

## **Introduction:**

Before starting the study, I want to state explicitly why liberals and Islamists have been chosen for this research. When envisaging the Islamists who were very important figures in the political and intellectual life of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th century, one would be confronted with the interesting ideas expressed by the Islamists, apparently democratic and pro-modern.<sup>1</sup> Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the election of 2002 in Turkey. Then the conflict between religious and secular Turks has risen again. It can be alleged that the problematic perception of Islam's relationship with democracy is the main part of this dispute. Therefore, the prospects for democracy in Turkey and Islamic World, especially after September 11, along with the broader question of whether or not Islam can accommodate democratic principles, became an important issue. This work is not concerned about the modern debates about Islam and democracy, but the development of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire can throw some new light on the modern debates about Islam, Islamist intellectuals and democracy, especially in Turkey. For example, a modern Turkish Islamist, Ali Bulaç, supports democracy and asserts that the main task in Turkey now is to discern points of convergence between different views through dialogue.<sup>2</sup>

There are many different definitions of the term Islamism. The term Islamic fundamentalism has now been superseded by others, including Islamic movements, political Islam, Islamic activism, Islamic revivalism and new religious politics. The notion of fundamentalism emphasizes the scripturist essentialism, pointing to the traditionalism of the movements. While the term, "radical traditionalism", wants to

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the Islamists who lived in this period supported constitutional regime and promoted democratic concepts. See; Mehmet Çelik, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Çıkan İslamcı Dergilerin Tematik İncelenmesi, (1908-1914), unpublished PhD. thesis, Istanbul, 1998, pp. 305-307

<sup>2</sup> Bora Kanra, Government and Opposition, Volume 40, Issue 4, Autumn 2005, p. 515

rescue the notion of fundamentalism,<sup>3</sup> Keddie proposes “new religious politics” as an alternative to “fundamentalism”, because it is neutral, making clear both the political content of the movements, and their contemporary nature.<sup>4</sup> While political Islam places emphasis on their political nature, “Islamic activism” is intended to account for the inclusion of various types of activities, political, social and cultural, that emerge under the rubric of Islamic movement.<sup>5</sup> The term fundamentalism is not enough clear to define the modern Islamic movements. Therefore, some distinguished academicians, like John Esposito, criticizes the usage of “fundamentalism”. According to him, fundamentalism is often equated with political activism, extremism, fanaticism, terrorism, and anti-Americanism. In his view, to speak of Islamic revivalism and Islamic activism is more preferable than of Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to determine what we mean with the expression of “Islamism in the Ottoman Empire”.

As stressed by Milton-Edwards, in the first decade of the twenty-first century one significant issue that has featured in global politics, discourse and international relations is the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism and the characterisation of the phenomenon as militant and radical. However, contemporary accounts of the fact often overlook and pay little attention to the political history of Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>7</sup> The prevailing accounts tend to make overarching generalisations about the nature and dynamics of Islamist movements. They tend to reify both Islam as a religion and Islamism as a political project by overlooking variations over time in religious perceptions, practice and institutions among different Muslim countries. Islamist movements are often presented as highly homogenous and coherent social units which are to be identified by the discourse of their ideologies.<sup>8</sup> Islamists

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<sup>3</sup> Asef Bayat, *Islamism and Social Movement Theory*, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 26. No. 6, 2005, p. 893

<sup>4</sup> Keddie, *New Religious Politics: Where, When and Why Fundamentalism Appear?*, in; *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 40, 1998. Quoted, Asef Bayat, 2005, p.893

<sup>5</sup> Asef Bayat, 2005, p. 893

<sup>6</sup> Martin Kramer, *Coming to Terms: Fundamentalists or Islamists?*, Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 10, Issue, 2, Spring 2003, p. 69

<sup>7</sup> Beverley Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Fundamentalism since 1945*, Routledge, 2005, p.1

<sup>8</sup> Asef Bayat, *Islamism and Social Movement Theory*, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 26. No. 6, 2005, p. 891

intellectuals reacted to the West either, on the one hand, by syncretism, justified by seeing certain Western ideas as expressions of true Islam, or, on the other hand, by revivalism, going back to the sources of revelation. Modernism and fundamentalism were driven by the experience of Europe's technical and military superiority and its economic penetration and exploitation. Modernism was an adaptation of religious ideas and practices to take account of what the West had achieved, and to improve upon it. Fundamentalism was a return to supposedly original core Islamic praxis as a way of overcoming the West.<sup>9</sup> Both of these features can be seen also in the Ottoman Islamism. However, the differences between Islamic movements which emerged at different times and historical conditions, should be considered. The focus of this research is not the whole Islamism and contemporary fundamentalism, rather I am focusing on the Ottoman Islamism and trying to understand its sociological basis.

The Ottoman Islamists, who were active at the first decades of the twentieth century, did not use the term Islamism. Yusuf Akçura in 1904, a prominent Turkish nationalist at the beginning of the twentieth century, firstly used the term "İslamcılık" (Islamism) to classify the intellectual movement of his time.<sup>10</sup> The use of this term became more common later among the intellectual circles to classify the Islamists' thoughts that appeared after the proclamation of the second constitution. The decline of the Islamic empires and the experiences of Western colonialism, together with the improved communications that this brought with it, was the genesis of a consciousness of solidarity among the Muslim peoples against a common threat. Consequently, many revivalist movements started as local or regional movements seeking a return to the foundations of Islam – the Koran and the Sunna.<sup>11</sup> The members of the revivalist populist movements criticized also the absolutism of the Muslim governments. Some Ottoman Islamist intellectuals considered despotism and absolutism to be forms of tyranny, regardless of their traditional Islamic legitimacy. They supported the transformation of the Western sciences and some ideas into the

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<sup>9</sup> Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought From the Prophet to the Present*, Edinburgh University Press, 2001, p. 279

<sup>10</sup> İsmail Kara, *Türkiye'de İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, No: 1, 1997, p. 31

<sup>11</sup> See; Reinhard Schulze, *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, E. J. Brill, 1990, pp. 17-43

