Sabahaddin Bey's father, Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha, was a brother-in-law of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Mahmud Pasha lost his important position in the government because of a disagreement with the Sultan. Thereafter, he escaped to Europe with his two sons, in order to continue his opposition to the Sultan. One of the causes of his conflict with the Sultan was the rejection of an English railway project by the Sultan. Pasha and his sons had established good relations with the

⁷⁸⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 57-62

⁷⁸⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 80-81

English in that period and Sabahaddin Bey carried on these relations after his father's death when he was in Europe.

Sabahaddin Bey was a supporter of English activities and resistant to the German politics in the Ottoman Empire. He considered German interests and activities in the Ottoman Empire as a threat to the Ottomans. According to him, the Germans wanted to colonize Ottoman territory and Abdulhamid II was causing the decline of the Ottoman Empire through a positive and intensive relationship with Germany.⁷⁸⁶ After being introduced to the thoughts of Demolins, he was convinced that the Ottoman Empire could be saved through decentralization and private ownership. Both decentralization and private ownership were claimed to be the main characteristics of England, and he believed that Demolins scientifically displayed them as the main reasons for English achievements. These two words were *idée fixe* in the thoughts of Sahabaddin Bey. Certainly, the opposition of his family to the Sultan, their positive relationship with the British and increasing discomfort among the non-Turkish citizens of the Empire can be counted as other important reasons and issues that influenced the formation of his thoughts.

On the other hand, it is clear that his ideas of establishing an assembly, which had to include all Ottoman subjects, facilitated his acceptance of the thoughts of Demolins, and decentralization. The ideas of decentralization and private enterprise, self-confidence, self-sufficiency and criticism against the communitarian structure of the Ottoman society were an important part of his liberalism. Another historical development that may have determined his liberalism was the failure of the centralization policy of the Tanzimat.⁷⁸⁷ Tanzimat reformers aimed at centralization of the state and some notables were dissatisfied with this policy. Besides Armenians, some Kurdish leaders also were unhappy with centralization and both of them

⁷⁸⁶ Nezahet Nurettin Ege, Prens Sabahaddin, pp. 90-101

⁷⁸⁷ Yücel discusses the political structure of the Ottoman Empire before the centralization policy implemented. According to him, one of the important feature of the Ottoman political structure before the Tanzimat was decentralization. See; Yaşar Yücel, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Desantralizasyona Dair Gözlemler, Belleten, no. XXXVIII, 152, Ankara, 1974. pp. 698-699

supported the party of Sabahaddin Bey.⁷⁸⁸ It can be argued that the social structure and political situation of the Empire facilitated his commitment to the thoughts of Demolins. Positivist tendencies and strong confidence in science were the most striking characteristics of the Ottoman intellectuals at that time. On the other hand, Abdulhamid II removed the constitution and established a centralist system. The centralist tendency disturbed different Ottoman subjects and increased the diffusion of nationalism among them. In short, several different issues, the desire to save the Empire from dissolution, strong confidence in science, his early education, the opposition of his family to the Abdulhamid II, political and social problems of the time should be kept in mind in order to better understand Sabahaddin's position.

Many Ottoman intellectuals promoted private enterprise among the Muslim citizens of the Empire. They believed that Muslims' avoidance of participation in economic life led non-Muslims to improve their ability to acquire wealth through commerce. These claims, which were added to the intellectual discussions before Sabahaddin Bey's intervention to the discussion, and the stagnant economic situation of the Muslims at the beginning of the twentieth century shaped the ideas of Sabahaddin. In short, private ownership, private enterprise and criticism of Ottoman bureaucrats were already the main discussion topics among the nineteenth century Ottoman intellectuals. Therefore, it is wrong to assume that Sabahaddin Bey's ideas were completely imported and transferred from the Western experience. Rather, it can be argued that Sabahaddin Bey found the best expression of his ideas in the studies of Demolins. The modern Ottoman schools that were established after the Tanzimat aimed to educate a bureaucrat class, which would determine state policy and hinder the decline of the state. This was one of the well-known characteristics of the Ottoman intellectuals. Although Sabahaddin Bey did not get his education at these schools, the general tendency of the Ottoman intellectuals influenced the formation of his thinking. Similarly, the idea of securing the state from dissolution is another main characteristic of his thought. Another striking point is that the resemblance of

⁷⁸⁸ Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties and Shifting Boundaries*, State University of New York Press 2004, (*Osmanlı Devleti ve Kürt Milliyetçiliği*), Istanbul, 2005, pp. 127-137

his writings to the proposal and petitions which had been suggested by the Ottoman functionaries since the beginning of the reforms in the Ottoman Empire. Stresses on decentralization and private enterprise, self-confidence, self-sufficiency and criticism of the communitarian structure of the Ottoman society constitute his liberalism. Although he stressed some economic principles of liberalism, he did not suggest an economic policy for the Empire.

