4-ISLAMISTS

Islamism, as the most influential ideology of the second constitutional period[277] is crucial in understanding Turkish intellectual history. However, there are many controversies in the classification of Ottoman-Turkish intellectual movements, which make it harder to examine. For example, Hilmi Ziya Ülken classifies the Islamic movement into four groups, namely, traditionalist Islamists, modernist Islamists, Islamists who tried to hybridize modernism and traditionalism, and anti-modernist Islamists,[278] whereas Niyazi Berkes[279] and Tarık Zafer Tunaya[280] consider Turkish history to be a continuing conflict between traditionalists and secularists. Thereafter, Berkes and Tunaya deem the Islamists reactionaries and consider Islamism to be an ideology against which secularists and Kemalists should fight.[281] On the contrary, İsmail Kara tries to show modernist elements within the thoughts of Islamists, understating their more conservative views.[282] Interestingly, in Western literature, more often the modernist characteristics of the Islamic movements have been stressed. According to Hourani;

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[277] Tarık Z. Tunaya, İslamcılık Akımı, Istanbul, (first edition 1962) 1991, p. 15

[278] Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi, Istanbul, 1979. Ziya's classification hinders eveluating of the ideas of Islamist, beucase in his classification, intellectuals who had different ideas, are classified among Islamists.

[279] Niyazi Berkes, Development of Secularism in Turkey.

[280] Tarık Z. Tunaya, İslamcılık Akımı, Istanbul, 1991. Examining of Islamism from the point of view of Kemalism produced its populist antithesis. Sadık Albayrak, Türkiye'de İslamcılığın Doğuşu, Istanbul, 1989. Albayrak considers Islamism to be a resistance against secularists. See; ibid.

[281] İsmail Kara, Din ile Modernleşme Arasında, Dergah Yayınları, 2003, p. 42-3. Kemal Karpat makes opposite evaluations; "…in the independent Ottoman state, the modernist reform movements were initiated at the top by political elites, headed by the sultan-caliph and aimed chiefly at saving the state. They were willing to use the faith to achieve their end, even though the old relation between the state and faith had already lost much of its sustaining religious philosophical basis. This development, paradoxically, brought to an end the de facto separation of faith and state that prevailed in the government practices of the classical Ottoman era- the supposed din-u devlet- (fusion of state and faith), notwithstanding. Instead, modernization eventually provided the state with a new argument for abolishing the faiht's relatively autonomous sphere and monopolizing all sectors of power, even, when necessary, using the faith for its own benefit in the name of secularism. The problem that Turks would eventually face, therefore, was how to free the faith from the autocracy of the state rather than vice versa, as usually claimed by some secularist". Kemal H. Karpat, Politicization of Islam, p.8

[282] See; İsmail Kara, İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri, Istanbul, 1994

Those of us who wrote in this way tended to neglect other thinkers who did not accept ideas coming from Europe, or who, if they accepted them, tried to incorporate them within a framework of thought which still relied on traditional categories and methods.[283]

It should be noted, however, that this study does not aim either to put Islamists into categories such as modernist-Islamist, traditionalist-Islamist or to evaluate them from the point of view of the development of secularism.[284] Doing so seems to be meaningless, since there were no absolute boundaries in the thoughts of Islamists. Their ideas were shaped by many factors, such as Islam, traditional values, modern Western thoughts, Ottoman cultural and economic features, individual backgrounds etc. The goal of this work is not to classify the thoughts of Islamist intellectuals of the second constitutional period, but rather to bring the features of their political ideas to the surface and to determine the factors that influenced their thoughts.

The policy of *İttihad-ı İslam*, carried out by Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) should not be confused with the Islamism that appeared after the dethroning of Abdulhamid II. Although many Islamists had used *İttihad-ı İslam* as an object translated in Western languages as "Unity of Islam", "Union Islamique" and "Vereinigung des Islam", they did not just consider it as a state policy.

According to İsmail Kara, Ottoman Islamism whose characteristics were activist, eclectic and modernist, can be defined as a rationalist political and intellectual movement which aimed at recovering and saving Islamic states and societies from the exploitation of Western states, dictatorial governments, and superstitions, whilst also trying to modernize, develop and unite Muslim countries.[285] However, it needs determinations that are more sophisticated. As will it be demonstrated later in this study, there were many differences and controversies in the thoughts of Islamists. In

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[283] Albert Hourani, How should we write the History of the Middle East?, International Journal of Middle East Studuies 23, 1991, pp. 125-136

[284] Şerif Mardin considers the Turkish social scientists' identification of themself with the official state ideology to be an inheritance of the past. According to him, this problem caused an absence of concentration on micro-sociological problems and scientific methodology. see; Şerif Mardin, Modern Türk Sosyal Bilimler Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler, in; Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik, Sibel Bozdağan-Reşat Kasaba(ed), Istanbul, 1998, pp. 54-69

[285] İsmail Kara, İslamcılık, Sosyal Bilimler Ansiklopedisi, issue II, Istanbul, 1990, pp. 261-262

order to understand Islamism, which appeared after the dethroning of Abdulhamid II, it is necessary to evaluate the historical, social and intellectual situation before Islamism came onto the scene.

4.1. Historical Situation on the Eve of Islamism

Islamism, recognized as a modern ideology, can be explained through the social change that undermined traditional values, the disseminating of mass media, and the emergence of a new intellectual class in the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world. Islamism emerged as a synthesis of traditional Islamic values and Western ideological thinking. Islamism has acquired its modern character through interpreting and considering problems rationally according to new social, economical and political developments.[286] However, it should also be mentioned here that all the rationality of Islamism of the second constitutional period was partially restricted by religious sentiments.[287] Therefore, Islamism has always been a controversial concept; not only in the political realm but also in academic research there has been a clear difference of opinion about the nature of Islamism. According to Karpat,

> Although Islamism was a new and modern ideology wrapped in a traditional religious garb, only its conservative aspect received much attention,[288] being given the name pan-Islamism and condemned as a doctrine of anti-European Islamic unity. Pan-Islamism has been used in Western political and academic circles for a century or more to indicate merely a dark-age ideology, without any definite agreement on its content, scope, and goals.[289]

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[286] Mümtazer Türköne, Siyasi İdeoloji Olarak İslamcılığın Doğuşu, p. 25. The necessity of renewal was called under an Islamic term, namely Ictihad. Ictihad is believed to a creative instrument, which enables Islamic scholars to adap to any new situation. The term of Ictihad implies that Islam has not experienced stagnation, on the contrary, it has constantly been updated. Rudolph Peters, Ijtihad and Taqlid in 18. and 19. Century Islam, Die Welt des Islams, 20, 1989, pp. 132-145. This term was used also by the Ottoman Islamists.
[287] T. Z. Tunaya, İslamcılık Akımı, p. 33
[288] As pointed out earlier, Berkes and Tunaya stress the conservative way of the thoughts of Islamists. However, Kara has concentrated mostly on their modernist tendencies. İ. Kara, İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri, Istanbul, 1994.
[289] Karpat, The Politicization of Islam, p. 16

Sabahaddin Bey (1879-1948), a prominent liberal Young Turk, pointed out another feature of Islamism. In 1906, the English foreign minister Edward Gray made a speech in which he described Islamism as a great danger to Western civilization, especially against the interests of England. He pointed out the responsibility of the Ottoman Empire for this policy. The speech of the English foreign minister saddened Sabahadin Bey and impelled him to write an article, published in an English newspaper, The Times, on 12 August 1906, in which he tried to show the motives of the Islamist tendency in the Islamic world. This article was translated into Turkish and published in his newspaper Terakki on 15 August 1906.[290] Sabahaddin Bey had established good relations with England as he had been opposing the regime of Abdulhamid. In one of his articles, he pointed out that the most important cause of the Islamic tendency among the Muslim masses was the severe policies implemented by Europeans. He insisted that Ottoman sultans had not pursued an Islamic policy in their history. According to him, the policy of the Abdulhamid regime did not intend a universal Islamist politics. In his opinion, Abdulhamid II aimed to hinder the collapse of the Ottoman Empire by using an Islamic discourse. Sabahaddin was insisting that Islamist tendencies stemmed from the social, political and economic problems of the Islamic world. In his opinion, because of the domination of religion in the Islamic world, the problems were being expressed in religious garments.[291]

As stressed by Karpat, Islamism/pan-Islamism was a new phenomenon in Islamic history and it was a European-type movement of liberation and change., In other words, it was a modern, progressive Islamic movement, the outward traditional aspects of which obscured its modern character and led it to be condemned as anti-European and regressive.[292] In fact, as we have mentioned, researchers have stressed different aspects of the thoughts of Islamists. Because of that, their thoughts were considered sometimes anti-modernist, conservative and reactionary and sometimes modernist, eclectic, etc.

[290] Landau, The Politics of Pan-Islam, p. 28
[291] ibid., 28
[292] ibid., p. 18

At this point, it would be useful to define the historical conditions that produced Islamists and Islamism that appeared during the last decades of the nineteenth century. During the nineteenth century, Muslims were suffering from the occupation of foreign powers and the conflict between modern and traditional values. It was their largely politicized response to these two challenges that provided the background for Pan-Islamism and later, Islamism. The reaction was anti-imperialist, whose character was religious.[293] However, according to Landau, the origins of political pan-Islam can be traced to the Ottoman-Russian treaty of *Küçük Kaynarca* in 1774, in which a clause was inserted, asserting the Sultan's spiritual jurisdiction over Muslims outside the Ottoman Empire.[294] Truly, the discomfort among the Ottomans disseminated in the late Tanzimat period, mostly in reaction to the manner in which millions of Muslims were being treated by the Russians as well as the newly independent Balkan states. On the other hand, stories of persecution and savagery from the Crimea to Belgrade and Sarajevo increased discomfort among the Muslims. The Tanzimat movement was also accused of undermining the *Ulema* and abandoning the basic ideals, traditions, and institutions of Islam by imitating European ways. The Ottoman financial bankruptcy, which included European use of the capitulations to destroy the traditional Ottoman industries and the debilitating dependence on high-interest loans, added to a general feeling of distrust. The French occupation of Tunisia followed by the British occupation of Egypt confirmed this feeling.[295]

In this context it should be also expressed that Tanzimat diplomats were unsuccessful in solving the economic and political problems of the Empire. This became especially evident during the last years of Sultan Abdülaziz (1830-1876). The Ottomanism of the Tanzimat, aimed at unifying the diverse peoples of the Empire, was rejected by the most of the Christian peoples of the Balkan provinces. The revolts in Crete (1866), Herzegovina (1875), and Bulgaria (1876) clearly demonstrated the failure of Pan-Ottomanist policies to bring together diverse

[293] Brigette Moser, Michael W. Weithmann, Die Türkei, Verlag Friedrich Pustet, Regensburg, 2002, pp. 52-54
[294] J. M. Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 10
[295] Lewis, The Emergence, p. 259

elements of the Empire. Nationalism among the Christian people in the Balkans was the result of economic and social changes and an ensuing cultural revival that had swept through these provinces during the second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. They were also motivated by the Pan-Orthodox and Pan-Slavist policies of Russia. The Ottoman government tried to put down these rebellions by sending its troops. At the same time the Muslim populations in the Balkans were also involved in the upheavals. In Bulgaria, thousands of Christians and Muslims died in these rebellions. The end of Ottoman rule in these realms caused a large-scale migration of Muslims from the Balkans toward Anatolia.[296] An anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim campaign started in the West because of the revolts in the Balkans. Many publications expressed their hostility against Muslims and Turks helping to turn Western public opinion against the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, besides these political difficulties, the Ottoman economy was going bankrupt. The Tanzimat's political and economic failure led to the revival of Islamist ideas in the Ottoman Empire, which had been favored by Sultan Abdülaziz since the early years of his reign. Domestic and international political events had the effect of gradually enhancing his role as the caliph of all Muslims.[297]

The result of these defeats and the establishment of Western colonial rule or a protectorate over Muslim countries was the genesis of a consciousness of solidarity among the Muslim peoples against a common menace that threatened their very existence. The Ottoman Empire, although economically and financially dependent on the West, was the only large politically independent Muslim state during the era of European imperialism, thus making its leadership in the Muslim world unequalled. In addition, Istanbul was the seat of the caliphate and its sultan enjoyed enormous prestige for being the ruler of the two holy cities of Islam; Mecca and Medina. For the Muslim peoples living under colonial domination in Asia and Africa, the Ottoman Sultanate represented a rallying point in their struggle for independence. The answer of the Ottomans to this call constituted a cause of disagreement among

[296] Kemal Karpat, Ottoman Population, 1834-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics, pp. 28-29
[297] ibid., p. 29

scholars of Ottoman history. During the later years of Sultan Abdülaziz's reign, Muslim delegations from central Asia and the Indonesian islands visited the Ottoman capital, demanding military assistance of the Sultan.[298] With the spread of modern communication means, it became possible to utilize and to exploit the masses. The Sultan and his constitutionalist adversaries, who had arisen in the 1860s, used communication means in order to propagandize their solution for the survival of the Ottoman Empire. For example, Abdülhamid II appealed to their religious traditions and loyalty toward the ruler, and the constitutionalists promised them the very new concept of political freedom and material betterment. To sum up, while Sultan Abdulhamid II promoted and supported religious populism directed, steered, and contained by the state from the top, the constitutionalists -Young Ottomans and Turks- promoted an institutional populism that took concrete form first in the constitution and parliament of 1876-78, and then reappeared in the period 1908-18. The new populist upsurge promoted by the revivalists represented at once a return to the faith and a challenge to the elitist political and social order. Sultan Abdulhamid, although sympathetic to the revivalists' pious aims, feared the political and cultural consequences of their populism.[299]

European occupation and influences not only destroyed the traditional Muslim political system and the economic and social institutions that had sustained it but also produced a new social stratum. At this time, a new type of middle class emerged, through personal initiative and the manipulation of market forces and government power, and challenged the traditional elites, who had mainly acquired their wealth through their position in the state service. The middle class that emerged after the Tanzimat Reforms accepted the ethical standards and cultural values of the traditional order but also adopted the rational business rules and the profit motive of the capitalist market system. The revivalist movements tended to regard the members of this new class, especially the intelligentsia, as somehow part of their own faith,

[298] Azmi Özcan, Pan Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924), Leiden:Brill, 1997, pp. 23-40
[299] Karpat, The Politicization of Islam, p. 9

culture, and community but also as deviating from the true path by accepting the enemy's practices and values.[300]

Consequently, many revivalist movements started as local or regional movements seeking a return to the foundations of Islam – the Koran and the Sunna – and gradually, or in some cases quickly, became militant movements of resistance against imperialism.[301] Their leadership came from lower urban, upper agrarian and tribal segments of the middle classes as well as from some of the old religious elites – usually those associated with reformist ideas. In pursuing their aim to renew society and oppose foreign occupation, the revivalist-fundamentalist movements may be seen as vehicles for adapting to the changed socio-economic and political environment. Most contemporary fundamentalist movements are critical of the modernism of the early Islamic reformers, whose wholesale "modernization" they regard as having been harmful to the integrity and purity of Islam.[302] The early revivalists emphasized the idea of *tajdid* (renewal), which describes a longstanding and continuing dimension of Islamic history, the idea of renewal being attributed to a saying of the prophet that at the beginning of each century, God will send to the Muslim community those who will renew its faith for it.[303]

The importance of the neo-*Sufi* movements for this research stems from its influence on modern Islamic intellectuals as in the case of F. Ahmet Hilmi. The neo-*Sufi* movement *Nakşbandia*, was also one of the most active organizations in the Islamic world, and it had become since the seventeenth century a widespread order, especially among the *Ulema* and upper classes in the Muslim lands of Asia. These developments coincided with the emergence of challenges, which Sunni Muslim

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[300] ibid., p. 21

[301] See; Reinhard Schulze, Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert, E. J. Brill, 1990, pp. 17-43. As we see in the subsuqeunt pages, Islamists criticized the modernist intellectuals on the grounds that they imitated the West.

[302] Karpat, The Politicization of Islam, p. 22

[303] ibid., p. 22. As we see in the relevant chapters, the renewal was also demanded by the Ottoman Islamists.

states and communities encountered.[304] The influence of these factors on the thoughts of F. Ahmet Hilmi can be seen clearly.

The revivalist populist movements also criticized the absolutism of the Muslim governments. They considered despotism and absolutism to be forms of tyranny, regardless of their traditional Islamic legitimacy; this issue was later, as remarked before, taken up by liberal intellectuals, especially by the Young Ottomans and reformulated in terms of European liberalism. Meanwhile, in an indirect fashion, the revivalists used the thoughts of some classical Muslim thinkers, to open the gates of *İçtihad* (renewal), blaming the political order for closing them when it prohibited free interpretation of the Koran and Sunna.[305] As stressed by Karpat, it would be a big historical error to regard the twentieth century fundamentalist orders as the continuation of the old revivalist movements that appeared in the history of Islam. While the old revivalists were active in coping with change, many modern Islamists are reacting against the effects of change as well as against the oppressive political regimes responsible for the economic poverty and moral deprivation of the Muslim lower classes.[306] This can be also explained by the assertion of Gellner. Gellners points to the different ways in which Christianity and Islam evolved. He argues that from the beginning Christianity contained the understanding of a separation between religious and political affairs, since it grew out of a context dominated by Roman rule. On the other hand, Islam's development followed a completely different way. According to him, there was no Caesar in the Arabic peninsula in Prophet's time. On the contrary, the political power was grounded in different customs and beliefs, which were disseminated in a sporadic fashion. Gellners asserts that the development of Islamic social order is the product of certain historical circumstances. Thus, a change in the relation between the state and Islamic actors should also be expected, if the circumstances change.[307]

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[304] Butrus Abu-Manneh, Transformation of the Naqshbandiyya, 17.-20. Century, Die Welt Des Islams, Vol. 43, nr; 3, 2003, p. 303
[305] Karpat, The Politicization of Islam, pp. 44-45
[306] ibid., p. 46
[307] Ernest Gellner, Muslim Society, Cambridge, 1981, p. 2

As a result, there appeared essential conditions for the formation of the Islamism in the Ottoman Empire. However, as we will discuss later, this was not the only reason for the formation of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire. There are many reason, such as secularization, Westernization, penetration of Western culture into the Ottoman Empire and so on, that shaped the characteristics of the Islamism of the second constitutional period in the Ottoman Empire.

4.2. The Birth of Islamism

Jamal al-Din al Afghani (1838-1897 -Cemaleddin Afgani in Turkish- was a prominent Islamist figure of the time. Born in *Asadabad* -near Hamadan, in Iran-, al-Afghani wandered around the Islamic countries and then through Europe. His travels included Iran, Afghanistan, India, Turkey, the Hijaz, Egypt, France, England, and Russia. Thanks to his brilliant writing, intelligence, charismatic oratory, and persuasive abilities, he earned many admirers, some of them considering themselves his disciples, continuing to spread his message. Afghani's ideas are not always consistent, particularly in his attitude to religion. However, his concept of politics is coherent, despite changes in emphasis.[308] Aware of the particular character of the people he had visited, he encouraged them to demand reforms and, even more insistently, to seek means and arms for resisting European intervention or domination.[309] He concluded that the physical force of each of the European powers could be resisted only by a united Islamic world. For him, nationalism and pan-Islam complemented one another in their liberationist aspect. Not surprisingly, Afghani reconsidered the Shiite-Sunnite difference in his articles published in different newspapers, suggesting the elimination of difference between the two sects.