Ottoman Empire and stressed the necessity of changes in some cultural attitudes and traditional Islamic law. In addition, Ottoman Islamists opposed the “secularization” project of the Tanzimat. They advocated the adoption of western technology, but not its culture. Islamists argued that a nation that turned its back on its own culture could only produce a rootless imitation. Nevertheless, Ottoman Islamists were not wholly against the adoption of the Western ways.<sup>12</sup> In other words, Ottoman Islamism was an ideology that tried to revitalize Ottoman Empire and Islamic society that was under the impact of the Westernization and Western pressure. However, we cannot speak of a coherent Islamism in the Ottoman Empire. Rather, there were many controversies between the ideas of Ottoman Islamists, which emanated from the sociological backgrounds of the intellectuals. Here, it should be also stressed that modern Islamist movements and ideas in Turkey can be better understood, when its historical backgrounds taken into account.

Almost all students of the late-Ottoman period have considered twentieth century Islamism in the Ottoman Empire to be one of the most influential ideological movements. Although today there are a few scholars who evaluated the ideas of Islamists either as utilitarian, conservative and stiff or arising from an inferiority complex, it is generally admitted by many scholars that the origins of Islamism and liberalism in the Ottoman Empire have not been researched sociologically, although this issue was emphasized by Yusuf Akçura, a prominent nationalist and intellectual at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. He asked a century ago whether Ottoman liberals had a social and economic background in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>13</sup> Although academic research into Ottoman Islamism and liberalism has increased during the last few decades, it is not easy to say that these ideological movements have been sociologically researched in a thorough manner. For example, although some of the articles and writings of the Ottoman liberals have been republished recently, finding academic research discussing their liberalism from the point of view of sociology is difficult. Similarly, although some qualified

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<sup>12</sup> Yıldız Atasoy, Turkey, Islamism and Democracy, 2005, New York, p. 23

<sup>13</sup> Yusuf Akçuraoğlu, Muasır Avrupa’da Siyasi ve İctimai Fikirler ve Fikri Cerayanlar, İstanbul, Yeni Matbaa, 1339(1923), p. 34, Quoted, Zafer Torak, Milli İktisat Milli Burjuvazi, İstanbul, 1995, p. 198.

academic research on the Ottoman Islamists has been made, the sociological basis of their thoughts was not investigated and discussed. Unfortunately, these important subjects all too easily become an ideological discussion in academic circles.

Prominent Ottoman specialists point out that there are many social, historical, and cultural patterns and structures<sup>14</sup>, which were to have a crucial impact on Ottoman ways of thinking, behavior and reforms, implemented in the last two centuries of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>15</sup> However, it seems that there are few studies investigating the relations between the ideas and the social, historical, and cultural patterns and conditions sociologically, especially in the Turkish language. In relation to this deficiency, Şerif Mardin points out that Turkish sociologists have not concentrated on the micro-sociological and macro-cultural issues because of their complicity with the state ideology and positivism.<sup>16</sup> Apart from that, there are conservative scholars who have tended to evaluate the liberal-minded Islamists non-sociologically as thinkers, affected by an inferiority complex vis-à-vis the West.<sup>17</sup> From this perspective, it seems inevitable that this untouched area should be investigated using modern sociological theories.

The purpose of this project is neither to concentrate on the Islamist movements nor to evaluate the liberal ideas produced at the end of the Ottoman Empire totally. By concentrating on the thoughts and lives of the important Islamists and liberals who are the representatives of these ideological movements, I intend to delineate the main characteristics of Ottoman Islamism and liberalism. Besides the origins of liberal thoughts, this study investigates the social, historical, cultural, and economic

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<sup>14</sup> Structuralism was criticized because of the idea of an abstract universal and everlasting structure forms. See; Stefan Münker, Alexander Roesler, Poststrukturalismus, Weimar, 2000, p. 90. In this work, the changes in structure will be considered from historical perspectives.

<sup>15</sup> See; Bernard Lewis, Turkish Democratic Experience in Historical Perspective, Bilanco, 1923-1998, Tarih Vakfı, İstanbul, 1999, Şerif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1962, Reşat Kasaba, Osmanlı Siyasal Düşüncesinin Kaynakları Üzerine, in Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi, İstanbul, 2001

<sup>16</sup> Şerif Mardin, Modern Türk Sosyal Bilimleri Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler, in; Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik, İstanbul, 1998, pp. 54-70

<sup>17</sup> For example, see; Sadık Albayrak, Meşrutiyet İslamcılığı ve Siyonizm II, İstanbul, 1990, pp. 11-113. Also, for a critical approach to the Islamist modernism, see; İsmail Kara, İslamcıların Siyasal Görüşleri, İstanbul, 1994

patterns, codes and contexts bringing about the so-called democratic ideas expressed by Islamists. At this point, I raise these questions. Were there any common Ottoman and Islamic social, cultural, economic structures or patterns that affected both Islamist and liberalist ideas? Were the Islamist and liberal thoughts entirely the results of Western impact or an inferiority complex? Were there any relations between the Ottoman legacy and these ideas? Under which conditions were these ideas produced and how did these conditions affect the intellectuals? What kinds of relations were there between the personal lives of Islamists and liberals and their thoughts? The aim of this project is to answer these questions.