Conclusion

The minds of the Ottoman intellectuals were shaped by the social, cultural and economic conditions of the time. If viewed in Mannheim's terms, their "generations" possessed some common characteristics. This is especially true in regard to Karl Mannheim's emphasis on the common pre-theoretical grounding that accounts for the unity we detect in the worldview of an age. This worldview for the Ottomans was saving the state, which made them very pragmatic. The Ottoman Empire was underdeveloped, and Ottomans tried to modernize the Empire through political and military reforms. When political and military reforms did not procure modernization, Western influence became more apparent on the Ottoman way of life and thinking. Consequently, all Ottoman intellectuals conceded the superiority of Western science and most of them accepted the Westernization as a politics, which could save the Empire. Although Islamists were against social and cultural Westernization, they considered modern science as a tool that could save the Empire.

On the other hand, the difference between Ottoman intellectuals' thoughts can be explained, first, by the term of Habitus, from the point of view of macro-micro relations. Due to the differences between their cultural, social and economic backgrounds, they had different "capitals" which differentiated their thoughts from each other. As remarked earlier, the habitus is shaped and transmitted by the social and institutional environment, as well as by the practices and traditions of a culture. Thus, we can also find some differences between the thoughts of Islamists, which stem from their individual histories. The concept of "figuration" also occupies a crucial position in the examination of the thoughts of intellectuals. The figuration concept provides quite important theoretical possibilities in understanding each individual as part of a chain of interdependence, linking people to one another and limiting individual possibilities of decision or action. All these concepts are very helpful in understanding Ottoman intellectuals.

The Liberalism and Islamism that emerged in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century can be understood only when all sociological horizons are taken into account. Both Islamists and Liberals were surrounded by and immersed in the social, economic and cultural conditions of the Ottoman Empire and the reflections of all these factors can be seen in their thoughts. On the other hand, their personal backgrounds also shaped their *weltanschauungs* that show the importance of different lives and habitus. Islamists did not adhere to a single theory and they were not members of the same social classes and cultural realms. Thus, there were many different elements that can be considered both modernist and conservative from the point of view of modern political theory in their thoughts.

In order to evaluate the position of M. Kazım the historical context of the Ulema should be considered. As mentioned earlier, the *Ulema*, which became one of the most powerful bedrocks for the Islamist movement at the beginning of the twentieth century, could still stand up in the nineteenth century as the upholders of religious principles against bureaucratic expediency and as the defenders of the rights of their Islamic brethren. However, after the Tanzimat reforms, the status of the *şeyhulislam* office was also changed. It was pushed outside the realm of temporal government. Therefore, the members of the *Ulema* became more desirous of participating in political life, in order to preserve their role in government and that of Islam in social life. Islamists were anxious because of rapid political and social changes, so they had to cooperate with the CUP in order to intervene in social and political matters, which inclined them to support the constitutional regime. However, this initiative of the Islamists cannot only be considered a pragmatic approach. Although Abdulhamid II followed a pan-Islamist policy in international politics, Islamists considered Abdulhamid's policy to be detrimental to Islam and the Sharia, because in his time reforms were carried out in a more rapid way that resulted in more secularization and Westernization in law, social and political life. On the other hand, the Young Turks had been trying to acquire the support of Islamic scholars (*Ulema*) publishing pamphlets in which they provoked rebellion against Abdulhamid II, since the 1890s.

Musa Kazım Efendi became a member of the Committee of Union and Progress before the proclamation of the second constitution and participated in some activities of the CUP. All these reasons influenced his political discourse and attitudes. One of the reasons he participated in these activities could have been personal self-interest. Indeed, the members of this office acquired important positions after the proclamation of the second constitution.