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[308] Jacob M. Landau, The Politics of Pan-Islam,, p. 13. Considering of Afghani to be the founder of Islamism has been criticized. According to Türköne, Afghani's ideas did not include any original content. According to him, Young Ottomans were the real founder of Islamism. See; Türköne, Siyasi İdeoloji Olarak İslamcılığın Doğuşu, Istanbul, 1994, p. 37. In the same way, Petrosjan indicates that there were Islamists elements in the thought of Young Ottomans. Ju. A. Petrosjan, Der Islam in der İdeologie der Jungtürken, Mitteilung des Instituts Für Orient Forschung, I, Band XV. 1969, Berlin, p. 102

[309] Jacob M. Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 14

After having been exiled from Egypt, he not only contributed to various European newspapers, but also established several periodicals in Arabic, of which the best known was *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa* in Paris. This one, published during 1884, was of particular importance: both he and his disciple Muhammad Abduh [310] (1849-1905) wrote articles for it, but it was his own views that apparently determined the contents, particularly since Abduh was deeply influenced by him. This periodical also expressed his views on Pan-Islam in general, at that time, in an article entitled *al-Wahda al-Islamiyya* (Islamic Unity).

The concept of a united Muslim community with a spiritual and political leader at its head was the most essential part of the nineteenth-century Pan-Islam movement. Although al-Afghani was probably not its originator, he adopted this concept and markedly tried to collaborate with Abdulhamid II, whom he selected as the personality most likely to direct a Pan-Islamic campaign.[311] Thanks to his activities, the Sultan, Abdulhamid II, invited him to Istanbul in 1892. While Abdülhamid's intentions were to make al-Afghani a valuable instrument in his Pan-Islamist policy, he soon became suspicious of his activities and placed al-Afghani under strict surveillance and comfortable confinement. The sultan had doubts about his activities, suspecting that Afghani was involved in a British plot to establish an Arab caliphate in cooperation with the khedive of Egypt Abbas Hilmi.[312] The ideas of Afghani and Abduh influenced the Ottoman Islamists.[313] For example, Abduh was an enthusiast of the sciences to the extent that he tried to find them a place in al-Azhar's

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[310] Muhammed Abduh (1849-1905 was al-Afghani's disciple and close collaborator in al-Urwa al-Wuthqa, in Paris in 1884. After his return from Paris to Egypt, Abduh became a central figure in the teaching and interpretation of Islam, rising to the post of Grand Mufti and he began to teach in Azhar in 1877. Although, he was interested in politics, this diminished over the years, due to the need to carry on a relationship with the British in Egypt. In his view, Islamic values had been eroded, but the Muslims themselves were at fault; a regeneration of the early-unadulterated Islam would restore its pristine character and enable it to compete successfully with European values. In his later years, Abduh seems to have believed that a united Muslim state was politically impossible, although he continued to invite Muslims to unite against their enemies. He increasingly favored what he believed to be more successful, that was the process of education in religious Pan-Islam within the framework of Islamic religious and social reforms. Quoted, Landau; The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 25

[311] ibid., p. 16

[312] Nikkie R. Keddie, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani: A Political Biography, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, p. 382

[313] J.M. Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 75

curriculum. He believed that if science and religion were to come together, they could bring society to fulfillment. Yet, he warned against imitating European sciences without understanding them in their own context, or otherwise, they would be alien transplants without roots, destined to whither in Muslim soil.[314] Similar ideas were expressed also by many Ottoman Islamists. However, these ideas of the Ottoman Islamists cannot be considered as a repetition of the Abduh and Afghani's ideas. The Ottoman context should be taken into account. For example, In the 1870s and the 1880s, Namık Kemal, already mentioned as a prominent poet and writer in Young Ottoman circles, was so disgusted by Ernest Renan's (1823-1892) claim, in a famous lecture entitled *L'Islamisme et la science*, that Islam was hostile to science, that he not only replied in some detail, defending traditional Islamic and Ottoman values, but also discussed the possibility of *Pan-Islamic unity* under Ottoman leadership, to better resist Europe's intervention. However, Namık Kemal viewed Pan-Islam as a mainly cultural phenomenon and had already expressed these opinions in an 1872 article entitled *İttihad-ı İslam*.[315] In the article, he maintained that 100-200 million Muslims, with a common religion and culture, could be a force, if their co-operation transcended the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. Another contributor to *İbret*, in an article entitled 'Strengthening the Ties', argued that, since Prussia had been striving to unite all Germany, Russia all Slavs, Sardinia all Italians, while some stateless peoples also had been thinking of uniting, strengthening inter-Muslim ties was imperative.[316] Their thoughts influenced the next intellectual generation in the Ottoman Empire.

As pointed out earlier many times, Islam had long been a strong religious and social force in the Ottoman Empire, with a vast bureaucratic structure serving it. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, there appeared an increasing concern about Islam among the members of the religious establishment and the common people. Islamism, *İslamcılık* in Turkish, focused firstly on returning to fundamental Islamic

[314] Amal Nadim Ghazal, Beyond Modernity: Islamic Conservatism in the Late Ottoman Period, Master Thesis, Edmonton, Alberta, 1999, p. 64
[315] Jacob M. Landau, The Politics of Pan-Islam., p. 24
[316] M. N. Özön, Namık Kemal ve İbret Gazetesi, p. 74-8, quoted from Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 25

values and on traditional matters, such as education and public morals.[317] Gradually, however, Islam and Islamic values gained political implications. The Young Ottomans were striving for political reform in the 1860s and 1870s, in the teeth of the conservative policies of the Sultan Abdülaziz and Abdülhamid that were based on Islamic values. Thus, Ottoman intellectuals focused on the issue of the West and western civilization attempting to develop an Islamic response..[318]

Pan-Islamic policy brought about an intervention of the Caliph on behalf of the Muslims. This level of Pan-Islam was often interlocked with activities in the Ottoman Empire's recently lost territories, as well as in more remote areas. One of the objectives of the Pan-Islamic policy was to persuade the West that the Sultan-Caliph's appeal to their own Muslim subjects was effective. Pan-Islamic propaganda, as directed from Istanbul, threatened Great Britain, France, and Russia and the Netherlands implicitly, while explicitly denying any such intent.[319]

On the other hand, it is interesting that although Abdulhamid pursued an Islamic policy in the international arena, he was sharply criticized by the Islamists. In order to clarify this contradiction, it is necessary to investigate Abdulhamid's policy. Abduhamid claimed that he was the Caliph of all Muslims, able to unite them in obedience to him. Abdulhamid's claim to the Caliphate brought about many discussions not only abroad but also in the Ottoman Empire. Abdulhamid II considered himself not only as the Caliph of Ottoman Muslims, but also of those who were not subjects. He tried to convince the European powers that his own spiritual leadership of Muslims everywhere was a significant contribution to his temporal power. The first of these three objectives was largely taken care of by a policy of Islamism, which increasingly favored the central government against the periphery, and the Ottoman Empire's Muslims at the expense of others – chiefly in public office, education and economic opportunities. To strengthen his authority in the Arab provinces and to integrate them into the Ottoman system, Abdülhamid increasingly

[317] Tarık Zafer Tunaya, İslamcılık Cerayanı, pp. 91-93
[318] Ihsan D. Dağı, Turkish Studies, Vol 6, No. 1, March 2005, p. 23
[319] Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 39

employed civil servants and officers of Arab origin in the Ottoman administration.[320] He also founded a special boarding school in Istanbul where the sons of Arab tribal chiefs received government scholarships. Abdülhamid also established direct and personal relations with many important Arab tribal chiefs to bring them under his control. One of the most important of these *sheikhs* was Ibn Reshid, the *amir of Shammar* who had the privilege of communicating directly with the sultan by using a private telegraph code.[321] He attracted many provincial notables to the capital in order to engage them in his centralized rule, and he supported them economically and socio-politically only in return for their support of his centralizing policy.[322] Because of this policy, intellectuals who did not agree with Abdulhamid, were either exiled, or kept under surveillance.[323]

At the time of his reign, many religious Muslims were appointed to the head of the state bureaucracy and to the Sultan's Court. The pensions and salaries of the new bureaucrats were increased. On the other hand, religious institutions were repaired and new ones built; religious schools were inaugurated and lessons in Islam were introduced into other schools. Religious fraternities were supported. Basic books on Islam were printed and distributed free of charge or at low cost; and free schools were started for Muslim families coming to Istanbul.[324] However, it should not be forgotten that the *Ulema* supported the first constitution (1876) and its architect, Midhat Pasha. Thus, Abdulhamid behaved coldly towards the *Ulema* on the grounds that the *Ulema* would be an obstacle for his absolutist regime.[325] This worry of the Sultan was one of the causes of the Islamist intellectuals' opposition to his rule and their support for the constitution. On the other hand, Abdülhamid did not reverse the Tanzimat's secularizing policies that had jeopardized the Ulema's legal and educational functions. While the more prominent religious families adapted to the

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[320] Engin Akarlı, Abdulhamid's Islamic Policy in the Arab Provinces, in Türk-Arap İlişkileri: Geçmişte, Bugün ve Gelecekte. Ankara, 1979, p. 53
[321] ibid., p. 54
[322] Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, p. 31
[323] One of the causes of increasing oppoisition of many different intellectuals against the regime of Abdulhamid was this policy.
[324] Cezmi Arslan, II Abdülhamit'in Islam Birliği; Osmanlı Devletinin Islam Siyaseti, 1856-1908, p. 27
[325] Şerif Mardin, Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset, Istanbul, 1991, p. 93

changing circumstances and managed to retain their land and administrative positions, the diversification of the bureaucracy and the rapidly increasing number of provincial administrative posts enabled the secular landowning families to obtain the new posts and to enhance their influence. In order to keep pace with the bureaucratization and the secular trend, the religious families had to compromise. Like the new landholding families, they sent their sons to the secular schools in Istanbul and increasingly married them into these families.[326] As a result, the opposition to the regime of Abdulhamid II increased among the Islamists intellectuals. At least, they had enough reasons for opposing his regime.

However, there are different approaches to the policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II. For example, Kayalı suggests that, Abdulhamid's Islamism was Ottomanism, equipped with ideological embellishments deriving from Islam. It served to justify autocratic rule and contributed to foreign policy objectives. It has been described as a pragmatic policy that utilized Islamic symbols and upheld the Ottoman state's Islamic identity and the Muslim subjects' morale following the losses in war. According to him, Islamism was a product of changing international and economic relations with Europe and the position that the Ottoman Empire acquired in the neo-imperialist status quo.[327] Pan-Islamic associations were few and small in the Hamidian period and most were short-lived.[328] Judged by its formal organization, the Pan-Islamic movement was not at all impressive. There is also some research asserting that in the period of Abdulhamid's rule, there was no Islamic policy that was planned strategically by the Ottoman State and the government of the Sultan Abdülhamid II.[329]

After the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908, Pan-Islam lost a lot of its influence. Although the new government continued Pan-Islamic activities, they failed to get the priority treatment that they had rated previously. Whatever the attitudes of

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[326] Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, p. 35
[327] ibid., pp. 31-32
[328] T.Z. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler, p. 133
[329] For example, see; M. Hakan Yavuz, Pan İslamizmin Yanlış Yorumlanması- Bir Değerlendirme Yazısı, Turkiye Günlüğü, no; 17, Ankara, 1991, pp. 84-92

the new rulers to Pan-Islam, ideological debates such as liberalism versus authoritarianism, Ottomanism versus nationalism, Islamism versus Turkism went on and intensified, particularly since censorship had become less severe, for a while, under the new regime.[330] In the second constitutional period (1908-1918), a few short-lived periodicals were published, which defended Islamism. The weekly *Sırat-ı Müstakim* (The Straight Path), founded on the 2nd August 1908, continued by *Sebilür-Reşad* pursuing an Islamic discourse. However, some nationalist-traditionalist intellectuals published some articles in these periodicals as well.[331] On the other hand, *Sırat-ı Müstakim* was considered the most important modernist Islamist periodical in the Ottoman Empire.[332] Besides *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, another important Islamist weekly magazine, *Beyanü'l Hak*, also supported a constitutional regime and refuted Abdulhamid's absolutism.[333] However, the Islamists thoughts that were expressed in those periodicals cannot be understood without considering the Ottoman context. For example, secularization of the Ottoman public sphere at this period alone influenced the discourse of the Ottoman Islamists.

In these periodicals, Pan-Islam was proclaimed boldly. Along with an emphatic request for a return to old Muslim values, demands for the unity of all Muslims were formulated and deemed necessary in order to resist the further onslaught of Christian Europe. Mehmed Akif (1873-1926) and H. Eşref Edip were editors of these periodicals for some time -M. Akif was an admirer of al-Afghani and Abduh.[334]

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[330] Shaw and Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Volume II, p. 273. Although pan-Islamism was discussed in these newspapers, opposition against the secularization and Westernization tendencies among the Ottoman elites were the main themes. Therefore, it can be said that with these Islamists periodicals cultural Islamism began to increase in the second constitutional period.

[331] Esther Debus, Sebilürreşad, Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zur islamischen Opposition der vor- und nachkemalistischen Ara, Frankfurt, 1991, pp. 27-29

[332] See; François Georgeon, Aux Origines du nationalisme turc. Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935), Paris 1980; Somel Akshin, Sırat-ı Müstakim: Islamist Modernist Thought in the Ottoman Empire, The Journal of the Middle East Studies at Columbia University. Vol, I, No, I, 1987, pp. 55-80

[333] Şeref Akbaba, II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi Türk Basın Hayatında Beyanü'l Hak Gazetesi, unpublished PhD. thesis, Istanbul, 1997, p. 160

[334] J.M. Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 75. However, it cannot be argued that he was influenced mostly by Abduh and al-Afgani. İsmail Kara argues that Mehmet Akif, the writer of Turkish national anthem, was one of the most important Islamist actors between 1900 and 1920, Young Ottoman influence upon Mehmet Akif was significant than it is suggested. For instance, in his writings and poems, Akif used Namık Kemal's name, a prominent Young Ottoman, 13 times whereas he used Muhammed Abduh only 3 times. See; İsmail Kara, Din ile Modernleşme Arasında, Istanbul, 2003,

There were many other important Islamist scholars who interested in the problems of the Ottoman Empire in this period. One of them was Said Nursi (1876-1961) whose ideas are still very influential in modern Turkey. Because of his continuous importance, it shall be convenient to discuss his thoughts in general.

Said Nursi was born in a Kurdish village (therefore, he was also called Said-i Kürdi), in Bitlis, one of the Kurdish province of the Ottoman Empire. At an early age, Nursi received strong Islamic education and achieved recognition as a well-known scholar when he was only fifteen years old, because of his succesful discussions with other ulema. He also received Sufi instruction during his education. At the end of 1907, Nursi arrived in the Ottoman capital with the intention of winning offical support for the development of the Eastern Kurdish provinces of the Ottoman Empire. He presented a petition to Sultan Abdulhamid setting out his proposals that led to his arrest. After the proclamation of the Second Constitution, Nursi made public speeches supporting freedom and constitutionalism, emphasizing their conformity with the Islamic principles.[335] From his youth, Nursi's overriding aim in life was to vindicate the Qur'an as a source of true knowledge and progress, and he prepared himself accordingly by acquiring wide learning in numereous branches of knowledge. However, like other Islamists, in his early life he pursued other urgent goals aimed at the revitalization of the Empire and Islamic world.[336] He supported also the constitutional regime and engaged in politics at this period. In virtually all of the speeches, newspaper articles, and other writings that have been preserved, Nursi used the ideas and terminology of the liberal thought made familiar to the Ottoman intellectuals in the nineteenth century by Namık Kemal and Young Ottomans, and their succssors.[337] At the beginning of the Second Constitutional period, Said Nursi,

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p.205. There are two another stuedies stressing the influence of Namık Kemal on Akif and other Islamists, see; Esther Debus, Sebilürreşad, Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zur islamischen Opposition der vor-und nachkemalistischen Ara, Frankfurt, 1991, p. 48; Akshin Somel, Sırat-ı Müstakim: Islamic Modernist Thought in the Ottoman Empire, The Journal of the Middle East Studies Society at -Columbia University, Vol, 1 No, 1, 1987, p. 55-80

[335] Şükran Valide, A Chronology of Said Nursi's Life, in; Islam at the Crossroads, (ed) Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, State University of New York Press, 2003, p. XVII

[336] Şükran Vahide, Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi, in; Islam at the Crossroads, (ed) Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, State University of New York Press, 2003, p. 1

[337] ibid. p.6

like many other Islamists, was an Ottomanist who believed that the Ottoman Empire was the last powerful muslim state, capable of unifying all Ottoman nations under one nation, regardless of linguistic differences. He rejected also the arbitrary personal governance, so that he gave his supports to the constitution.[338] He believed also that the solution to the new problems could be found in Islam. The values of Islam bring order to daily life, at the same time binding people to one another. This connection between Islamic values and their application to the problems of the masses appears in one of Nursi's views concerning prescribed prayer.[339] Like Musa Kazım Efendi, Said Halim Pasha and Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi, Said Nursi considered the constitutional regime as a tool, which would hinder the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and arbitrary rules of the Sultans. Unfortunately, he became uninterested in political philosophy in his later period.

In 1921 Nursi withdrew into solitude and underwent a profound mental and spiritual transformation, the result of an intense inner quest, in the course of which he realized that he should take the Qur'an as his guide and free himself from the influence of philosophy and politics. He called this transformation as the emergence of "New Said".[340] Then, he began to write his "risales" (short treatises), the collection of which is known in Turkey as the "Risale-i Nur". During his later period, Said Nursi devoted his time to the development of a new Islamic theology, and the establishment of a university for religious education.[341]

In the period of "New Said", Nursi define his goal as that of defending Islamic faith. As opposed to the earlier period of his life, he had no desire at this point to deal with political questions or activities, but sought instead to strengthen the religious feeling and Islamic identity of the people. He stated, the greatest danger facing the people of Islam at this time is their hearts being corrupted and belief harmed through the misguidance that arises from science and philosophy. Nursi's mission and self-

[338] Said Nursi, Hutbe-i Samiye, in; İctima-i Reçeteler, Vol 2, İstanbul, 1990
[339] Şerif Mardin, Reflections on Said Nursi's Life and Thought, in; Islam at the Crossroads, (ed) Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, State University of New York Press, 2003, pp. 45-46
[340] Şükran Vahide, A Chronology of Said Nursi's Life, XVIII
[341] Yıldız Atasoy, Turkey, Islamists and Democracy, London&New York, 2005, p. 47

responsibility for protecting Muslims people's faith from the attacks of Western materialistic and positivistic movements that were spreading through Islamic world during his time is very clear throughout his writings. The main characteristic of Nursi's revitalization project in his "Old Said" period was the combination of Islamic disciplines with the contemporary sciences and learning. In conclusion, in his later period, Nursi's aim was not to set up a theoretical system, but to reinforce the faith and beliefs of his people. He was addressing a general public that was under the influence of the impact of modernity, and had questiongs regarding their religion.[342]

In conclusion, we can say that at the beginning of the second constitutional period in 1908, almost all Islamist intellectuals supported the constitution and criticized the regime of Abdulhamid II. The Islamists used traditional Islamic values when they criticized the rule of the Sultan Abdulahmid II. To put it generally, in these periodicals Islamists asserted that the Prophet Muhammad governed the state not personally but through consultation. According to them, Muhammad condemned the obedience of a governor who does not carry out Islamic rules. The four caliphs were elected by the people and did not appoint any successors. Islamists believed that it is forbidden to rule the state by a dynasty in Islam. Accordingly, they argued, Islam is not against democracy; on the contrary, it supports the political rights, equality and freedom. Consequently, Islamists tried to make legitimate the idea of parliament by redefining old concepts such as *şura* and *meşveret*. However, there were differing opinions among the Islamists about these matters.[343]

Some researchers stressed that CUP leaders opposed Adulhamid II before they dethroned him, and they sought an opportunity to cooperate with Islamists, in order to hinder an Islamic opposition supported by Ottoman common people.[344] According to Zahrone, Islamists were anxious because of rapid political and social change so that they had to cooperate with the CUP in order to intervene in social and political matters, which inclined them to support the constitutional regime. The same author

[342] M. Sait Özvarlı, Said Nursi's Project of Revitalizing Contemporary Islamic Thought, in; Islam at the Crossroads, pp. 317-333
[343] See; İsmail Kara, İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri, İstambul, 1994
[344] For example, see; Şükrü Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, especially, pp. 50-80

stresses that Musa Kazım Efendi became a *şeyhülislam* (chief religious official) after the proclamation of the constitution, and he did not engage in political matters until the proclaiming of the constitutional regime. Kazım Efendi was interested in *Sufism* and other religious matters as a representative of classic Ottoman *Ulema* before the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908. According to Zarcone, Kazım Efendi wrote about political and social matters after the CUP seized power.[345] This determination seems very important in evaluating the Islamists' approach to the constitution, democracy and freedom. If the assertion of Zarcone is true, it can be said that Islamists, at least Kazım Efendi, were pragmatist. But this argument alone can not explain the minds of the Islamists.