Many sociologists have contributed important ideas on the relations between thoughts, culture, social structure and agencies. The first sociologist whose theories will be examined is Pierre Bourdieu. As is well known, Pierre Bourdieu tried to overcome objectivism-subjectivism or macro-micro conflicts in social theory.<sup>18</sup> The fruit of Bourdieu's own reflexive sociology was a shift of analytic focus away from both structure and subjective experience toward social practice, which I want to realize in this research. He understands practices as reflecting and reproducing both objective social relations and subjective interpretations of the world. The main idea of this approach is Habitus.<sup>19</sup> His "habitus" concept provides many theoretical possibilities for this work. He sees habitus as "systems of durable, transportable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principle of the generation and structuring of practices".<sup>20</sup> The concept of Habitus provides a great opportunity in understanding the shaping of the thoughts which will be examined in this research. Another useful concept of Bourdieu's is capital. There are three main capitals, which affect the practices of individuals. Whereas economic capital describes financial resources, social capital is related to the social ties that people can mobilize for their aims. Bourdieu considers cultural capital to be a dimension of a broader habitus, and therefore as reflecting the social location of its possessor. His research showed that particular classes and groups in

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<sup>18</sup> See; Pierre Bourdieu, *Rede und Antwort*, Surhkamp, 1992, p. 136

<sup>19</sup> Philip Smith, *Cultural Theory*, Blackwell, 2001, p. 136

<sup>20</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 72

French society tended to have distinctive tastes in music, art, food, and so on. So, central to the process by which cultural capital and habitus assist in social reproduction are institutions.<sup>21</sup> One of Bourdieu's central concerns is the role of culture in the reproduction of social structures, or the way in which equal power relations, accepted as legitimate, are embedded in the systems of classification used to describe and discuss everyday life and in the ways of perceiving reality that are taken for granted by members of society.<sup>22</sup> Bourdieu's theory of the cultural field can be considered as a radical contextualization. "It takes into consideration not only works themselves, seen relationally within the space of available possibilities and within the historical development of such possibilities, but also producers of works in terms of their strategies and trajectories, based on their individual and class habitus, as well as their objective position within the field."<sup>23</sup> In other words, Bourdieu's methodological objectifying means that all phenomena are referred back to the social space, institutions refer back to class interests, and cultural products refer back to habitus and objective positions.<sup>24</sup> However, I have mostly concentrated in this work on the history of the two ideologies rather than on the habitus, capital and life styles of the intellectuals. Due to the fact that there has not been enough researches on the private life, life styles, individual experience, and biographies of the intellectuals who have been analysed in this research, it was not possible to make clear, the relations between the habitus, capital and life styles of the intellectuals.

Karl Mannheim and Norbert Elias are also important sociologists whose ideas would be constructive -and instructive- in this study. Mannheim's ideas on the relations between thoughts and culture, social and economic structure provide us with a suitable background to analyze our problems.<sup>25</sup> Mannheim suggested a sophisticated analysis of the role of intellectuals and of the role and history of *ideology*. He proposed a sociological consideration that considered all mental structures -with the exception of the natural sciences- as context-dependent. According to Mannheim, the

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid*, pp. 137-138

<sup>22</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, Introduction, Polity Press, 1993, p. 2

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9

<sup>24</sup> Lilli Zeuner, *Cultural Sociology from Concern to Distance*, 2003, p.199

<sup>25</sup> See; Karl Mannheim, *Die Gegenwartsaufgaben der Soziologie*, Tübingen, 1932. *The Sociology of Knowledge*, in; *Ideology and Utopia*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1936.

*Seinsverbundenheit* of human knowledge is rooted in the social existence of competing groups in a society. However, the characteristics of that bond of human knowledge to social existence can be variable and it should be open to empirical research. According to Mannheim, to search for ideological thoughts and “weltanschauung”, it is necessary to consider the political, cultural and economic conditions of society. Besides, the classes, generations, elites, and status groups are also important in understanding the formation of ideologies and worldviews.<sup>26</sup> In addition, Elias’ *figuration* concept, which stresses the role of the individual without neglecting the social and historical context, is crucial to revealing the effect of the past.<sup>27</sup> As Chartier noted, “a figuration is a social form of extremely variable extent in which the individuals involved are linked by a specific mode of reciprocal dependence and the reproduction of which supposes a mobile balance of tensions. It appears that the notions of formation, interdependence and balance of tensions are closely linked, which enables Elias to shift from several classic oppositions inherited in the philosophic or sociological tradition, most importantly the contrast between liberty and determinism. Elias refuses to operate on metaphysical grounds, where the only choice is between an affirmation of the absolute liberty of the human species or its total determination, according to the model of physical causality erroneously transferred to historical conditions. He prefers instead to think of the freedom of each individual as part of a chain of interdependence linking people to one another and limiting individual possibilities of decision or action. Against the idealist categories of the individual, or the absolute person, and against an atomistic representation of societies which considers them merely as aggregates of isolated subjects and sum of instances of personal behavior, Elias introduces the networks of reciprocal dependence that make each individual action dependant upon an entire series of other actions as central to his study, and in turn, these networks modify the overall picture of social interplay.”<sup>28</sup> According to Elias, social and cultural legacies, language,

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<sup>26</sup> Lloyd, Spencer; Karl Mannheim, <http://www.tasc.ac.uk/depart/media/staff/ls/Modules/Theory/Mannheim.htm>. Also see; Karl Mannheim, *Wissensoziologie*, Berlin, 1964, pp. 567-613

<sup>27</sup> See; Norbert Elias, *Engagement und Distanzierung*, *Arbeiten zur Wissensoziologie*, Frankfurt, 1983. *Was ist Soziologie? Grundfragen der Soziologie*, München, 1970. *Die Gesellschaft der Individuen*, Frankfurt, 1987. Norbert Elias, *Über sich Selbst*, Frankfurt, 1990, pp. 170-197

<sup>28</sup> Roger Chartier, *Social Figuration and Habitus*, Reading Elias, in; *Cultural History*, Polity Press, 1993, p. 78



philosophies, behavioral models, social norms and values, orders and prohibitions, are internalized in the process of socialization.<sup>29</sup>

These theories that attempt to overcome micro-macro conflicts and to tie micro-macro sociological dimensions will be applied in this investigation in order to analyze liberalism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, concentrating on the thoughts of key Islamist and liberal figures. Thus, it will be also possible to see the difference among the representatives of these ideologies that stemmed from their individual backgrounds. In other words, it will be also questioned whether it is true or not, regarding these ideologies as having a coherent structure.

