

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF

2ND Constitution of Turkey: Seeds of Ottomanism & Islamism, Fruits of secularism & democracy

ABSTRACT

The Ottoman Empire was, from its very inception, inclined to a brand of Ottomanism and a form of Islamism. However the two strains remained parallel during most of the history of the empire, for about four hundred years. When, finally, the dynamics of the modern west initiated the process which resulted in formulation of constitutions on the European model, these two forces, which had by now become deeply entrenched in Ottoman culture, influenced the content of these documents to varying degrees. Some of the cultural forces of ethnicity and governance that had evolved over the centuries could not be overlooked while formulating the new constitution. However, some cultural forces had acquired a negative and repugnant connotation for the Turkish people and could not be included in a constitution being prepared even in the second constitutional period.

This paper identifies the origin and evolution of these concepts in the Ottoman Empire during its period of expansion and highlights the socio-political relationship of the Turks with them in the formulation of the first constitution. It goes on to study the dynamics which motivated the changes in 1909 through the content of these documents. In order to identify how we may assess if the thrust of these forces was positive or negative the content and intent of the documents under review is analyzed at the end of the paper. Thus it deals with remote dynamics leading to the constitutional articles of 1876 & 1909.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE 2ND CONSTITUTION OF TURKEY:

The Ottoman Empire was an unusual and somewhat paradoxical state of the Turks whose pragmatism is unique in the annals of history. Whereas almost all Turkish states before the Ottomans used the languages in vogue within their domain, preferring as official the one used by their predecessors or by the majority of their subjects, the Ottomans chose to patronize Turkish. This was one sign of Turkism in the Ottoman state. As with all other Turkish states, the Ottomans chose to rely on the *sipahis* and mounted Turkish soldiers for expanding their state. Thus they began their conquests with traditional Turkic militant tribalism; this was another aspect of Turkism within the Ottoman Empire. Despite two major thrusts towards ethnicity, the Ottoman state was soon to acquire an anti-ethnic administrative slant which should be construed as Ottomanism. Supply of *ghilman* from Europe and innovative administration developed for the *yenicheri*¹ system led to a state which placed the Turkish *Sipahis* at a disadvantage with respect to the *Janissar* corps².

In a similar paradox, we find the Ottoman Islamism to be, simultaneously, more Islamic as well as more secular than that of other Turks. Most Turkish Muslim states did not begin as *ghazi* states; rather they acquired the Muslim political mandate of *ghazwa* as and when required by state needs for expansion or from the aspiration of rulers. However, the other states retained the

implicit obligations of an Islamic government³ vis-à-vis civil administration but the Ottomans opted for a sort of secular innovation by allowing non-Muslim communities to govern themselves according to their own traditions.

Perhaps the reason for these anomalies lay in the unique experience of the followers of Suleiman Shah, or in the strategic location of the original domain of Ertughral. We could seek the answer in Usman *Ghazi's*⁴ need to maintain viable interstate balance in dealings with other *Ghazi* principalities on one hand and Christian states to the north, particularly the Byzantines, on the other. Another source of cross cultural influences may be the early inclusion of Byzantine princesses in the Ottoman Harem. The origin of these paradoxes may possibly be attributed to a complex interplay of factors enumerated above. Whatever the source which led to these anomalies, the end result was that Ottomans were ethno-centric and xenocentric at the same time⁵. The ethnicity had Ottoman undertones within the general ethnicity of Turkism. Simultaneously, the Ottoman ruling class identified totally with Islam, yet was thoroughly open to norms of other creeds and communities.

Suleiman's party of Turks may have tarried for several centuries in regions influenced by Persian culture before they marched westward. Nonetheless they seem to have arrived in Anatolia untouched by Iranian traditions. Unlike most of their fellow Turks, even when they reached Anatolia and the Seljuq Empire, the acculturation of the Ottomans was less intense, slower and more superficial than the Ghaznavids, Seljuqs and Memlukes who not only became persianized in statecraft but also as individuals⁶, and contributed freely to the enhancement of Persian language and culture. The Ottomans, perhaps because of limited exposure to high society and the sudden opportunity in the decaying fabric of the Seljuq state at the frontier, were free from much of this cultural baggage and wealth.

Strategic peculiarities of time and space allowed the followers of Suleiman Shah to evade the more violent phase of the crusading scourge on the one hand and the Mongoloid one on the other. The larger and more powerful states like Tekke and Mentеше took the brunt of the backlash of a power vacuum caused by the fragmentation of the Seljuq Empire⁷. This two phase transition from the Seljuq to the Ottoman state facilitated expansion of the latter within a relatively stable state system. On the one hand this secured the survival of the Ottoman state, on the other it enhanced the *ghazi* spirit as a kind of subconscious counter-crusade. It is possible that herein lay the root of the "secularized Islamism"⁸ of the Ottomans. Ironically, the first victims of the Ottoman expansion were the Byzantines, co-victims with the Seljuqs, of the ravages wrought in Anatolia by the crusaders.

A similar irony of fate saw an interregnum in Ottoman fortunes when the Tartar heirs to the Mongols extinguished the brilliant career of Bayazid. The Tartars had been converted to Islam and Timur may have considered himself no less a *ghazi* than Bayazid⁹. The fact that the competition to the south and east was Muslim while that to the north and west was Christian enhanced the ambivalent, secular Islamism¹⁰ of Ottoman Empire builders and, consequently, the political ethos of their state¹¹.

The primary object of this paper is to look into the roots of this political culture and ethos that pervaded the evolution of Ottoman institutions in their state¹² through the first three centuries of its existence. This will help us to identify the social backlash that came from the *Sipahis* in particular and the Turks in general. This community was most affected by the secularism and xenocentrism of the Ottoman state. As a result when the expansion of the Ottomans finally slowed down, before coming to a halt, the *sipahis* made a push to acquire the privileges that had

heretofore been reserved for the *Yenicheri*. From about the 17th century the Turks began to reclaim their ethnic and Islamic privileges steadily. Thus the Turkism/Ottomanism and Islamism that, though active, had taken a back seat to xenic and secular trends, now superceded them. Just as this Islamic-Turkism was a reaction to the supremacy of xenic-secularism, *Tanzimat* and Young Turks were a counter-reaction.

The westernization of the Ottomans was partially a consequence of the European cultural crusade. Christian Europe experienced an inferiority complex when Muslims conquered Andalusia during the eighth century AD. While its first attempt to restore self-confidence and dignity had been the proselytizing surge to the north, Christianity's second effort was the crusade. During this time Byzantine rulers were hard put to hold on to Constantinople whereas central Europe was feeling the threat of Muslim penetration into the Balkans, and later along the Danube. In this climate Turks were bringing a growing enlightenment to Europe. It may be too chauvinistic to claim that the anti-theocratic polity of Islam gave rise to the Protestant concept of the primacy of scripture over a theocratic church but it is certain that the Islamic values influenced the reformation and counterreformation.

The present study is based on the hypothesis that much of what was brought to Ottomans as modernism from Europe was the result of Ottoman experiments in institution building. We will present a rationalization through five sections: first, Ottoman modernism of 1300 to 1600; second, a century of reaction when the administration had to go on the back foot; third, a century when they became recipients of a secondary modernism from Europe; at the end of this period a feature of the Ottoman Empire was the conflict between the local and foreign strains of modernism, this is the fourth section of this discourse; the fifth and last being the analysis of the constitutional articles of 1876 and 1909.

The centre-stage of human history till the rise of the Greek city states had been the Fertile Crescent, but the Hittites had claimed a place of eminence for Anatolia which became a bone of contention between the Greeks and the Persians. It has, from that day forth, been the lynchpin for the history around the Mediterranean. That is to say, Anatolia holds the key to the combined historical heritage of all three continents¹³ which comprise the Old World. The sea of Marmora, bounded by the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, has been a centre of civilization for more than two thousand years of history, from Byzantium to Istanbul. This was the passage from which the wisdom of the Muslims passed to Europe. Neither the Italian traders of the Mediterranean nor the Moorish conquerors of Spain were able to make as material a contribution to Christian civilization in Europe during medieval times.