The ideas of M. Kazım show that he was a passive figure at the beginning of the second constitutional period whereas the CUP promoted the activity of the religious functionaries in the party. Thus, he joined politics because of the activities and propaganda of the CUP. Nevertheless, it is not possible to say that he just legalized the secular social policy of the CUP. For example, he did not just remark that religious laws guide spiritual life. He also asserted that religion and religious laws, Sharia, determine some matters pertaining to the world. However, the position of Islamists was difficult, so they were mostly hesitant about political and social developments. This contradiction was an interesting outcome of the Ottoman reform process and, at the same time, it was a main theoretical dilemma of the Islamists who supported the constitution and democracy. While they supported the constitution and democracy, which secularized Ottoman civil law, on the other hand, they considered civil law as a reflection of religious rules. However, it should be emphasized that Ottoman civil law was not separated from the Sharia at that time. Ottoman civil law had been a mix of Islamic laws and European laws for a few decades, which embroiled the Ottoman intellectuals in a deep contradiction. Likewise, Musa Kazım Efendi alleged that while Islam consisted of both worldly and spiritual matters and Ottoman civil laws composed of Islamic rules, the application of the constitution necessitated abiding by religious laws.

Kazım Efendi cooperated with the CUP, opposed the regime of Abdulhamid II and promoted consultation, and Islamized the new concepts that had emerged after the French Revolution. There were a few main reasons that determined his political views and attitudes. As mentioned before, the members of the *Ulema* were losing their prestige and important role in society and government with the reforms, which

propagated Abdulhamid's regime as well. On the other hand, the modernization process and reforms brought about a secularization of Ottoman law. Although most of the Young Turks were secular-minded activists, some members of the *Ulema*, like Musa Kazım, did not falter in opposing and supporting new regimes and concepts thanks to the the *Ulema's* inability to participate in the decision-making process in the period of Abdulhamid's regime. On the other hand, it is not very surprising that he promoted equality, freedom, brotherhood and justice. Although there were some *Ilmiye* members who opposed the decisions of sultans in Ottoman history, the functions of the *Ulema* mostly concerned the legitimization of the decisions of the Sultan. At this point, there was no divergent situation for the Ottoman tradition. On the other hand, most of the Young Turks were considered by the *Ulema* to be supporters of their decisions and intermediaries with the people. Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked that he did not remain just as a legitimator, he also tried to raise objections against the reforms and intellectuals when he did not agree with them. This aim represents, on the other hand, the *Ulemas'* effort to become more active in the process of social and political change. Lastly, "saving the state" was an important motive of his political attitude, which inclined him to support the CUP and Western political institutions. However, it should be also considered that the legacy of the Young Ottomans' thoughts was among the factors that facilitated the support of Islamists for the constitution and democratic concepts, such as brotherhood, consultation and equality. As remarked earlier, it was often mentioned by the Islamists that Quran does not make any explicit reference to any kind of governing structure or style and Shura (consultation) is one of those rules, which should play a central role in governing. The Young Ottomans' thoughts, which were related to the constitution, were mostly based on Islamic concepts. So, their influence on the thoughts of Islamist can be seen explicitly. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that M. Kazım did not take a modernist attitude in all matters. For example, on the issue of women he held a very conservative position. He was against cultural and social Westernization and considered feminism as a sign of Westernization. His cultural capital and Ottoman patriarchal social structure did not allow him to take a modernist position in this matter.

It is not realistic to consider the Islamists to be passive actors who were manipulated by the Young Turks. Although Musa Kazım Efendi did participate in the opposition against the regime of Abdulhamid II, and although he was interested in promotion of the constitution after the proclamation, Hilmi's early role in opposition is enough for refuting this assertion.

Ahmed Hilmi was a typical modern Ottoman intellectual, engaging in a primarily Islamic discourse. Like many other Ottoman intellectuals, he was interested in the social and political problems of the Ottoman Empire. As a religious intellectual, he was in a difficult situation. On the one hand, the influence of Western culture and science was increasing in the Ottoman Empire. On the other, Islam was losing its prestige and influence in Ottoman society. Although he was against Westernization, he was an adherent of Western science, which was considered a tool for saving the state. This was the source of his eclecticism. In this context, the thoughts of Spencer provided him with a theoretical background. Besides, there were some personal experiences that had a significant influence on Hilmi's ideas. For example, his refusal of political Islam emanated from his experience in Libya where he witnessed the pan-Islamist activities of the Sanussiyya that resulted in failure. On the other hand, it is also possible to find the influence of Western thoughts and discussions made between contemporary Ottoman intellectuals in the thoughts of Hilmi.