In fact, the Young Turks were trying to acquire the support of the *Ulema*, publishing pamphlets in which they sought to provoke rebellion against Abdulhamid II, since the 1890s.[346] On the other hand, Islamists considered Abdulhamid detrimental to Islam and the Sharia.[347] Besides, it should not be forgotten that the intellectual legacy of the Islamists was providing a theoretical basis for their acceptance and promotion of a constitutional regime. The Young Ottoman's thoughts, regarding the constitution, were mostly based on Islamic concepts. At this point, it is important to determine the causes that impelled the Islamists to join the opposition against Abdulhamid II, although he carried out an Islamic policy. As pointed out earlier, Abdulhamid II pursued an autocratic policy, removing the parliamentary system. Besides, he was very doubtful about the activities of the *Ulema* and religious intellectuals whom he could not control. On the other hand, the social, economical and political problems of the Empire could not be solved by the time of the Abdulhamid II. The Ottoman intellectuals -including Islamists- whose first aim was the survival of the Empire increased their opposition against the rule of the Abdulhamid II.

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[345] Thierry Zarcone, Soufisme et Franc-Maçonnerie a la fin de l'Empire Ottoman: L'Exemple du Şeyhülislam Musa Kazıf Efendi (1850-1920), Anotolia Moderna, Paris, 1991, II, pp. 201-208

[346] See; Şükrü Hanioğlu, Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyetti ve Jöntürklük 1899-1902, Istanbul, 1985, İsmail Kara,, Ulema-Siyaset İlişkilerine Dair Önemli Bir Metin:Muhalefet Yapmak/Muhalafete Katılmak I-II, Divan, issue, 4 and 7, 1998-1999

[347] Esther Debus, Sebilürreşad, Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zur islamischen Opposition der vor- und nachkemalistischen Ara, p. 47

It has been attempted to depict the conditions in which Islamists and Liberals lived. Before attempting to evaluate the ideas of the Islamist intellectuals, I want to consider the discussions of the second constitutional period regarding the place of the Ottoman women in society. This issue is especially important for analyzing the thought of Islamists, because it brings out important features of their thoughts and their dilemma into the open.

4.3. Feminism in the Ottoman Empire at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

Discussions about feminism and the place of women in Ottoman society have a special importance in understanding the different characteristics of the thoughts of Islamists. Although the discussions of the Islamists about feminist demands in the Ottoman Empire reveal the conservative nature of their thoughts and their positions in Ottoman intellectual circles, this point has not been analyzed sufficiently from a sociological aspect. Because of that, it is important to analyze their responses to the feminist demands in order to understand the background and the context of their thoughts. Besides, as pointed out, it concretizes the ambiguities in the thoughts of Islamists. It will be shown in this chapter that even the Islamists who were considered modernist by many academicians were in fact, conservative[348] about the transformation of the place of women in the Ottoman Empire. However, although Islamists were very critical of feminism, they did not just defend traditional forms. At the same time, their endeavor for a synthesis became more tangible in this

[348] Robert Eccleshall defines conservatism as follow; "The everyday meaning of the concept- a respect for tradition and a rejection of radical change- appeals alike to the foes and friends of conservatism. It enables opponnents of conservatism to accuse their rivals of nostalgia for the relics of the past: "reactionaries" who cling to antiquated social practices rather than confront the problems of the modern world. Conservatives themselves favour common usage because it depicts them as moderate and pragmatic people who are committed to gradual, piecemeal reforms: custodians of an inherited wisdom who value practical experience, but scorn both political dogmas and grand schemes of social engineering...Conservatives, it is claimed, prefer to ground their judgements in concrete historical experience rather than abstract theory.", Robert Eccleshall, Conservatism, in; Political İdeologies, Hutchinson, 1984, p. 80. In this sense, Islamist can be also considered to be conservatist.

instance. For this reason, the development of feminism during the last decades of the Ottoman Empire will be discussed in this chapter.[349]

The dominant comprehension of gender in a society is determined not only by biological difference but also by history and culture. Besides, if historical and cultural comprehensions would be threatened, there would emerge reactions based upon the assumption that they would cause social disorder.[350] This is especially true for discussions about feminism in the Ottoman Empire.

Relations between women and men only have begun to occupy Ottoman historians in larger numbers long after the topic had become popular among social scientists dealing with the Ottoman Empire and Turkey.[351] However, there are enough works focusing on the modernization process of Ottoman women, which would be useful in understanding the Second Constitutional period.

Before the Tanzimat, there was only one primary school for girls at which basic religious knowledge was taught. After the Tanzimat, a women's high school was established in 1858 and in 1870 a teachers' training school for women was founded.[352] On the other hand, the equality between men and women was discussed after the Tanzimat in 1856 with the law of land *(Arazi Kanunnamesi*). With this law, women acquired the equal inheritance right. However, it is worth noting that in

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[349] For a bibliographical survey on women's history in the Ottoman Empire, see; Klaus Kreiser, Women in the Ottoman World: A Bibliographical Essay, Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 2, 2002, pp. 197-206

[350] Lipsitz Bem Sandra, Changing Gender Cultures: The U.S. Experience., in; Globalization of Communication and Intercultural Experience, Helgard Kramer (Ed), Berlin, 1998, pp. 109-112

[351] Suraiya Faroqhi, Stories of Ottoman Men and Women, Istanbul, 2002, p. 22. The works which were published about Ottoman feminism in recent years; Serpil Çakır, Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi, İstanbul 1993; Aynur Demirdirek, Osmanlı Kadınlarının Hayat Hakkı Arayışının Bir Hikayesi, Ankara, 1993; Z. Toska, S. Çakır, T. Gençtürk, S. Yılmaz, S. Kurç, G. Art, A. Demirdirek (eds) İstanbul Kütüphanelerindeki Eski Harfli Türkçe Kadın Dergileri Bibliyografyası, İstanbul, 1993; Şefika Kurnaz, Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını (1839-1923), Ankara, 1991; A. Karakaya-Stump, Debating Progress in a Serious Newspaper for Muslim Women; The Periodical Kadın of the Post-revolutionary Salonica, 1908-1909, in British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, November, 2003; Fatmagül Berktay, Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Feminizm, in Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi, Istanbul, 2001

[352] Nurdan Melek Aksulu (Ed), Frauen im Osmanischen Reich, Deutschsprachige Quellen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, Hamburg, 2004, pp. 20-21

England the right of ownership for married women was accepted in 1882.[353] Although Islamic law provided women with rights, there was a strict difference between men and women in social life, especially in cities of the Ottoman Empire. The clothes and finery of women, their behavior in markets and promenades, were determined by rules before and after the Tanzimat. According to Berktay, patriarchal tradition in the Turkish culture was influencing the Sharia. She further claims that the influence of patriarchalism in modern Turkey's civil law could be seen until recently and that it became especially apparent in the perception of protecting and patronizing of women.[354] Berktay alleges that although the Tanzimat reforms promoted the appearance of women in social life, on the other hand, it was restricted on the grounds that men had an anxiety of losing their control of women.[355] Truly, it was not just the Islamists who were very critical of feminist tendencies and discourses in the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, some secular and nationalist intellectuals stressed the traditional role of women in the family, criticizing Western women even in 1920.[356]

The changes in institutions, economy, bureaucracy and social life, which became more visible after the Tanzimat, also appeared in the social life of women. Demands for the amelioration and improvement of the social and economic situation of Ottoman women were especially promoted by the media, newspapers and women magazines. The first Ottoman women's' magazine was *Terakki-i Muhadderat*, published in 1869 in Istanbul.[357] In articles written by women readers, not only was the necessity of education for women stressed but also complaints about the situation of Ottoman women in society. In one of those articles, a female reader demanded more freedom, giving examples of the better situation of Western women. On the other hand, the magazine contained some information about Western feminism and

[353] Fatmagül Berktay, Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Feminizm, in Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi, Istanbul, 2001, p. 352. As it will be seen in the following chapters, most of the Islamists defended that the situation of women in the West was worse than Ottoman women, and Islam provided main rights of women one milenium earlier than the West.
[354] ibid., p. 354
[355] ibid., p. 355
[356] Serpil Çakır, Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi, 1993, Istanbul, pp. 38-39
[357] ibid., p. 23

the life of women in the West.[358] There were some secular Ottoman female writers, such as Fatma Aliye, who were stressing the domination of patriarchalism in the world in general. According to Aliye, "the woman problem" was not confined to Ottoman society; patriarchalism was also present in Western societies. Aliye was arguing that Ottoman women did not know their history. According to her, many Muslim women were interested in political, social and economic matters and took responsibility in social, economic and political life in the history of Islam.[359] She was inviting her contemporaries to be more active in social and political life using feminist discourses. However, she was providing examples from the history of Islam in order to legitimize her position.[360] There were a few leading women writers at this time and a striking feature of them was their aristocratic origin. Most of the female writers who studied at foreign schools were daughters of high officials and interested in the developments occurring in the West.[361] As it will be seen, Islamists criticized the aristocratic backgrounds of the Ottoman feminists and their education when they rejected feminism.

After the proclamation of the second constitution, the feminists' demands began to increase and the activities of the supporters of feminism brought about reactions among Islamists and traditionalists. The proclamation of the Second Constitution caused an explosion of publications, a part of which was the flourishing women's press. Not only was there an increase in the number of women's periodicals published in this period, but also a noticeable diversification of the views they expressed.[362] In *Içtihad*, a prominent periodical of the time, famous for its Westernist and materialist approach, many articles were published in which the feminist movement was supported and the traditional conditions of Ottoman women were criticized. Even in *İçtihad*, an Islamic tone was used when feminism was supported. For example, it asserted that Islam included all that was good so that it should be

[358] ibid., p. 24
[359] ibid., p. 29
[360] ibid., p. 30
[361] ibid., pp. 30-31
[362] A. Karakaya-Stump, Debating Progress in A Serious Newspaper for Muslim Women: The Periodical Kadın of the Post-revolutionary Salonica, 1908-1909, in; British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, November, 2003, p.155

open to feminism as well.[363] The writers of *Ictihad* instrumentalized Islam as they were trying to legitimize their ideas. While the editor of *Içtihad*, Abdullah Cevdet (1869-1932), was stressing the equality of women and men, he, on the other hand, did not abstain from criticizing European feminists who demanded equality in all spheres. However, Abdullah Cevdet was emphasizing the role of women in the family so that he could not be labeled as a radical in this discussion. According to him, the duty of women was to raise virtuous children. However, he differentiated himself from Islamists and nationalists by stressing the education of homemakers. In his opinion, women should be able to both cook and play the piano. In his opinion "great writers, philosophers and politicians were raised and supported by women".[364] One of the writers of *İçtihad*, Rıza Tevfik (1869-1949), stressed the role of social structure, economic underdevelopment and ignorance as the causes of the womens' problems in the Ottoman Empire. However, he was also alleging that veiling was not the principle of Islam.[365] Yet, another well-known writer of the time, Celal Nuri (1881-1938), was promoting radical feminism in the Ottoman Empire, quoting the thoughts of a Finnish feminist in his article, which was published in *İçtihad*. In those articles, the Finnish feminist was defending the removal of the family and the founding of absolute equality between men and women.[366] In *Içtihad*, veiling was being discussed as well. Abdullah Cevdet was emphasizing that wearing *çarşaf* was not present in the early years of Islam. He was demanding more freedom for women in social life.[367] There were some writers who were against veiling in this period[368] and these articles brought about passionate discussions among the Ottoman intellectuals.

The periodical *Sırat-ı Müstakim* (later *Sebilürreşad*) was the center of Islamists in which anti-secularist and anti-Westernist articles were published. Feminism and

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[363] İçtihad, issue: 26, I July 1911, p. 775, in; Meşrutiyet Istanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, Sadık Albayrak, Istanbul, 2002, p. 359
[364] Dr. Abdullah Cevdet, Kadınlarda Gaye-i Hayat; İçtihad, no:1, issue; 28, 1 Agust 1911, pp. 798-800, in; Albayrak, Meşrutiyet İstanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, pp. 362-363
[365] Rıza Tevfik, Kadın Meselesi Etrafında, İçtihad, no: 94, 20 Februar 1329 (1914), pp. 2097-2101. , in; Albayrak (2002), pp. 407-409
[366] Albayrak, Meşrutiyet Istanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, p. 368
[367] ibid., p. 380
[368] ibid., p 389

amelioration demands for the situation of Ottoman women were the topics mostly discussed in *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and *Sebilürreşad* by Islamists. The ideas of Musa Kazım Efendi who published his articles in *Sırat-ı Müstakim* will be examined later. However, it would be beneficial to give a general approach of the articles about feminism and women, which were published in different Islamist magazines, in order to delineate the ideas of Islamists on this subject.

In the articles that were published in the periodical of *Sırat-ı Müstakim* about women, it was claimed that Muslims should be against imitation.[369] The writer of those articles was an Egyptian and Mehmet Akif, a prominent Islamist of the period, translated his articles. The criticism of imitation was a general characteristic of the Islamists in the Islamic world and Ottoman Islamists were considering feminism to be imitation of the West. As pointed out earlier, some Ottoman intellectuals were criticizing veiling. In response to these criticisms, Islamists asserted that veiling was the real source of freedom. For example, Vecdi suggested that through veiling, women were able to establish a healthy family so that they could raise their children in better circumstances.[370] As remarked, Islamists determined their position in this discussion, in the first issues of *Sırat-ı Müstakim*; the criticism of the imitation and the role of women in family life were being stressed. However, in the subsequent issues, the discussions were widened and varied. In the articles *Nisaiyyat* (women), written by a female writer, Makbule, and published in *Sebilürreşad*, the ideas of the Westernists (in fact, the writers of *İçtihad*) were criticized and it was alleged that if veiling were removed, there would be a social anomaly in the Ottoman Empire.[371] Makbule further emphasized in one of her articles that imitation could not produce development. According to her, Japan became a developed country through preserving its tradition and culture. In her opinion the Ottoman Empire should take Japan as a model so that culture and traditions were preserved, and the science and knowledge of the West imported. She was stressing as well the role of women in the

[369] Ferid Vecdi, Müslüman Kadını, Sıratımüstakim, no; 1, issue; 3, p. 43, 1324. (1908)
[370] Ferid Vecdi, Müslüman Kadını, Sıratımüstakim, no. 1, issue:13, 1908, p. 203
[371] Ayşe Makbule, Nisaiyyat, Sebilürreşad, 1329, no.11, issue: 281, p. 329

family the social importance of veiling.[372] Another female writer of *Sebilürreşad* was Ayşe Meliha, and she was stressing the social importance of veiling and criticizing the supporters of anti-veiling movements.[373]

A well-known army official, Kolağası Niyazi Bey (1873-1913), wrote an interesting article in 1908, which was published in the sixth issue of *Sırat-ı Müstakim*. He was known as the "hero of freedom", because of his active role in the proclamation of the second constitution. In fact, Niyazi Bey did not have any connections either with Islamism or with Islamists. However, his ideas about feminism and the women problem were harmonious with those of Islamists, so that his articles were published in *Sırat-ı Müstakim*. On the other hand, it is possible to consider his articles to be a pragmatic initiative that aimed to win the support of Islamists for the new regime. Surprisingly, while he was defending Islamic law, veiling, and polygamy in his articles, he was, on the other hand, criticizing the Westernization of the way of life of Ottoman women and their education in foreign schools. He supported the education of women in national schools and the amelioration of the situation of Ottoman women within the boundaries of Islamic law.[374] Besides, in a textbook written for girls, despite its modernist approach, the idea of the natural superiority of men over women was being approved.[375] That shows patriarchalism in the mind of Ottomans. Thus, it is not surprising that Islamists were conservative about the women discussions, while they could be modernist in other issues**.**

In the subsequent years of the constitutional regime, complaints about the removal of veiling were increasing in the articles of *Sırat-ı Müstakim*.[376] In a letter written by ten

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[372] Ayşe Makbule, Nisaiyyat, Sebilürreşad, 1329, no: 11, issue: 280, p. 308
[373] Ayşe Meliha, Nisaiyyat, Sebilürreşad, 1329, no:11, issue, 282, pp. 345-346
[374] Kahraman-ı Hürriyet ve Fazilet Niyazi Bey Efendi Tarafından Risalemize İhda Edilmiştir; Sıratımüstakim, no.1, issue; 6, 18 September 1324, p. 84-85. At this point it should be remarked that although Ottoman army were mostly secular at the time of the second consitutional period, political system and social structure was still based on the Islamic principles. The prohibition of discussions about veiling by government in 1914 shows the position of government. This restriction was wellcomed by Sebilürreşad circles, Bir Karar-ı Müsib; Sebilürreşad, no. 12, issue; 294, 1330 (1914)
[375] See; Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlakiye ve Medeniye, Kısm-ı Salis, Istanbul, 1329. Quoted; Füsün Üstel, Makbul Vatandaşın Peşinde, Istanbul, 2004, p. 118
[376] Direklerarasında Hanımların Otomobille Gece Piyasaları, Sıratımüstakim, 2 September, 1326 (1910) no.5, issue; 106, pp. 26-28

female readers of *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, an Ottoman author who charged Ottoman women with ignorance, imperceptiveness and insensitivity, was criticized, on the grounds that it was not necessary to be like Western women in order to be considered virtuous. It was being argued that conditions, traditions and cultures were different in the West and East, so that Ottoman women could improve their situation in harmony with their culture and tradition. However, the female readers of the period were accepting general ignorance among the Ottoman women. Although they considered the education of Ottoman women to be a necessary thing, they were expecting it from men, passively. On the other hand, Ottoman men were considered the cause of the ignorance and the unpleasant situation of Ottoman women. Besides, they supported modern Ottoman women writers, poets and artists.[377] Islamist women writers did not want to take part in debates about veiling. Likewise, another author stressed the ignorance of the Ottomans in general and suggested improving education of Muslims in the Empire instead of discussing veiling.[378] In other words, while Islamists rejected the feminist demands, they accepted the terrible situation of Ottoman women and stressed a restricted education for them.