The Seljuqs in Anatolia started the interaction which was supplemented by the crusaders, but it was the Ottomans who opened the gate between Christian Europe and Muslim Asia¹⁴. What is remarkable is that, from the start, the Ottomans had a modern outlook. As they circumvented Constantinople, they steadily increased in power. However, while they established new systems such as the *yuruke* settlements through *surgun* in *timar*¹⁵ lands, the Ottomans did not take on the privilege of dictating norms to their subjects. Perhaps this was because theirs was a humble beginning which made slow yet steady progress.

The French, less than the British, asserted their right to define normative politics till Napoleonic times. Thereafter it was the British leadership which was the arbiter of right and wrong in global political norms. Initially it was legitimacy and balance of power, as chartered by Talleyrand at the congress of Vienna. However, three democratic quakes of public opinion in Europe forced Metternich and his British cohorts to acknowledge forces of democracy as the paramount index

of normative politics for the future¹⁶. Britain had heretofore not been willing to subjugate legitimacy to democracy or the balance of power to secularism. However, it now became the champion of the democratic secularism which had been the cardinal sin of the French people at the time of their great revolution.

The Ottomans, had, by the beginning of the nineteenth century become convinced of their role as followers in the intellectual race of political norms. Though they had inspired the European religious tolerance that emerged at the end of the reformation, the capitulations seemed a novel European innovation¹⁷. In a similar case of national amnesia they seemed to forget their own modes of assessing public opinion, ensuring public participation and maintaining a modicum of accountability as well as a system for redress of grievance. If we deconstruct democracy into its components without being committed to the form of a parliament or the generalized rights of representation given to it, we find that it consists of elements which had existed in one form or other within the Ottoman state¹⁸. However, when first France and then Britain claimed that the Ottoman Empire lacked democratic norms, the Turks succumbed to their criticism.

It is this reappraisal of the role and mode of public participation in affairs of state that lie at the heart of the constitutional struggle during the reign of Abdul Hamit. The lip service to democracy in the shape of the first constitution and the failed effort to pander to public opinion causing the formulation of the second constitution is a focal issue of this paper¹⁹. The content analysis of the text of the second constitution will be preceded by an overview of three stages of evolution in the political culture of Ottoman Turkey in both contexts, that of the Ottomans and that of the world they belonged to. It will also be prefixed with certain generalizations regarding Islamism and Turkish ethnicity.

OTTOMAN POLITICAL CULTURE AND EVOLUTION OF INSTITUTIONS 1300-1600 AD.

The international currents that dominated the first phase of evolution in the Ottoman state came from the Christians of Europe and the Mongols/Tartars who were sweeping through Asia, wave after wave, northeast to southwest and then due west. A century of these pressures had preceded the Ottoman state and they returned to bedevil the rising Ottoman tide at the end of its first century of steady growth. An interregnum followed by a half century of stabilization led on to a phase of 150 years of steady growth. Three centuries of history thus brings us to the zenith of the Ottoman power which had radiated almost evenly to the north in Europe. Its expansion into Anatolia and on to its south had also been quite symmetric. However its southwestward passage into Africa was linear like the Roman Empire before it, due to geographic factors. Its northwardly growth was the main source of xenic blood as the Asiatic and African expansion brought the Ottomans mostly in contact with other races that had cohabited with the Turks through history. While democratic norms were struggling for supremacy in Europe and scientific thought was finding its feet, the paradoxical ying and yang of xenocentric and ethnic priorities appear to have enjoyed an alternating supremacy in the Ottoman state.

Evolution of Ottoman culture during the 8th to 10th Hijra centuries may be divided into three stages of about one century each. During the first century, matters of administration and interstate policy concerns determined issues of political culture. Emerging as a state from Ertughral's militant band and having been stationed on the northern marches²⁰, Ottomans were bound to be *ghazis*. Surrounded by larger *ghazi* states with settled populations and urban centers, the Ottomans [whose nomadic past was not so distant] were able to attract *Yuruke* groups from other marches²¹. They thus had a subject population with very high potential of militancy. Hardy nomads and militant *ghazis* who had little desire to settle in urban regions found their way into

the service of Usman Khan and Ertughral. Having neither had a long stay in Iran nor exposure to the Seljuq court, the Ottomans lacked conformity with established administrative norms of Muslim states. Their administration was, consequently, more innovative and pragmatic in its approach.

Ethnicity in the Ottoman state was not purely racial or tribal, Turk and non-Turk warriors accepted the leadership of Usman to become Ottomans. More than likely also that the *Ghazis* who joined Usman included several non-Turks, however, once absorbed within the comity they became Turk²² and Ottoman²³ like the others. The *beyliks* [leading to the concept of *Sanjaq bey* and *beglarbey*] were a continuation of the Seljuq practice as was the system of the marches while the system of the *timar* may have roots in pre-Seljuq times²⁴. It has been suggested that the Roman practice of extending citizenship to non-Romans also found its way into Ottoman policy²⁵, one response to this comes from J. W. Barker in the same volume²⁶. The concept of *ghazi*, derived from the Muslim *sharia* with its cultural transmission via the *madrisas* and other Muslim practices apart, the Ottomans borrowed freely from almost all civilizations that preceded them. The Islamism of the Ottomans was based on *Sharia* of course but not all soldiers had a deep commitment to the cause of Islam. However, all had chosen the militant life of the marches which, in the case of a Muslim state with a frontier facing a non-Muslim automatically transformed them into *ghazis*. In principle, the life of a *ghazi* should be governed by *sharia* alone but, in fact, the life of the neo-convert *ghazis* would be little different from that of any other soldier of the marches²⁷, or for that matter from his life as a soldier before conversion.

Among the early administrative systems of the Ottomans was the concept of *Sanjaq bey*, which developed into a delicate three dimensional balance between *timardar*, *Qazi* and *Sanjaq bey*. This was to be disturbed after 1600 such that the functions of a *timar* holding *sipahi* (for example tax collection and land administration) came to be performed by the *ayans*. In the larger context this was part of an overall attrition of the administration, but Ottomans had a remarkable tenacity and capacity for readjustment²⁸. Just as competitive selection of Sultans gave way to *biradarkushi*²⁹ which in its turn was supplanted by the *kafe*³⁰ system, the *Ghazi* gave way to the *sipahi* who in turn yielded to ³¹the *eshraf*. In the choice of Sultans, however, the Ottomans limited themselves to a single racial group i.e. Ottoman blood, in this the empire maintained pure male lineage through six centuries.

By the middle of the second Ottoman century, the *ghilman* had begun to join the ranks of the *sipahis*, especially the descendents³² of the *Yenicheri*. Heretofore, more often than not, the *sipahis* were almost exclusively Turks. Thus the ethnic segregation was first crossed by the progeny of *Yenicheri* who could no longer be conveniently or exclusively placed on one or the other side of the ethnic divide. It is also possible that the meaning of the term *akinji* underwent some transformation during this phase in order to adapt the ethnic restructuring of the *ghazis* to the needs of the new organization. This caused a reaction from *Sipahis* in the third Ottoman century. On one hand societal and ethnic restructuring and on the other the technology of small firearms undermined *timar* and *sipahi* systems. As conquests ground to a halt, the supply of new *timar* lands as well as the availability of *Yenicheri* troops began to dry up. This dual process brought about reactions which were both ethnic and religious in origin.

The history of the Ottoman administrative practices is a fascinating study in pragmatism and innovation; however, it is not germane here. Over a period of three centuries these processes led to a heightening of Islamism in theory and lower standards for society in practice. These processes also brought with them divisiveness due to ethnicity in place of the collaborative and competitive racial relations in the past, particularly among Muslims. The inherent strength of the

complex administrative system delayed the decline³³ of the Empire for nearly two centuries but the internal administrative and political decline had begun leading to the second phase of ethno-religious evolution. Feudal Europe had begun to give way to cultural awakenings of the renaissance. The Italians, who led the way were divided in small states and relied on the Ottomans to provide diplomatic focus for civilized states³⁴, French interaction with Ottomans also had undertones of subordination.

