The Struggle Within:
"Moral Crisis" on the Ottoman Homefront During the First World War

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Abstract

"The Struggle Within: 'Moral Crisis' on the Ottoman Homefront During the First World War"

Çiğdem Oğuz, Doctoral Candidate, 2018
at the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University
and the Leiden University Institute for Area Studies – Turkish Studies

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This study focuses on the issue of a "moral crisis" which was a widely discussed topic among the Ottoman intelligentsia. Moving on from the common view that the "moral crisis" reached a peak during the First World War, this study investigates how morality was related to the war and the preconditions that created the perception of a crisis in morality.

The study argues that morality was a contested space among the intellectuals and explains how rival ideologies set forth their political positions depending on differing understandings of morality. For the state, on the other hand, moral decline became a matter of national security during the war. The study demonstrates how wartime rivalries were reflected in the cultural sphere through morality discourses. In public opinion and political circles, immorality was generally considered a social problem that had been imported from European countries. At the social level, the study focuses on family, women, and morality related crimes with an emphasis on the impact of war on traditional family order. The dissertation sheds a light on the place of morality in lawmaking processes, the ideas of reform and progress, and plans for a new society. It also suggests the historical background of contemporary debates on morality vis-à-vis lifestyle, identity, and the impact of moral understanding on the formation of political identity.

83,500 words

Özet

"İçerideki Mücadele: Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Osmanlı Cephe Gerisinde 'Ahlak Buhranı'"

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Bu çalışma son dönem Osmanlı entelektüellerinin sıklıkla dile getirdiği "ahlak buhranı" meselesine odaklanmaktadır. Ahlak buhranı tartışmasının özellikle Birinci Dünya Savaşı yıllarında doruk noktasına ulaştığı kanısından yola çıkan çalışmada, bu krizin savaşla ilişkisi ve ahlak buhranı algısının temelini oluşturan olgular araştırılmaktadır.

Çalışmada, ahlak alanının rakip ideolojilere sahip entelektüeller açısından bir mücadele alanı olduğu iddia edilmekte; bu ideolojilerin ahlak anlayışı üzerinden nasıl politik konum aldıkları anlatılmaktadır. Devletin gözünden ise ahlak meselesinin savaş döneminde mili güvenlik sorunu haline geldiğine dikkat çekilmektedir. Savaş dönemi ülkeler arası rekabetin kültürel alana yansıması ahlak üzerinden gerçekleşmiş; ahlaksızlık, kamuoyunda ve siyasette, gelişmiş Avrupa ülkerinden ithal edilen bir sosyal sorun olarak görülmüştür. Sosyal alanda ahlak için ise geleneksel aile düzeninin sarsıntıya uğradığı savaş döneminde, taşrada erkeklerin korumasından uzak kalan kadınlar ve asker aileleri ve ahlak suçları çalışılmıştır. Bu tezde, ahlakın yasama, reform, ilerleme düşüncesi ve yeni bir toplum tahayyülündeki yer edinişinin hikayesi anlatılmaktadır. Çalışma, aynı zamanda günümüzde ahlakla ilişkilendirilen hayat tarzı, kimlik ve ahlaka dayalı politik konumlanışlara dair de ipuçları vermektedir.

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To Alberto

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Glossary of Non-English Terms

Âdâb	Manners
Ahlâk	Morality
Ahlâk-ı Umûmîye	Public morality
Ahlaksız	Immoral
Ahlaksızlık	Immorality
Bâb-ı Meşihat	Office of the Şeyhülislam
Dar'ül-Hikmet'il İslamiye	The School of Islamic Philosophy
Esbâb-ı Mûcibe Lâyihası	Justificatory Memorandum
Fuhuş	Prostitution
İctimâîyyat	Sociology
İdare-i Örfiyye	Martial law
Medrese	Islamic learning institutions
Şeriat	Islamic law
Şeyhülislam	The supreme religious authority
Terbiye	Upbringing
Ulemâ	Ottoman religious scholars (collectively)
Zina	Adultery

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOA	*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri*
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress
MMZC	*Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*

A Note on Transliteration

In the transliteration of Ottoman Turkish, I chose the simplest form of latinization except for differentiating between "ع" ('a or 'i) and "ا" (a) in certain cases to avoid confusion with respect to the meaning. For the sake of simplicity, names and terms that are well known in contemporary English are rendered in conventional form. Therefore, I use *Sharia* not *Şeriat*, and *Jihad* not *Cihad*. For the same reason, I prefer *Şeyhülislam* to *Sheikh-ul Islam*. Names and terms in Ottoman Turkish are generally transliterated in their modern Turkish form.

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love. This work would have been impossible without his intellectual and emotional support so I dedicate this dissertation to him.

NOTE: The in-house editor of the Atatürk Institute has made recommendations with regard to the format, grammar, spelling, usage, and syntax of this dissertation in compliance with professional, ethical standards for the editing of student, academic work.

1

Introduction

Je suis l'Empire à la fin de la decadence.

–Paul Verlain, *Langueur*

Long before the rising scholarly interest in the homefront in the historiography of the First World War, a Turkish academic and journalist as well as a witness to the war, Ahmed Emin [Yalman], wrote a chapter entitled *War Morals* in his well-known work *Turkey in the World War*. He asserted that "people in Turkey were, from the viewpoint of morality, less prepared to resist the social and economic effects of the war than any other belligerents."[1] On the other hand, Ottoman intellectuals of various ideological backgrounds continuously mentioned the problem of moral decline at the turn of the twentieth century, which, according to them, reached a peak during the First World War. This study sheds light on these polemics of moral decline and their preconditions on the Ottoman homefront during the First World War. It argues that morality had important political, social, and cultural implications in this particular period. How was morality related to the war? This single question allowed me to see through the social and cultural transformation that the late Ottoman society experienced in times of political and social turmoil.

1 Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 239.

Apart from this question, my interest in the topic arose from the central place of morality in the political and social environment of contemporary Turkey. Intermingled with discussions about lifestyle, a powerful discourse on morality, it can be argued, is part of Turkish identity. Every Turkish citizen knows the motto: "We will adopt the technology of Europe but not European morality."[2] On the other hand, moral discourses employing the terms of religion, patriarchy, and tradition prevail in daily life – particularly in provincial towns of Turkey – thereby constituting an important dynamic that suppresses potential challenges to the extant social order. Contributing to the literature, this research draws attention to strong parallels between contemporary and one-hundred-year-old debates on morality. The following chapters sketch, in different ways, how fault lines in today's Turkish society are grounded in the sociopolitical context of the late Ottoman Empire.