Islamism was amongst the most influential ideological movements at the beginning of the 20th century in the Ottoman Empire, and there were many periodicals that were published by many different Islamists. It is not possible to cover and investigate all these Islamist intellectuals and their writings in this study. Therefore, I restricted my project to three important Islamists. I give a special importance to the range of the intellectuals I have chosen, whose thoughts will be investigated in this project: Said Halim Pasha (1864-1921), a member of the upper administrative class; Musa Kazım (1858-1910), a member of the *Ulema* class; Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi (1865-1913), more of a modern phenomenon, and a member of the modern intellectual class. On the other hand, we will try to show that there were many differences between the ideas of the Islamists, stemming from their culture, class, life and *lebenswelt*. Liberalism was not a powerful ideology at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire. In those times, there were few intellectuals and periodicals able to serve as representations of liberalism. Mehmed Cavid Bey (1875-1926) and Sabahaddin Bey (1879-1948) were the most important and widely acknowledged liberals.

This research is based mostly on the original Ottoman sources; however, I also profited from many secondary sources, books and articles in different languages.

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<sup>29</sup> Ralf Baumgart/Volker Eichener, Norbert Elias, Hamburg, 1997, p. 106

## **1- OTTOMAN LEGACY**

Considering and examining general Ottoman history is important in understanding and analyzing many historical and current scientific problems in this realm. Although Ottoman history contains a wide period, examining it would provide a researcher with considerable advantages. There are considerable studies emphasizing the influence of the Ottoman past even on modern Turkey's politics and society.<sup>30</sup> In other words, it is important to define the general characteristics of the Ottoman Empire in order to understand the social, political, economical, and intellectual developments in the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire.

### **1.1. Social and Political Structure**

According to İnalcık, the original characteristics of the Ottoman Empire can be described by Ottoman-Turkish traditional society in the time of Süleyman I (1520-1566). One could not see any original forms of the Ottoman Empire at the nineteenth century, as new social and political developments had undermined the basis of those institutions.<sup>31</sup>

The period of 1300-1600 is known as the classical age of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was established by a small principality, which devoted itself to the holy war, on Anatolia and on the Byzantine Empire.<sup>32</sup> İnalcık points out that

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<sup>30</sup> For example, Gerber argues that development of democracy in Turkey is related to the Ottoman experience. See; Haim Gerber, *State, Society and Law in Islam*, State University of New York Press, 1994, p. 2. For a similar assertion, see; Bernard Levis, *Turkish Democratic Experience in Historical Perspective*, Bilanco, 1923-1998, Tarih Vakfı, Istanbul, 1999. For another work, which stresses the influence of the Ottoman past on the origins of Young Ottoman Thought, see; Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1962.

<sup>31</sup> Halil İnalcık, *Political Modernization in Turkey*, in "From Empire to Republic, Essays on Ottoman and Turkish History", Istanbul, 1995, p. 123

<sup>32</sup> Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300-1600*, in; *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* (edit) Halil İnalcık, Donald Quatert, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.11. However, there are discussions about the conditions, which influenced on the genesis of the Ottoman Empire. For these discussions, Ernst Werner, *Die Geburt Einer Grossmacht- Die*

religious character of the Ottoman Empire influenced the state's historical existence for six centuries. According to him, "its dynamic conquest policy, its basic military structure, and the predominance of the military class within an empire that successfully accommodated disparate religious, cultural and ethnic elements. The society to which these elements gave rise followed in the tradition of earlier Islamic empires, but some of its most unique features were created by the Ottomans themselves."<sup>33</sup> The structure of the early Ottoman administration was based on Islamic and Turkish political traditions. İnalcık points out that;

The absolute power of the Ottoman sultans found further legitimation in the old Oriental political philosophy that a ruler cannot have enough power without soldiers, no soldiers without money, no money without the prosperity of his subjects, and no popular well-being without justice. Repeated in the Turkish political thought from Kutadgu Bilig in the eleventh century to the Gülhane Rescript of 1839, this reflection was considered a resume of practical statesmanship. Katib Çelebi in the seventeenth century particularly stressed the central position of the sultan in the state. Though absolute power was ascribed to the caliph in the Islamic community, the theorists emphasized that absolute power was simply a means of implementing the religious law. The Ottoman sultans first tried to realize this theoretical absolutism by founding a type of administration that gathered power in their persons. They achieved this notably by eliminating all kinds of aristocracies in the conquered lands, by entrusting executive functions only to slaves trained in the court (*kuls*) and by enlisting the *Ulema* in their service.<sup>34</sup>

The palace was the center of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>35</sup> According to Shaw, the Ottoman social structure was based on the personal delegation of the sultan. Those who administered the sultan's delegated authority were the rulers. The place of the sultan concerning the law and the state kept on both the Islamic-Middle Eastern and Turkic

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Osmanen (1300-1481), Berlin, 1978. Especially pages 98-104. On the other hand, Lowry criticises Paul Wittek's "gazi thesis" which evaluates Ottoman expansion as religious fanaticism. According to Lowry, religion, far from being the driving mechanism of the emerging Ottoman polity, repeatedly appears to have given way to practical considerations. He says; "Ottoman Empire was established on the lands of the Eastern Roman Empire, known as Byzantium-not by fanatical gazis seeking to spread Islam through holy war, but by a group of tribal chiefs, mystical fraternities of craftsmen, and other Anatolian elements, including some Christian lords of west Anatolia and the Balkans, many seeking to escape the Mongol onslaught of the 13. century. in, Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, State University of New York Press, 2003, p. 131

<sup>33</sup> Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman State*, p. 11