It may be asserted that at the midpoint of its existence, the interstate prestige of the Ottoman Empire was at its height. Traditional European paramountcy of the Holy Roman Emperor and pope set the stage for Ottoman centrality in the Mediterranean region and the south of Europe. Similarly the Ottoman interest in supporting Calvinists during the 16th and 17th centuries along with their own holdings in East Europe made them central actors in that arena as well³⁵. The Eurocentric historiography tends to gloss over this fact while emphasizing the role of the 19th centuries “sick man of Europe”. In fact, however, it was the Ottomans who dominated the interstate history of Europe from 1500-1700. The first part of this paper dealt with the trends which set the stage for Turkish centrality to European politics through its role both as leader and later as follower. The phase of xenic tendencies till 1600³⁶ which was formative and innovative, followed by an ethnic reaction till 1800, next came a counter-reaction in the form of the *Tanzimat*³⁷.

SOCIAL BACKLASH: THE *SIPAHIS* AND REVIVAL OF TURKIC PARAMOUNTCY

The *Sipahis* as a class were closest in competition for privileges with the *Janissar* corps³⁸. Xenocentric privileges of the *Yenicheri* became a sore point with them when the Ottoman expansion finally slowed down³⁹. With typical pragmatism, the Ottoman Sultans realized that reduction in conquest and excessive wars needed some other sources of troops to supplement the *Janissary*, the solution of *culcardasi* was found⁴⁰. Economic pressure due to greatly changed international environment did not make things any better. The *sipahis* now made a push to acquire the privileges that had heretofore been reserved for the *Yenicheri*⁴¹. From about the 17th century the Turks began to steadily reclaim their ethnic⁴² and, particularly after the reign of Murad IV, their Islamic privileges⁴³.

The emergence of a revived Islamism within the Ottoman Empire, however, was not only due to the *sipahis*. European states had, once again, revived the crusading spirit to combat the Ottomans⁴⁴. On the other hand the *Shia* -*Sunni* divide was giving rise to sectarian zeal both in Safavid Iran and Ottoman Turkey⁴⁵. In sharp contrast with the conquests in the first and second Ottoman centuries, the conquests of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had been mainly in Asia and Africa.

By the time the Ottoman advance had finally been halted, the global scene had changed drastically⁴⁶. Feudal Europe had undergone immense transformation through the age of discoveries, changing lines of communication, a renaissance and reformation. The French, like the Mughals now had a passion for gardens, Germans and East Europeans contested Papal practices, Spaniards and Englishmen had contested the supremacy of the open seas and the Spanish Main was lost to Spain. American colonization had shifted from the southern continent to the northern one. Galileo like Copernicus had been and gone and Newton was at hand to facilitate the age of industry, discoveries and colonization to flourish through science. In the Muslim lands, the blossoming of culture was bearing ripe fruit but science and technology were waning. Scattered small states had again given way to large ones, this time three in number, Mughals, Safavis and Ottomans.

For a century and a half, the Ottoman administration under some powerful sultans and the Koprulu Viziers were able to maintain a modicum of administrative control and political dominance also an international presence in the European theatre. The inevitable decline was to come after the middle of the eighteenth century; the road to this decline was paved with a rising religious and ethnic division which had not been the case till the seventeenth century⁴⁷. Both military wings of the Ottomans, *Janissary* and *sipahi* [of non-Muslim and Muslim origin and synonymous with Turk and non-Turk in the past], now contributed to anarchy and facilitated disintegration in society.

Though the motivation behind the anarchy of the soldiers is to be found in economic and political mismanagement, the consequences were normative and socio-psychological. An inherent human trait of reverting to cultural roots long forgotten or abandoned is seen in Ottoman Turkey. It is important to remember that it was Rumeli which had supplied the bulk of the *Yenicheri*, while the majority of *sipahis* in the early days came from Anatolia. It is also worth noting that the Ottomans had conquered much of Rumeli before Anatolian expansion became a significant part of their domain. Since their European recession took place while Anatolia was becoming more significant and aggressive in claiming primacy within the empire, the Anatolian roots dominated the direction of social change.

Unlike Rumeli, in Anatolia the Ottomans were neither the first Muslims nor the first Turk settlers. The Seljuqs did not have quite the same level of xenic or secular inclination as the Ottomans. It was the Konia model⁴⁸, however, that the Sipahis tended to revert to rather than the Istanbul one in their several attempts to gain ascendancy over the Sultan during many rebellions. In the seventeenth century Mustafa Naima repeated the concepts propounded by Tusi and Ghazali, this should rather suggest that it was not until this time that Ottoman sources began again to hearken to pre-Ottoman themes⁴⁹. The Ottoman institutions in secondary sources generally come to a watershed at the middle period of the Ottoman Empire. A survey of Ottoman institutions and practices will make it obvious that most of them, before 1600 AD were not founded on Muslim jurisprudence⁵⁰.

However, institutional developments after 1600 are, as alleged, more “traditional” in their tone and intent⁵¹. Whereas the competition in Europe had acquired the modernism of the earlier Ottomans, that in Asia and Africa tended to remain more traditional than them. As Europe surpassed the Turks in economy, military and technology, the Ottomans receded in social organization of their own accord. The influence of the *ulema* is obvious from about the start of this phase as the enthronement and deposition of Muhammad IV⁵² were both preceded by a *fatwa*. Before this, the *muftis* do not seem to be needed for instating or deposing sultans, rather the political and military elite deemed themselves competent to do so. While the Ottomans were able to use the efficiency and rigor of the administrative machinery to control anarchy from time to time during about two hundred years, the need to obtain religious sanction for such actions, in one form or other, continued to undermine the “secularism” practiced by the Ottomans in the past.

As early as 1700, the Ottomans had begun to search for means of self improvement in the light of European developments. Hussein Pasha, a member of the famous Koprulu family, who became vizier before the turn of the century was a member of Mevlevi *dervish* order. While he reverted to tax administration in the typical style of his family, he organized the navy on European lines⁵³. Typically Ottoman, he blended in his person an Islamist Sufi, a visionary modernist and a pragmatic administrator. His pragmatism, like the empire was, however, weak and could not save him from internal politics. What is worthy of note is that the counter-reaction

to Islamism had already begun. A rebellion of the soldiers led to the nomination of the Sheikh-ul-Islam along with the Sultan as the cause of discontent⁵⁴.

The emulation of European customs and systems continued to be touted by one school of thought as the means for revival of Ottoman glory during the eighteenth century⁵⁵. The induction of foreign experts in the training and development of the military and the use of sciences for military technology were the obvious and physical aspects of modernity. The abstract and conceptual forces were to follow, but let us not mistake these for democracy or nationalism. Europe was yet to resist these trends for another fifty years after the end of the eighteenth century. Particularly the Europe that Ottomans faced, Austria & Russia, were to resist these trends for almost as long as the Ottomans, let us not also mistake their developments to be the decline of feudalism and the rise of trade. The Ottoman Empire had never been feudal like Europe and had been the cause of the blocking of trade to Europe not the victim of a blockade. It was the rise of industry that the Ottomans were slow in emulating as well as in reacting to the changing environment of trade. Above all, however, is the fact that the changing economic profile of Europe itself was enough of a setback to offset and highlight the internal economic decline of the Ottomans.

XENIC-SECULARISM: COUNTER-REACTION TO THE ISLAMIC TURKISM OF THE *SIPAHIS*

The Islamic-Turkism of the *sipahis* had coincided with the decline in Ottoman supremacy and as such was villainized by the ascendant west. The Ottomans were viewed as ethnic and religiously motivated. Thus in the eighteenth century, while Europe was discovering nationalism and secularism, it inculcated a xenic-secularism in a small community within the Ottoman Empire which was willing to follow a European modernism that it had itself fostered. The *Tanzimat* and Young Turks were a counter-reaction to the Islamic Turkism of the *Sipahis*. Though these movements were pro-Turk, they were so in the traditional⁵⁶ Ottoman sense rather than a Seljuq-Sassanid scheme. Both took their cue from European developments and both were patriotic but one looked more to the west for inspiration than the other, in the 19th century sultans, particularly Abdul Hamit, resisted this process.