The present work explores discourses of moral decline in the context of the First World War. This war not only paved the way for the territorial dissolution of the empire, but also contributed decisively to its socio cultural transformation on which the Republic of Turkey would be founded. Despite the constant debates among late Ottoman intellectuals on morality as an important aspect of Ottoman-Muslim identity, this field has remained largely untouched in Ottoman-Turkish historiography except for a few studies. On the other hand, the topic has been studied at great length by theologians because morality debates are closely associated with religion, in particular with Islam.[3] A recurrent characteristic of such studies is that they treat late Ottoman texts on morality (especially texts written by the Ottoman Islamic scholars, *ulemâ*) as if they are timeless, ahistorical works to be taken as guides for life for all time. However, a close look at these morality texts reveals the context of intellectual disputes following from the social and political conditions of the period in question. This does not imply that the effects of these discourses remained limited to the time of their emergence. These historical

2 See Yalçınkaya's work on debates on science in the nineteenth century in which he shows how morality and science came to be associated with one another. Yalçınkaya, "Their Science, Our Values."

3 See Çağrıcı, *Anahatlarıyla İslam Ahlâkı*; See, for instance, Kaya, *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Osmanlı'da Ahlâk Eğitimi*; Erdem, *Son Devir Osmanlı Düşüncesinde Ahlâk*.

disputes over morality have shaped the manner and tone with which social and cultural conducts is discussed today. The contest over morality still prevails in Turkish society in line with ideological and cultural confrontations.

As I started to work on so-called moral decline in the context of the late Ottoman Empire, I had two assumptions in mind that came to be challenged as the study progressed. My first conviction was that the concept of "moral decline" was a reflection of anxiety in society resulting from increasing prostitution due to the circumstances of war. My second assumption was that I would find many punitive measures regarding the protection of public morality on the Ottoman homefront. This was partly because a single party – namely the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) – ruled the Ottoman state and came to be regarded as an authoritarian power deriving strength from the extraordinary nature of wartime. With respect to my first assumption, prostitution was indeed a major topic in morality discussions; however, the direction of the causal link between immorality and prostitution was not as I had assumed. In most contemporaneous accounts, prostitution was not regarded as the reason for moral decline; rather, it was treated as one of the consequences of moral degeneration. Also, the definition of prostitution was broader than I had assumed and encompassed several kinds of misconduct. This also means that prostitution *per se* was only part of a broader discussion on moral decline. With respect to my second assumption, the CUP government truly attached great importance to the protection of public morality, but it never introduced punitive measures – at least not measures as harsh as expected – no matter how heated the debate became. Despite many rumors during wartime about the introduction of new measures, the government defined the violation of public morality broadly and left final decisions to the discretion of the courts. However, as shown in this study, moral anxieties indeed played an important role in the penetration of the state into the realm of family. Protecting the honor of Ottoman citizens was important as part of mobilization efforts. While eliminating prostitution and related vices went hand in hand with anxieties about fading Muslim identity and imperial prestige, fears over the destructive effects of the war on society constituted the precondition for rethinking the limits of the state intervention. In some cases, immorality in the forms of prostitution and trafficking of women was prosecuted on grounds of

national security. Yet, surprisingly, it was not the wartime CUP government but the Ankara Government and the Turkish republic that would realize the expected punitive measures in the name of protecting public morality, including the prohibition of alcohol in 1920 and of prostitution in 1930. Before presenting the detailed arguments of this study, I would like to present the conceptual and contextual framework.

§ 1.1 The Concept: "Moral Decline" in the History of the Ottoman Empire and the Terminology of Morality

The Oxford Dictionary defines morality as "principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior."[4] In Ottoman Turkish, the word for morality is the Arabic *ahlâk,* the plural form of *hulk* or *huluk.* Şemseddin Sami's *Kâmûs-i Türkî* defines *ahlâk* as a "spiritual and inner condition that humans possess either by creation or education."[5]

While keeping these basic definitions in mind, this study avoids both a strict definition of morality as well as an analysis of moral philosophy. This is for the sake of contextualization purposes. Instead of limiting the reader's perspective of morality with a strict definition, this study maintains a broad concept of morality that transcends the Hegelian distinction between ethics and morals. As a work of social and cultural history, anything described or referred to as morality or immorality in primary sources falls under the scope of our analysis. This does not mean that this study negates the importance of philosophical and sociological analysis; instead, it utilizes them to enhance the understanding of the works of Ottoman intellectuals, for sociological analyses have a distinctive place in the study of morality. Throughout this study, I consider morality to be a contested area in which several actors were involved encompassing both external and internal developments in the broader context

4 "Morality," *Oxford Dictionaries,* accessed May 12, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/morality.

5 "…insanın yaradılışda haiz olduğu veya terbiye ile istihsal ettiği ahvâl-i ruhiye ve kalbiye." Şemseddin Sami, *Kâmûs-î Türkî*, 82.

of the war. These actors ranged from intellectuals to military men and from ordinary people to state elites.

In a similar vein, this study avoids presenting a single definition of "moral decline." Instead, I argue that this concept is abstract in form yet understood when employed to define certain phenomena. Contrary to the common view that moral decline is merely a consequence of increasing prostitution; this study offers a broad understanding of morality and a novel perspective that encompasses political, cultural, and social dynamics. Broadly speaking, the term moral decline was often used to refer to degradation of social and moral values among the Ottoman Muslims. To my knowledge, no intellectuals of the time who were commenting on morality denied the existence of moral decline. However, the definitions of that decline and the solutions for it varied. Throughout this study, I evaluate these ideas in juxtaposition. As the context of the First World War provides a deep insight into the points of debates, I attempt to limit certain preconditions of moral decline with the war context.

A glimpse at the history of the Ottoman Empire shows that morality discourses had a significant place in political and social life long before the nineteenth century. The *nasihatname*s (advice letters), for instance, exemplify the motives and context of moral discourse in the early modern Ottoman Empire. This literary genre, which appeared in the second half of the sixteenth century and continued up until the eighteenth century sought to teach manners and advise statesmen on various issues. They were similar to European literary products such as Machiavelli's *The Prince*.[6] The authors of this genre employed a strict moral discourse with an emphasis on growing corruption and the degradation of moral and social life that accompanied a discourse on the decline of state power and the disruption of the world order (*nizâm-ı âlem*). Abou-El-Haj argues that the "moral polarization" between the virtuous and avaricious characters in these stories actually referred to political struggles among the ruling elites. *Nasihatname* writers such as Koçu Bey and Mustafa Ali manifested their discontent as they were losing political power to new social

6 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State*, 23; Abou-El-Haj, "The Ottoman Nasihatname as a Discourse over 'Morality'," 18.

classes.[7] According to Abou-El-Haj, the *nasihatname*s and the rise of moralistic discourses were the products of a socio economic context in which great transformations and crises were emerging in terms of the land system, taxation, and the rise of commercialization.[8] In addition, gender relations were central to these moralistic discourses. This was clearly depicted in one of the most popular *nasihatname* of the sixteenth century, Kınalızade Ali Efendi's *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* (Supreme Morality). As discussed by Baki Tezcan, Kınalızade's work was based mainly on the "idea of equilibrium" among social "classes" and associated the continuation of the political order with the preservation of the patriarchal family as the latter was essential for establishing the hierarchy among members of the household.[9] In a similar vein, moral discourses that accompanied clothing laws in the eighteenth century emerged from the considerations of the ruling classes hoping to preserve the social order on the basis of gender, class, and ethnic separation.[10] In this way, the Ottoman state institutionalized moral authority as a means of restoring order, particularly after crises that were followed by loss of territories.[11] Kırlı emphasizes the importance of the context of political crisis for the emergence of sumptuary laws targeting public spaces such as coffeehouses, taverns, and similar venues.[12]

From this perspective, it is possible to argue that transitory periods had a significant role in the rise of moralistic discourses. However, each period must be evaluated in light of its own peculiarities. I believe that the point about nineteenth-century polemics of moral decline that distinguishes them from those of early-modern discourse was their inclusivity. Owing partly to the development of the press, the rising literacy rate, and the wide circulation of the newspapers particularly after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, morality debates had become polyphonic with the participation of new authors and

7 Ibid., 19-20.

8 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State*, 40–41.