<sup>34</sup> İnalcık, *Political Modernization in Turkey*, p.122-123

<sup>35</sup> Nicoara Beldiceanu, *L'organisation de L'Empire Ottoman*, in; *Histoire de L'Empire Ottoman*, Robert Mantran, 1989, p. 119

ideals of what the sovereign was and should be. His orders had to be implemented without question by all members of the ruling class.<sup>36</sup> In the classical Ottoman administration system, while the bureaucrats had the executive power, the administration of law was in the hands of the religious scholars, the *Ulema*. Although both of these subdivisions of the administration were attached to the sultans' authority, each was independent from the other. A governor was not vested with the authority to give orders to a local judge (*kadi*) appointed by the sultan. The conflict that arose between these branches was conveyed directly to the central government. The same judges administered both the sharia and the subsidiary laws and regulations directly issued by the sultan. Besides, the chief *Ulema* had no right to interfere directly in the government or in legal administration.<sup>37</sup> However, in practice, the situation was quite different. According to Shaw, "the nature of the Ottoman system in fact gave the sultan a limited power. Significant aspects of Ottoman life were left to be dealt with autonomously, not only by different nations, but also by the guilds, the corporations, the religious societies, and the other groups forming the corporative substructure of Ottoman society."<sup>38</sup>

The Sultan aimed at expanding his treasury and military in order to make his power even greater. Besides, realizing social security and order was one of the duties of the sultan.<sup>39</sup> At that point, İnalcık asserts, "Tursun Beg's own rational ideas were manifestly arranged to show that every society must have one ruler with absolute power and with the authority of issuing regulations and laws other than the religious law. The most important values, which a ruler was to conserve, were public order and security under justice. These considerations constituted the basic political philosophy of the Ottomans."<sup>40</sup>

Ottoman society was divided into two major classes. During the classical age, Ottomans were able to effectively govern a vast expanse of territory. A military and

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<sup>36</sup> Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume 1, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 165

<sup>37</sup> İnalcık, *Political Modernization in Turkey*, p.124

<sup>38</sup> Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, Volume I, p. 165

<sup>39</sup> İnalcık, *Political Modernization in Turkey*, p. 124

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p. 124

administrative class that was able to control whole territories made these achievements possible. The other class was the reaya, the ordinary people.<sup>41</sup> High officials were chosen mostly among the Muslims. Islamic Law was very important for the Ottoman administrative system. However, the division of subjects into religiously oriented communities was not practiced just by the Ottoman Empire. This was applied by the Romans and in the Middle Eastern empires.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, as Göçek noted, the Sultan drafted the members of his households from the prisoners of wars, sons of the local nobilities, and Christian boys levied and converted to Islam.<sup>43</sup> The members of the government, or high officials ensured state authority and the security of the Ottoman people generally.<sup>44</sup> While the military judges had the right to practice judicial authority, the treasurers undertook financial authority.<sup>45</sup>

At this point, an important question is raised about the features of the Ottoman Empire. What were the sources of the characteristics of the Ottoman administrative system? Many Ottomanists try to provide an answer to this question. It can be said that there were many factors that influenced the nature of the Ottoman Empire. As Karpat noted;

The Ottoman state was at the junction of several major high cultures – Roman-Byzantine, European, Islamic, and Central Asian geographically and culturally. Its bureaucracy therefore inherited noteworthy political, historical, and intellectual assets, which it used rather effectively to develop a rational understanding of the phenomenon of power as the determining tool of state, along with creative ability and an unusual flexibility to adapt the innovations of others to their own system.<sup>46</sup>

Gerber is among the Ottomanists who try to reply to this question. According to Gerber, the internal structure of the Ottoman administration was different strongly from the Weberian model of a patrimonial bureaucracy in which officials were slaves

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<sup>41</sup> Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats, The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, Cornell University Press, 1997, London, p. 25

<sup>42</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire, Ottoman Westernization and Social Change*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1996, p. 151

<sup>43</sup> Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, p.24

<sup>44</sup> Gilles Veinstein, *L'Empire dans sa Grandeur (XVI siècle)*, in; *Histoire de L'Empire Ottoman*, Lille, 1989, pp. 175-191

<sup>45</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, p. 31

<sup>46</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Politicization of Islam*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.311

of the ruler, carrying out his capricious and unreasoned demands. In his words, “a generation ago such a description was still viable; but as studies of the inner mechanisms of this bureaucracy have begun to appear, the situation has become more complex. There is today an ocean of criticism on the validity of Weber’s model as a description of a real life bureaucracy”.<sup>47</sup> To him, “although when one compares the modern West to the historic empires of the past, the Weberian model is to a large extent both correct and analytically fruitful, further that Ottoman bureaucracy contained important rational elements.”<sup>48</sup> An example of this assertion can be found in the study of Fleischer. Cornel Fleischer demonstrates in his study that Mustafa Ali, a sixteenth-century bureaucrat and intellectual could ascend to the top position of bureaucracy through his personal achievements and qualities.<sup>49</sup>

## 1.2. Economic Structure

Until the proclamation of the Tanzimat Edict (1839), there was no trace of a modern economy in the economic thoughts of the Ottomans.<sup>50</sup> The Ottomans considered the economy to be a means of reinforcing the Empire’s revenues and trade in the Iranian state tradition and tried to accumulate as much gold as possible. Fiscalism aimed at maximizing the public revenues at all times for other than economic purposes; this idea was a main principle for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, military imperialism together with fiscalism formed the basis of the Iranian-Ottoman conquest notion of state, and together they account for the dynamics of Ottoman conquest and the empire building process.<sup>52</sup>

There were important diversities between the Ottoman economic mind and European economic considerations. According to İnalçık,

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<sup>47</sup> Haim Gerber, *State, Society and Law in Islam*, State University of New York Press, 1994 p.144

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*, p. 145

<sup>49</sup> Cornell Fleischer H, *Bureaucrat and Intelctual in the Ottoman Empire*. Princeton, 1986

<sup>50</sup> Ahmet Güner Sayar, *Osmanlı İktisat Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, İstanbul, 2000, p. 61

<sup>51</sup> Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün İlkeleri*, in; *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Ekonomi*, İstanbul, 2000, p.50