Some articles about feminism were also published in *Beyanü'l Hak*, another Islamist organ of that period. A writer of this periodical, Mustafa Saffet, emphasized the same ideas as those of Said Halim Pasha's, which will be examined later. Saffet asserted that feminists had not considered the economic infrastructure of the West so that they were not able to understand the origins of men-women relations in the Western world. According to him, there was de facto equality between men and women in Anatolia and the rural areas of the Empire. Although he emphasized that he was an advocate of the education of women, he added that the social and cultural structure of a society should be considered, when a reform was indispensable.[379] Likewise, when he criticized the new theatres in Istanbul, he based his critiques on the assumption

[377] 10 Milyon İslam Hemşirelemize; Sıratımüstakim, no.5, issue; 109, 23 September 1326 (1910), pp. 84-85

[378] Mahmut Esad, Tesettür-i Nisvan Meselesi Hakkında Son Söz, Sebilürreşad, no. 11, issue; 279, 1329 (1913), pp. 289-290

[379] Beyazıt Dersiamlarından Emenekli Mustafa Safvet, Şark ve Garp Kadınları; Beyanü'l Hak, no.3, issue; 74, 19 August 1326 (1910), p. 1437-1740 in; Albayrak, Meşrutiyet İstanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, pp. 27-28

that theaters in the West represented the common ideals, morals and cultures of Europeans. Then he concluded that theaters in the Ottoman Empire did not represent the idea of their own culture, but just immorality and an admiration of Western culture.[380] He asserted that the origin of feminism in the West laid in inequality between women and men. According to him, while there was no veiling in the West, women were deprived of the many rights, which brought about feminism. On the contrary, in his opinion Islamic law gave rights to Muslim women. Then he concluded that while feminists in the West had a pretext for their discourse, feminism in the Ottoman Empire did not have consistent grounds except for the imitation of the Western culture.[381] Although he remarked that he was not against theatres and considered reforms indispensable,[382] his critiques against change reflected a very conservative perspective about this issue too.

It is clear that Islamists, female writers and readers of *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and *Beyanü'l Hak* were mainly conservatives, defenders of Islamic law[383] and against imitation and secularization. The writers of other Islamist magazines of the second constitutional period were also emphasizing the same ideas.[384] Although Islamists were not totally against the amelioration of the current situation of Ottoman women, it is clear that they were very hesitant about the issue. They tried to build a discourse against secularists and Westernists and consequently, they can be considered conservative. However, the influence of the Turkish-Ottoman patriarchal social structure on their thoughts can be also clearly seen. The stress on the role of women in family life was emphasized not only by Islamists, but also by nationalists[385] and

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[380] Mustafa Safvet, Tiyatrolar, Beyanü'l Hak, no. 3, issue; 77, 30 August 1326, in; Albayrak, Meşrutiyet İstanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, p. 31-32

[381] Emenekli Mustafa Safvet, Bizde Yenilikler (1), Beyanü'l Hak, no. 7, issue; 167, 9 July 1328 (1912), p. 2954-2956. in; Albayrak (2002), pp. 58-59

[382] ibid., p. 58

[383] For example, İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, Tesettür Hakkı, Tesettür Meselesinin Turuk-i Halli, Sebilürreşad, no.12, issue; 291, 27 March 1330 (1914), p. 78-80. Besides, Abdülaziz Çaviş, Alem-i İslam; Hastalıkları ve Çareleri, Sebilürreşad, no. 14, issue; 357, 22 September 1332 (1916), pp. 148-149

[384] Ahmet Reşit, Tesettür, Beyanü'l Hak, no.1, issue; 18-19, 1324 (1909), pp. 405.406; in; Albayrak, Meşrutiyet İstanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, p. 6

[385] Nationalists were the supporter of modernization of the situation of women. Nationalist-Islamists tried to reinterpret Islamic law, in order to legalize the change from the point of view Islam. They

Westernists. As pointed out earlier, Islamist writers and readers of *Sırat-ı Müstakim* did not just defend the current situation; they demanded also the amelioration of the situation of women and more education for them. However, these requests can be seen as the outcome of reactions against feminist and Westernist pressures.

Ottoman Islamist intellectuals developed their thoughts in these historical, social, economical and cultural conditions. Now, we will try to evaluate the ideas of the Islamist intellectuals considering these conditions**.**

4.4. Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi

Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi was born in Philippopolis (Filibe) – today in Bulgaria – in 1863. He was the son of a diplomat. Attending the primary school in Filibe, he learned Arabic and Persian but was not able to continue his education because of the 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian war. Due to the Ottoman defeat in the Balkans, his family had to flee from Filibe to Istanbul. This migration had a deep influence on his thoughts. Later in his memoirs, Ahmet Hilmi dramatically depicted this migration, which may be one of the causes of his opposition to the regime of Abdulhamid, a regime that could not solve the problems of the Ottomans.[386]

According to some research, he visited the *Galatasaray* School,[387] which was established in the Ottoman capital, taking European schools as a model. However, there is no documentation about his life from the time he came to Istanbul when he was fifteen, until he began to work in a post office in Istanbul, when he was twenty-five in 1888.[388] He worked as a civil servant at the *Duyun-u Umumiye* and was then

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also supported participation of women in social life. For these approaches, see; Albayrak, Meşrutiyet İstanbul'unda Kadın ve Sosyal Değişim, p. 280-357

[386] He expressed his experience as follow; "We were wiped out because of an incompetent, miserable government. Thousands of Turks died on the road to Edirne." F.A.Hilmi, Elvah-ı Hayat, Türklerin Elemli Mukadderatından Bir Yaprak, Hikmet, n. 29: 29 August 1912, p. 2

[387] İbrahim Alaaddin Gövsa, Meşhur Adamlar, Hayatları-Eserleri, Istanbul, 1933. Also; Neşet Toku, Türkiye'de Anti-Materyalist Felsefe (Spritualizm)-İlk Temsilcileri, Istanbul, 1996

[388] Mehmet Zeki Ekici, Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi, Hayatı ve Eserleri, p. 33

appointed to Beirut. In Beirut, he established relations with Young Turks and was impressed by them. From Beirut, he escaped to Egypt because of his political activities. Although he returned to Istanbul in 1901, he was arrested due to his political activities and exiled to Fizan, in Libya. When he was in exile, he encountered mystic Islam and became a member of the *Arusi tariqa*, which also influenced his ideas. He had spent years in *Tripoli* (Libya) carrying out Pan-Islamic and anti-French propaganda among the *Sanusiya* Fraternity and other Muslims of the area. [389]

After the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908, he returned to Istanbul and published the weekly newspaper, *Ittihad-ı Islam* in the same year. In his newspaper, of which eighteen issues were published between 17 December 1908 and 23 April 1909, Şehbenderzade analyzed the "Union of Islam". After closing the *Ittihad-ı Islam*, he published many political and philosophical essays in different newspapers such as *İkdam*, Şehbal and *Tasvir-i Efkar*. In 1910, he published the weekly newspaper *Hikmet-i Ceride-i İslamiye*, which was sent to the most important cities of the Islamic world. In 1911, he published some other newspapers and periodicals, in which he criticized the Young Turks. As a consequence of these criticisms, his newspapers were banned and he went into exile. After 1908, he taught philosophy at the *Darulfünün* as a professor in Istanbul. In 1914, he died unexpectedly.[390] He was interested in different themes and fields, such as politics, philosophy, literature, poetry, theater etc. However here, only his political, social and philosophical writings will be examined.

4.4.1. A Realist Islamist

After the proclamation of the Second Constitution in 1908, Hilmi returned to Istanbul, and published his own periodical, *İttihad-ı Islam*. As it will be seen, his ideas about Pan-Islamism differed from the other Islamists in some aspects.

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[389] ibid., p. 33
[390] İsmail Kara, Türkiye'de İslamcılık Düşüncesi, Istanbul, 1997, pp. 69-70

The subtitle of *Ittihad-ı İslam* was *Union Sociale Muslumane* and it was indicating the approach to Islam and Pan-Islam that the periodical would follow. Indeed, the first issue comprised of an editorial written by Ahmed Hilmi, entitled "What Does the Union of Islam Mean in Our View?"[391] Ahmed Hilmi, in this article, did not support political Pan-Islam. Hilmi maintained that a plan to set up a state, which would comprise all Muslims, contradicted the laws of both history and human nature, and he asserted that such a plan was just a fantasy, like Pan-Hellenism. His social Pan-Islam should aim, instead, to raise and develop Muslim society, in the spirit of the Committee of Union and Progress. This leitmotiv was often repeated in favor of social and cultural development for all Muslims and all Ottomans. Thus, on the other hand he was supporting Ottomanism that would be popular with the new constitutinal regime.[392]

Nonetheless, editorial policy frequently emphasized the independence for all Muslims via news and commentaries about the political situation of Muslims in the world. An "Islamic policy", it was argued, should encourage building stronger ties among all Muslims.[393] In the "Future of Islam", a four-part article, he emphasized that Muslims had huge economic, social and cultural potential. Meanwhile, Ahmed Hilmi wrote sympathetically about political Islam in different newspapers and periodicals. In his important periodical, *Hikmet*, which he edited in Istanbul during 1910-11, Ahmed Hilmi took an even more outspoken line, calling on the world's three hundred million Muslims to unite. One of the most important books of Ahmet Hilmi was entitled "A Guide to Politics for the Twentieth-Century World of Islam and Europe."[394] Hilmi considered the Muslim elements in the Ottoman Empire to be the only part of society who desired the Empire's survival. For him, only the unity of Muslims was the solution for the troubles of the Ottoman State and the only guarantee for the independence of Muslims worldwide. On the other hand, he

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[391] F.A.Hilmi, Bizce ittihad-ı İslam ne demek?" İttihad-ı İslam, 4 Dec. 1908, pp. 1-2
[392] J.M.Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 77
[393] F.A. Hilmi, Siyaset-i İslamiyye, İttihad-ı İslam, 5 (I Jan. 1909), p. I
[394] J. M. Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 78. Also F.A. Hilmi, Yirminci Asırda Alemi İslam ve Avrupa, Istanbul, 1327 H. (1911). It was republished with different title in 1966. See; Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmet, Müslümanlar Uyanın, Bedir Yayınevi, Istanbul, 1966. In this study, we used the last edition.

considered the division of Muslims from the Ottoman Empire a disaster for all Muslims.[395] He asked, "after twenty-five million warlike Arabs in Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt had lost their independence, how can five million Yemenites and three million Syrians maintain their existence, if the Ottoman Empire breaks down?"[396] For him, the hope of all Muslims everywhere was the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate. He added that although there were conflicts between various Muslim elements impeding unity, the union of these elements was imperative; sovereignty implied the decision of the majority, which was composed of Muslims. When Muslims were not united, they would fail to demonstrate their worth to the Great Powers. Against these dangers, a united Islam enjoying the moral support of 400 millions would not be a force to be taken lightly.[397]

It was stated above that A. Hilmi did not support political Pan-Islam. Instead he was a supporter of social and economic reforms, which would realize developing Islamic societies. He then tries to explain his understanding of Pan-Islam. According to him, the unity of Islam can be dated back to the century during which Prophet Muhammad lived.[398] According to him, although Selim I (1470-1520) carried out İttihad-ı Islam (Unity of Islam) during the sixteenth century, it could not be maintained, because of the decadence, immorality and ignorance of the administrators. He asserts that Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) tried to realize the unity of Islam with Sayyid al-Mahdi who was an active Islamist in North Africa. However, A. Hilmi alleged that they failed because of their methods.[399] Moreover, he suggested that there were three kinds of unity of Islam, namely political, religious and social. According to him the first form is hazardous and non-realistic, while the second already exists, and the third is indispensable.[400]

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[395] ibid., pp. 72-75
[396] ibid., p. 77
[397] ibid., pp. 79-80
[398] F.A.Hilmi, Tarih-i İslam, Volume. II, p. 591
[399] Al-Mahdi did not support Ottomans against the Russia in 1877 Ottoman-Russian war. see; Reinhard Schulze, Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert, E. J. Brill, 1990, p. 50
[400] F. A. Hilmi, Senusiler ve Sultan Abdulhamid, Istanbul, 1992, p. 68

Filibeli A. Hilmi asserted that the realization of political Islam was impossible because there were many Islamic countries and societies whose interests, languages and habits were different from each other. Moreover, there was no leader, in his opinion, who had enough power and charisma to unite all those countries. According to him, Abdulhamid II was not suitable for this mission either. On the contrary, he asserted, Abdulhamid had many characteristic disadvantages for carrying out Islamic unity. He wrote; "Setting Ottoman nations, Arabs, Turks, Albanians, fighting with each other, Abdulhamid II brought about more separateness among Muslims which made it harder to establish the Unity of Islam."[401] The influence of the "Zeitgeist" is obvious in these sentences; the strong desire to hinder the collapse of the Empire. On the other hand, there were many non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire that decrease the importance of the Pan-Islamic policy, when Hilmi stated these ideas.

As far as Pan-Islam was concerned, he claimed that while the Sanusi fraternity failed to realize religious unity, Abdulhamid II could not achieve the task of carrying out political unity. In his opinion, what should have been done was to work for *İctima-i İtthihad-ı İslam* (the social unity of Islam). He implies with this the importance of innovation in Islamic beliefs and attitudes. He alleged that the foundation of the social unity of Islam was achieved in the early ages of Islam. However, according to him, nobody had considered its importance sufficiently in history. He further indicated that the notion of the social unity of Islam was not contradictory to having different states and nations. In other words, in his opinion, realizing the "social unity" of Muslims was not impossible, like political and religious unity. To him, the hadj (pilgrimage to Mecca) is evidence for the possibility of social unity.[402] On the other hand, he stressed that the lawful equality of Muslims was one of the other meanings of social unity that was founded on the protection of the interests of Muslims. According to him, social unity would bring about the improvement and development of Islamic societies. In his words, "in order to get economic development and stability, it is necessary to fulfill social unity".[403]

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[401] ibid., pp. 61-64
[402] ibid., pp. 68-69
[403] ibid., p. 65

4.4.2. Islamism as a Unifying State Ideology

A. Hilmi participated in the political discussions after the proclamation of the second constitution like every intellectual who was active during this period. As an intellectual engaged in daily politics, his ideas were deeply determined by the political situation of the Empire and his thoughts can be better examined when both the political situation of the Ottoman Empire and his positions in the political debate are considered together.

When the second constitution was proclaimed, nationalism was rising all around the Ottoman Empire, especially in the Balkans and the Arab provinces. The main goal of most Ottoman politicians and intellectuals was to hinder the disintegration of the Empire and impede the dissemination of nationalism. However, at the same time, Turkish nationalism was becoming a current issue among Turkish politicians, intellectuals and soldiers.[404] As an active Islamist, A. Hilmi participated in these discussions defending Ottoman unity, supporting religious sentiments among Muslim subjects and democracy. According to him, the dissemination of nationalism would smash Ottoman unity. Besides, he criticized Turkish nationalism on the grounds that, it would cause the disintegration of other Ottoman nations. In his view, former Turkish Ottoman diplomats and intellectuals did not use the term Turk to bring different nations together.[405] In fact, these sentences a were criticism of the new Young Turk government which captured political power after the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908 and the dethroning of Abdulhamid II in 1909, because of their tendency towards Turkish nationalism. On the other hand, he did not abstain from criticizing the school of decentralization, which appeared as an alternative policy to nationalism, because he worried about the unfamiliarity of this policy for the Ottoman Empire. Sabahaddin Bey, whose ideas will be evaluated in the last chapter of this study, was very active in the constitutional period and influential in

[404] See; Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, 1964
[405] F.A.Hilmi, Mebahis-i Siyasiye: Kavmiyet Asrı ve Bizim Nasyonalizm Cereyanları, Hikmet (daily), no; 26, August 1912

the political scene with the idea of decentralization. According to Hilmi, *adem-i merkeziyet* (decentralization)[406] is among one of the most detrimental political movements, as it bears the potential for damaging the notions of the fatherland (*vatan*) and the Islamic nation.[407] Although he considered centralist and despotic governments to be harmful for the Ottoman Empire, he did not support the ideas of the Sabahaddin.[408] He thought that a socially developed country such as England could carry out "decentralization" and benefit from it. In his view, however, because of the Ottoman Empire's social and political instability, such a policy could not bring about peace and stability among the Ottoman subjects.[409]

Although A. Hilmi was critical of nationalism, we can see in some of his articles that he was hesitant about this matter. On the one hand, he criticized all sorts of nationalism; on the other hand, he opposed the allegations that the Young Turks were Turkish nationalists.[410] However, by Young Turks he did not mean the government but the intellectuals who demanded democracy. In fact, the cause of this dilemma was the political situation of the Empire. When the second constitution was proclaimed on 24th June 1908, almost all Ottoman subjects celebrated this political reform. However, it did not bring political stability to the Empire. On 3 October 1908, the Austro-Hungarian Empire annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was part of the Ottoman Empire, and a semi-independent Bulgaria acquired full independence and Crete was incorporated by Greece on 15th October 1908. To put an end to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the Young Turks government, namely the Committee of Unity and Progress, established an association called "*İttihad-ı Anasır-ı Osmaniyye*"(Unity of Ottoman Components). However, they were not able to hinder the nationalist movements in the Empire and the independence demands of other Ottoman subjects such as Arabs, Albanians and Armenians. Some

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[406] Decentralization (Ademi Merkeziyet) was a political project that support a decentralized government. Sabahaddin Bey was the most famous adherent of this policy. chapter 5.6.
[407] F. A. Hilmi, Darülfünün Efendilerine Tahriri Konferans, Hangi Meslek-i Felsefeyi Kabul Etmeliyiz, 1329, Istanbul, p. 45
[408] F.A.Hilmi, Mebahis-i Siyasiyye: Müfrit Adem-i Merkeziyet ve Anasır-ı Osmaniyenin Menfaati, Hikmet (daily), No, 25, 25 August 1912, p. 1
[409] ibid., p. 1
[410] F. A. Hilmi, Pek Müşkil Bir Vaziyet: Milliyet Meselesi ve Karşısında Türkler, Y. Tasviri Efkar, No. 314, 14 April 1910, p. 1

of the Ottoman intellectuals, who did not believe in the utility of unity of Islam, encouraged Turkish nationalism while Islamists insisted on the Islamist policy. However, it should not be underestimated that cultural nationalism among Turkish intellectuals had been a current issue since 1850. Besides, the well-known nationalist poet Mehmet Emin was writing vivacious poems, which encouraged Turkish nationalism even in 1897.[411] Nevertheless, Turkish nationalism did not become a current issue as a state policy until 1913.[412]

After the proclamation of the Second Constitution in November 1908, the first election was held and resulted in the victory of the CUP. However, the CUP was not able to elect enough pro-CUP deputies in order to constitute a CUP government. Nevertheless, they tried to control the government and to determine state policy. The Young Turks intended to depart from communal politics in favor of party politics. On the other hand, opposition to the CUP was rising all over the Empire because of its failure to solve problems. It was the time for CUP leaders to attempt to suppress the opposition, sometimes using fraudulent methods. Complaints and gripes peaked when Hasan Fehmi, a prominent journalist of the time and an opponent of the CUP, was assassinated in 1908 in Istanbul. In addition, the events of 31st March in 1909, an uprising started by a group of religious fanatics, resulted in martial law, which later brought about some complaints by the opponents of the CUP that political freedom was worse than during Abdulhamid's time. Moreover, the election of 1912, which was called an election "with beating and cudgel" in the political literature, increased the grievances after only a few opponents had been elected because of the CUP's unfair policy and propaganda.[413] F. A. Hilmi initially defended the Young Turk leaders, writing articles and praising poems about them. He rejected the criticisms put forth by non-Turkish subjects that the Young Turks were trying to "turkicize" non-Turkish nations. CUP leaders wanted to promulgate Turkish as the official language of the Empire and were sharply criticized by some non-Turkish subjects because the CUP's aim was to assimilate non-Turkish nations. On the one hand, A.