9 Tezcan, "Ethics as a Domain to Discuss the Political: Kınalızâde Ali Efendi's Ahlâk-ı Alâî," 112-114.

10 Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720–1829," 409.

11 Ibid., 411.

12 Kırlı, "The Struggle over Space," 38-49.

audiences coming from different social backgrounds. The popularity of these debates also contributed to the changing nature of morality discourses from monologs to dialogues, particularly with the participation of women in the discussion. This implied that the monopoly over moral authority by the ruling elites and their entourages became vulnerable and open to challenge. The growing economic integration of the Ottoman Empire with European capitalism increased social and economic conflicts, and the consequences of this integration manifested itself in increasing cultural polarization.[13] Particularly apparent in literary works, morality came to be identified with these problems, and it was translated into a common discourse of anxiety.[14] As shown in the following pages, the discourse of moral decline in Ottoman reformist circles also reflected intellectual debates about decadence, degeneration, and regeneration in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Europe.

There are a few studies that mention discourses of moral decline and their reflections in politics and society. I only mention some briefly here since the chapters deal with them in detail. Along with sumptuary laws and various measures, public education in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century has become the subject of scholarly attention in terms of its emphasis on morality. Given that education was central to the Ottoman bureaucratic and military modernization process, Selçuk Akşin Somel discusses the fact that public education during the Tanzimat and Hamidian eras was an instrument for inculcating modern notions such as order, discipline, and material progress together with the ideology of the Ottoman state and Sunnism in provincial areas.[15] According to him, until the 1860s, Ottoman educational reforms retained "the ancient tradition of viewing education as a means of inculcating religious and moral values," through which "obedience and loyalty" for the

13 For the history of the penetration of capitalism in the Ottoman Empire, see Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Bağımlılık ve Büyüme, 1820-1913*; Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908*.

14 Müge Özoğlu discusses this anxiety from the masculine standpoint with reference to the declining power of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the twentieth century in literary works. See Özoğlu, "Modernity as an Ottoman Fetish."

15 See Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908*.

central authority were reproduced.[16] He asserts that particularly during periods of political crises, children and adults were forced by the central authority to frequent mosques and attend Quranic schools.[17] On the other hand, morality textbooks such as *Ahlâk Risalesi* by Sadık Rıfat Paşa were representative of educational policy during the Tanzimat era and provided both religious and rational justifications for shaping ideal social norms.[18] During the Hamidian era, additional emphasis was put on moral and religious values in school curricula. Benjamin Fortna examines the gravity of "Islamic morality" in "secular" schools and argues against the "presumed split between 'religious' and 'secular'" while drawing attention to the combination of the traditional Islamic "underpinning that had been crucial to official Ottoman legitimation for centuries" and "the optimism engendered by the relatively new conception of education as worldly or profane science (*maarif*)."[19] Moral instruction in public education, according to him, was a general trend in the nineteenth century instead of being unique to the Ottoman or Hamidian cases.

> Such simultaneity suggests that there was a common world-time reaction to the perceived speeding up of time, to concerns about keeping abreast with the "demands of the present," and to the feeling that flight from the "traditional" theological understandings of the way in which the world worked was accelerating, leading to moral decay. New-style education appeared as a seemingly universal beacon of hope, particularly when it was meant to convey a reworked but "traditionally" inspired notion of morality.[20]

Hamidian public schools thus sought to instrumentalize moral instruction to fight "foreign encroachment and internal moral decline."[21]

16 Ibid., 6.

17 Ibid., 7.

18 Ibid., 62–64.

19 Fortna, "Islamic Morality in Late Ottoman 'Secular' Schools," 375.

20 Ibid., 373.

21 Ibid., 375.

Betül Açıkgöz, in her doctoral thesis on Ottoman school textbooks between 1908 and 1924, argues that moral instruction was central to public education even after the Hamidian era, but in a different way: "In the Constitutional years, morality was needed not only to make God content and the other world secure, but also for the purpose of this world's rescue and happiness, which was prosperity and progress. The latter was overemphasized and prioritized the former."[22] During the Balkan Wars and the First World War, a "regeneration thesis" that argued that the loss of morality in the Ottoman Empire resulted in the loss of lands in the battles was also integrated into school textbooks.[23]

There is a positive correlation: as political crisis increases so does emphasis on morality. Another crisis that came to surface particularly in the turmoil of the First World War was formulated by Elizabeth Thompson as the crisis of paternity. In her book *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon,* she employed the term "crisis of paternity" to describe the "widespread gender anxiety" encompassing both the First World War and the postwar years to which French rule added another dimension in Syria and Lebanon.[24] Following years of war and famine, "a climate of profound uncertainty and social tension" altered traditional definitions of paternal authority, family, and community.

> The woes of World War I fell upon the Syrian provinces of the Ottoman Empire like a nightmare. Communities, families, and even personal identities were transformed, sometimes beyond recognition.… The general struggle for food fueled a mad and cut-throat competition between citizen and state, peasant and landlord, consumer and merchant, even parent and child. Gender norms of honor and protection between men and women were also violated. Memories of this world seemingly turned upside down would haunt the postwar era. For

22 Açıkgöz, *The Epistemological Conflict in the Narratives of Elementary School Textbooks (1908-1924)*, 80.

23 Ibid., 81.

24 See Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*.

> many, it would take years to piece together their shattered lives. For all, the subversion of order and authority at home and in the community produced a pervasive crisis of paternity.[25]

As discussed throughout this study, emphasis on gender roles and sexual norms constituted a major part of the moral decline thesis among the Ottoman intellectuals.[26] It is possible to think of Thompson's "crisis of paternity" together with the "crisis of family" voiced by intellectuals and novelists of the 1910s and the decades that followed. As Zafer Toprak notes, the novels of these decades are particularly important for historiography because they fill the vacuum of what history books have excluded.[27] In this respect, Behar and Duben's study of Istanbul households evaluates late Ottoman and early Republican novels with specific emphasis on the "crisis of family." They reach out the conclusion that the discourse of crisis increased during the war years and encompassed themes of moral decline, the clash of generations, and the lack of paternal authority.