<sup>52</sup> İnalçık, *The Ottoman State*, pp. 44-45

The difference between Western mercantilist power and the Ottoman state was that the European state encouraged industries and manufacture so that mercantilism and mercantile classes captured a leading place in society. In other words, while the West moved toward an economy of national wealth acquired through ever-expanding industries and markets under a capitalistic system, the Ottomans pursued an imperial policy with stress on territorial expansion, along with traditional monopolies in manufactures and a conservative policy in landholding and agriculture. The nature of Ottoman economic relations with Europe would inevitably be subject to some changes with the advent of the Western nations in the Levant, and the capitulatory regime itself would assume a new direction. Western mercantilism was founded on the concept of national economy, which was envisaged and managed as a nation-wide corporation, was an advanced form of capitalism compared to its initial forms in Italy. Both easterners and mercantilists pursued the policy of barring the export of precious metals and allowing their free import.<sup>53</sup>

Contrary to the Western economic concept, Ottoman public officials preferred to preserve the traditional system so that traditionalism in economic life in the Ottoman Empire before the Tanzimat period became one of the principles of the Ottoman economic mind.<sup>54</sup>

During the classical age of the Ottoman Empire mercantile activity, urban production and distribution were organized through the guild system.<sup>55</sup> The Ottoman Empire prohibited exporting silver and gold and these elements were exempted from customs and duties. This stemmed from the economic consideration of the medieval East.<sup>56</sup> Besides, the Ottoman state focused on hindering the shortage of necessities and raw material in the cities. The aim of the state was to regulate the qualities and quantities of commodities, purchase and sale and to fix prices in markets.<sup>57</sup> This approach to economic management constituted the third main principle of the Ottoman Empire.

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p. 48

<sup>54</sup> Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün İlkeleri*, pp. 48-49

<sup>55</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein and Reşat Kasaba, *Incorporation into the World-Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839*, in; *Economie et Sociétés Dans l'Empire Ottoman*, J.L. Bacqué-Grammont-P. Dumont (ed), Paris, 1983, p. 341

<sup>56</sup> İnalçık, *The Ottoman State*, p. 49

<sup>57</sup> Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, p. 33

Because of low productivity and difficulties in transportation, Ottomans preferred provisionism, which was based mainly on the increasing of goods in markets.<sup>58</sup>

Fiscalism and market supply were a part of Western mercantilism. However, Ottomans could not achieve developing the idea of an economy as a whole and its protection against other countries before the eighteenth century. Ottoman administrators concentrated fundamentally on the fiscal interest of the state and the protection of consumers in the internal market, while in the Western mercantilist economies regulations were determined by a competitive international market.<sup>59</sup> Briefly, the difference stems from the contrast between a social and economic structure, which is controlled and designed by an authoritarian ruler in an estate society, and a civil society in which the economic classes prevailed.<sup>60</sup> As İnalçık put it,

To explain the European departure from the medieval economy and its structural differentiation from Asiatic economies, the emphasis should be placed on the fact that Europe evolved from a predominantly natural economy to a predominantly money economy in the fifteenth century, while in the Ottoman East bartering and long term credit transactions in trade continued throughout the sixteenth century until Western silver coins invaded the Empire after the 1580s.<sup>61</sup>

It is to be remembered that the Ottomans thought that wealth could be created from new tax resources in the land annexed by conquest, not by intensive methods and commerce through new technologies.<sup>62</sup> In conclusion, the Ottoman Empire was not successful in creating the circumstances that would bring about an economic development carrying the Ottoman economy from an agrarian to an industrial, commercial and maritime superstructure. Besides, they could not secure a bigger share in the profits of international commerce for Ottoman citizens. The economic measures of the Ottoman governments were not derived from a systematized and

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<sup>58</sup> Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün İlkeleri*, p. 46

<sup>59</sup> İnalçık, *The Ottoman State*, p. 50

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, 50

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, 50

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, 51



consistent theory as in the West. Rather, their economic knowledge was based on the experiences and traditions of Middle Eastern societies and cultures.<sup>63</sup>

There is a contradiction between the restrictive controls and the desire for building an economy, which would produce wealth and abundance.<sup>64</sup> The reason of the contradiction is the difference between an economy of protection and command and that of the liberal- bourgeois society, which aim at creating wealth not through regulation but through freedom. In fact, Ottomans, as an example of a traditional society, were aware by experience and tradition that insufficient production leads to higher prices for the consumer, and over-production to low prices unfair for the artisan; because of that they strongly regulated economic activity, controlled and manipulated cities, and restricted their commercial and political activities.<sup>65</sup> Only when giant markets like that of Istanbul emerged, was expansion of the economy possible. Thus, the Eastern economies, traditionally and in general, were based on the long experiences of small towns with limited and static markets where citizen and craftsman alike wanted regulation, whereas notably first in Italy then in the whole West, the economy developed on the basis of an ever-expanding market.<sup>66</sup>

In Islamic jurisprudence, ownership of land was based on the concept of the conquest and the right of the Islamic society as God's trustees. Common property of the Islamic state took its definitive institutional form during the first century of Islam under Byzantine and Sasanid influence.<sup>67</sup> The fact that the Muslim estate was considered a subordinate, and subservient to the society as a whole, formed the second characteristic of it. In fact, the division of society into estates was envisaged as a practical measure that aims at creating the best for society through the allocation of occupational roles and functions. This system could be carried on more or less

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<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 51-52

<sup>64</sup> Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, p. 41

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, p. 41

<sup>66</sup> İnalcık, *The Ottoman State*, p. 53

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103

without damage until the eighteenth century, and there was no clash among estates as long as basic internal change could be avoided.<sup>68</sup>

A substantial part of the land system was *miri*, the land owned directly by the state. *Vakf* land belonged to religious foundations. Privately owned land was subject to the liberal provisions of Islamic law and comprised a rather small proportion of all arable lands. In conclusion, one can say that during Ottoman times most of the land was public, and that the state had the proprietary rights and controlled it.<sup>69</sup> According to Karpas, the meritocratic character of the Ottoman political system having no aristocracy of the blood and being egalitarian in outlook helped the Ottoman Empire in the long and painful transition to modern nationhood and statehood.<sup>70</sup> In addition, the social situation of merchants was not different in respect to religion during the classical age, when Muslim merchants were as prominent as non-Muslim ones in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>71</sup> The division of the population into four estates – rulers, scribes, merchants, and peasants – without any regard for their faith made it possible for the state to control and regulate the major economic resources and prevented the emergence of social coalitions against the ruling elite. The main aim of the state bureaucracy was to prevent the emergence of economic elites that could challenge its primacy.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Kemal Karpas, 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 Karpas, 2002, Boston-Leiden, p. 295