[411] Şerif Aktaş, Türk Şiiri ve Antolojisi I,1860-1920, Ankara, 1996, p. 142
[412] See; Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 1962
[413] See; Aykut Kansu, The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey, p 193-241. Also see; Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, p. 64

Hilmi defended the promulgation of Turkish as the official language alleging that Turks had the right to do so. On the other hand, he believed that the concept of national difference was not an obstacle to constitute the unity of Islam.[414] These conditions were the sources of his dilemma. To him, accepting Turkish as the official language was a necessity to preserve Ottoman unity. He gave some examples of the practices of European states to support this idea.[415] However, he did not hesitate to criticize some of the members of the CUP because of their infractions. His readers criticized him sometimes, because of the fact that he supported the CUP and sometimes, he was accused of being an opponent of the CUP. Consequently, he published a number of articles in order to clarify his position.[416]

Hilmi remarked that after carrying out constitutional monarchy in 1908, there appeared two main attitudes between Ottomans; some Ottoman nations followed just their interests and others tried to unite all nations of the Empire. He stated that all Muslims in the Empire should try to solve this political problem by considering the historical experiences of the Turks. According to him, Turks had treated all Muslim nations with equality and all non-Muslim nations with respect, although non-Muslims had not had equal rights. He asked, "What should we –Muslims- do to solve the problems related to the unity?" Then, he noted that all Ottoman nations -Muslim and non-Muslim- demanded the preservation of their culture, language etc. He concluded that these demands could be accepted only on the condition that all Ottoman nations consent to the spiritual superiority of Islam, support and protect the constitutional monarchy, and promote Ottomanism and Ottoman unity.[417] However, he admitted that Greeks and Bulgarians who lived in the Ottoman Empire considered Athens and Sofia as their centre. Then he differentiated Muslims from non-Muslim subjects of the Empire because non-Turkish Muslims did not have the same requests. He asserted that Arabs, Kurds and Albanians could not preserve their independence if the Ottoman Empire was destroyed. Then he alleged that all Muslims should try to

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[414] F.A.Hilmi, Cevaplarımız, İttihad-ı İslam, no.6, K.sani 1909, p. 5. F. A. Hilmi, Millet-i Hakime Düşüncesi ve Türklerin Müşkil Mevkii, Hikmet (daily), no. 29, 29 August 1912, p. 1
[415] F.A.Hilmi, Meşrutiyet'te Mana-yı Müsavat, Yeni Tasviri Efkar, no. 237, 27 K. Sani 1910, p. 1
[416] For this criticisms, ibid.
[417] Yirminci Asırda Alem-i İslam ve Avrupa-Müslümanlara Rehberi Siyaset, 1966 pp. 75-76

preserve the Ottoman Empire.[418] After emphasizing the people's governmental role in constitutional regimes, he suggested that national sovereignty meant superiority of the majority. To him, while the majority consisted of Muslims in the Empire, non-Muslims had to remain as a reality of the Empire. However, he emphasized that non-Muslims should be treated with equality in order to provide their fidelity and loyalty.[419]

F. A. Hilmi was looking for an ideology that could hinder the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. His concern about the destruction of the Empire was causing a contradiction in his thoughts. Although he demanded a political system under which non-Muslims were treated equally, his ideas actually possessed Islamist and Ottomanist elements. Actually, in the constitutional period both Islamism and Ottmanism were considered as alternative ideologies with which to procure Ottoman unity. As a political activist, he engaged in political discussions and wanted to explore different alternatives. However, he was more pro-Islamist because of non-Muslims' demands for independence.

4.4.3. Criticism of Westernism and European Thoughts

According to İsmail Kara, Hilmi failed to evolve a critical approach to the discourse of orientalist and modern Western sciences. Kara alleges further that, F. A. Hilmi accepted the logic of modern sciences and was influenced by the Orientalists. Similarly, Kara criticizes Filibeli Hilmi because of his acceptance of Western social science as a measure in his analysis.[420] In fact, when F. A. Hilmi criticized the approaches of the Westernists and European thoughts, he did not aim at rejecting the methods of Western science. His eclecticism appears also at that point.

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[418] ibid., p. 77
[419] ibid., p. 78
[420]İsmail Kara, Osmanlı Dünyasında Yeni Tarih Telakkileri, Şehbenderzade Örneği, pp. 110- 118, in; Din İle Modernleşme Arasında, Istanbul, 2003

Although Hilmi supported the idea that there was a need for new interpretations in Islamic law and beliefs, and for the transfer of some European institutions and thoughts, he nevertheless did not refrain from criticizing European thoughts, institutions and habits. He claimed that Europeans considered politics as a tool for a trick. According to him, they utilize and exploit technology and scientific developments in order to carry out their policy, which is based on lies, trickery, and so on. He also criticized the philosophy of Darwin on the grounds that the notion of the superiority of the strong had formed its basis. Hilmi discarded Machiavellian politics, although he did not mention Machiavelli's name explicitly. According to him, politics should be based on morality, philosophy (*hikmet*) and religion. However, in order to clarify his position, Hilmi stressed that he was an admirer of the material civilization of Europe. However, in his view, the spiritual and moral situation of Europe was representing something that had not been seen in the history of humanity.[421]

He continued his criticism alleging that freedom did not exist in Europe. On the contrary, there was an oligarchy constituted by bankers, party leaders, financial institutions, and so on. Then, he concluded that what Europeans had done was the opposite of what they thought they had done. In his opinion, socialists and anarchists would capture political power in Europe in the future.[422] It can be said that by using the socialist critiques of capitalism, he tried to build a theoretical framework for his ideas so that he would be able to oppose materialist and Westernist intellectuals at home. As will be examined later in this study, different Islamists also used these arguments. On the other hand, these sentences reveal a sentiment, which stems from the anxiety of defending traditional Islamic values.

One of the most vehement debates among the Ottoman intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century was the duality of spiritualism-materialism. Some materialist, positivist and Westernist intellectuals

[421] F.A.Hilmi (Şeyh Mihriddin Arusi), Yirminci Asırda Alem-i İslam ve Avrupa-Müslümanlara Rehberi Siyaset, 1966, pp. 17-18
[422] ibid, pp. 25-26

such as Abdullah Cevdet, Celal Nuri İleri, Baha Tevfik, attacked religion, though indirectly, translating some books from Western languages into Turkish, and publishing articles in which they considered religion to be an obstacle for development. Islamists, although they supported innovations in Islamic law and a limited institutional Westernism, tried to retaliate the materialist assault by transferring anti-materialist thoughts from the West. For Hilmi, materialism was an ideology whose logical confirmation was impossible. He also criticized positivism on the grounds that it was based on the same logic as materialism.[423] F. A. Hilmi was among the Islamists who considered religion an important part of society. According to him, religion has very important functions for society and the state, and it was the most important element for the defense of the fatherland.[424]

Hilmi criticized Westernist intellectuals as well, though he always emphasized the necessity of incorporating some European institutions into the Ottoman Empire. For instance, he used the term "transferring technology" many times in his works like many other Islamists. For him, Japan served as a good example of how to become a developed country without becoming westernized. He quoted the thoughts of a Japanese soldier who had converted to Islam, to make his own thoughts more clear and to find a valid basis for his argument. The thoughts of the Japanese soldier, Ömer Yamaoka, were published in the *Tasvir-i Efkar*, which was among the most prominent newspapers of the time. Yamaoka tells that they (Japan) had sent students to Europe in order to bring technology to Japan and develop their country. Therefore, Japan could import the technology that was not present in Japan, without imitating Western culture and the Western way of life.[425] By publishing the thoughts of a Muslim Japanese soldier, Hilmi wanted to strengthen his own ideas and show the Westernists that there was another way of becoming a developed country. He emphasizes two concepts, which differentiate the path to development; *intihab* (choosing, eclecticism) and *iktibas* (quotation, transfer). After expressing that imitation was a feature of primitive men, he remarked that, "if we turn to imitation

[423] Neşet Toku, Türkiye'de Anti-Materyalist Felsefe (Spritualizm)-İlk Temsilcileri, p. 81
[424] F.A.Hilmi, Huzur-ı Akl-ü Fende Maddiyyun Meslek-i Delaleti,1914, Istanbul, p. 12
[425] F.A.Hilmi, Japonya'da İstikbal-i İslam ve Hacı Ömer Yamaoka Efendi'nin Fikri, Yeni Tasvir-i Efkar, no. 70, 29 Februar 1910. Quoted from, M. Z. Ekici, Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi,, p. 395

instead of choosing and transferring, we can not become a developed country. Imitation is a caricature of investigation and searching. Unfortunately we have used mostly the method of imitation".[426] It can be said that Hilmi's arguments show, on the one hand, his critical approach to the Ottoman modernization process, and on the other hand, they can be evaluated as a search for an alternative means of development and as an effort to get rid of the backwardness of Islamic societies, preserving traditional and Islamic values.

According to Hilmi, none of the philosophical schools are able to find absolute truth or can be universal. However, he finds the philosophy of Spencer important and useful because his philosophy (evolutionalism) contains all scientific truths and philosophical doctrines. According to him, "there is no way except for accepting scientific truths and experience in solving the problems related to industry, economy and life." On the other hand, there is no better way than accepting a philosophy, which contains all truths of different philosophic schools using the method of *intihab* (eclecticism).[427] A. Hilmi investigated the reasons of Ottoman depression in his different publications. According to him, to transfer European institutions into the Empire without making them suitable for the Ottoman social and political structure was the main cause of Ottoman social, political and economic defeat.[428] It is also worth noting that during the same years, Spencer influenced both liberals and Islamists in the Ottoman Empire.[429] Positivism and the evolutionism of Spencer were very attractive for the Ottoman intellectual. Various academics have stressed the inclination of Ottoman intellectuals towards positivism that stemmed from the pragmatism of the Ottoman bureaucratic tendency.[430]

F. A. Hilmi not only criticized the Westernist intellectuals but also condemned Europeans, remarking, "Europeans did not want to give useful things to the non-

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[426] F. A. Hilmi, Darülfünün Efendilerine Tahriri Konferans, Hangi Meslek-i Felsefeyi Kabul Etmeliyiz, 1329 (1913) Istanbul, pp. 21-30
[427] ibid., p. 45
[428] F. A. Hilmi, Bir Millet Nasıl Mahvolur, Hikmet, No. 24, 24 August 1912, p. 2
[429] Murtaza Korlaelçi, Pozitivist Düşüncenin İthali, in; Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyetin Birikimi, Istanbul, 2001, p. 219
[430] For example, see; Şerif Mardin, Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri

Western countries, on the contrary, they gave some social motives which caused instability and dissipation in Islamic countries."[431] As an example of this assertion, he wrote that in Islamic countries, which were colonized by Europeans, no artisans and engineers appeared who would make bridges, high buildings, railways, etc.[432] To him, Ottomans and Muslims imitated the Western way of life, such as playing the piano, keeping up with European fashion, instead of transferring their methods and applying them in trade, agriculture, economics, etc. But he did not imply that just the material objects of Europeans were useful and good. He also emphasized some social and spiritual things that would improve the social situation, such as philanthropy, gentleness and virtue. He concluded that Ottomans and Muslims had not tried to transfer those useful things.[433]

4.4.4. Feminism as a Detrimental Movement

Because of the importance of the discussions on feminism made by the Islamists, A. Hilmi's ideas about feminism will be examined in this chapter. Hilmi considered the feminist movement to be one of the most harmful ideologies for a society. Like many other Ottoman Intellectuals and especially Islamists, he stressed the role of women in family life. According to him, feminism ruins the family, which forms the basis of social life. However, A. Hilmi stressed that women have an important role in the development process of a society. To him, if a society does not have "good wives and mothers," it is sentenced to decline and vanish.[434] Filibeli condemned the supporters of feminism in the Ottoman Empire, because he considered feminist demands in the Ottoman Empire to be a part of the imitation of the West.[435]

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[431] F. A. Hilmi, Bir Millet Nasıl Mahvolur, Hikmet, No. 24, 24 August 1912, , p. 2
[432] ibid.p. 2
[433] A. Hilmi. Yirminci Asırda Alem-i İslam ve Avrupa-Müslümanlara Rehberi Siyaset, 1911, p. 66-67
[434] A. Hilmi, İçtimaiyyat: Din, Hikmet ve Fen Karşısında Feminizm Yani Kadınların Bais-i Felaketi Olan Nisaiyyun Mesleği" Hikmet (weekly), no: 6, 13 May 1326, (26 May 1910), p. 2
[435] ibid.,p.2. However, it was not just the Islamists who considered feminism as detrimental and an outcome of the Westernist thoughts. For example, the periodical of Genç Kadın (Young Woman), published in 1919, rejected feminism because of its Western origins. Besides, another woman periodical İnci, published by secular intellectuals in 1919, stressed the traditional role of women in family life. See; Serpil Çakır, Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi, 1993, p.39. It can be argued that these reactions against feminism were stemming from Ottoman-Turkish cultural codes and social structures.

He raised his objection to the supporters of feminism by doubting their sincerity. According to him, the intellectuals who supported feminism did not work for the improvement of the situation of women. In his opinion, they could not perceive that feminism brings about dissoluteness and it was not related to having respect for the rights of women.[436] After asserting that feminists had been working for the realization of equality between men and women, Hilmi defended the difference between them, giving examples from biology and physiology. To him, the investigations that had been conducted on animals had shown that the difference between women and men increased proportionally to the complexity of a creature. Quoting a sentence from Hegel, he claimed that the difference between the two genera began in the uterus and grew with time.[437] He not only provided examples from the natural sciences but also using the ideas of Le Bon, a well-known French sociologist of the time, he concluded that the more advanced civilizations were, the greater the difference between men and women would be.[438] Thereafter, he asserted that feminism would harm the comfortable situation of women which was provided by the civilization.[439]

Many secular Ottoman and Western intellectuals criticized polygamy in Islam at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it became a part of feminist discourse in the Ottoman Empire. A. Hilmi took a defensive position in these discussions. He asserted that polygamy was not an order of religion, but it was just permission, which could be valid in certain conditions. According to him, in normal conditions, Islam recommends monogamy.[440] The highlighting of monogamy

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On the other hand, whereas Kemalism supported the activities of women in society, the modernization of women has been thought as a sign of civilization and modernisation. But Arat criticizes the Kemalist project saying that "it was not asked what women have demanded." Yeşim Arat, Türkiye'de Modernleşme Projesi ve Kadınlar, pp. 82-99. in; Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik, Sibel Bozdoğan-Reşat Kasaba (eds), Istanbul, 1998

[436] A. Hilmi, İçtimaiyyat, Din, Hikmet ve Fen Karşısında Feminizm, Yani Kadınların Bais-i Felaketi Olan Nisaiyyun Mesleği, p. 8

[437] ibid., p. 2

[438] ibid., p. 3

[439] ibid., p. 6

[440] F. A. Hilmi, Tarihi Islam I, 1910 (1326), p. 231

by Islamists shows how the criticism of Islamic values affected the thoughts of Islamists.

However, the most harmful element of feminism, in his opinion, was its abandoning of maternity. For him, the idea of maternity was one of the main features that differentiate women from men. Because of that, he considered feminism to be against both human nature and Islam.[441]

Ahmet Hilmi criticized the intellectuals and feminists who considered the headscarf and veiling to be the cause of the under-development of the Ottoman Empire. He alleged that veiling became a problem because of the excessiveness of Muslims and because of their wearing the *çarşaf* (a garment), which had first appeared in Iran. He considered it an excessiveness that could not be found in the early ages of Islam. According to him, at the time of the Prophet Muhammad, women had a more active role in society.[442] After stressing that Islam did not impose a specific form of veiling, he concluded that, veiling could be facilitated for women.[443] Although he accepted that the exploitation of women in the Ottoman and Eastern societies did occur, he also expressed that this situation stemmed from ignorance and not from the principles of Islam.[444] In his opinion, the exploitation of women could be hindered through education, and by applying Islamic principles in social life.[445]

It can be clearly seen that the attitude of Hilmi was ambivalent about the issue of women. On the one hand, he criticized the feminist and Westernist approach and defended Islamic principles, on the other hand, he sought a third way in order to improve the situation of women in society. His discourse was determined by many

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[441] A. Hilmi, İçtimaiyyat: Din, Hikmet ve Fen Karşısında Feminizm Yani Kadınların Bais-i Felaketi Olan Nisaiyyun Mesleği" Hikmet (weekly), no: 6, 13 May 1326, (26 May 1910), pp. 7-8
[442] F. A. Hilmi, İçtimaiyyat, İslam, Kadınlar ve Mazi, Hal ve İstikbal, Hikmet (weekly), no;13, 1 July 1326- 13 July 1910, p.5
[443] ibid, p. 6
[444] A. Hilmi, İçtimaiyyat: Din, Hikmet ve Fen Karşısında Feminizm Yani Kadınların Bais-i Felaketi Olan Nisaiyyun Mesleği" Hikmet (weekly), no: 14, 21 July 1910, p. 5. Also İçtimaiyyat: Din, Hikmet ve Fen Karşısında Feminizm Yani Kadınların Bais-i Felaketi Olan Nisaiyyun Mesleği" Hikmet (weekly), no: 6, 13 May 1326, (26 May 1910), p. 4
[445] ibid, p. 6

different factors. When he was searching for a third way, undoubtedly, Zeitgeist was the biggest determinant. In his defense of traditional and Islamic principles, he used 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 in the political arena. On the one hand, Islamists must find a way that could modernize the country; on the other, they must try to protect the Islamic fundamentals of the Empire. Most of the Ottoman administrators, members of the army and intellectuals were becoming secular and were defending the secularization of not just the civil law but also almost all institutions of the Empire. A. Hilmi was mostly in a defensive position and he used different sources in order to establish his own discourse on the discussion topics, which was largely determined by the secular-minded intellectuals. On the other hand, the influence of the Ottoman patriarchal social structure on his thoughts is also clear.

4.4.5. The Necessity of Renewal

As remarked earlier, Ottomans had been searching a way that would save the Empire since the eighteenth century. After the Tanzimat Era, Western science became a prestigious tool that would help to save the Empire. This also influenced the mind of the Islamists. Consequently, rational thinking and being critical of superficial beliefs were among the most striking features of the thought of Islamists.[446] These features were present also in the thoughts of Hilmi. According to him, Islam was the most rational religion among all the world religions. [447] He defended the necessity of renewal by establishing his discourse on rational thinking.

He stressed that change was the meaning of life and the concept of life could not be conceived with the notion of preservation. According to him, the rule of evolution and changes in time and place entail transformation of both individuals and societies. For him, the cause of the underdevelopment of the Ottoman Empire was the inability

[446] T. Z. Tunaya, İslamcılık Akımı, p. 27
[447] F. A. Hilmi, Tarih-i Islam, pp. 612-613

to understand these rules and ignorance of the Islamic societies.[448] The influence of the Westernists' criticism of Islam on his ideas can be clearly seen, especially when he emphasized that the fatwa's of religious scholars had made it difficult to accept and understand religion. The decisions of some conservative religious officials, he argued, are in conflict with the findings of science. As a result, he wrote that, "either Muslims internalize natural science and skeptical philosophy or they will cease to care for religious sentiments."[449] Moreover, quoting the names of prominent international Islamists, i.e., Abduh and Afghani, he stressed the necessity of changes in Islamic laws.[450] With the term of "*içtihat*", he emphasized the necessity of a new interpretation of Islamic regulations, beliefs and social practices. Especially, he aimed at getting rid of superstitions, one of the causes of under-development of Islamic countries. According to Hilmi, the principle of innovation (*teceddüt*) was one of the most important elements of Islam, showing its flexibility for every century and capacity for development. He further stressed that the religious, ethical and practical principles of Islam were destroyed by the influence of different cultures and changing times, so that Islam had differentiated from its original form and had been confused with some superstitions. To him, it was necessary to change passive perception of morality by considering hadith and the Koran as the main measure.[451]

Discussions about *içtihat* became an important religious debate among the Islamic *Ulema* and secular intellectuals in the Islamic world after the evolution of Western superiority in the world. The necessity of *içtihat* was the most urgent activity, according to A. Hilmi. He did not hesitate to sharply criticize the *Ulema* and intellectuals who were against the innovation of Islamic law, on the grounds that opposing the *içtihat*, for him, meant that there was no possibility of replacing old decisions with new ones and no possibility of solving the new social, political and economic problems of Muslims.[452] However, when he contemplated the *içtihat*, he differentiated himself from secular intellectuals. There were many non-religious

[448] ibid., p. 636
[449] ibid., p. 638
[450] ibid., p. 640
[451] İ. Kara, İslamcılık, Sosyal Bilimler Ansiklopedisi, II, p. 263
[452] F.A. Hilmi, Tarih-i İslam, p. 665

intellectuals, demanding reform in Islamic beliefs and practice. In one of his articles, written as a response to the reform demands of non-religious intellectuals, especially materialists, he asserted that new interpretations of Islamic beliefs and law could not be made without an appropriate method. According to him, reforms and new interpretations, made by coercion, would produce nothing except for damage to Islamic societies. He stressed that there had been no fanaticism in the history of Islam, but at the same time, one cannot find an absolute freedom in it either.[453] These sentences differentiate him from the non-religious intellectuals who wanted reform in Islam, and show his religious side.