> At the beginning of the 1910s the situation starts to be viewed in crisis proportions as Ottoman society frees itself from nearly three decades of repressive authoritarian rule under Abdülhamid II. It is during this period, and especially during the war years and the 1920s, that reference is made to a 'family crisis'."[28]

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25 Ibid., 19.

26 This leads to the assumption that sexual immorality was central to moral decline. Nonetheless, the notion of moral decline had complex social and political implications. Some descriptive accounts were published on moral decline, social problems, and prostitution during the First World War and the armistice period, predicating a story of an inevitable social and moral disintegration without questioning the term moral decline itself. For instance, see Özer, "Mütareke ve İşgal Yıllarında Osmanlı Devletinde Görülen Sosyal Çöküntü ve Toplumsal Yaşam"; Yetkin, "II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi'nde Toplumsal Ahlak Bunalımı: Fuhuş Meselesi,"; Ulu, "I. Dünya Savaşı ve İşgal Sürecinde Istanbul'da Yaşanan Sosyal ve Ahlaki Çözülme 1914-1922."

27 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 283.

28 Duben and Behar, *Istanbul Households*, 199.

As Toprak discusses in detail, the crisis also offered reform-minded intellectuals the opportunity to demand social change in line with the idea of creating a "national family."[29]

The terminology of moral decline, indeed, speaks for itself. Several expressions were used to define this phenomenon in the works of Ottoman intellectuals: moral crisis (*ahlak buhranı*), moral decay or decline (*ahlâkî çöküş*), social crisis (*ictimâî buhran*), movement of immorality (*ahlaksızlık ceryanı*), social ills (*ictimâî hastalık*). On the other hand, state documents referred to the phenomenon in a rather different way: acts against morality (*ahlâka mugâyir hareketler*), violation of public morality (*ahlâk-ı umûmîyeye hıyanet*) and breaking public morality (*ahlâk-ı umûmîyeyi iskât*). The point these expressions had in common was emphasis on "acts" or "behaviors" that promoted decadence. In this respect, state documents treated immorality more concretely and approached it as a type of crime. To be discussed in detail, this further illustrates that the Ottoman State considered morality within the wider scope of protecting public order.

§ 1.2 The Context: The Ottoman Empire in the First World War

The Ottoman state declared its mobilization on August 2, 1914, and entered into the war in late October on the side of the Central Powers – Germany and Austria-Hungary – against the Entente Powers – namely Britain, Russia, and France. At the time, the ruling party was the Committee of Union and Progress, the organization behind the victorious Constitutional Revolution that had overthrown the regime of Abdülhamid II in 1908. After the Tripoli War with Italy in 1911 and the subsequent outbreak of the Balkan Wars, the empire was on the verge of territorial dissolution. Faced with a difficult decision when European powers called upon it to mobilize following the murder of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand in June 1914, the Ottoman government hoped to restore its previous territorial losses with the help of the Central Powers. In Turkish historiography, the decision of the Ottomans to enter the war is discussed at great length with emphasis on the role of the "triumvirate," – the

29 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935),* 14-16.

three powerful men in the CUP: Enver, Talat and Cemal – in the decision to side with Germany, ultimately to be defeated in the First World War. In his book, Mustafa Aksakal presents a complex picture of the Ottoman Empire's entrance into the war that employs both internal and external dynamics.[30] Indeed, in political circles in the Ottoman Empire, the war was an opportunity "to transform the empire into a politically and economically independent, modern country by removing foreign control and cultivating a citizenry that would be loyal to the state."[31] We should highlight the latter for the sake of our topic: wartime constituted a laboratory for reformers advocating social reform as a means to regenerate the Ottoman-Muslim community. They were convinced that national revival would only be possible when its social aspects were taken into consideration.

Expecting to revive opposition in the Muslim colonies of France and Great Britain as well as in the Muslim territories of Russia and to establish a religion-based unity with Arabs and Kurds in the empire, the Ottoman government proclaimed jihad in November 1914.[32] Hence, the war became "sacralized" both at home and abroad to legitimize and popularize the mobilization among the Muslim masses in Anatolia.[33] As discussed in this study, the declaration of jihad added to concerns about morality and strengthened moral discourse in both international and domestic debates regarding the legitimation of the holy war. Acting in line with the Islamic principles and morality became a standard to test the legitimacy of an Ottoman-led jihad.

The Ottoman Empire succeeded on two fronts: Kut al-Amara and Çanakkale along with the conquest of the Transcaucasian region in 1918 and successful campaigns in Galicia and Romania in 1916-17. Especially Çanakkale became symbol of Ottoman resistance and blessed in public as a moment of national revival. However, on other fronts, especially on the Caucasian front

30 See Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*.

31 Ibid., 14.

32 "Introduction," Teitelbaum, "The Man Who Would Be Caliph: Sharifian Propaganda in World War I," 17–20.

33 Beşikçi, "Domestic Aspects of Ottoman Jihad: The Role of Religious Motifs and Religious Agents in the Mobilization of the Ottoman Army," 95–96.

against Russian troops, the Ottoman counter-offensives resulted in disastrous defeats. The Arab Revolt in 1916 led by Sharif Huseyn in Mecca with the support of British forces as well as attacks by British troops in Palestine and Mesopotamia broke the Ottoman resistance. Furthermore, Ottoman soldiers were poorly equipped and suffered from starvation and diseases including malaria, typhus, typhoid, syphilis, cholera, and dysentery.[34] Desertion was a significant problem caused both by harsh conditions on the battlefront as well as conditions on the homefront that made Ottoman soldiers and their families vulnerable.[35] In October 1918, with the defeat of Bulgaria, the Central Powers lost their territorial continuity. The Ottoman government immediately resigned and the new government started the process that resulted in the Armistice of Mudros on October 31, 1918.[36]

A significant amount of the scholarly work on the war points out that the homefront inquiry is as important as the battlefield. The very concept of "total war" implies the central role of domestic mobilization. The Ottoman Empire was no exception in this regard. However, homefront dynamics that dominate Ottoman historiography are ethnic conflicts. Along with tensions that occurred upon the arrival of the Muslim refugees from territories the empire had lost, massacres targeting the Armenian community dominate homefront narratives. Moreover, hunger, poverty, compulsory labor, and the heavy taxation of agriculture and husbandry as well as the constant attacks of deserters and plunderers on villages defined the living conditions of the Ottoman people on the homefront.[37] The urban population was affected by economic privation due to lack of access to transport. Istanbul was significantly affected by such privation, due to its reliance on imported goods. At the beginning of the war, the city met consumption needs with existing stock, but as the war went on, speculation, black marketeering, and rising inflation accompanied shortages.

34 Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, 176.

35 See Zürcher, "Between Death and Desertion"; Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War*.

36 Zürcher, *Turkey*, 120–121.

37 Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 133–134.

Eventually, a new class of war profiteers emerged from this scene.[38] These profiteers are discussed in both political and intellectual contexts as their lifestyles were often associated with moral decline.