<sup>69</sup> *ibid*, p. 296

<sup>70</sup> Kemal H. Karpas, Politicization of Islam, p. 311

<sup>71</sup> Donald Quataert, The Age of Reforms, in; An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1914, (ed) Halil İnalcık-Donald Quataert, Volume II, Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 837-838. The position of foreign merchants revived after 1870. After the late eighteenth century, the Ottoman merchant community dealing in international trade increased. Non-Muslim merchants had been acquiring foreign protection in the form of a certificate that endowed the tax benefits and privileges of a European merchant. The Ottoman state sought to stamp its own authority on the identity of the merchant group during this crucial juncture. Only after the eighteenth century did Ottoman merchants become a distinct subgroup that was more and more exclusively comprised of the non-Muslim minorities of the Empire. *ibid*, pp.838-839

<sup>72</sup> Kemal H. Karpas, Politicization of Islam, p. 311. However, this anxiety of bureaucrats would change in eighteenth century. With the reforms in the nineteenth century, bureaucrats began to try to acquire private ownership and ensure their estates.

### 1.3. Islamic and Ottoman Political Culture

The Ottoman justice system was based mostly on Islamic law and absorbed the Turkic and Persian state traditions. The Ottomans considered justice necessary for building a powerful state and a circle of justice as the foundation of social order. If any one of these precepts were neglected, the state would collapse. The sultan had to exercise strict control over his administration in order to maintain this circle. Islamic tradition and law also affected the sultan's legitimacy.<sup>73</sup> Islamic religious law and the traditional ordinances and practices of the previous sultans determined the limits of the sultan's authority in administration.<sup>74</sup> This gave the sultans "the discretionary right to inflict capital punishment on offender liable according to Islamic law, to lighter penalties".<sup>75</sup> Even the punishment could only be carried out as an administrative measure, in order to provide for the order of the state, to protect the people, or to give a warning example to others.<sup>76</sup>

In relation to this topic, İnalçık asserts that Ottoman rule was not arbitrary.<sup>77</sup> The Ottoman Empire was tolerant of other religions, in accordance with Islamic law and tradition, and its Christian and Jewish subjects, on the whole, lived in peace and security.<sup>78</sup> In the same way, Gerber stresses the characteristic of the Ottoman rule. After researching the *Kadı* courts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Bursa and Istanbul, Haim Gerber emphasizes that Ottoman Law, Sharia, was not a tool of the upper class. On the contrary, it seems more appropriate to consider it as a means for people of the lower classes to defend themselves against the possible

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<sup>73</sup> Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, p. 30

<sup>74</sup> Uriel Heyd, "Kanun and Sharia in old Ottoman criminal Justice" *The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities Proceedings*, 1967, p. 13

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, p. 13

<sup>76</sup> Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, p. 30

<sup>77</sup> Halil İnalçık "Adaletnameler (Imperial rescripts of Justice) " *Türk Tarihi Kurumu Belgeler 2*: p. 49-53

<sup>78</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 14. Then Lewis adds that "but they were strictly segregated from the Muslims, in their own separate communities", *ibid.*, p. 14

encroachments of the elite.<sup>79</sup> Besides, Cohen stressed the same points also. According to him, it would be an oversimplification to remark that the Ottoman government, by leaving the task of social unification to the religious institutions, condemned the non-Muslim and heterodox Muslim groups under its control to exclusion from effective incorporation in the Ottoman structure of society. Neither the Christians nor the Jews were excluded from effective incorporation into Ottoman society. In his opinion, the very opposite was the case. On both sides of the equation, there was a will and many ways in which their incorporation was actually effected. In his opinion, “suffice it to say here that they were not only summoned by the court whenever Muslims sued them, but applied to it when allegedly harmed by Muslims.”<sup>80</sup>

Another important question concerns how the Ottomans saw themselves. Although there were during the first half of the fifteenth century a number of signs of the rise of a kind of Turkish national consciousness,<sup>81</sup> Ottomans did not seem to be aware of their own achievements in cultural matters. However, the fact that some books were written by early Turks, such as the *Divan-ü Lügat-ü Türk* of Mahmud Kaşgari (1025-?), regarding the ethnic identity of the Turks shows that there was an interest in Turkish identity among the Turks.<sup>82</sup> According to Karpat, the Ottomans purposefully ignored the Turkish features of society and state and emphasized their Islamic characteristics in the second half of the fifteenth century in order to consolidate the Balkan conquest and integrate the newly converted Bosnians, Albanians into

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<sup>79</sup> Haim Gerber, *State, Society and Law in Islam*, p. 57. Thereafter, he alleges that Ottoman social structure has an influence even on the politics in modern Turkey. “Disregarding real democratic measures like free elections and voluntary changes of government on several occasions, these scholars argue that because the Ottoman polity was rapacious, corrupt and highly despotic, and because in history there is no such thing as turning over a new leaf, it follows that the Ottoman mentality must somehow still control modern Turkey. To my mind this logic should be turned on its head. To me, modern Turkish democracy is absolutely real, if very problematic and incomplete, and if indeed there is no new leaf in history then it follows that there is something wrong with our old image of the structure of the Ottoman state and society.” in, Haim Gerber, *State, Society and Law in Islam*, State University of New York Press, 1994, p.2

<sup>80</sup> Amnon Cohen, *On the Realities of the Millet System: Jerusalem in the 16. century*, in; Christian and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, (ed) Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, Newyork, 1982