The transformation of the international scene by this stage was as reactionary as were the developments within the Ottoman state. The battle for democracy which, according to the British claim started centuries earlier, with the Magna Carter, while the French ascribe it to their own revolution, actually started in earnest with the American revolt of 1776. This culminated in the victory of democracy nearly a hundred years later. Monarchy continued as a paramount norm, effective till 1858, sporadically till 1872 and tenaciously in certain states even afterwards. Treaties of Westphalia and Utrecht set the stage for the Congress of Vienna and an international comity of nations to sweep aside the final vestiges of Feudalism and aristocracy. Changes in the Muslim world were no less momentous, mega-states vanished leaving Muslim rulers to ponder the feasibility of state and policy matters under a new set of non-Muslim norms and complex inter-state relations.

The Ottomans also faced a unique situation during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, on one hand an Anglo-French rivalry for colonies and its concomitant rivalry in European affairs fuelled a diplomatic war in East Europe. On the other hand a tripartite contest for supremacy fell to the lot of the three empires whose subjects included a significant Slavic population. In the battle field and in Eastern diplomacy, the Ottomans were able to hold their own for nearly a century starting towards the middle of the 18th century. However, in competing with the British, they, like all the other states of Europe suffered defeat. In the 1730s French and Russian diplomats

vied with each other for Ottoman favours. While the Austrians preferred a more belligerent posture, the French, being distant from Turkey were exclusively diplomatic and the Russians were both militant and diplomatic⁵⁷.

France's claim in matters relating to the politics of the Mediterranean was stronger than the British but the Napoleonic wars provided Britain with an ideal opportunity to acquire more influence in central Europe. Ottoman interests in Europe had generally focused on east Europe but now they were virtually confined to it⁵⁸. The Ottomans saw themselves in competition with Austria and Russia, therefore their aim was to achieve a Balkan centered balance of power. Such a balance of power would shut out the British from the Levantine theatre in the immediate future and from the European arena in the long run. Master of the seas and way ahead in the colonial race, Britain was keen to limit its involvement in Europe to the minimum but could not afford to be eliminated from the scene. Whether France brokered the balance of power in the east or one of the competitors in that theatre emerged as the victor in their contest, Britain was bound to suffer. It therefore chose to fight its battle for Europe on the Ottoman front with diplomacy as its strategic weapon.

Within the Ottoman Empire, the elimination of the *ayans* and the *Janissaries* threatened the society with a catastrophic change. With typical pragmatic alacrity, the Turks turned to reorganization in the form of the *Tanzimat*⁵⁹. On the other hand, the pomp and show of the empire had grown inordinately in matters of foreign affairs. The protocol surrounding attendance at court and its inconvenience are brought into sharp focus by the beginning of the eighteenth century⁶⁰. While the Ottoman Empire may not have allowed too much of a lag in military organization compared to its European neighbours the diplomacy gap grew to gigantic proportions. It took the Ottomans forever to realize that they had actually lost the battle for survival in the diplomatic field. They were no sicker than the Austrians or the Russians in socio-political, administrative and intellectual terms but they were too crude and unwieldy in diplomacy for their own survival by the end of the 17th century.

Ottomans had been expelled from the Yemen in 1630⁶¹ but managed to regain control in a short time. This, along with other factors may have forced the Ottomans to re-evaluate their equation with the subject races, especially the Arabs. The eighteenth century reform process seems to have included this agenda⁶². While the Ottomans met with some success during the eighteenth century, the nineteenth saw an unending and continuous decline. In the first decade Egypt and Serbia, in the second and third decades Greece, the Balkans and Syria, in the sixth and seventh decades the Crimea and Lebanon were disintegrative initiatives. Armenia, Crete and Macedonia, towards the end of the century bring the disbanding of the European segments of the Ottoman Empire to their peak⁶³. Obviously the empire could no longer survive further mismanagement by the Sultans.

Abdul Hamit is touted as being a "pan Islamic" sultan⁶⁴, it is more likely, however that his pan-Islamism was essentially political expediency. The real purpose was probably to woo Islamist elements who were powerful in his empire, pit them against the modernist group which was ascendant. The ethnocentric element within the empire had been active for two centuries in 1800 AD. Their actions resulted in activating centrifugal forces in the extremities of the empire. It is worthwhile to remember that the ethnocentric forces were not exclusively Turkish, the Arabs and Slavs etc. were all active within their homelands⁶⁵. The Ottoman military, of all the arms of state, had received European modernization in bulk, during the many phases of trying to catch up with competitors in the west. It had a representation of both revolutionary and reactionary forces. Abdul Hamit tried to pit the reactionaries against the modernizing revolutionaries but this was a

losing battle⁶⁶. What was remarkable about this phase was the fact that while Ottomanism and Islamism were unable to retain an appeal for the army, the Turkism of the Ottomans rather than that of the Seljuqs took firm root and almost total control⁶⁷ of the movement.

The Ottomans have not been given due credit for their tireless and continuous desire for improvement and excellence in government. Having been far ahead of Europe in matters of state involvement in governance for three centuries, as soon as they realized that they had fallen behind than they began to try and bridge the gap. Starting in the reign of Abdul Hamit I, in the eighteenth century, restructuring of state continued for a century⁶⁸ until, the crafty and unwilling Abdul Hamit II was forced to concede two constitutions in one reign. Those who feel that the Ottomans were slow to acquire ‘modern’ norms of Europe may be forgetting that in 1839, not only the Austrians but also the British were strongly opposed to the democratic winds blowing from France. What the Tanzimat offered was hardly less advanced than what the more liberal European states were willing to concede.

GENERALIZATIONS REGARDING ISLAMISM AND TURKISH ETHNICITY:

As a religion, Islam had a modicum of religious tolerance for other Semitic religions built in to it since the people of the book are protected within all Muslim states. Other religions are also accommodated with a prescribed place in the body politic⁶⁹, albeit an inferior one compared to the Muslims. Turkish Islamism had ever been more inclined towards simple and pragmatic matters, eschewing much legality. An interesting fact of Muslim history is that almost all the legal and philosophical battles between the intellectuals of Islam have taken place in the period preceding Turkish hegemony. Occasionally, as in the case of Ibn Taymiya, the debate occurs during and within the range of Turkish dominance. However, the issues for Ibn Taymiya also are largely pragmatic and more inclined to practice than to theory, more actual than conceptual⁷⁰. One could argue that because they were lax in enforcing *sharia* the rate of conversion of non-Muslim subjects to Islam was low during the time that the Turks were increasing the territory under Muslim rule.

The Turks as a people had the remarkable ability to adjust to the dictates of virtually any social environment⁷¹. However, it seems that an Islamic polity suited them best, perhaps since it was predisposed to both, the nature of their tolerance and their form of aggression. It was in a spirit of tolerant syncretism that the Ottomans had absorbed so many races in the initial period of their expansion. This cultural absorption resulted in the formation of a society, the preservation of which is designated as Ottomanism in the constitution of 1876. The foregoing discussion has shown that this was a policy of the early sultans as well. The ethnic absorption of the children of the *ghilman* is a more obvious example but the settlement of *yuruke* groups and formation of *Zawiya* centers for acculturation of the non-Muslim non-Turk population, particularly in Rumeli were sophisticated tools for the Ottomanization of the governed people. Thus Turkish ethnicity of the Ottoman Empire is to be seen as a process of acculturation rather than in the form of a racial dominance⁷². In this sense there had been a consistency within the Ottoman state with a brief aberration.