A. Hilmi was mostly in a defensive position and he was using different sources in order to build his own discourse, which was determined by the non-Islamist intellectuals. The influence of the Westernist criticism of Islam on his ideas can be clearly seen, especially when he emphasized that the fatwas of religious scholars had made it difficult to accept and understand religion, because of the discrepancies between their decisions' and the findings of science. Spencer was one of the most influential philosophers in the Ottoman intellectual circle at that time and Hilmi claimed that he considered the philosophy of Spencer very appealing. This may stem from the pragmatic approach of the Ottoman intellectuals, which oriented them towards an eclectic philosophy.

It can be clearly seen that the attitudes of Hilmi were hesitant on the issue of women. On the one hand, he criticized feminist and Westernist approaches and defended Islamic principles; on the other hand, he looked for a third way in order to improve the situation of women in society. Many different elements determined his discourse. When he was searching for a third way, doubtlessly, *Zeitgeist* was the most important determinant. In his defense of traditional and Islamic principles, he referred to both the modern arguments of Western thinkers and Islamic sources. His efforts for a synthesis between modern and traditional elements represented the difficult situation of the Islamists. Most of the Ottoman administrators, members of the army, and intellectuals were becoming secular, and defending the secularization of the civil law and almost all institutions of the Empire. Thus, Hilmi was inclined to look for a third-way synthesis. However, as remarked earlier, this eclecticism and pragmatism was related to Turkish political thought and culture. Their predecessors, the Young Ottomans, were pragmatic and eclectic as well. The influence of Western thoughts, modern science and rationality can also be found in the discourse of Islamists.

Said Halim Pasha's cultural and social capital, as a member of upper class, educated in Europe, clearly influenced his thoughts. It is obvious that Western political thinking had a considerable influence on the thoughts of Said Halim Pasha. His stress on the maturity of Islamic institutions and criticism of sudden changes, which were being carried out with respect to theoretical speculations, is reminiscent of the ideas of Edmund Burke. Ideas of assembly, representation, constitution, supervision of government and many other words of the repertoire of modern politics reflect his openness to modern political thought. On the other hand, it should be remembered that these concepts had been a part of Ottoman politics and political thought since the proclamation of the *Tanzimat*. However, the role of political authority in Said Halim's thought is very much reminiscent of that expounded by medieval Muslim thinkers. Like them, he considered that the concept of authority occupied a primordial place in Muslim society, not only because it issues from the *Sharia*, but also because it brings the *Sharia* into force. Like those medieval thinkers who placed the institution of the caliphate at the center of their political thought, Said Halim

constructed his political view with authority vested in the head of the state. Because of his strong criticism against the current political situation in the Islamic and the Western world, he had to find a basis for his thoughts and classical Islamic philosophy became the real foundation for him. Afghani and Abduh were more famous in the Arabic world and because of Said Halim's Arabic origin, he was more open to the influence of their thoughts. Indeed, there is a great resemblance between their thoughts.

Said Halim Pasha rejected feminism on the grounds that its source was not real but imitation. Islamists were the most conservative intellectuals in the debate about feminism at this period in the Ottoman Empire. They considered feminism to be a part of Westernization so they tried to hinder of this process. Thus, it is not possible to consider the Islamists as modernists entirely. There were many contradictions in their thoughts, stemming from the social, cultural, historical, and political situation of the time in the Ottoman Empire. Said Halim's stress on the empiric method and criticism against abstract theories imply a prevalent feature of the Young Turks and the positivist tendencies of the Ottoman intellectuals.

Sociological theories, which were used in this study, reveal that the thoughts of Islamists cannot be considered to be an integrated whole. There were differences in their thoughts stemming from their individual backgrounds and *lebenswelt*.

Another characteristic of the Islamism can be stem from the historical structure of Islam. As Gellner stress, the development of Islamic social order is the product of certain historical circumstances. Thus, if the circumstances change, a change in the dialogue between the state and Islamic forces should also be expected.⁷⁸⁹ The development of Ottoman Islamism is a good example in favor of this assertion. This is also valid for the example of Justice and Development Party in Turkey.