A.Hilmi supported the constitution of a council, which would consist of prominent *Ulema* of the Islamic world because of the urgent problems of Muslims. He asserted that if this council could be constituted, there would be a possibility to solve the social problems of Islamic societies. According to him, the most urgent problem of Islamic societies consisted of social matters. He claimed that new ones should replace the old interpretations (içtihads), which were useless. On account of the fact that all innovations and changes pertained to the entire Islamic world, constituting a general religious council was more important than other problems.[454] In fact, A. Hilmi established a relationship with the leader of Sanussiya fraternity who stated this idea when he was in exile in North Africa. The idea of getting rid of religious difference and constituting a general Islamic sect seems inconclusive today, it but can be read as a response to the problems of the Muslims and Ottomans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

It is clear that A. Hilmi aimed at constituting a political philosophy that would provide Ottoman unity, sovereignty and the development of Islamic countries. On the other hand, by stressing the içtihat, he tried to find an alternative way of solving the problems of Islamic societies. He was occupied with daily politics and problems of the Ottoman Empire. It can be asserted that he was a pragmatist when he supported the constitutional regime. However, his belief in the constitutional regime was strong

[453] F. A. Hilmi, Huzur-ı Akl-u Fende Maddiyyun meslek-i dalaleti, pp. 111-126
[454] F. A. Hilmi, Tarih-i İslam, pp. 667-670

and it was propped up on the history of the Young Ottomans' thought and on the political condition. Constitutionalism had been a strong political and intellectual movement since the 1850s in the Ottoman Empire. However, A. Hilmi could not create a consistent and refined political philosophy, because of the influence of the Empire's political situation on him. As Mardin stresses[455] the Young Turks concentrated on saving the Empire and their thoughts were shaped by this aim. Like the Young Turks, Hilmi and other Islamists also tried to find the best way forward for the Empire. The protection of the Islamic background of the Empire differentiated the Islamists from other intellectuals. The cause of the ambiguity of their ideas stemmed from this point.

4.5. Musa Kazım Efendi

Musa Kazım Efendi was born in Erzurum, a small Anatolian city, in 1858. He attended primary school in his hometown, and then he came to Balikesir to pursue his further education. He acquired Islamic knowledge from Ali Şuuru and Lutfi Efendi, well-known teachers of the time in the city. He began to teach Islamic science at the Fatih mosque in Istanbul. Musa Kazım Efendi served in the government as *Şeyhülislam* -chief religious official in the Ottoman Empire- for 5 years between 1910 and 1917 at intervals. After World War I, the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası*) were arrested and Kazım Efendi was sent to prison. He died in exile in Edirne in 1920.[456]

There is some research asserting that Musa Kazım Efendi was as a member of the freemason community.[457] Because of this assertion, his relations and ideas have been under discussion since he served in the government. However, he sharply refuted

[455] Şerif Mardin, Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri
[456] Ferhat Koca, Şeyhüslislam Musa Kazım Efendi, Ankara, 2002, pp. 13-14
[457] See; Thierry Zarcone, Soufisme et Franc-Maçonnrie a la fin de l'Empire Ottoman: L'Exemple du Şeyhülisma Musa Kazım Efendi (1850-1920), Anatolia Moderna, Paris 1991, II, pp. 201-208

these accusations.[458] As a prominent Islamist of the time, M. Kazım represents many features of the Islamists. Moreover, his ideas reveal interesting sociological points**.**

When his career is examined, it will be seen that he wrote about traditional subjects for an ordinary Ottoman scholar such as Islamic philosophy, Sufism etc. between 1888 and 1908. Nevertheless, after the proclamation of the second constitution, he began to occupy himself with political matters, theories and everyday politics in the mean-time, he served in the Young Turk governments.

It was mentioned that Musa Kazım was a *şeyhülislam* between 1910 and 1917. As a religious chief official, he cooperated with the CUP, whose members were mostly secular and Westernist. In order to evaluate the ideas of Kazım Efendi and the reasons for his cooperation with the CUP, the historical situation of the *Ulema* and the *medrese* (Islamic teaching institutions) should be examined. His book, *Külliyat*, including his all articles, was published in 1918 (1336) in Istanbul.

4.5.1. Hesitation of the Ulema

The *Ulema* had an important role in the Ottoman organizational structure. While Muslim courts and *kadis* had existed from earliest times, it was only after 1330 that a significant effort was made to organize and control them, by the creation of the position of *kadi* of the army (*kazasker*). Initially, the role of the *kazaskers* involved the task of building up the *Ulema* by importing learned men from the old centers of Islam, appointing them to judicial and other positions, and arranging them to train Ottoman subjects to take their place by building up the *medrese* (religious education institutions) system.[459] Beginning in the late fifteenth century, leadership of the *Ilmiye* was shared by the kazaskers and the grand *mufti* of Istanbul, who, by virtue of his position as leader of the corporation of *muftis* around the Empire as well as his prerogative of issuing *fatwas* legalizing the Sultan's canons and reconciling them

[458] Musa Kazım Efendi, in; Yakın Tarihimiz, no: 3, Istanbul, March 15, 1962, quoted from Ferhat Koca, Giriş Yerine, in; Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi, Külliyat, Ankara, 2002, p. 24
[459] Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire, Volume I, p. 138

with the religious law, came to be given the official position of *şeyhülislam*.[460] In the Ottoman Empire, religious institutions and the influence of the *Ulema* reached maturity and fulfilled their function as the guardians of the faith and the law.[461]

Berkes describes the historical role of the *Ulema* as follows;

> The *Ulema*, the corps of the learned men of religion, maintained the continuity of law and tradition and combated the anti-authoritarian, anti-traditionalist religious tendencies, which manifested themselves, particularly in the seventeenth century. Members of the *Ulema* were drawn from institutions of education called medreses; these were not monastic or cathedral or guild schools but colleges founded and financed by the rulers. The emphasis in the curricula was on law and theology. Another important function of the *Ulema* was maintaining the link between *din* (religion) and *devlet* (state). Its function was to interpret the Sharia when new cases arose. This interpretation was named *ifta*, and the statement in which an interpretation was given was called fatwa. But when the case involved something that had special religious or political import, the mufti assumed an unusual importance. Because of this, the mufti who held the highest religious rank, called the *Şeyhül-Islam*, almost as equal in power as the *Sadrazam* in state affairs. His official statements related to not only matters of religious policy, but also such major concerns of the state as declarations of war, relations with non-Muslim states, taxation, and innovations such as the use of coffee or tobacco and the introduction of inventions such as the printing press.[462]

Many innovations, which had become part of the medieval order and civilization, were promoted by the *Ulema* as necessities of the time. They showed a good degree of flexibility within the limits of the order and tradition. Starting from the seventeenth century, when the order began to feel that it was being shaken, certain fundamentalists were emerging who regarded any innovation as contrary to the sharia. These came mostly from the lower ranks of the *Ulema* class or were outsiders of that order, which they regarded as a mere interest group that is corrupt, mundane and no longer genuinely representative of religion.[463] However, the reforms made after the Tanzimat, began to shake the status of the *Ilmiye* and its members and

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[460] ibid., p. 139
[461] Lewis, The Emergence p. 16
[462] Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, p. 15
[463] ibid, p.18. "A number of them (member of the Ulema class) appear to have worked in collaboration with the reformist", see; Şerif Mardin, The Genesis, p. 217

restrict their role in society and in protecting traditional culture.[464] Besides, their importance in bureaucracy decreased at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[465] Before the Tanzimat (1807-1826), the opposition of the *Ulema* to the reforms was the issue. The sultans, on the one hand, gave new privileges to the *Ulema* in order to acquire their support. On the other hand, they appointed the members with whom they could work, and punished or sent opponent *Ulema* into exile. Because of this cooperation, reforms were wrapped in a religious garment, or at least reforms were not considered contrary to Islamic principles, so that opposing the reforms meant to defy Islam.[466] However, with the modernization process the *Ulema* began to lose their leading role in society and government so they tried to regain their old position by involving themselves in the reform discussions and movements.[467] Erosion in the religious scholars' prestige continued in the period of Abdulhamid II, because he considered the *Ulema* class and religious sects to be an obstacle for his reform policy, and tried to control the *Ulema* by providing them with some privileges that would prevent any opposition.[468]

In the period of Abdulhamid II's regime, the Young Turks tried to win the approval and support of the *Ulema*, publishing articles and books.[469] The aims of the propaganda of the Young Turks were to increase support for a constitutional regime, engender an Islamic opposition, and arouse a revolt among different classes of society.[470] On the other hand, some Westernist intellectuals were sharply criticizing the *Ulema* class because of their archaic beliefs and conservatism.[471] This kind of criticism also put pressure on the *Ulema* who then orientated themselves towards a more modern view. Members of the *Ulema* financially supported the magazine of

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[464] İsmail Kara, İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri, Istanbul, 1994, p. 47
[465] Esra Yakut, Şeyhülislamlık, Yenileşme Döneminde Devlet ve Din, Istanbul, 2005, p. 15
[466] A. Levy, Osmanlı Uleması ve Sultan II. Mahmud'un Askeri Islahatı, in, Modern Çağda Ulema, Ebubekir Bagader(ed), Istanbul, p. 40
[467] Kara, İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri, p. 49
[468] ibid., p. 50
[469] See; İsmail Kara, Ulema Siyaset İlişkilerine Dair Önemli Bir Metin: Muhalefet Yapmak-Muhalefete Katılmak, Divan, no; 4, 1998, pp. 1-25
[470] İsmail Kara, Ulema-Siyaset İlişkilerine Dair Metinler II, Ey Ulema Bizim Gibi Konuş!, Divan, no; 7, 1999, p. 66
[471] Kılıçzade Hakkı was one of these intellectuals. For his toughts, see; Celal Pekdoğan, Batıcı Bir Düşünür Olarak Kılıçzade Hakkı (1872-1960), unpublished PhD. thesis, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara, 1999.

Beyanü'l Hak, an important Islamist weekly, which was founded after the proclamation of the second constitution. *Beyanü'l Hak* and its writers, most of them members of the *Ulema*, promoted the constitutional regime and democratic concepts and refuted absolutism.[472] 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 facts influenced his political discourse and attitudes.

After the First World War, Musa Kazım Efendi was arrested and convicted because of his membership in the CUP governments. During the trial, he gave important information about his political and religious activities between 1908 and 1918. According to his statements, he had become a member of the CUP after the proclamation of the second constitution. He said:

> There was an office of the union for the *Ulema*. I was active in this office ... We were discussing about the utility of a constitutional regime and its suitability for the sharia. In other words, we were promoting it, because we believed that the development of our country could be realized only by the constitutional regime. Therefore, we struggled for it ... We always explained that the constitutional regime was legitimate and suitable for the sharia. It was not banned by it, on the contrary, *our sharia ordered a constitutional regime* ... We tried to explain what freedom, brotherhood meant; what the meaning of equality was ... We aimed at explaining them to people ... In other words, we did not desire European political institutions to be transferred directly into the Empire ... Our task was to realize a constitutional regime within the limits of the sharia[473]

At this point, it is important to reply to these questions; how can his activities be evaluated in the CUP and the promotion of the constitutional regime? Which conditions influenced his political career? Unfortunately, there is not much information about his life before he became a member of the CUP. However, he gave some information about his activities during the second constitutional period. In his trial, he emphasized insistently that he was not involved in partisanship. This sentence may be understood as his apolitical attitude before the proclamation of the

[472] Şeref Akbaba, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Basın Hayatında Beyan'ül Hak Gazetesi, unpublished phd. thesis, Istanbul, 1997, pp. 162-165
[473] Quoted Sadık Albayrak, Türkiye'de Din Kavgası, Istanbul, 1973, p. 100

constitution. According to him, he was chosen as *Şeyhülislam* by the Union because of his trustworthiness. He claimed that he accepted this position because of his belief in his ability to serve.[474] However, he was not the only *Ulema* member of the CUP. There were other important religious functionaries who were members of the *Ulema* office of the CUP, working together for the promotion the constitutional regime. One of the reasons for their participation in those activities could have been their personal self-interest. Actually, the members of this office acquired important positions after the proclamation of the second constitution.[475] On the other hand, the testimony of M. Kazım shows that he was a passive agent in that period whereas the CUP promoted the activity of the religious functionaries in the party. But there was another factor that encouraged him to participate in political activity; as a religious Ottoman citizen, like Hilmi and many others, he was aware of the changes and political instability in the Empire, so that he became involved in politics and political discussion as a representative of his class and community.

4.5.2. About the Constitution, Freedom, Brotherhood and Equality

When Kazım Efendi evaluated political matters, he analyzed them from the point of view of Islamic theology. He emphasized that Islamic belief was composed of two main parts; whereas the first related to worldly matters, the second pertained to the hereafter. Then, quoting verses from the Koran, he asserted that the principles that pertained to the world demanded from Muslims *to consult* with each other in every matter and to conform to *justice and equity*. He stressed that the Koran ordered his prophet to consult with Muslims.[476] He concluded that if the caliph, the leader of the Muslims, would not consult with Muslims when he acts, it would be a sin. According

[474] ibid., pp. 110-111
[475] Musa Kazım gives the names of other members of this office. see; Albayrak, Türkiye'de Din Kavgası, pp. 112-113
[476] Musa Kazım Efendi, Külliyat, Istanbul, (AH) 1336, (1918), p. 243-244. There were another Islamists who tried to "islamize" the notins of equality, freedom, constitution, see for example, Ebu'l-ula Mardin, Sırat-ı Müstakim, Sure-i Şura, I. 6-7; 28.08. 1908

to him, “Prophet Muhammad was consulting with his people about the public matters. He was not favoring anyone. He was acting in accordance with justice and equity.”[477] These sentences can certainly be read as support for the new constitutional regime.

Using religious expressions, he asserted that the most important characteristic of a governor should be his piousness. In his view, an aristocratic origin was not an important factor in this context. However, he then added that piousness entailed acting justly. According to him, somebody who carried out a national official duty should be well informed, honest and capable. Besides, he added that the Prophet did not favor his relatives or intimates.[478] These ideal features of a governor, remarked by M. Kazım, can be found in the literature of classical Islamic political philosophy.[479]

After quoting parts of speeches of the Prophet Muhammad, he tries to further formulate his ideas in an Islamic tone.

> In this way, a wise government had been established, inspired by the laws which the Prophet proclaimed. Moreover, this brilliant sun of the truth, thanks to the efforts of the four caliphs, disseminated the light of justice all around the world. In a short time, more than three hundred million people, which had been yearning for freedom, eager for justice and equality, were pleased by the rule which the Prophet proclaimed…Muslims, non-Muslims, Christians and Jews were equal in law…A Jew enjoyed the same freedom, equality and justice as the caliph.[480]

In his opinion, consultation, equality, freedom and justice, which have been the basics of humanity and civilization, were rights of the people, bestowed by God 1300 years ago. Then he added that religious rules had been changed after the four caliphs. In his view, the rights bestowed by God such as justice, freedom, equality had been usurped. He criticized the orthodox *Ulema* because while they had alleged that obedience to the government was a religious duty, they had undervalued the rules,

[477] M Kazım Efendi Külliyat, Istanbul 1336, p. 245
[478] ibid., p. 245
[479] See; Erwin I. J. Rosenthal, Political Thought in Medieval Islam, Cambridge, 1958
[480] M. Kazım Efendi, Kulliyat, p. 245

which had limited the obedience. He concluded that the proclamation of the second constitution in the Ottoman Empire was the application of the will of God.[481]

At this point, a specific importance should be given to the concept of equality. In the Tanzimat period, equality -*müsavat* in Ottoman- became one of the basic problems in the Ottoman Empire, as pointed out earlier. Non-Muslims constituted 40% of the general population of the Ottoman Empire after the Tanzimat. The nationalist and separatist discourse among non-Muslim Ottoman citizens was based on the assumption that there was no equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. The Ottoman state had to carry out egalitarian politics in order to ensure stability and continuation of the system.[482] In traditional Islamic law, the basic rights of non-Muslims were guaranteed, but non-Muslims had to pay a tax that Muslims were not obliged to pay. There were some reactions against the proclamation of the Tanzimat, on the grounds that Muslims and non-Muslims became equal.[483] At this point, it is interesting that Musa Kazım Efendi neither examined the concept of equality from the perspective of Western thought, nor did he search its historical place in Islamic philosophy and theology. Instead, he contented himself with the promotion of equality on the grounds that it was a necessity of civilization. On the other hand, he Islamized the concept of equality, alleging that all these concepts – equality, justice, and brotherhood – were bestowed by religion. In fact, he did not have any original ideas about these points. He was mostly repeating the thoughts of the Young Ottomans.

Kazım Efendi criticized, like many Islamists, imitating the Western way of life that was disseminated through the Ottoman Empire after the proclamation of the second constitution. He tried to establish his criticism by evaluating the meaning of freedom and fraternity from the Islamic point of view and the constitution. It is worth remarking that when he evaluated the proclamation of the second constitution, he

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[481] ibid., pp. 246-247
[482] Roderic H. Davison, Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century, American Historical Review, Vol: LIX, no; 1, October 1953, p. 846
[483] Halil İnalcık, Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri, in; Osmanlı İmparatorluğu- Toplum ve Ekonomi, Istanbul, 1996, pp. 369-372

praised the Ottoman army saying that "…Thanks to heroic and religious efforts of the Ottoman army, we have been able to acquire our freedom and constitution which was recorded as a glorious event of the Ottoman history".[484] This remark gives important clues about his understanding of freedom, equality and constitution. He then tried to throw light on the rights provided by the constitution by asking questions like "what is the constitution? What do freedom and equality mean?"[485].

He emphasized that freedom meant to be free from something. However, he stressed that it did not mean to be free from every restriction. According to him, absolute freedom is not present in the world. In his view, it is limited by responsibility, which is present everywhere in the world. He wanted to stress the natural laws, which were created by God, such as the concept of "presence of responsibility in the world". He asserted that some laws like natural laws restrained human beings. If those were abided by, there would be disorder in society. He reached the conclusion that

> Now we see that there is no absolute freedom in the world of animals and plants. Everything is limited by many restrictions and has much responsibility … Moreover; a human being is restricted by both natural laws on the one hand, and jurisprudence, custom and traditions on the other... While a human being is limited by natural and positive laws, in order to serve his/her material needs, at the same time he/she is at the same time restricted by religious laws for spiritual needs … In that case, the rights, provided by the constitution, which is an explanation of the verses of the Koran related to worldly matters, mean to be free from illegitimate and unreasonable restraints of Abdulhamid's regime, and also these rights comply with the religious laws and national customs.[486]

Moreover, he tried to strengthen his arguments by evaluating religious and civil laws in detail. He emphasized that although a human being has freedoms, he/she is obliged to comply with civil laws on the grounds of providing common utility. In his view, everybody must consider the rights of others and the common weal, in order to provide the continuity of society and state. To him, civil laws are necessary in order to concretize the way in which they would teach the members of a society what truth

[484] M. Kazım Efendi, Kulliyat, p. 248
[485] ibid., p. 248
[486] ibid., pp. 249-251

and freedom are. Then he tried to clarify what he meant by religious laws. He stressed that human beings consisted of two main parts, physical and spiritual. While positive civil laws determine the physical life of humans, religious laws arrange their spiritual life. However, he did not content himself with remarking that religious laws arrange the spiritual life. He asserted that beyond that, religion and religious laws determine some matters pertaining to the world.[487] 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, which supported the constitution and democracy. On the one hand, they supported the constitution and democracy, which secularized Ottoman civil law; on the other hand, they considered civil law to be a reflection of religious rules. However, it should be emphasized that, Ottoman civil law was not separated from the sharia at that time. At the time of Kazım Efendi's remarks, Ottoman civil law had been a mixture of Islamic laws and European laws for a few decades, which impelled 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 were composed of Islamic rules, the application of the constitution should be bound by religious laws.