The particular brand of Ottoman religious tolerance which emerged as a combination of Islamism and Turkish ethnicity during the 14th – 16th centuries was eroded during the 17th century due to the ethnic jealousy of the Timar holders on the one hand and the winds of religious violence blowing from Europe on the other. The Tanzimat revived the spirit of tolerance to a certain degree but they were unable to revive the essence of its Ottomanism. When the democratic norms became overwhelming and the dismemberment of European portions of

the Ottoman state was almost complete, in the last quarter of the 19th century, a sense of pugnacious obstinacy pervaded the Islamist camp within the Ottoman Empire. Islamists were led to believe that modernism was synonymous with being anti-religion⁷³.

The crusades had done a lot to undermine the goodwill towards Christianity in the hearts of the common Muslim. Although essentially a-Christian in their secularism, modernity and science, in the form which they took c.1800 became synonymous with the crusades as anti-Islamic movements or kind of crusade in their own rights in the eyes of Islamists. Thus when Abdul Hamit put up a resistance to democracy, first in the process of granting a constitution and then in implementing the same, Islamist elements gave him overt and covert support. These Islamists belonged to the sipahi tradition and took on the role from a European tradition, that of the landed aristocracy. On the other hand the modernists also arose from a military tradition harkening to the xenic openness to ideas which had been a hallmark of the Janissary.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE 2ND CONSTITUTION:

As a historical analysis of intellectual traditions and a study of a socio-political psyche, this paper is cross disciplinary. In preceding sections we presented historic antecedents of traditions and socio-political psyche of the Ottoman Empire. In this section we will deal with the intent behind the content of the constitutional formulations at the beginning and the end of Abdul Hamit's reign. The values and Cultural Forces that dictated the content and form of the constitutions of the Ottoman period can be seen first in the composition of the constitution commission of 1876. Sixteen bureaucrats, ten ulema⁷⁴ and two soldiers, under the chairmanship of Midhat Pasha sat together. The Sultan ensured that there were powerful opponents like Cavdet in the commission to counter Midhat. They proposed a bicameral parliament in a document by October which was accepted and promulgated by October 1876. Efforts of the Sultan to delay the parliament's ratification were countered through international pressure⁷⁵ and the cabinet finally approved the constitution on the 6th of December. The issues that were the subject of last minute debate included the status of languages within the state, the ministerial responsibilities clause, freedom of the press and sultan's prerogative to exile a person considered dangerous for the state⁷⁶.

The opposing political forces were obviously modernist and traditionalists but the issues that they raised were ethnic and administrative. That it took only two months to formulate and ratify the constitution testifies to the evolutionary and inherently Ottoman nature of the document. The status of the sultan not only remained unchallenged, the Islamic aspect of his powers was also affirmed by the constitution in its first few articles⁷⁷. The fact that the title of prime minister as opposed to Vizier became a subject of discussion shows not merely a semantic issue but also an effective one. However, issues like this were political in essence and not symptomatic of the Islamic or ethnic undercurrents as were the powers of enforcing *sharia* and having the Sultan's name pronounced in the Friday prayer⁷⁸.

The executive powers of the government as such were more bureaucratic than political⁷⁹ and lay mainly in the council of ministers. The *meclis-i-ayan* may be linked directly with the post 1600 rise of the Islamic Turkism of the *sipahis* and the *timar* system⁸⁰. However, in financial matters, the parliament had considerable power which could, none the less be circumvented by articles 101 and 102. Ottomanism gave the citizens of all religions equal rights within the state but Islam was to remain the state religion, the constitution curtailed access to public offices by demanding proficiency of the state language, Turkish⁸¹. It is in this context that we can see the underlying Turkism of this constitution and the causes of debate between Midhat and Cavdet who may be

identified as champions of xenic and ethnic segments within the constitution commission on the language issue in 1876.

The *vilayet* structure subscribed to by Midhat and his cohorts had a mongrel origin in that it devolved power to the *vilayats* for trade, commerce, education and agriculture on the western model but saw the *vilayats* as a sub-central unit on the model of *beglarbagliks* and *sanjaqs*. The judicial system in the new setup was a compromise between Islamism and secularism. The *millet* structure was not European in conception; rather it had its roots in the *sanjaq* and *beglarbey* system of the early period. The *sanjaqs* that had been formed in the 14th and 15th centuries had some basis of ethnic grouping built in to them or acquired it in due course of time. The racial and ethnic elements that entered the Ottoman Empire through conquests had been absorbed and Ottomanized at an earlier date only to revert to a non-Ottoman status during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The constitution of 1876 may have “contained ... institutions that had been developed during the previous half-century by the Tanzimat”⁸² but it was based on principals which had been the essence of Ottoman government⁸³ for about six centuries. All who resisted acculturation to Ottomanism⁸⁴ throughout this period were sidelined. So long as the state had surplus benefits to offer, even the second tier of privileges was sufficient. However, when the benefits were limited; competition brought the need of fresh acculturation into sharp focus. In over thirty years the Sultan gave the constitution only lip service and so he was deposed by the Young Turks⁸⁵. We may note that both processes, one that brought Abdul Hamit to power and one that deposed him bore marks of association with Islamism and Turkism⁸⁶. The developments in 1908 started with a reiteration of constitution of 1876, except that they went further in subscribing to secular nationalism cast in the European mould. Of course the modifications proposed for the sultan’s power, the ‘freedom of conscience’ for all but the essential services and empowerment of ministries only reflected complaints against the sultan’s administration, not a change in the aspirations of the people. While this may be true for the reason for the modification, a change in the proportion of active modernists seems equally certain.

Since some of the cultural forces of ethnicity and governance that had evolved over the centuries could not be overlooked while formulating the new constitution, reflections of the Ottoman tradition are apparent in the constitutions under review. However, we see that some cultural forces had acquired a negative and repugnant connotation for the Turkish people and could not be included in the constitution being prepared in 1908. The sultan’s policies, particularly towards the end of his reign on the one hand and European propaganda on the other swung the balance of public opinion against Abdul Hamit. This need not imply that already the modernists had acquired a majority support but it implies that the politically active population was by now dominated by forces opposed to Abdul Hamit. Gradually they began to oppose the institution of the sultanate and Khilafat but that was only after results of the First World War placed Ottoman rulers in an untenable position. A comparison of the articles of the two periods is given in annexure “C”.

The bulk of the changes relate to administrative and procedural issues and are concerned with articles 3, 7, 27, 28, 30, 41, 44, 54 while article 120 was a new addition. Separate comments on each of the articles are given in annexure “C”, however the comments do not relate exclusively to the reasons for change of text, they also present ideas regarding causes which led to the wording of the constitution of 1876. A more detailed analysis may be made by persons conversant with the Ottoman language in which the original articles were formulated. In the

present paper only a conceptual framework has been presented for a historical analysis of the mind of the Ottoman society while it framed the documents under review.

¹ Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, tr. Itzkowitz and Imber, London, 1973, p. 11 believes that the system of *Janissars* emerged as a result of the prisoners of war taken at the conquest of Adrianople. It is possible that the *Yenicheri* came into being very early in Ottoman history, before the death of Ala-ud-din Pasha, brother of Ertughral, c.1330, or at the latest in the time of Murad, 1362. It is also conceivable that whereas Ala-ud-din created the *Yenicheri*, it was only in the time of Murad that the system of making them into *Janissars* and sanjaq beys was formalized. One of the reasons put forward by those who are dismissive about the possibility that the Ottomans could, this early in their state visualize the complex system fails to take into account that the Turks had experienced the institution of *ghilman* through centuries and had themselves been the convert *ghilman* in many states in which they had risen to power. In fact not only were these institutions well developed in the polity to which the Ottomans were heir, but their track record also shows that this group of Turks was more innovative and pragmatic than most other groups from their race who had gained the imperial status.

² Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *The Ottoman State and its Place in World History*, Lieden, 1974, p. 23f. Toynbee points out that while the Ottomans retained the institution of *devshirme* for about 300 years, in 1669 a new office was created for the Christian subjects who did not become Muslims. This is about the time that the *Sipahi* reaction to privileges of the *Janissary* began to create problems.