⁷⁸⁹ See; Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Another factor here should be stressed. Over the challenge posed for the validity of Islam, Islamic thinking moved into a defensive mode, arguing that there certainly existed a relationship between the fate of the Muslims were left behind because they deviated from the true belief. Then, Islamist intellectuals sought to find the essence and the roots of Islam and tried to revive Islam and Islamic civilization. That was the very beginning of the process of reconstructing a modern Islamic identity that was shaped by the immediate challenge of the West.⁷⁹⁰ The characters of the Islamists' thoughts (modernist, pragmatist, anti-westernist, eclectic, conservative and reactionist) were shaped by all these facts.

As noted previously, the economic characteristics of the Ottoman Empire, traditionalism, fiscalism, and provisionism, did hinder a mercantalist economy until the proclamation of the Tanzimat. On the other hand, the penetration of capitalism into the Ottoman Empire brought about some important economic changes in psyche as well as in social structure. Besides, as noted many times, the desire for private ownership was one of the main characteristics of the Ottoman bureaucrats and *ayans*, provincial leaders. When one investigates the origins of the inclination towards liberalism, which appeared in the time of Selim III, no signs can be found showing Western influence. These liberal tendencies can be seen as economically preventative measures stemming from efforts that aimed to eradicate political and economic crises and instabilities. Moreover, it must be emphasized that there was a great desire for private ownership among Ottoman subjects. Besides, the liberal reforms that were realized in the time of Selim III were not against traditional and Islamic rules.

By looking at the type of inter-relatedness that was sustained between Western Anatolia and the core areas of the capitalist world economy, and at the effect of the growth in production and trade on the region, the development of the Ottoman Empire during the middle decades of the nineteenth century was peripheral in character and non-Muslim intermediaries were the main brokers and beneficiaries of the peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire. Most of the non-Muslim merchants

⁷⁹⁰ İhsan D. Dağlı, Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey, Turkish Studies,, p. 22

profited from capitulations and retained foreign citizenship in order to acquire the privileges of the capitulations and the protection of their embassies and consulates. Neither the Greeks nor the Armenians considered the Ottoman State to be the representative of their interests. This becomes very clear from their relations with the constitutional regime after 1908. This was one of the causes of the weakness of liberalism in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, Salonica, Mehmet Cavid's native city, developed and prospered after the Tanzimat period. Foreign investments were among the most important causes of this development in this city. The bourgeoisie of Salonica had a different agenda from the nationalist economists. However, it should not be forgotten that the administrative center of the CUP was in Salonica and most of the Young Turks supported a liberal economy at the beginning of the second constitution. The European way of life was disseminated among the inhabitants, especially among the bourgeoisie of this city. The economic, social, cultural and political situation in Salonica was the most important factor in determining Cavid Bey's liberalism. In fact, he was one of the few Ottomans who had a real basis for becoming a liberal.

As stressed before, one of the motives of the Tanzimat Edict was to acquire the right of ownership. In fact, Islamic law protected the right of proprietorship. However, the Sultan had a right of confiscation, should he find it necessary. This rule had been implemented many times in the history of the Ottoman Empire. However, the new bureaucratic class, which appeared with modernization at the end of the eighteenth century, tried to guarantee the right of ownership by modern law. Mehmed Cavid Bey was one of those who praised the right of ownership with liberal arguments. His defense of private ownership in the first article of *Ulumu İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye*, reflects the importance that was given to this theme. He applauds the constitution because it guarantees private ownership. Cavid Bey's books, written as textbooks at the beginning of the twentieth century reflect the Ottoman economic textbook tradition. Since the beginning of the Tanzimat Period, almost all economic books were written taking the classical economic school as example. The influence of nineteenth century classical liberalism on Cavid Bey's mind is clear, but as pointed out many times, his social, political, economic and cultural experiences, and his

personal experiences also shaped his ideology. For example, Cavid Bey grew up in Salonica, which had a cosmopolitan atmosphere and profited from liberal economic policy. His father was also a prosperous merchant. On the other hand, Ottomanism was the official ideology until the First World War that supported liberal politics in order to provide Ottoman unity and to win the support of non-Muslim nations of the Empire. This provided a concrete background for the liberal ideology of Cavid Bey.