As discussed by Mehmet Beşikçi in his book on the Ottoman mobilization, the concept of total war highlights the role of the state in total mobilization by which it gradually expanded its power, but the concept also refers to the reciprocal relationship between state power and society.[39] Also, the need for "mass participation" in the war increased the state's reliance on the people.[40] This point addresses the changing nature of the relationship between the state and society. Yiğit Akın explores this point in his work on soldiers' families by referring to the changing relationship between women and state authorities in the absence of male family members.[41] Through an analysis of women's petitions submitted to state authorities, he states that

> Implicitly or explicitly, the women argued that the state was obliged to support their families, whose sole breadwinners had been taken away by the state and the army. The rhetoric they employed clearly displayed their awareness of the moral obligation that the state had towards soldiers' families, whom it promised to shield in the absence of their protectors.[42]

In this study, we discuss this point with reference to morality and family, emphasizing the protection of soldiers' family members from sexual assault. In addition, we highlight the importance of polemics on social values in the formation and dissolution of Muslim families, which, in turn, acted as a pretext for the Family Decree of 1917.

The occupation of Istanbul and some parts of Anatolia was marked by moral discourses that juxtaposed the occupiers and their collaborators with the national resistance movement in Anatolia. Together with occupation

38 See Toprak, *Ittihad Terakki ve Cihan Harbi*.

39 Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War*, 7.

40 Ibid.

41 Akın, "War, Women, and the State."

42 Ibid., 26.

forces, the arrival of refugees from Russia who escaping the Russian Revolution brought about a change in the public sphere, entertainment, and leisure in Istanbul that for some contemporary observers – such as the famous neuropsychiatrist Dr. Mazhar Osman – resembled the Pompei of the Roman Empire.[43] With a few exceptions, the occupation years not fall within the scope of this study for both practical and contextual reasons. Although the period is fruitful in terms of discourses of moral decline, in many respects there were fundamental differences in the perception of immorality.

§ 1.3 Between Progress and Decline: The Intellectual Context of Discourses of Moral Crisis in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

What were the characteristics of discourses of moral decline in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? What was the contribution of political and social upheavals like the First World War to intellectual debates on moral decline in the European context? The broader intellectual context of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century better clarifies how and why discourses of moral decline became popular among Ottoman intellectuals. Such a contextualization eliminates a particularistic approach to the Ottoman history while at the same time clarifies the distinctive characteristics of the Ottoman case. This further contributes to overcoming the biased view that the preconditions for discourses of moral decline can be reduced to the rise of prostitution. The notion of a "sense of decadence" has a long past dating back to the political thought of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, but at that time, the discourse was part of a cyclical understanding of history that presupposed that "what goes up also come down."[44] Koenraad argues that the decline of the Roman Empire particularly influenced European thought to the extent of obsession "in the hope of finding an answer to the question of how

43 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 271–295. For a detailed analysis of the occupation, see Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923*.

44 Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France*, 5.

their own society could escape a similar fate."[45] Moral decay in a society attracts intellectual and political interest as it was believed that such a decline in virtue constituted the major reason behind the decline of the Roman civilization. This thought is well expressed in Cicero's famous exclamation "O tempora, O mores!" by which he referred to corruption of his age.[46]

The idea of decadence prevailed in the medieval ages, as well; however, it was not perceived as integral to a natural course of events in which things "go up and down." Rather it was part of a "divine scheme preceding the ultimate salvation of the elect."[47] With the Renaissance, this gloomy understanding of history began to transform into an optimistic approach to future.[48] Although complaints about the current state of affairs continued in later periods, what made nineteenth century unique was the insistence on the inevitable victory of progress despite the intrusion of decadence. Moreover, decadence was treated as a necessary step; the old system had to diminish to open up space for the "birth of a new superior phase of civilization."[49] At this point, we should also take into account nineteenth-century discourses of "degeneration" which also applied to morality. Initially coined in psychiatry to define a deteriorated mental condition, the term *dégénérescence* had a powerful appeal in the natural sciences, particularly with reference to the theory of evolution.[50] Darwin's followers expanded the theory of evolution to cultural and social realms in search of affirmation of progress in human populations from a scientific point of view. In the context of the nineteenth century, such views became popular, and references to physical and moral degeneration led to infamous biological determinisms and eugenics.[51] Daniel Pick notes that by combining the ideas of evolution and progress, the language of degeneration

45 Ibid., 6.

46 Ibid., 3. Edward Gibbon's account of the Roman Empire has been enormously influential for this line of thought. See Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

47 Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France*, 11.

48 Ibid., 18.

49 Ibid., 61.

50 Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*, 2.

51 On the relationship between the social sciences and Darwinism, see Karaömerlioğlu, "Darwin ve Sosyal Bilimler."

in the nineteenth century had a different connotation from that of early sentiments that insisted on "the notion, or at least the question, of things getting worse": the language of degeneration "moves from its place as occasional subcurrent of wider philosophies and political or economic theories, or homilies about the horrors of the French and the Industrial Revolutions, to become the center of a scientific and medical investigation."[52] However, it needs to be underscored that the term degeneration was not only used to characterize racial differences but also to identify internal dangers and crises within Europe involving moral decadence in terms of crime, alcoholism, prostitution, and suicide.[53] Paradoxically, these "social pathologies" emerged from rapid urbanization and industrialization as a consequence of "progress." Finding the "pathologies" to remove obstacles to progress came to be regarded as the scientific solution for degeneration. Degeneration and progress developed dialectically in a way that "civilization, science and economic progress might be the catalyst of, as much as the defense against, physical and social pathology."[54] Koenraad also draws attention to how paradoxical concepts – progress and decadence – combine: "It is, for example, not at all illogical to be convinced that in certain fields like religion or morality serious decline has taken place and yet to believe at the same time that in other areas like science and art great progress has been achieved."[55]

The language of degeneration is strongly connected to tensions and constant conflicts in the society that emerged in the course of the nineteenth century. The case of France is representative and important given the vast influence of French scholars on Ottoman intellectuals. Late nineteenth-century French republicans were inspired by the ideas and methods of Auguste Comte's positivism and anticipated the triumph of progress over religion: "Thus, a lay Republic that sought to replace religion with a 'scientific' morality, while preserving the 'natural' structures of the social order, could be regarded

52 Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*, 20.

53 Ibid., 21.

54 Ibid., 11.

55 Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France*, x.

as a progressive force in history."[56] Auguste Comte, the leading figure of sociology and positivism, condemned the French Revolution in his search for social order, authority, and an organization to facilitate progress.[57] Emile Durkheim, the first professor of sociology, studied the years of tension between the revolution and the counter-revolution during the Third Republic.[58] Durkheim developed his theories as a means of overcoming political and social disintegration in French society and sought the means of "national regeneration."[59] In this respect, morality and moral values were important for reinforcing the ties among individuals that would eventually lead to the "division of labor" and harmonious social life.[60] This point, indeed, is crucial for understanding the approach of reformist Ottoman intellectuals who regarded science as an ultimate guide and sociology as the queen of the sciences with respect to coping with the problems of moral decline and establishing a new understanding of morality.[61]

Interestingly, *fin-de-siècle* discourses on "decadence" together with the decadent movement in literature had lost its influence in France by the eve of the First World War. "A new state of mind" emerged among a new generation "who became known for their realistic attitude toward life, their interest in action and sport, and their antipathy to excessive speculation and self-analysis."[62] The war was welcomed as a step towards further regeneration.[63] Ottoman intellectuals guided by the sociological insights summarized above continued to believe that Ottoman society was experiencing the same sense of

56 Nye, *Crime, Madness and Politics in Modern France The Medical Concept of National Decline*, 68.

57 Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France*, 69.