4.5.3. The Limits of the Changes

The Islamists who appeared in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century were considered by some academics to be modernist and liberal. Although those determinations are true in some aspects, they do not represent the whole scene. While their modernist side wanted to support equality, freedom, constitutionalism and democracy, their conservative side wanted to defend the dominance of religious and traditional values in society. As we will see; this contradiction can be seen generally in the thoughts of Islamists. Likewise, Musa Kazım Efendi was very conservative in evaluating some of the changes that appeared in the Empire, especially those that pertained to the situation of women. For example, after alleging that all prohibited things are detrimental for human beings and all commanded things

[487] ibid., p.252

are useful for them, he concluded that women should not work outside the house and participate in activities that are arranged by men.[488] On the other hand, his insistence on national customs that limit freedom show his conservative aspect more clearly. According to him, customs are established in the souls and accepted by trustworthy men for centuries. He was insistent that every civilized country should make its laws in harmony with its customs and traditions. After quoting a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, "whatever Muslims considered well was well for Allah too", he stressed the importance of customs from the point of view of religion.[489] Thereafter, he asserted that having freedom does not mean to imitate a Western way of life. On the contrary, he suggested preserving traditions, customs and the way of Ottoman life.[490] However, it should be emphasized that these thoughts were conservative even for some Islamists.

Like many Islamists, he emphasized that Ottoman Muslims should transfer European science and technology while preserving their traditions. He claimed that becoming a developed country does not necessitate imitating and importing the European way of life. As expected, he gave Japan as an example, which, according to him, became a developed country without imitating the West.[491] In other words, whereas he considered customs, traditions and way of life unique and national, he stressed that science, art and, technologies are universal.

Musa Kazım Efendi wrote an article under the title "Islam and development" in which he evaluated the notions of consultation, freedom, justice, equality and brotherhood.[492] In this article, giving examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad, he tried to establish his political approach on a religious basis, which would be more effective in persuading Muslim masses that consultation, justice, capability, equality etc. were an indispensable part of Islamic political philosophy and tradition.

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[488] ibid., p. 254
[489] ibid., pp. 272-273
[490] ibid., p. 273
[491] ibid., p. 273
[492] Musa Kazım Efendi, İslam ve Terakki, İslam Mecmuası, in; Musa Kazım Efendi, Külliyat, 1336, pp. 279-281

In conclusion, Kazım Efendi cooperated with the CUP, opposed the regime of Abdulhamid II, and promoted consultation, and Islamized modern concepts that emerged after the French Revolution. There were a few main reasons that determined his political views and attitudes. As pointed out earlier, the members of the *Ulema* were losing their prestige and important role in society and government as a result of reform, which propagated Abdulhamid's regime as well. Though the modernization process and reforms brought about the secularization of Ottoman law, the second constitution guaranteed the validity of Islamic laws[493], which facilitated its acceptance by the Islamists. Although most Young Turks were secular-minded activists, some members of the *Ulema*, like Musa Kazım, did not falter in opposition and began to support new regimes and concepts because of their inability to participate in the decision-making process in the period of Abdulhamid's regime. Because of that, it is not very surprising that he promoted equality, freedom, brotherhood and justice. Although there were some *Ilmiye* members who opposed the decisions of the sultans in Ottoman history, the function of the *Ulema* was mostly confined to legitimizing the decisions of the governors.[494] For instance, after the removal of the Janissaries, most of the members of the *Ulema* supported the reforms of Mahmud II.[495] At that point, in the case of Musa Kazim Efendi**,** there was no divergent situation for the Ottoman tradition. Most of the Young Turks considered the *Ulema* to be legitimators of the Sultans' decisions. Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked that he did not just remain as a legitimator, but he also tried to raise objections to the reforms and intellectuals when he did not agree with them. This aim represents, on the other hand, the *Ulema*'s effort to become more active in the process of social and political change. It should also be remarked that personal worries could be another factor in his participation in the Young Turks' propaganda. As remarked before, Musa Kazım Efendi acquired the highest religious position in the time of Young Turk governments. Certainly, the thoughts of the Young Ottomans

[493] Suna Kili, Türk Anayasaları, Istanbul, 1982, p. 27
[494] Esra Yakut, Şeyhülislamlık, Yenileşme Döneminde Devlet ve Din, Istanbul, 2005, pp. 47-48
[495] ibid, p. 50

who reinterpreted the Islamic political philosophy with modern terms had some influence on his ideas.

4.6. Said Halim Pasha

Said Halim Pasha (1864-1921) differed from some other exponents of Islamism in the Young Turk era in at least two respects. First, he was an Egyptian. Born in Cairo, he was the grandson of Muhammad Ali and the son of Halim Pasha, who was frustrated in his hopes of becoming the ruler of Egypt. Said Halim moved to Istanbul with his family when he was 8 years old. After learning Arabic, Persian, English and French from private teachers, he went to Switzerland to study political science. He stayed there for five years and returned to Istanbul after graduating from university in 1888. When he had become a high-grade official, it was announced that he was related to the Young Turks movement. Therefore, his residence was investigated and although no illegal or incriminating documents could be found, he had to go into exile to Egypt in 1905. Then, Said Halim Pasha joined Young Turk circles, and took on the responsibility of inspector of the Committee of Union and Progress in 1906. Under Khediv Abbas Hilmi's administration (1892-1913), Egypt became a safe haven and center for Young Turk opposition to the Hamidian regime. During this time, Said Halim stayed in Egypt as an inspector of the CUP and continued to provide financial support to Young Turk activities there and in Paris.[496] In his memoirs, Ahmed Rıza (a prominent Young Turk) mentioned the name of Said Halim Pasha among other members of the Egyptian khedivial family who financially supported the Young Turk movement in exile.[497] Said Halim Pasha returned to Istanbul with the revolution of 1908. After a succession of lesser official positions, he became the Secretary General of the ruling Committee of Union and Progress in 1912, Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1913, then for three years Grand Vezir, until

[496] Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 84, Hanefi Bostan, Bir İslamcı Düşünür, Said Halim Paşa, Istanbul, 1992, pp. 20-25
[497] Ahmed Rıza, Meclis-i Mebusan ve Ayan Reisi Ahmed Rıza Bey'in Anıları, Istanbul, 1988, p. 19

February 1917. He was assassinated by an Armenian in Rome after the end of the war.[498]

Said Halim Pasha wrote eight pamphlets, all in French, at different times and whose names were Constitutional Monarchy (1911, Turkish in 1918), Our Imitations, (1911), Our Opinion Crises (1917), Our Social Crisis (1916), Fanaticism (1910), The Collapse of the Islamic World (Inhitat-ı İslam) (1918), and Islamization (1918) respectively. All these pamphlets were published in one book in 1919 under the title of Our Crises (*Buhranlarımız*). Said Halim Pasha wrote another important book in which he summarized his thoughts, when he was in exile in 1922 titled Political Organisation in Islam (*İslamda Teşkilat-ı Siyasiyye*).

His writings emphasized the central position of Islam in social and political behaviour. He maintained that Islam, as a unity of the eternal truths of equality and solidarity, had no fatherland. No less characteristic was his saying that a Muslim's fatherland was the place in which the Sharia prevails. In a lengthy article in French, he argued that the sharia should determine both the law and the government of Muslim populations. As Said Halim also stressed the non-racial, non-territorial character of Islam, on the other hand, he considered the merits of Pan-Islam as well. Being a diplomat, he gave some consideration to the ways and means of achieving the union of Muslims. Acknowledging that it was impossible to achieve an immediate union of Muslims, he argued for an interim federation, furthering a common all-Islamic society, which would lead to a future union of Muslim nations.[499] According to Landau, being of Egyptian origin and not a Turk could understandably have influenced his thinking in this direction, which was more easily acceptable to Arabs than other Muslim groups.[500] However, as displayed in the thoughts of Filibeli Hilmi, it was a common idea to consider the immediate union of all-Muslims unrealistic. Therefore, this opinion of Said Halim Pasha cannot be based

[498] Feroz Ahmad, Said Halim Pasha, (Mehmed), The Oxford Encylopedia of the Modern Islamic World, vol. 3. pp. 459-460
[499] Landau, The Politics of Pan Islam, p. 85
[500] ibid., p. 85

on his Arab origin, but it is possible to see it as a realist position. Now we shall consider his relevant thoughts in detail.

4.6.1. Against Authoritarianism

S. H. Pasha acknowledged that most social and political illnesses were produced by authoritarian regimes. However, he asserted that the causes of the illness differ from country to country and insisted that Muslims, who had believed in justice, lived under the regimes, which had realized political freedom and equality in history.[501] After this assertion, Said Halim Pasha began to criticize the political situation in the West, for the purpose of responding to Westernist tendencies among the Ottoman intellectuals. In his view, no social and political privilege in Islamic society could include an authoritarian regime. According to him, while non-Muslims have lived comfortably under Muslim rule, there had been many struggles between religious sects in the West. According to Pasha, whenever wise men and intellectuals understood Islamic rules properly, Islamic societies lived peacefully, but when they did not apply Islamic rules, they exposed themselves to absolutist regimes. In other words, he considered authoritarian regimes illegitimate because of their conflict with Islamic principles. Then he concluded that the way to hinder despotism would be different in the West and in Muslim societies because of their different social and political structures.[502] He insisted that Islamic societies have contained both aristocracy and democracy and the distinctive principles of Islamic morality, stemming from the principles of freedom, equality and solidarity. In his own words, "Islamic society is democratic, because it includes principles of solidarity, justice and humanism. At the same time, it is aristocratic due to its respect for laws, personal superiority (difference), virtue and science."[503] He emphasized that both the aristocratic and democratic features of Ottoman society had to be strengthened in order to provide stability and progress. He further claimed that there had been no

[501] Said Halim Pasha, Meşrutiyet, Buhranlarımız ve Son Eserleri Istanbul, 2003, p. 65
[502] ibid., p. 65
[503] Said Halim Pasha, İnhitat-ı İslam, 1334 (1918) İstanbul, pp. 19-20

contradiction between the people (*reaya*) and aristocrats (elites) in the Ottoman Empire, because in his view "aristocrats have no privilege in law".[504]

However, it can be easily determined that there are some contradictions in his ideas. On the one hand, he alleged that Islamic society was democratic; on the other hand, he tried to explain how an Islamic society could be democratized. (In fact, he stated that the cause of administrative illness and despotism in Islamic societies was due to deficiencies in carrying out Islamic rules. Even though he may have been be aware of that, he did not try to provide a sociological explanation about the administrative illness in the Ottoman Empire). According to him, modern Islamic societies can be democratized through increasing the respect for ordinary people among aristocrats, which had been present for centuries in history, and supporting the respect for elites and science among the peoples.[505] Although he did not clarify his idea of democracy in Islamic societies, it can be assumed that he implied with it that the origins of democratic ideals existed in Islamic society, but that in modern times it had ceased to exist**.** Therefore, according to him, there is no use trying to apply Western democracy to the Ottoman Empire. However, S. Halim Pasha insisted that there was no better political regime than democracy for the Ottoman Empire. The worst regime for him was the absolutist regime. According to him, an appropriate constitutional regime for the Ottoman Empire could be established if the constitution was based on national tradition, social and political structure.[506] In fact, these statements arose from Said Halim Pasha's political experience. As remarked earlier, after the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908, Ottomans were not able to solve the political, social and economic problems of the Empire. On the contrary, rivalry between political parties worsened the situation. Therefore, Pasha searched for an alternative democratic system, which he later tried to identify in his book *İslamlaşmak*.

4.6.2. About the Constitution

[504] ibid., p. 20
[505] ibid. p. 21
[506] Said Halim Pasha, Meşrutiyet, in; Buhranlarımız, 1329 (1913), İstanbul, p. 5

Said Halim Pasha was a supporter of the constitution and the constitutional monarchy. In his first book, *Meşrutiyet*, the proclamation of the constitutional monarchy was considered to be among the most important events in Ottoman history.[507] Rather than a political philosophical treatise about the constitutional monarchy, this book is a criticism of the Ottoman modernization process, which had begun almost 100 years before the book was written. In his book, on the one hand, Said Halim Pasha criticized the constitution and democracy regarding them as copies of European institutions, because they were not suitable for the Ottoman social structure and historical experience, but on the other hand he considered them to be inevitable. His contradiction and the nucleus of his political thoughts lie in this point.

Firstly, he began to criticize the constitution of 1876, which was created by officials who were an important body of the monarchic regime;[508] S.H. Pasha asserted that the reformists who made the constitution of 1876 were aware of the unconsciousness of the Ottoman people who were incapable of benefiting from the rights provided them by the constitution. Then, he claimed that the officials who prepared this constitution could broaden their rights against the Sultan. In his view, the reformists were populist. He based his criticism on the idea that "while the Ottoman people were uninformed, ignorant of their rights and alien to the constitution, they did not support reformist officials when Abdulhamid II eliminated them".[509] In his view, a parliament had to be constituted by considering Ottoman historical experience, social and political realities, and the differences and antagonisms between all parties and Ottoman nations. When he evaluated political parties, he claimed that the meaning and the functions of political parties in the Ottoman Empire differed from the West. According to him, Ottoman political parties, which were established after 1908, did not come into existence as a social, political or economic necessity, but they were inspired from abstract theories. He alleged further that the benefits of parties, which were seen in the West, would not occur in the Ottoman Empire.[510] In *İnhitat-ı İslam* (The Collapse of the Islamic World), written in 1918, he wrote that, Islamic rules had

[507] ibid., p. 3
[508] Said Halim Pasha, ibid. p. 4
[509] ibid, p. 5
[510] Said Halim Pasha, Mukallidliklerimiz, in; Buhranlarımız 1329 (1913), pp. 31-32

not permitted opposition and contradictions between different parties and classes.[511] However, he did not say that there could not be more than one party in Islamic societies either. In fact, this criticism stems from the failure of the government and the discrepancies between Ottoman parties, which caused many difficulties in administration.

4.6.3. Criticism of the Tanzimat Reforms and Westernist Intellectuals

Said Halim Pasha began his criticism of the Ottoman reformers by stating that all reform efforts had been wasted and the methods, which had been applied for one century by the Ottomans, were false. In his view, the mistake was to think that the translation of European laws into Turkish and transferring European institutions into the Empire could solve the problems of the country. He gives some examples to prove this claim asserting that the French justice system, which had been adopted by the Ottomans for many years, had not solved the problems, but worsened the Ottoman justice system. Besides his criticism, he did not forget to stress that he was not against reforms. However, he claimed that there are no qualified diplomats who can find the correct methods in the Empire. Furthermore, he insisted that imitation of the West had been implemented without actually understanding the European experience.[512] In his view, the laws, although logical, were prepared without considering the realities of society, and could not produce a wealthy and prosperous community. On the contrary, they would produce despotism and misuse. He tried to evaluate the social structure of Western societies in order to show the structural differences between Ottoman and European societies and to find a basis for his ideas. He asserted that nobility, an important factor in the history of Europe, was alien to the Ottomans and the bourgeoisie was not an effective social factor in the Ottoman Empire. He concretizes his criticism in the following sentences, which carry traces of his education in Switzerland.

[511] Said Halim Pasha, İnhitat-ı Islam, 1918, p. 20
[512] Said Halim Pasha, Buhranlarımız ,1913, p. 4

Nevertheless, contrary to the European aristocracy and bourgeoisie, who have courage, responsibility and the soul of initiative, the officials and intellectuals who do not have responsibility and the soul of enterprise are the most effective actors of the Ottoman society. Then, how can the institutions, which were built by a different society, be beneficial for the Ottoman Empire?[513]

Said Halim Pasha criticized Ottoman intellectuals and diplomats on the grounds that they had a strong belief in abstract theories, and wanted to apply such theories without thinking about their suitability for Ottoman social, political and economic realities. He suggested, "even the notions of equality and freedom differ from one country to another."[514] He evaluated the formation process of equality and freedom in Europe, saying that the notions of equality and freedom had emerged as an outcome of the struggle between different classes in Western societies. According to him, because of the absence of an aristocracy and religious clergy, there were no class struggles in Islamic societies.

In *Fikir Buhranımız* (Our Crisis of Thought) S. H. Pasha continued to criticize Westernist Ottoman intellectuals. He asserted that westernized modern Ottoman intellectuals had not understood both European thoughts, political, social and economic structure on the one side, and Ottoman culture and problems on the other, because of their hate for their own society.[515] In this book, he concluded that westernized intellectuals could not solve the problems of the Ottoman Empire. He proposed, instead of westernization, the "nationalization of western civilization."[516] His criticism of the westernist intellectuals constitutes an important part of the book *Cemiyet Buhranımız* (Our Social Crisis). He also discussed the feminist movements in the Ottoman Empire in this book. His conservative thoughts become more visible when he discussed the place of women in society.