³ E. Mercil, ed., *A Short History of Turkish-Islamic States*, tr. Ahmet Edip Uysal, Ankara, 1994, has given a survey of the histories of Other Turkish states which amply depicts these trends.

⁴ H. A. Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman State*, London, 1968, p.23ff and passim, is an example of scholarship which lends credence to the militant Islamism of the Ottomans. The story of a dream of historic importance and the blessings of the holy man is a common medieval “occurrence” and is often the spiritual supplement to temporal aspirations. Similarly many a spiritual experience has proved more practicable when material gain is imminent as a consequence; the same appears to apply to Usman Khan’s enterprise. Other incidents, like the difference of opinion with Dundar [Gibbon, p.50] suggest that Usman Khan had an assertive and aggressive personality, the kind that is needed for ambitions of an empire builder.

⁵ Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *The Ottoman State and its Place in World History*, Lieden, 1974, Introduction, p. 2. Ottomans were able to integrate peacefully more than 60 linguistic and ethnic groups during the course of history. William H. McNeill, “The Ottoman Empire in History”, in the same volume, pp. 34-47, p. 35 refers to the Ottoman Empire as “poly-lingual” and “poly-ethnic”.

⁶ Hakki D. Yildiz and Erdogan Mercil, “State Organization and Culture in Turkish-Islamic States” in E. Mercil, ed., *A Short History of Turkish-Islamic States*, tr. Ahmet Edip Uysal, Ankara, 1994, pp.329-386. In this section the state organization of seven Turkish states have been discussed which could have provided a model for the Ottomans. A comparison between these administrative norms and those of Ottomans would show the quantity and quality of Ottoman administrative innovation. This innovative genius is inherently Turkish and derives from a lack of Persianization in the estimate of this researcher.

⁷ Erdogan Mercil, “The Anatolian Principalities” in E. Mercil, ed., *A Short History of Turkish-Islamic States*, tr. Ahmet Edip Uysal, Ankara, 1994, pp.185-210 gives a brief history of the Anatolian Turkish states contemporary with the Ottomans in the early 14th century.

⁸ Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *The Ottoman State and its Place in World History*, Lieden, 1974, p. 1f, the Islamic nature of the secularism is apparent from the fact that while the Ottomans gave “official recognition to all three monotheistic religions” it maintained a distinction between them as well.

⁹ William H. McNeill, “The Ottoman Empire in History”, in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 34-47, p.36f, has pointed out that the Ottoman Empire also proved to be a model for the Safavis and Mughals who had, by the 1520’s, gained control of almost all the land ruled by the Muslims through history.

¹⁰ Hakki D. Yildiz, “The Turks’ Adoption of Islam”, in E. Mercil, ed., *A Short History of Turkish-Islamic States*, tr. Ahmet Edip Uysal, Ankara, 1994, pp. 29-45, p. 42 has developed a case to suggest that Islam was closer to the culture of the Turks than other religions with which they came in contact in the early phase of

their empire building. Many centuries earlier Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, *Tarikh Fakhr-ud-din Mubarakshah*, ed. E. Denison Ross, London, 1927, had suggested that the Turks were unique converts to Islam in as much as they neither reneged, nor hankered after their homeland and proved tireless champions of their new faith. He had also suggested that the Turk was better appreciated when he had left his homeland. It is possible that the particular blend of militancy and civilization that was the hallmark of the Muslim world from the third Muslim century onward was most suited for the Turks and particularly the Ottomans.

¹¹ M. A. Cook, ed., in his introduction to *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 1-10, p. 2ff, has emphasized the ambivalent character of the Ottoman state to highlight the fact that it did not have a single Turkish nation and was not heir to the Christian Roman Empire. Inadvertently he also seems to have testified to the non-ethnic and secular stance of the Ottomans.

¹² Keeping in view the complexity of this import and export of influences between Europe and Levantine Islam, the secondary objective of this paper is to create a consciousness of the fact that the designation of Occident and Orient is not apt, especially in this present context. A corollary of this hypothesis is that whereas the expansion of the Muslim state resulted in the so called 'oriental' export of views and values, the export of a Christian-European culture and institutions brought about an expansion of dominance of Germanic peoples and states under the Anglo-Saxons and the Franks leading to colonialism.

¹³ Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *The Ottoman State and its Place in World History*, Lieden, 1974, p. 2, points out that thirty six modern states etc. in the three continents had been part of the Ottoman Empire. Probably a greater number were included in the Roman Empire, where the passage to Africa may have as easily come from the sea or the straits of Gibraltar, but the hold over Anatolia made it possible for Roman traditions to survive the death of the Roman state and even the defunct Roman civilization. Thus the area of modern Turkey has held together the thread of world history through three out of six millennia of recorded human history. The present author takes issue with the concept of continents in a work under preparation but the concept has been used here due to its currency in the geography of the modern age to date.

¹⁴ Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 1f, starts off with the mutual relationship of the history of Europe and the Ottoman state a theme he continues to develop throughout his discourse.

¹⁵ Halil Inalcik, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", in M. A. Cook ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 10-53, p.36, *Timars* were land grants to *Sipahis*, *Sugun* was an old system of population transfer or exile which was applied to nomad Turks referred to as *Yuruke*.

¹⁶ Although any history of nineteenth century Europe will attest to this British experience but for a compact statement of facts we may refer to H. A. L. Fisher, *History of Europe*, London, 1936.

¹⁷ Halil Inalcik, "The Turkish Impact on the Development of Modern Europe" in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-58, p.56f. Selim had renewed the Memluke capitulations to France in 1517 but the first official Ottoman capitulation to the French is dated 1569. Now other western nations had to trade under the French flag. Favoured trading status *Imtiazat* had been a Memluke practice for some time and was used by the Ottomans to good effect for nearly three centuries before it started creating problems for them.

¹⁸ C. M. Kortepeter, in his comment on Halil Inalcik, "The Turkish Impact on the Development of Modern Europe" in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-58, in the same volume highlights on p. 59ff., that the Ottomans had a "feedback" capacity for redress of social grievance. He believes that these were "politically crippling but morally praiseworthy practices" of the Muslims which took the form of *Imtiaz* [capitulation] to societies other than the Muslim resulting in the inability to absorb them within the 'Ottoman polity'. This aspect needs considerable focus to see how the Ottoman *Imtiaz* in socio-political dealing led to the concept of secularism in Europe and the *Imtiazat* of trade led from bullionism to mercantilism.

¹⁹ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977. Chapter 3 gives a detailed account of the stages through which the Empire passed in the reign of Abdul Hamit.

²⁰ V. L. Manage, *Neshri's History of the Ottomans*, London, 1964, gives a brief of the possible sources of early Ottoman history of the first two centuries; the source material is essentially sketchy.

²¹ Inalcik, “The Rise of the Ottoman Empire” *op. cit.*, p.14 refers to the *ghazis* who joined Usman Khan, since these *ghazis* would generally not be from among the urbanized Turks, it seems likely that the bulk of those who flocked to the Usmanli camp would be recently arrived and semi-settled nomads like the leader they chose to join.

²² H. A. Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman State*, London, 1968, p. 29, reports that in 1785 Ottoman usage of the word Turk was derogatory. However, we also know that the *Sipahis* were by and large Turks. This is the typical Ottoman paradox of ethnicity coupled with anti-ethnic norms.

²³ The term Ottoman should thus, except in the case of the Sultan’s family descending from Usman Khan, be taken to mean belonging to the state ruled by the Ottomans irrespective of Turk or non-Turk, Muslim or non-Muslim origin of a person or socio-cultural norm.

²⁴ Kemal H. Karpat, “The Stages of Ottoman History: A Structural Comparative Approach” in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 79-99, p. 88, but “in the Ottoman state that the *timars* emerged as a well organized and fully developed socio-economic system integrated into the state structure.”

²⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Ottoman Empire’s Place in World History” in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 15-27, p. 23.