58 Royce, *Classical Social Theory and Modern Society*, 55–56.

59 Ibid., 56.

60 Ibid., 65.

61 On the emphasis of science in the Young Turk movement, see Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 289–311. For the place of sociology in shaping the worldviews of prominent Young Turks and the CUP, see Toprak, "Osmanlı'da Toplumbilimin Doğuşu." For Darwinism and Ottoman intellectuals, see Doğan, *Osmanlı Aydınları ve Sosyal Darwinizm*.

62 Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France*, 195–196.

63 Ibid., 198.

crisis, though in a belated fashion. Like the French case, they argue of the crisis was a sign of progress and a signifier of an upcoming national regeneration. On the other hand, a divine understanding of moral decay continued to dominate religious circles intermingled with contests over moral, political, and social authority. While discourses on "decadence" corresponded with discourses on moral decline in the late Ottoman context, "degeneration" had more to do with early republican eugenics, another – albeit more biological and medicalized – approach to morality.[64] Yücel Yanıkdağ's analysis of the concept of degeneration among Turkish neuropsychiatrists demonstrates that Turkish neuropsychiatrists such as Mazhar Osman, Fahrettin Kerim and İzzettin Şadan approached the First World War as a watershed moment that revealed inherited pathological conditions among prisoners of war, including the mental disorders.[65] In this sense, their medical claims served the ideals of reviving the nation by equating the health of the nation with the health of individuals.

The First World War brought about profound changes in the social, cultural, and political realms that had a long-lasting impact on intellectuals and public opinion. During the war, more than eight million men lost their lives on the battlefield.[66] The number of civilians killed during the war may have been even greater given that they were exposed to systematic violence by enemy countries through sieges, deportations, forced labor, mass executions, and bombardments targeting civilians.[67] Civilians were also targeted by their own governments and exposed to similar violence, including massacres such as that of the Armenian population living in the Ottoman Empire.

"For communities at war, military casualties predominate. The fundamental reality is loss of life and limb. All other considerations are secondary," wrote Adrian Gregory, drawing attention to the moral power of sacrifice evoked in the new ideals in society: "The needs of 'total war' subverted the dominant idea

64 On eugenics in the early Republican context, see Toprak, *Darwin'den Dersim'e*; Alemdaroğlu, "Politics of the Body and Eugenic Discourse in Early Republican Turkey"; Atabay, "Eugenics, Modernity and the Rationalization of Morality in Early Republican Turkey."

65 Yanıkdağ, *Healing the Nation*.

66 Mazower, *Dark Continent*, 80.

67 Connelly, *Fatal Misconception*, 46.

of political economy, the idea that the common good was served by the pursuit of self-interest. In its place it resurrected new forms of older ideals, those of Christian martyrdom and 'republican' civic humanism in which self-interest was contrasted to the common good."[68] On the homefront, hunger and famine overshadowed other concerns, adding to the moralization of everyday life. "Moral judgment" worked well to distinguish between "profiteers and the nation at war" and reinforced senses of collective solidarity and the common good.[69]

On the other hand, significant loss of young men during the war put great pressure on the traditional family given the high number of widows and orphans left behind. Those men who returned home were "destroyed" by the physical and mental effects of the war. Many of committed suicide some found solace in alcohol or, as Mazower wrote, "tried to reassert their authority by beating their wives and children."[70] "A newly fatherless community" had emerged further provoking the sense of moral and social disorder.[71] At the end of the war, the rate of population decline triggered governments to increase not only the quantity but also the quality of their nations' populations.[72] For contemporary observers, the war broadened the reach of the idea of degeneration from psychiatry to different contexts.[73] In this context, family and family values – with a strong emphasis on motherhood – came to be more central to interwar European politics and ideology than before.[74]

The new morality of the collective good was reflected in the foundation of secular morality of the early Turkish republic in line with other continuities between late Ottoman and republican thought.[75] In 1931, Mustafa Kemal

68 Gregory, "Lost Generations: The Impact of Military Casualties on Paris, London, and Berlin," 57.

69 Winter and Robert, "Conclusions: Towards a Social History of Capital Cities at War."

70 Mazower, *Dark Continent*, 80.

71 Ibid.

72 Connelly, *Fatal Misconception*, 47.

73 Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*, 17.

74 Mazower, *Dark Continent*, 82.

75 On the continuities between late Ottoman and early Republican thought, see Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*.

Atatürk explicitly wrote in the book titled *Vatandaş İçin Medenî Bilgiler* (Civics for the Citizen) that

> Turks have a shared morality. This high morality does not resemble that of any other nation.… When I say moral, I do not mean advice given in books on morals.… Morals are above individuals, and they can only be societal, national.... Some people say that religious unity can play a role in nation formation, but we see the opposite in the Turkish nation.[76]

§ 1.4 Arguments and Plan of the Study

This study explores discourses of public morality and moral crisis at three interrelated levels. The first is the intellectual level and focuses on polemics of moral decline among Ottoman intellectuals in juxtaposition with each other. Considering morality as a contested space among the conflicting ideologies of the period, I examine journals that represent these ideologies, namely the Journal of Islam (*İslam Mecmuası*), New Journal (*Yeni Mecmua*), and Straight Road (*Sebilürreşad*). Since debates on morality revolved around the place of women in society, I also include articles from several women's journals such as Homeland of Knowledge (*Bilgi Yurdu*), Young Woman (*Genç Kadın*), Women's World (*Kadınlar Dünyası*), and Flowing (*Seyyale*). Through the analysis of several articles on morality, this study shows that morality played a vital role in ideological conflicts of the time. The conflict was especially clear between Turkish nationalists and political Islamists.[77] There were some preconditions for this increasing tension. The First World War, in particular,

76 Afet İnan, *Vatandaş için Medenî Bilgiler*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 12, quoted in: Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 182.

77 As discussed by Zürcher, labeling the late Ottoman intelligentsia into three groups "Islamists," "Turkists," or "Westernists" does not reflect the complexity of the Ottoman political spectrum, and such labels do not explain the CUP policies and the inconsistencies within those policies. See the chapter titled "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists" in Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, 213–235. I use the labels of nationalist or reformist to indicate intellectual circles who wanted Islam to be adjusted to the needs of society, and of political Islamists for those who wanted society to be adjusted to the rules of Islam.

brought an urgency to discussions of social problems in Ottoman society. For moral decline polemicists, the war served as a laboratory in which to ground their theories on the destructive effects of immorality. The war exacerbated a sense of anxiety both about diminishing traditional values and about so-called corruptive new adaptations. On the other hand, particular political and ideological developments such as the rise of Turkish nationalism added to these tensions, the background of which started with the revolution of 1908.