One of the most striking points in the thoughts of Said Halim Pasha is his criticism, which can be considered conservative from the point of view of modern political

[513] ibid., p. 16
[514] Said Halim Pasha, Mukallidliklerimiz, (1326), Istanbul, in; Buhranlarımız (1329), p. 30
[515] Said Halim Pasha, Buhran Fikrimiz, Istanbul, 1337, pp.10-11
[516] ibid., p. 14

ideas. However, he insisted continuously on his support for the reforms. What he suggested was "to make reforms in order to preserve. For this reason, reforms come into being with time."[517]

Said Halim Pasha did not hesitate to criticize the class of *Ulema* and traditional Islamic scholars in his next book, which was published in the same year (1911). The name of the book is *Taklitçiliğimiz* (Our Imitationism) and it deals with the problems that appeared in the modernization process of the Ottoman Empire. In his opinion, the real cause of Muslim decline lay in the misunderstanding of the Prophet's practices by conservative Muslim scholars in their study of *ilim* (science). These scholars reduced the concept of *ilim* to the level of religious and legal knowledge, leaving out natural and positive sciences. This comprehension hindered the mental and material developments of the Muslim world and caused its economic underdevelopment, resulting in economic, political and social weakness, which was being exploited by external forces. For him, false diagnosis divided the Muslim elite into two diametrically opposed groups. The first group, consisting of pious Muslims led by the conservative *Ulema*, argued that since the nature of material progress clashed with the basic rules of the Sharia, Muslims should reject material prosperity. The latter, adherent and supportive of complete Westernization, defended the position that material progress should have precedence over fidelity to the Sharia.[518] The former, according to Said Halim, sought to bring back the splendor of the Islamic past without understanding that it could not be achieved without a prosperous economy and a materially advanced society. While Pasha declared this expectation false, he equally condemned the Westernist ambitions to create a materially advanced society at the cost of alienating it from Islamic principles. Both views, he asserted, are erroneous because far from condemning economic prosperity and progress, Islam encouraged them.[519]

[517] Said Halim Pasha, Taklitçiliğimiz, in; Buhranlarımız (1329) p. 43
[518] Ahmet Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, pp. 133-134
[519] ibid., p. 134

4.6.4. Criticism of Feminism

As pointed out earlier, Said Halim Pasha was very critical of the social Westernization of Ottoman society and of feminist demands, which were considered to be an element of Westernization. According to him, "the pretensions of some women have been one of the causes of the decline of the Ottoman society."[520] In his opinion, women who do not want to veil themselves, who do not accept the sovereignty of their husbands, and demand to live as Western equals are a threat for the Ottoman and Muslim way of life. Giving examples from the history of civilizations, he asserted that none of the civilizations had begun to arise with the freedom of women; on the contrary, in his opinion, whenever women had gained absolute freedom in a society, it caused the decline of a civilization.[521] Nevertheless, he stressed the importance of women for a society. According to him, this importance would appear only if it was used appropriately. Besides, he alleged that demands for more freedom could not always be right in itself. The value of demands for freedom stems from social necessities.[522]

He emphasized that feminist movement in the Ottoman Empire came on to the scene not because of social necessity like in the Western example. On the contrary, he wrote that Ottoman feminists and their supporters have emphasized the rights of women on the grounds that they tried to imitate Western societies.[523] S.H Pasha made a distinction between social and political freedoms, in order to clarify his position on this matter. According to him, social freedoms originated from social necessities as an equivalent of a social duty. Political freedoms have not arisen from social requisites but from the idea of political equality. With this distinction, he wanted to stress that Western feminism and the freedom of women emerged from Western social realities. Then he gave examples from Ottoman agricultural life, where men and women had been in similar social positions for centuries. In his view,

[520] Said Halim Pasha, Buhran-ı İctimaimiz, İstanbul, 1332, p. 22
[521] ibid., p. 23
[522] ibid., p. 24
[523] ibid., p. 25

in agricultural life women and men do the same jobs and have the same rights.[524] According to him, "Westernist intellectuals supposed that if women had positions similar to those of Western women, the Ottoman Empire would become a developed country."[525]

To him, in the lower classes, the difference between women and men becomes less visible, while it increases in the upper classes. He further remarked that difference between women and men in the Ottoman society originated from social realities. Therefore, according to him, feminism was an artificial ideology, which had been supported by Westernists. He believed that acquiring a freedom without meriting it would cause social diseases. In his view, "the degree of the freedom" of women in a society neither shows the superiority of the society nor does it show the importance of women in the considerations of the members of the society.[526] Then he concluded that, "in order to evaluate the importance of the freedom of women, it should be considered how it was acquired. Has it arisen from virtue or from dissoluteness?"[527] Said Halim Pasha considered the demands, which aimed to change and transform the place of Ottoman women, to be a mistake on the grounds of social realities. He asserted that if those demands arose from the social realities, they could be realized spontaneously. The objection to those demands and to feminism in Ottoman society, for him, should be understood as a defense of social and cultural values. Consequently, Said Halim Pasha regarded laws as a barrier to stop the movements that were a threat to society.[528]

However, S.H. Pasha was not against women's rights. He believed that the more the Ottoman Empire developed, the more rights Ottoman women would have. According

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[524] It is worthy of noting that a woman writer was arguing in one of the first Ottoman women periodical that there was equality between men and women in the Ottoman provinces. But she demanded more equality in education. Then, she emphasized that veiling was not an obstacle for education of women. On the other hand, she demanded the same rights for the Ottoman women that Western women had. Besides, some information about European feminist movement were published in this periodical. Terakki-i Muhadderat, Rabia, Birinci Mesele: Terbiyet-i Hatıramızın Vucub-i Islahı, No: 5, 1869. Quoted; Serpil Çakır, Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi, Istanbul, 1993, p. 24
[525] Said Halim Pasha, Buhran-ı İctimaimiz (1332), pp. 26-28
[526] ibid., pp. 29-30
[527] ibid., p. 31
[528] ibid., pp. 32-33

to him, this demand had to arise from social realities and necessities so that the social balance could be preserved.[529] It is clear that Said Halim Pasha considered feminism to be a part of Westernist movements, and therefore a social and cultural alienation. All his criticism was based on the same point: the rejection of cultural and social Westernization. However, it can be alleged that he could not be fully aware of the social, cultural and economic changes in the Ottoman Empire, which constituted a basis for new demands.

4.6.5. Building an Alternative Discourse

İslamlaşmak, considered as the most important book of Said Halim, consists of some ideas showing the important transformation in his thoughts. However, it can be alleged that his thoughts matured in the *Political Organisation in Islam* published in Rome in 1921. The Ottoman political experience after 1908, namely the defeat in the First World War and increasing Westernization in political and daily life, influenced his thoughts and brought about some important changes in his political and social ideas. The title of the former book, "Islamization", implies an important opposition against the prominent political, social and intellectual climate of the Ottoman state, which began to collapse after the First World War. This social, political and moral anarchy exposed many contradictions in his thoughts.

S. H. Pasha clarifies what he implies with Islamization. According to him, Islamization means to put Islamic beliefs, political and social institutions into practice.[530] Although he was sharply critical of Western values, he emphasized that freedom and equality were among the most fundamental of Islamic principles. In his opinion, freedom is a duty of Islam. All Muslims must have the freedom that would produce equality in social life. However, he insisted that personal inequalities, which were consequences of individual qualities, talents, and capabilities, were accepted by

[529] ibid., pp. 29-30
[530] Said. Halim Pasha, İslamlaşmak, İstanbul, 1337 (1918), p. 5

Islamic society.[531] He alleged that while elites had been democrats in Islamic society because they strived to work for the people, members of lower classes had been aristocratic on the grounds of their inclination towards aristocratic ideals. Therefore, there would be no struggle between upper and lower classes in Islamic society, because they have aimed to reach to the same ideals. He added further, "for this reason all Muslims should try to perfect the application of Islamic morality and social order."[532]

The presidency has an important role in his political thoughts. According to him, "the duty of the president is to provide stability to the Islamic order. The president should have the political power in his hands, and all citizens should obey him. Nonetheless, all of his actions should be controlled as well. It is the people who provide political power to the president, and if he fails to carry out his duties, the people can dismiss him. But the president of the state must carry out and promote Islamic laws (Sharia), and political power must protect personal rights and social solidarity."[533] According to him, by establishing these values in Islamic society, international solidarity and humanism can be provided. On the other hand, it should be noted that he accepted difference between nations although he criticized nationalism on the grounds that it increases abhorrence between nations.[534]

Now his mature ideas as expressed in his last book, *Political Structure in Islam*, shall be evaluated.[535] He began this book asserting that there was nothing in Western societies that Muslims should transfer, except for natural science and technology. In his view, on the contrary, there were many things in Islamic societies from which Western societies would benefit.[536] It can be seen clearly that these sentences were written as a form of criticism against Westernist intellectuals who considered Westernization indispensable. Then he tries to defend his arguments. Said Halim

[531] ibid., pp. 8-9
[532] ibid. p. 10
[533] ibid., p. 14
[534] ibid., p. 14
[535] This book is a collection of his articles in Sebilürreşad. I used these articles.
[536] Said Halim Pasha, İslam'da Teşkilat-ı Siyasiye, Sebilürreşad, no: 19. Issue; 493, Istanbul, 1338. p. 264

Pasha remarked that the social structure of Islam was established upon the sovereignty of Islamic law, which he defined as the moral and social values composed of "natural" realities. In his view, "Sharia means sovereignty of moral and social laws which are natural and suitable for human nature and it can not be changed for the desires of people. Like natural science, all people are equal in the laws of Sharia and it is the source of real freedom."[537] In this way, he concludes that sovereignty is the domination of the divine power, which is the defender of social justice and moral realities. To him, the domination of the divine power means sovereignty of science, reason, and wisdom.[538]

In his opinion, Ottoman intellectuals believed in the sovereignty of a nation because they supposed that the achievements of Western nations stemmed from that sovereignty. According to him, they confused cause and effect. He remarked that the sovereignty of a nation was a utopia. To him, there was one basic principle in Western politics, and that was power, which caused struggle between different classes, fundamentally weakening social and political stability. He criticized the concept of national sovereignty, asserting that it did not represent the majority of a nation as it was implied. He claimed that even if it was accepted that national sovereignty represented the wish of the majority, it would not be true because, this principle, and the wish of the majority, would harm the rights of minorities. For him, there is no difference between this principle and aristocratic and theocratic governments because all of them include tyranny.[539] However, he then added that it would not be true if it were not accepted that the will of a nation was important since the desires of a nation were valuable in governing. On the other hand, he suggested that the will of a nation should be suitable for the divine law because, in his view, divine laws were natural laws.[540] These sentences can be understood as a rejection of the unconditional national sovereignty principles of the new Assembly in Ankara that was established on 23rd April 1920.

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[537] Said Halim Pasha, İslam'da Teşkilat-ı Siyasiye, İslam'ın İctimaiyyatı, Sebilürreşad, no: 20, issue; 495, Istanbul, March 11, 1338. p. 1
[538] ibid, p. 1
[539] Said Halim Pasha, İslam'da Teşkilat-ı Siyasiyye, Garbın Usul-u Siyasiyyesi, Sebilürreşad, no:20, issue; 498, Istanbul, 1338, p. 38
[540] Said Halim Pasha, Buhranlarımız, pp. 228-229

He also rejected the Rousseauian concept of natural rights. In his own words,

> It is asserted that man was born with some natural rights which were later limited by his environment depriving him of his freedom. However, no ideas like that can be harmful for freedom. A human being does not have any rights by birth, but the ability to adapt to environment.[541]

The most interesting point of his ideas lies in connecting natural rights and divine rules. According to him, human beings learn to adapt themselves to divine laws just like adapting to natural laws. In his view, if people obeyed the divine laws, they would acquire freedom.[542]

S. H. Pasha stressed constantly that Western political and social institutions emerged as a solution to the problems with which Western societies were confronted. However, by criticizing Westernist intellectuals, he not only refused their approach but also tried to bring forward a theoretically well-founded criticism against Western political theories and institutions, sometimes using Western political thought. To him, the power of a parliament in a Western political system can be harmful for the government so that governments cannot carry out their duties, which would cause the emergence of self-interested persons in parliaments.[543] In addition, he criticized plural political systems because each party would follow its self-interest. According to him, the best political regime for a society must be suitable for its social, political and economic realities. After that, he tried to determine the appropriate political regime for an Islamic society. In his opinion, the first condition was that all Muslim citizens should obey Islamic laws. Secondly, a political regime must be in a way a representation of a nation, not the sovereignty of a nation. The parliaments that would represent the nation will consist of the members who represent the will of the nation and will not follow their self-interest but follow the same ideas, which would provide social balance. He adds that "Therefore there would be no communist,

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[541] ibid., p. 2. Also, Seyhun, Said Halim Pasha, p. 131
[542] Said Halim Pasha, İslam'ın İctimaiyyatı, p. 2
[543] Said Halim Pasha, İslamda Teşkilat-ı Siyasiyye, Garbın Usulu Siyasiyyesi, Sebillürreşad, no:20, issue; 498, pp. 38-39

socialist, republican and supporter of the sultanate in the parliament. All members would aim to improve the social, political and economic situation of the country."[544] In this political system, the members of the legislative body should be elected among specialists. It meant that parliament could not enact new laws, contrary to Islamic principles. The president of a nation should be elected by the nation but he must have enough power in order to serve the people. However, he and his officials are responsible for carrying out Islamic rule and the will of the nation. If they fail anew government should be elected by the nation and by parliament.[545]

For Said Halim, Pan-Islamism meant the salvation of the Islamic world by the Muslim intellectual elites through liberty and progress. Pan-Islamism represented the revival of an Islamic conscience among Muslims all over the world that were determined to liberate themselves from the shackles of ignorance and servitude by improving their intellectual prowess, their capacities and their material condition.[546] According to Said Halim, the fundamental problems in the Muslim world consisted of an incorrect diagnosis of the problems afflicting Muslim societies, and an even more disastrous mistake in the prescription of their remedies. Said Halim concluded that the only group that benefited from Westernization was the European imperialist powers.[547] In his opinion, the Muslim *Ulema* had encountered the scholastic ideas during the Crusades through their dealing with the Christian European clergy. Eventually, this scholasticism began to dominate Islamic intellectual life and to hinder its development. Thus, whereas Afghani considered the Pan-Islamic movement primarily as a rallying ideology for the Muslim world to fight Western colonial encroachments, Said Halim believed that Pan-Islamism would lead to the regeneration of Muslim society through a revival of accomplishments. This is very much reminiscent of Muhammad Abduh's position, which sought the salvation of the

[544] ibid., p. 39
[545] Said Halim Pasha, İslam'da Teşkilat-ı Siyasiyye, Reis-i Hükümet, Sebilürreşad, no: 20, issue; 500, Istanbul, 1338, pp. 62-63
[546] Ahmet Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, p. 39
[547]ibid., p. 163

Muslim world in an intellectual and religious awakening more than in an anti-imperialist political struggle against the colonial powers.[548]

In conclusion, the most important points in his view can be classified respectively. (1) He asserted that the backwardness of the Islamic world stemmed from material conditions and not from Islamic beliefs, cultures and traditions. While he was against Westernization, he suggested transferring natural science and technology from the West into the Islamic countries. (2) Although he rejected the Western political system, he did not defend the sultanate and absolutist regimes. He wanted to constitute a parliament, and to build a political system in which citizens would elect the president. Moreover, the most important point is his quietness about the Caliphate that was the most important part of Abdulhamid II's Islamic politics. All of these features of his thought mean that on the one hand, he refused Westernization; on the other hand, he tried to renovate the traditional Ottoman-Muslim political system using some ideas from the West. (3) His stress on the empiric method and criticism against abstract theories imply a prevalent feature of the Young Turks and the positivist tendencies of Ottoman intellectuals.[549] Pasha emphasized that experimental methods were the method of Islamic science. (4) His stress on the maturity of Islamic institutions, and criticism against sudden changes, which were carried out with respect to theoretical speculations, reminds us of the ideas of Edmund Burke.[550] Burke's influence on him can be clearly seen, especially in his criticism o transferring Western institutions into the Empire. (5) His criticism against the plural political system which was applied after 1908, stemmed from the disappointment of the conclusions of the Ottoman constitutional regime. As pointed out earlier, the problems of the Empire could not be solved by parliamentary regime;

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[548] ibid., p. 40

[549] Şerif Mardin, Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri, Istanbul, 1967

[550] "Edmund Burke spent thirty years in the House of Commons, and almost all his activity was in the opposition. He advocated many reforms, usually without any immediate success. He urged the necessity of reform, but always with wisdom and prudence and with a recognition of continuity in government and the national life. He therefore sharply distinguished between reform and innovation or revolution", see; Louis I. Bredvold and Ralph G. Ross, The Philosophy of Edmund Burke, 1967, pp. 165-166. For an evaluation on the thoughts of Burke, also Christian Graf von Krockow, Edmund Burke, Kapitale II, in; Pipers Handbuch der Politischen Ideen, (ed), Iring Fetscher and Herfried Münkler, no:4, München-Zürich, 1986, pp. 71-125

on the contrary, the political, social and economic situation deteriorated during the constitutional period. Like all Ottoman intellectuals of his generation, he also tried to find a solution to the collapse of the Empire. He was defensive and reactionary: his ideas have both modernist and conservative aspects. In addition, the influence of his family and education on his thought can also be seen clearly.

To sum up; on the one hand, Islamists supported the constitutional regime, approved transferring Western science and technology, and regarded renewal (*içtihad*) of the Sharia necessary; on the other hand, they opposed Westernization, the removal of Islamic rules, and the secularization of society. Most of the prominent Islamists, Bereketzade İsmail Hakkı, Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi, Musa Kazım Efendi, Manastırlı İsmail Hakkı, Mustafa Sabri, Sait Halim Pasha supported the constitutional regime and the CUP until Westernist and Turkish nationalists gained the majority in the Ottoman period.[551] At this point, it is important to understand why the Islamists opposed the regime of Abdulhamid II and supported the constitutional regime and the CUP. Secondly, it is crucial to determine whether Islamists developed a new political theory or how far they were influenced by the Ottoman past and European political thought and the political, social and economic situation of the Empire. Thirdly, it is important to clarify their conservative position regarding the social, political and economic changes in the Empire. Islamists began to criticize the policies of the CUP, especially with regard to matters pertaining to jurisprudence and education.

Islamists intensified their criticism against the plural political system, especially after the many defeats in the fatiguing wars. Their opposition to the plural political system can be understood within that context. There are other articles, written by different Islamists that rejected and criticized parties because they increased differentiation and disagreement in the Empire.[552]

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[551] Esther Debus, Sebillürreşad, Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zur islamischen Opposition der vor- und nachkemalistischen Ara, 1991, p. 80

[552] See; Ali Vehbi, İttihad ve İttifak İslam'ı Yükseltti, Nifak ve Şak Perişan Etti, Sebilürreşad, XIV. 32, p. 37-39; 10.06-24.06, 1915. Tahirü-l Mevlevi, Müslümanlık Mani-i Tefrikadır, Sebilürreşad, IX,

Young Ottoman political thought, especially Namık Kemal (1840-1888) clearly influenced the political thought of Islamists. Namık Kemal was considered the father of many different ideologies, such as nationalism, Islamism, and modernism in Turkey. This ambiguity may stem from the nature of his eclectic thought.[553] As pointed out earlier, Islamists also used his name in their writings. Namık Kemal is well known, especially for his stress on the notion of freedom. However, like many Islamists, he had not separated the notion of freedom and constitutional regime from the Islamic context. Like Said Halim Pasha, Namık Kemal refused the notion of natural rights.[554] On the Other hand, Young Ottoman criticism against the reforms of the Tanzimat period (1838-1875) resembles that of the Islamists' against Westernization in the following periods.

Islamists believed that the economic, technological, and military superiority of the West was provided by modern science, so they supported transferring modern science, which would help to develop the Ottoman Empire. However, they opposed imitating the Western way of life, alleging that it would terminate Ottoman and Islamic culture. Their criticism against feminism was based on this assumption. While Musa Kazım Efendi, as a member of the traditional *Ulema*, represents more conservative thoughts about the place of women in society; Said Halim Pasha, who studied political science in Switzerland, evaluated it from a sociological perspective. It is possible to see the influence of both Islamic political culture and European political thought in their ideas. As intellectuals who tried to "save the state" and Muslims, they behaved in a pragmatic and eclectic way. However, as remarked earlier, this eclecticism and pragmatism was related to the Turkish political thought and culture. Their predecessors, the Young Ottomans, were pragmatic and eclectic as well. Kara alleges that the thoughts of Islamists had a function in legitimizing secularism and Westernism in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey.[555] Although the

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415-417, 426-428; 21.02, 28.02. 1913. Ömer Rıza, Mekr-ü Nifak Medeniyeti, Sebilürreşad, XIII. 149-150;07.05.1914

[553] See; Şerif Mardin, The Genesis

[554] See; Mümtaz'er Türköne, Siyasi İdeoloji Olarak İslamcılığın Doğuşu

[555] İsmail Kara, İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri, p. 20

thoughts of Islamists can be evaluated as eclectic and pragmatic, it should be considered that there was no homogeneity among the Islamists. It is obvious that in the thoughts of Said Halim Pasha, Western political thinking had considerable influence. 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 thoughts since the proclamation of the Tanzimat.

In addition, 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 occupies a primordial place in Muslim society, not only because it issues from the sharia, but also because it brings the sharia into force. Also like these medieval thinkers who placed the institution of the caliphate at the center of their political thought, Said Halim constructed his political theory with authority vested in the head of the state.[556]

[556] Ahmet Seyhun, Said Halim Pasha, p. 152