²⁶ The comment follows the article *Loc. Cit.* on pp. 28-33 and suggests that neither were Ottomans the only successors of Byzantium, nor perhaps was Byzantine culture the only model for the Ottomans to follow.

²⁷ Inalcik, “The Rise of the Ottoman Empire” *op. cit.*, p.16ff draws parallels between the *ghazi*, the *akritai* of the Byzantines and the *alplar* of the traditional Turks.

²⁸ H. A. Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman State*, London, 1968, p. 70ff says that the first legislation of the Ottomans is attributed to Orkhan’s brother. He is however, disinclined to believe this to be true, be it as it may, the innovation itself is remarkable. He also mentions that Ottomans practiced “complete religious toleration.” Why it is not possible to think of this as the inspiration for secularism is a mystery.

²⁹ V. J. Parry, “The Reigns of Bayezid II and Selim I, 1481-1520, in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 54-78, p.55 refers to Muhammad Fateh’s legitimization of the practice of eliminating possible rivals to the throne.

³⁰ Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, tr. Itzkowitz and Imber, London, 1973, p.98, mentions that as a result of this system the mother of the Sultan became very important.

³¹ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p. 114 uses the term *eshraf* for the new middle class but Kemal H. Karpat, “The Stages of Ottoman History: A Structural Comparative Approach” in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 79-99 is of the view that this group emerged when *timar* lands lost their old utility and were given to state dignitaries.

³² Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, tr. Itzkowitz and Imber, London, 1973, p. 114 mentions that in the 15th and 16th centuries “a large part of the timar-holding cavalry was, like the *Janissary* corps, composed of slaves.” However, V. J. Parry, “The Reign of Sulaiman the Magnificent, 1520 -66” in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 79-102, is of the opinion that till the reign of Suleiman, the *Sipahis* were mainly Turks. Since Inalcik has given the details of the composition of *Timar* grants, it is more reasonable to assume that *ghilman* or their children formed the bulk of the *sipahis* of the *Timar* by the middle of the sixteenth century.

³³ The sequence of evolution is presented in tabular form in annexure “A”.

³⁴ Halil Inalcik, “The Turkish Impact on the Development of Modern Europe” in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-58, p.51, has referred to the researches on Italian archival material regarding the Ottoman role.

³⁵ Halil Inalcik, “The Turkish Impact on the Development of Modern Europe” in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-58, p.53.

³⁶ Kemal H. Karpat, “The Stages of Ottoman History: A Structural Comparative Approach” in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 79-99, has divided Ottoman history into four stages as against the traditional three phases of expansion, stagnation and decline. Karpat’s scheme seems the more reasonable of the two. However, the scheme of periodization in the present paper is based on a more complex system which takes

into account the trajectory of evolution of different systems within the Ottoman Empire. This scheme may perhaps appeal to the sociologist who commented on Dr. Karpat's paper.

It is assumed here that time units of 5-10; 30-50; 90-100 and 150 years determine a set of small and large movements within systems as these are the common timeframes within which human beings can influence systems. The Ottoman Empire is, in the experience of this author as a teacher of history, one unit of history which provides the most pristine example of the 50, 100 & 150 year timeframe of change. It is a history which displays the sequence of systemic evolution as: 1. military administration; 2. inter-state expansionist politics and intrastate administration 3. intrastate politics and social organization & 4. cultural refinement.

In its first fifty years, the entire contribution of the Ottomans can be summed up in the elementary level of military administration. This was enhanced in the next two phases of fifty years each to reach a quantitative optimum and a qualitative ideal by the time of Muhammad Fateh. In the second phase of fifty years [1350 to 1400], interstate expansion became a meaningful part of Ottoman activities and intrastate administration became a serious concern for the rulers. Again two more fifty year phases brought these activities to the height of their success. Intrastate politics & social organization appear to have become important during the post-interregnum phase [1430's onward] and continued till age of Suleiman. Similarly cultural refinement becomes obvious from the time of Bayazid II and reached its zenith after 1600. It is at about this time that the developments which had peaked in about 1450 began their phase of decline and were followed by the sequential decline in interstate expansion [peaked about 1500], social organization [1550] & culture [1600].

³⁷ Kemal A. Faruki, *The Evolution of Islamic Constitutional Theory and Practice*, Karachi, 1971, p. 139ff, gives a fairly extensive account of the stages of Ottoman constitutional evolution. Unlike Karpat, ed. *Op.cit.* He does not dismiss the *Tanzimat* as non-modern but he does identify them as ineffective. In this paper, as we have not accepted the thesis that modernism came to the Ottomans from Europe but rather was inherent in them, the *Tanzimat* are placed in the intermediate position between a normative evolution that was more Ottoman in essence and one that was more West European in tenor.

³⁸ Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, tr. Itzkowitz and Imber, London, 1973, p.140ff gives the conditions of urban life, the *imaret* system and the guilds. These people were not directly affected by the political turnover of the military classes but by the mid 1700s the struggle began to affect the social fabric as a whole and consequently contributed to the social decline of the 1800s.

³⁹ V. J. Parry, "The Successors of Sulaiman, 1566-1617" in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp.103-133, p.120ff. The peace of 1606 between Austria and Ottoman Empire seems to mark the end of the patience of the Sipahis. Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, tr. Itzkowitz and Imber, London, 1973, p. 83 notes that the number of *Janissary* rose from 12,789 in 1568 to 37,624 in 1609. This three fold increase in the rival corps while the *Sipahis* were the ones who controlled the entire countryside along with several other factors would be responsible for having finally galvanized the reaction from the Turks.

⁴⁰ V. J. Parry, "The Successors of Sulaiman, 1566-1617" in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp.103-133, p.122. The brothers of the *ghilman* were from the Muslim subjects of the Sultan. That the non-*ghilman* Muslims should share the privileges of the *Janissary* while the Turk-Muslim *sipahis*, who had contributed so much, should be denied would have been most galling aspect.

⁴¹ V. J. Parry, "The Successors of Sulaiman, 1566-1617" in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp.103-133, p.129f, the revolt led by Kara Yazidi and Deli Hasan is one of the events leading to the inclusion of Turks into the privileges reserved for the *Janissary* such as coveted posts of *Sanjaq beg* and *beglarbey*.

⁴² V. J. Parry, "The Period of Murad 1617- 48" in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 133-156, p.142f, Abaza Muhammad's action against the *Janissary* in 1622 and that of Abaza Hasan in 1658 are cases in point for the acquisition of ethnic privileges.

⁴³ Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, New York, 1976, Vol. I, p. 154, has identified the bektashi order which though founded during the 13th century, only became popular with the *Janissary* corps. As noted herein, the 16th and 17th centuries saw a crossing of the divide from both the *sipahi* and the *Janissary* corps. It is probably this Turkicised *Janissary* which was drawn toward the Sufi order. In any event the growth in popularity of the Sufis indicates the rising Islamism of these Ottomans.

⁴⁴ V. J. Parry, "The Period of Murad 1617- 48" in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 133-156, p.152ff, the knights of St. John and St. Stephen etc.

⁴⁵ Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, tr. Itzkowitz and Imber, London, 1973, p.196, the Kazilbash activity picked up after 1511.

⁴⁶ Charles Issawi, "The Ottoman Empire in the European Economy, 1600-1914. Some Observations and Many Questions" in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 107-117, traces the difference made by trade and the changes in trade routes.

⁴⁷ A. N. Kurat and J. S. Bromley, "The Retreat of the Turks, 1683-1730" in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 178-221, p.180ff, brings to light differences between the older Ottoman regions of Anatolia and Rumeli and the newer ones in the east, west, south and north.

⁴⁸ Oktay Aslanapa, *Turkish Art and Architecture*, London, 1971, p.200ff, shows how the Ottoman state began to come out of the Seljuq shadows in art and architecture within the first half century of its existence.