The CUP government was challenged in the immediate aftermath of the constitutional revolution by the liberals (*Ahrar Fırkası*) that sought to decentralize the empire and the religious class – the *ulema* – who organized around the idea of "restoring the Islamic Law" – although the Sharia had not been abolished at all. In 1909, the opposition against the CUP turned into an armed movement shedding blood in the streets of the capital city and voicing demands that Islamic principles (including prohibition of bars and theatres, the prohibition of photography, and imposing restrictions on the freedom of movement of women) be imposed along with some other political demands such as marginalization of some of the Unionists. The event, known as the Uprising of 31 March, left its mark on the collective memory of the late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic as a counterrevolution. It was a remarkable, as well, since moral crisis was central to the calls of Sheikh Vahdeti, the leader of the uprising: "The empire is collapsing; the foundation of this collapse is in the Western morality."[78] With the Uprising of 31 March, morality discourses gained a new political meaning.

The years following the event were characterized by bitter political struggle up until 1913. In 1913, the CUP took the power via a military coup known as *Bâb-ı Âli Baskını*. The CUP leadership aimed at establishing absolute authority in order to prevent further territorial loss after the outbreak of war in the Balkans. From then on, the Ottoman government was under the control of the CUP and the powerful figures of Enver, Cemal, and Talat Pashas.[79] Amit Bein

78 Vahdeti, "Buhran-i Vükelâ, *Volkan*, no. 46, 1908, 203, quoted in Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, 109.

79 Many works on the period refer to them as a "triumvirate" to emphasize the power of these three famous pashas of the CUP. However, Zürcher asserts that the idea of a triumvirate is an

calls this period as the "political marginalization of the ulema."[80] In this period, a discourse on the similarity between European clergy and the ulema accompanied radical steps to eliminate the jurisdiction of the şeyhülislam over sharia courts and remove his seat from the cabinet. The administration of religious endowments (*evkaf*) was transferred to the newly established Ministry of Religious Foundations (*Evkaf Nezareti*). Islamic schools (*medrese)* were brought under the authority of the Ministry of Education, and their curriculum was modernized.[81] Throughout the history of the Ottoman Empire, family law had remained a stronghold of the ulema. With the introduction of the new Family Decree of 1917, its religious tone notwithstanding, the ulema lost its monopoly over the formation and the dissolution of the marriages. Also, the ulema traditionally had the right to officially answer moral and ethical questions in the Ottoman Empire. Such moral judgments were not mere intellectual exercises, they constituted the basis of both religious and secular lawmaking.[82] In this respect, morality discourses had political implications. This explains how and why tensions regarding moral polarizations escalated so quickly and occupied such an important position in political conflicts. In addition, while the CUP eliminated the political power of the Ottoman ulema to an extent, it adopted a pragmatic approach to the relationship between politics and religion. The declaration of jihad as part of the war effort during the First World War clearly shows this. The committee's grand vizier was Said Halim

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oversimplification, especially during the period of the First World War. The committee had many factions and many other powerful leaders. See Zürcher, *Turkey*, 110.

80 Bein, Ottoman *Ulema, Turkish Republic Agents of Change and Guardians of Tradition*, 23–24.

81 Zürcher, Turkey, 121–122.

82 Rifaat Abou-El-Haj, "The Ottoman Nasihatname as a Discourse over 'morality,'"25. Zarinebaf explains the notion of justice as follows: "The notion of justice in the Ottoman Empire was based on two traditions. The first was the ancient Near Eastern and Iranian (Sassanid) theory of the Circle of Justice that passed from the Seljuks and the Ilkhanids to the Ottomans and formed the legal philosophy of the imperial law codes issued by Ottoman sultans, most notably Mehmed II (1444–46, 1451–81), Bayezid II (1481–1512), and Süleyman Kanuni (1520-66). The second involved the Islamic ethical principles of morality, equity, and social justice contained in the Qur'an and the Prophet's sayings and deeds that evolved into the shari'a." *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul*, 149.

Paşa, who was a declared political Islamist. Such paradoxical attitudes were the result of complex political relations and developments. At the end of the war, when the CUP lost power, Mustafa Sabri, the new şeyhülislam and an opponent of the CUP regime, dedicated his office "to revers[ing] the emasculation of the religious establishment and reassert[ing] the observance of traditional Islamic norms and practices in the public sphere."[83] He used the anti-CUP political atmosphere to revive the moral authority of the ulema. Through a "morality commission" established under the Islamic Academy (*Dar'ül-Hikmet'il-İslamiye*) in 1918, he prioritized the regulation of public morality by issuing official decrees and "guidelines" as well as the reporting of cases of violated morality to police and necessary institutions.[84] Such cases ranged from alcohol consumption to the violation of the fast during Ramadan, to immoral content in theater plays and the press, to disregard for gender segregation, and to women's attire and public appearance. I mention this commission while discussing intellectual views on morality.

The declaration of jihad during the war made the Ottoman Empire more vulnerable to critique targeting lifestyles within the empire that were "incompatible" with Islam. In this framework, morality was of broad and intense interest in discussions of the legitimacy of the caliphate. The sensitiveness of the political situation increased with defeat at the end of the war. Therefore, the fight over morality became more explicit among the intellectuals, particularly between Turkish nationalists and political Islamists. Interestingly, in this intellectual contest both parties accused the other of being the ideological carrier of degeneration. Especially during the end of the war, the contest was clearly due to increasing political tensions. Since the Ottoman Empire was defeated on the battlefield, the ideology around the Caliphate and jihad was questioned, as well. This counterpropaganda was particularly evident in the British press which explicitly argued that the Ottoman Empire did not qualify for a "holy war" due to widespread amoral behaviours observed among the Ottoman Muslims. In addition to British propaganda, the anti-Ottoman propaganda of Arab nationalists' further questioned the sultan's right to the

83 Bein, *Ottoman Ulema, Turkish Republic Agents of Change and Guardians of Tradition*, 97.

84 Ibid., 98.

caliphate. Sharifian propaganda against Ottoman rule was based on the claim that Sharif Husayn was against those who had violated the sharia by ordaining secular laws and lifestyles.[85] This increased the anxiety of Islamists with respect to moral decline and added a dimension that can be formulated as "the whole Muslim world is watching us."

As a matter of fact, the discourse on moral decline was accompanied by a discourse on the need for "social reform" and the transformation of the Ottoman Muslim mentality that was perceived as medieval and backward. Moreover, there was a dilemma that came to the surface during the war: while the Ottomans were at war with the Entente Powers, at the same time they admired the progress and advancement of "enemy countries" such as France and Britain. The influence of yet another country, Germany, was growing in the Ottoman Empire. As a result, fears about the growing influence of European culture and the loss of authentic Muslim identity solidified. As the war progressed, social problems became even more visible and this caused a gradual increase in the morality discourse. Therefore, for moral decline polemicists, the issue was deeper than the problems of increasing prostitution and venereal diseases.