It is impossible to differentiate Sabahaddin Bey's political activities from his thoughts. His thoughts cannot be understood unless taking his political activities into consideration. Sabahaddin Bey's father, Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha, was a brother-in-law of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Mahmud Pasha lost his important position in the government because of a disagreement with the Sultan. One of the causes of his conflict with the Sultan was the rejection of an English railway project by the Sultan. Pasha and his sons had established good relations with the English in that period and Sabahaddin Bey carried on these relations after his father's death when he was in Europe. Sabahaddin Bey was against German interests in the Ottoman Empire and a supporter of the English activities. After coming across the thoughts of Demolins, he was convinced that the Ottoman Empire could be saved through decentralization and private ownership. Both decentralization and private ownership were considered the main characteristics of England and Demolins was showing it as the source of English achievements. These two words became *idée fixe* in Sabahaddin Bey's thoughts. Certainly, the opposition of his family against the Sultan, their good relations with the British and increasing discomfort among the non-Turkish citizens of the Empire can be perceived as being among the causes that could explain the origins of his thoughts. His strong belief in social science in his later life clearly shows how natural science and positivism had influenced his ideas. For his entire life, Sabahaddin Bey continued to believe that social problems could be solved through scientific investigations.

It can be argued that the social structure and political situation of the Empire facilitated his commitment to the thoughts of Demolins. As remarked earlier, positivist tendencies and an unshakeable faith in science were among the most

striking characteristics of the Ottoman intellectuals at that time. Political centralism, which had begun to increase with the Tanzimat Reforms, was disturbing to different Ottoman subjects and increasing nationalistic thoughts among them. When all these factors – the desire to save the state, a strong belief in science, political and social troubles between Ottoman subjects, the opposition of his family, the choice and thoughts of Sabahaddin Bey – are considered together, his ideas and liberalism can be better understood.

Many Ottoman intellectuals promoted private enterprise among the Muslim citizens of the Empire on the grounds that Muslims did not participate in economic life while non-Muslims improved their commercial abilities and acquired wealth through commerce. Both these ideas, which were stressed by many intellectuals before Sebahaddin Bey and the stagnant economic situation of the Muslims at the beginning of the twentieth century, shaped his ideas. Private ownership, enterprise and criticism of officials, which had been the ideal of Muslim subjects, were among the main discussion topics of nineteenth century Ottoman intellectuals. Therefore, it would be wrong to evaluate Sabahaddin Bey's ideas completely as imports. It can be argued that Sabahaddin Bey found his feeling as written pamphlets in the book of Demolins. Modern Ottoman schools which were established after the Tanzimat, aimed to educate a functionary class, which would determine state policy and hinder the decline of the state. Although Sabahaddin Bey did not study at these schools, the general tendency of the Ottoman intellectuals influenced his thinking. The idea of saving the state became concrete in his thoughts. Şerif Mardin and Şükrü Hanioglu boldly stressed that the traditional Ottoman intellectual outlook bore the characteristics of a "conservative bureaucratic worldview," which was focused on the issue of preserving state power.⁷⁹¹ It was the aim and duty of ruling individuals to govern the state and the subjects in an appropriate way. Another striking point is that the resemblance of his writing to the proposals and petitions that had been suggested by the Ottoman functionaries since the beginning of the reforms in the Ottoman Empire. The emphasis on decentralization and private enterprise, self-confidence,

⁷⁹¹ Şükrü Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, İstanbul, 1981; Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasal Fikirleri 1895-1908*, İstanbul, 1983

self-sufficiency and criticism against the communitarian structure of the Ottoman society constituted his liberalism. Another historical development that may have determined his liberalism, was the failure of the centralisation policy of the Tanzimat. Tanzimat reformers aimed at centralization of the state and some notables were dissatisfied with this policy. Besides Armenians, some Kurdish leaders also were unhappy with the centralization and both groups supported the party of Sabahaddin Bey.⁷⁹² In other words, there were appropriate social and political contradictions in his liberalism during the last decades of the Ottoman Empire.

Unfortunately, I was not able to reach to the source that would make possible to build the relations between the thoughts, habitus, cultural capital, private lives, life styles, and *weltanschauungen* of the intellectuals who have been analysed in this work. This is one of the results of the lack of biographical resarches about the intellectuals. Much further research is to be done in order to analyse the influence of the habitus and capitals on the life styles, and the influence of the life styles and cultural backgrounds on the thoughts of the intellectuals.

⁷⁹² Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties and Shifting Boundaries*, State University of New York Press 2004, (Osmanlı Devleti ve Kürt Milliyetçiliği), Istanbul, 2005, p. 127-137