⁴⁹ Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, New York, 1976, Vol. I, p. 112, suggests that Ottoman state was based on the Sassanid pattern, a view that is strongly opposed in this article.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 118ff, while the palace and tax structure bears a general resemblance with oriental courts, and to that extent may derive from Sassanid as well as Greek-o-Roman origins, the *sanjaq*, the *timar* and the *Janissary* were all Ottoman innovations which preceded the extensive palace and tax structures in the state during its infancy.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, part II of this volume consists of three chapters, each of which has a reference to traditional reforms.

⁵² *Ibid*, p.203 and p.219.

⁵³ Rhodes Murphy, *Ottoman Warfare 1500-1700*, London, 1999, p.87, the Ottomans were generally more concerned with their own traditional equipment and military management which they did to the last details of food for soldiers and mounts. The west had moved on to other concerns which had become "traditional" for them [p.101] notes that the British ambassador, Sutton, felt that the Ottomans ignored "traditional concerns such as battlefield positions" etc.

⁵⁴ Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, New York, 1976, Vol. I, p. 227.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 233ff, the Tulip period and the military reforms of the *Humbarachi* corps [bombers] etc. provide several examples of this trend throughout this period.

⁵⁶ This is distinct from the trend of the *Sipahis* which, as noted earlier was Seljuqid and Konian rather than Ottoman and Istanbul based.

⁵⁷ Lavender Cassels, *The Struggle for the Ottoman Empire*, London, 1966, p. 76ff gives an account of the kinds of trials to which the Russian ambassadors were subjected.

⁵⁸ Briefly, in the sixteenth century during the Franco-Austrian rivalry the Ottomans had been power brokers of central and west Europe. Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, New York, 1976, Vol. I, p. 87ff, perhaps the Ottomans had a natural affinity for the French.

⁵⁹ Kemal H. Karpat, "The Stages of Ottoman History: A Structural Comparative Approach" in Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 79-99, p. 95, suggests that *Tanzimat* were in fact "legal and political recognition" of institutional changes that had taken place since Selim III.

⁶⁰ Lavender Cassels, *The Struggle for the Ottoman Empire*, London, 1966, p. 56ff, gives the details of the protocol for the envoys.

⁶¹ Caesar E. Farah, *The Sultan's Yemen: Nineteenth-Century Challenges to Ottoman Rule*, London, 2002, p.119, mentions that the chiefs of Aden, Qatabah and Yafi in the *sanjaq* of Taizz 'reverted to their old tribal

methods of rule'. They were of course to re-conquer it in due course but the event is an example of tribal affinity within sub units of the Ottoman Empire.

⁶² Karl K. Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708-1758*, New Jersey, 1980. p. 8 outlines how he studies how "the Ottoman state tried to revitalize its administration in the province".

⁶³ William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire and its Successors*, London, 1966, is the volume to consult for a comprehensive survey of the European decline of the Ottomans.

⁶⁴ Itzhak Weismann, "Law and Sufism on the Eve of Reform: The Views of Ibn 'Abidin", in Itzhak Weismann and Fruma Zachs, ed., *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration: Studies in Honour of Butrus Abu-Manneh*, New York, 2005, pp. 69-80, p. 69.

⁶⁵ Itzhak Weismann, "Law and Sufism on the Eve of Reform: The Views of Ibn 'Abidin", in Itzhak Weismann and Fruma Zachs, ed., *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration: Studies in Honour of Butrus Abu-Manneh*, New York, 2005, pp. 69-80, has the Syrian perspective, in the same volume, Moshe Ganner, "The Ottoman Reforms and Shaykh Shamil", *Loc. Cit.*, pp. 55-66, reflects the Daghestan situation. Similar events took place in Arabia and Mousel as reflected in Part II of the same volume. In the Yemen in fact the developments of the 1600s reflect the beginning of this mood. See: Caesar E. Farah, *The Sultan's Yemen: Nineteenth-Century Challenges to Ottoman Rule*, London, 2002. Notwithstanding the biases of the authors of these articles, it is certain that ethnicity and Islam went hand in hand in this period.

⁶⁶ Handan Nezir Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey: The Ottoman Military and the March to World War I*, London, 2005, p.30ff, gives the detail of the losing battle on the side of the Sultan.

⁶⁷ A set of three comparative statements of the relationship between Ottoman evolution, modernism and the European pull are given as annexure "B".

⁶⁸ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p. 55.

⁶⁹ People who surrendered and accepted the protection of the Muslim state had a status equal to the 'people of the book', but more importantly the Quran decrees that the people who fear Allah and are righteous in their actions and believe in the day of judgment will be given the wages of their actions on day of judgment and they shall have no fear nor will they be worried. Al Quran, 2:62.

⁷⁰ Saeeda Iqbal, *Islamic Rationalism in the Subcontinent*, Lahore, 1984, p. 64 identifies four approaches in Muslim rationalism. In the case of Ibn Taymiya, she uses the terms "dogmatic and theological", this is at variance with the view of Qamar-ud-din Khan, *The political thought of Ibn Taymiy*, Islamabad, 1973, and rather different from the picture that emerges in Agha Mahdi Husain, *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, London, 1938, who calls Taymiya a "free thinker".

⁷¹ M. B. Ahmad, *Select Constitutions of the World*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., Karachi, 1951, p.1, noted that "among the nations that have flourished and decayed, the Turks stand out by reason of their recuperative genius." Although he was writing with reference to modern Turkey, his dictum applies equally to all Turks.

⁷² The concept of ethnicity and its racial component is a subject beyond the scope of this article but, like the issue of historical justification of the geographical designation of continents forms part of the author's work in progress on a world history.

⁷³ Europe started its reformation with a belief that science and worldly knowledge were opposed to religion; this was soon translated into a belief among the modernists that religion was opposed to modernity and to development. It took three centuries for this attitude to gradually infiltrate the Ottoman society but it could not influence politics until the democratic and constitutional norms began to assert themselves. Principles of consensus and compromise as practiced in Muslim states were replaced by democratic divisive grouping. It was in this climate that modernists and Islamists of Ottoman Empire came to have a head to head fight.

⁷⁴ The Ulema in particular represent the Islamist element while the soldiers probably had a commitment to modernity, the bureaucrats could belong to either category.

⁷⁵ The fact that the modernists were supported by European diplomacy provided the Sultan with an ideal opportunity to exploit the Islamists and lay claim to nationalist sentiments.

⁷⁶ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p. 174f.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 175, articles 3, 4, 5 & 7. Article 113, later added at the Sultan's insistence further consolidated his power by giving him the prerogative of exiling "opponents" to the state.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 175.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 175f, articles 28-38 left the assembly without any coercive ability and gave the sultan, through the ministers, the ability to take action without recourse to approval from the assembly.

⁸⁰ See for examples, references number 30 and 56 *supra* and the sources for them.

⁸¹ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p. 177, articles 8, 9, 17, 18 and 19.

⁸² Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p. 178.

⁸³ Roderic H. Davison, *Turkey*, New Jersey, 1968, p.86, claims that the Turks reacted to pan-Slavism and European intervention with patriotism and a "fanatically Islamic" attitude. It would seem that the patriotism was a much older root and there was hardly any fanaticism in the Turkish reaction. However, Davison has a soft spot for Abdul Hamit who came to power after two of his predecessors had been deposed by Midhat and others and had immediately to face a loss of territories in which the kingmakers may have contributed as much because of foreign pressure as due to an ethnic priority which was later to be exercised after world war I, whereby the Turks were content, almost happy, to surrender non-Turkish speaking lands.

⁸⁴ David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876-1908*, London, 1977, p.37, places the Ottomans above all other Turks. Whether this be defensible on all counts one cannot say but certainly in nationalism and administration they had no parallel among the Turks.

⁸⁵ Halide Edib, *Conflict of East and West in Turkey*, Lahore, 1963, p. 60ff, is very bitter in her criticism of Abdul Hamit in contrast with Davison as perhaps should be anyone who has lived through a national crisis and views the head of state to be its cause.

⁸⁶ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p.78, note that in reaction to European nationalism, "the Muslims turned more and more to Islamic and Turkish views".