<sup>81</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 1962, p. 9

<sup>82</sup> For example; see; Bernard Lewis, *ibid*, pp. 10-15

Ottoman Islamic society. The Ottomans ignored their Turkish identity as a matter of state policy until it was reaffirmed, again for state reasons, late in the nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century.<sup>83</sup> Consequently, it can be said that the Ottomans preserved the Arabic alphabet, took gunpowder and the big cannon from Europe and China, and adopted their land system, literature, philosophy and concepts of authority and administration from Islam, Persian and central Asian Turco-Mongolian practices. The Turkish tribesmen who established the state in the thirteenth century assimilated all these into a new format that was neither Arab, nor European, nor Persian, but Ottoman; namely, as Karpat called, they were a bit of all of them but also something apart.<sup>84</sup> Besides this, Karpat stresses another feature of the Ottomans; according to him, the Ottomans created a strong pragmatic sense, flexibility, and relativism, which usually paved the way for giving a shape to their ruling institutions tailored to the requirements of the time. On the other hand, it enabled them to preserve the cultural and institutional continuity of the institutions in appearance and in essence. The state bureaucracy, was simultaneously the guardian of Islamic beliefs, the main agent of change, and the mediator between ethno-religious and cultural groups in the old period.<sup>85</sup>

Besides, Islamic political philosophy also influenced Ottoman political mind. The system of government, which was the result of the doctrines of the Prophet Muhammad, has been described as a nomocracy, this term being used to denote that in Islam the law precedes the state and constitutes the principles guiding social cohesion.<sup>86</sup> Three consequences of importance for political theory came into existence from such a basic assumption. The first is that in Islam political obligation is founded not on a theory of ethics but on the religious criteria of the Koran. Because of this aspect, in Islamic political theory, the idea of a contract of society is grasped in a much narrower sense than it was in the Greek, Roman, medieval

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<sup>83</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, Boston-Leiden, 2002, p. 11

<sup>84</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Politicization of Islam*, p. 311

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>86</sup> Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Baltimore, John Hopkins Press, 1955, p. 16, Quoted Mardin, *The Genesis*, p. 83

Christian, and modern Western world.<sup>87</sup> Political authority is a divinely established category in Islam. As Mardin noted,

In Islam, the possibilities for evolving a theory of politics as a self-contained process with its own inner dynamics are very much restricted... the foundation of Islamic social polity was made on the basis of a compact of agreement, being understood that this agreement was by no means one between two equals. It was rather a compact of submission, which reflects the nature of God's covenant with man. Secondly, the Islamic conception of natural law differs not only from that of the Enlightenment philosophers but also from medieval Christian conceptions...the possibilities that were provided by the Western conception of the autonomy and essential rationality of nature and natural law, which in Europe led to the investigation of the natural and self-evident rights inherent in nature, were considerably restricted in the body of doctrine available to the orthodox thinkers of Islam. However, an elected ruler governing according to law is central in the Sunni Islamic doctrines of the state and sovereignty and may be found in every textbook of the Holy Law...one of the consequence of this last political understanding is that a political theory, which is philosophical rather than theological in nature immediately, becomes suspect to the orthodox.<sup>88</sup>

The political theory of İbn Sina (Avicenna), a well-known medieval Islamic philosopher, especially affected Ottoman political thinking. His political thoughts introduced the fundamentals of political science and oriented readers towards the need to think carefully about the strong affinity between the vision of political life and that exceptional individual who surpasses philosophic virtue by acquiring prophetic qualities.<sup>89</sup> He gives to the lawgiver the primary task of regulating the life of society, by separating the citizens into three estates: the rulers, the artisans and the guardians.<sup>90</sup> Approximately fifty years after Ibn Sina's death his theory appears almost simultaneously in three books which all became Ottoman political classics: the *Siyasetname* of the Selçuk vizier Nizam ül-Mülk (1092), the *Kutadgu Bilik* (1070) and the *Kabus Nane* (1082).<sup>91</sup> In Ottoman political thinking, the philosophizing was also a central theme. As long as the basic consideration prevailed, that

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<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, p. 83

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 84-91

<sup>89</sup> Charles E. Butterworth, *Ethical and Political Philosophy*, in; *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, (ed) Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor, 2004, p. 281

<sup>90</sup> E. I. J. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam: An Introductory Outline*, Cambridge University Press, 1958, p. 145

<sup>91</sup> Mardin, *The Genesis*, pp. 94-97

nothing was worse than anarchy, and as long as institutionalized methods of opposition to the existing political machine did not exist, it proved an adequate political model.<sup>92</sup> In the Ottoman Empire there was a secular lawmaking vision based on custom, which was always criticized, by the *Ulema* and the first Ottoman modern intellectuals, the Young Ottomans. They argued that it could bring about absolutism. This theory stated that where the sharia did not provide a solution to existing problems, the reason could be used to enact regulations with the force of law.<sup>93</sup> This legacy became also apparent in the minds of the Islamists at the second constitutional period.

The making of secular laws by the sultans sometimes was not consented to by the *Ulema* and therefore, sometimes the *Ulema* complained about the rule of the sultan. In addition, because the *Ulema* had been taught that no law was above divine law, the less sophisticated *Ulema* could not accept the validity of secular laws. Thus the *Ulema*, though they achieved increasing control of parts of the state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were able to represent themselves in the nineteenth century as the upholders of religious principle against bureaucratic authority and as the defenders of the rights of the Islamic community.<sup>94</sup> According to Mardin, “it might be said that the Islamic past laid little ground for the permeation of Turks by European political philosophy, but that the politico-ethical commands of the sharia provided one possible point of contact with the political theory of the West, insofar as Western theory also disguised, even in its most rationalistic form, certain religio-ethical convictions about the inviolability of the human person.”<sup>95</sup> Mardin makes these pretensions for the origins of the Young Ottomans, the first modern intellectual movement that appeared in 1860s in the Ottoman Empire. However, as it will be seen in the related chapter, Şeyhüslam Musa Kazım Efendi’s interpretations of the reforms and transformations at the beginning of the twentieth century, bears the influence of this Ottoman tradition.

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<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*, p. 98

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 102-104

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*, p. 105