This study shows that political tension between the Islamists and Turkish nationalists was transfigured in the intellectual realm as a conflict about the sources of morality. While Islamists insisted that Islam and Islamic principles were the only sources of morality, nationalists argued for the need for a new morality, namely "national morality," which would transcend the scope of religious principles and encompass progressive ideals. What united these two ideologies was their critique of the Tanzimat era – wherein European values had penetrated into the society – as well as their critique of materialism with reference to the Russian Revolution of 1917.

In fact, it was the nationalist challenge to traditional Islamist thought that triggered the heated debate on morality. Ziya Gökalp invented the concept of "national morality" through which he theorized a "new life" for Ottoman Turks. In an article he published under the pseudonym Demirtaş, titled "Yeni

85 Teitelbaum, "The Man Who Would Be Caliph: Sharīfian Propaganda in World War I," 284.

Hayat ve Yeni Kıymetler" (New life and new values), he asserted that "we have achieved the political revolution; now we are confronted yet with another task: To prepare for the social revolution."[86] Among the principles of new life, morality occupied a central role: "A new life means, obviously, a new form of economy, a new form of family life, new aesthetic standards, a new morality, a new conception of law, and a new political system."[87] He developed this idea further in his book "Principles of Turkism" in which he classified morality under several headings.[88] His idea of solidarity (*tesanüd*) was also established on the basis of new morality. New life would be implanted in the new family to create a national identity.[89] By questioning the content of the morality that Islamists defended, he opened the gate for the reform of untouched zones in Ottoman society. The idea of social reform indeed became the genesis of the new values and new morality that would serve the purposes of the advancement of society and the collective good. Obviously, the family and women were important for achieving this purpose.

How, then, could reformists claim the need to reform the very areas traditionally claimed by the sharia? Niyazi Berkes convincingly evaluates this point in *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* and concludes that both the Islamists and the Turkish nationalists agreed on the necessity of reform in the name of progress. The real struggle was to define the limits of sharia and to determine what needed to be changed or replaced in Islamic society. The Islamists "persistently sought arguments for enlarging the scope of the Sharia to cover areas of life that were traditionally regarded as outside the Sharia."[90] The "New Life Group" on the other hand, penetrated the stronghold of the ulema with a simple question: "Which of the traditional institutions are in a state of decline, are thus factors of cultural maladjustment, and therefore are to be eliminated as a pre-condition of reforming those parts of life related to

86 Ziya Gökalp, "Yeni Hayat ve Yeni Kıymetler, *Genç Kalemler*, no.9 (1911), quoted in, Berkes, *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*, 55.

87 Ibid., 56.

88 Devereaux, *The Principles of Turkism*.

89 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 15.

90 Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 361.

them?"[91] I argue that the last stronghold was morality, and the state of moral decline indeed strengthened the claims on both sides. The new morality, as formulated by the nationalists, prevailed and constituted the basis for early republican secularism. Claiming and re-claiming the spheres of religion is an ongoing debate; its form becomes concrete particularly on morality-related issues.

Following this summary of the intellectual debates on morality, I turn my interest to the second level: political regulations and their limits regarding the protection of morality. This study assesses the extent to which moral decline debates were reflected the political sphere. In this regard, two dimensions of the Ottoman homefront call for careful analysis: the abolition of the capitulations and the expansion of military power due to the extension of martial law. Only after the unilateral abolition of the capitulations at the outbreak of the war was the Ottoman government finally able to control brothels and take action to prevent the trafficking of women by foreign citizens in the empire. The proclamation of martial law expanded the power of the military to undertake measures to ensure public morality. Based on archival research conducted in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri, BOA), this chapter reveals the deportation and banishment of those engaged in prostitution. Accordingly, some civilians whose settlement in territories under martial law was considered harmful were banished from these territories for the sake of the mobilization. This measure was applied to those inciting violations of public morality, such as prostitutes, procurers, and debauchers. Their cases were considered an issue of national security during the mobilization. The punishment of immorality ordered by the military was a significant phenomenon of the war, contextualizing it as a national security concern. Given the insecure environment that emerged during the war, foreign citizens living in the empire applied for Ottoman citizenship. In this study, I examine citizenship applications of foreign nationals that were declined due to immorality. The fact that none of these applicants obtained citizenship shows how moral judgment and national security concern intersected. Such wartime measures enabled the dismissal of "undesirable" elements in the society.

91 Ibid., 381.

Obviously, the Ottoman government's motivation for eliminating prostitution in certain areas concerned the spread of venereal disease. As discussed in this chapter, this was also the case in many belligerent countries in the First World War. I consider prostitution as a space that one can observe the cultural rivalry that intensified over the course of the war. For many contemporary writers, prostitution was not the reason for moral decline, but rather the result of it.

For state authorities, the violation of public morality was a part of the concern for public order. Despite heated debates that even involved state elites, the Ottoman government kept the definition of public morality offenses under the discretionary authority of the courts and never attempted to define the limits of violations of public morality. Through the end of the war, *Tanin*, the mouthpiece of the government published two editorials on issues of morality.[92] The articles argued that moral decline manifests itself in three ways: first, prostitution and public manners; second, war profiteering; and third, the misuse of official services. After these two articles stressed the duty of the government to protect public morality, the public apparently considered these editorial articles as new measures. *Tanin* therefore published a short notification indicating that the government had no intention to take new steps to uphold morality; rather, the newspaper reminded the people of existing laws in the Ottoman Penal Code. On prostitution, though, the notification said that the offices were collecting information on prohibitive measures.[93]

In daily life, the protecting public morality had broader implications than counteracting prostitution. Therefore, I include a sub-chapter on the sumptuary laws, war profiteering, regulation of entertainment venues and conspicuous consumption, and official approaches to alcohol and gambling. By juxtaposing the popular perceptions of immorality and political measures, I argue

92 "Ahlâk Mes'eleleri," *Tanin*, September 14, 1918; "Adâb-ı Umûmîye Mes'eleleri," *Tanin*, September 16, 1918.

93 "Nezâret mevcud maddenin tatbikini dikkatle takib edecektir. Ceza kanunu âdâb-ı umûmîyeye muhalefeti tarif etmeyerek takdirî bir halde bırakmıştır. Nezâret kanunu tefsire kalkışmayacak ve mahkemelerin hakk-ı takdirine riayet eyleyecektir. Bir fiilin âdâb-ı umûmîyeye muhalif olub olmadığı meselesi hükkâmın takdiriyle ta'yin edecektir." *Tanin*, August 31, 1918.

that the Ottoman government's pragmatic approach towards "vices" considered signifiers or causes of immorality intensified during the war. This was partly due to limitations on the state power that accompanied financial concerns, as such "vices" constituted a good amount of the state's budget.

In the final chapter, I focus on the Ottoman family and dynamics in provincial areas that contributed to the involvement of the state in the family vis-à-vis morality. I examine rape, sexual assault, and adultery cases that involved soldiers' families. Throughout the war, soldiers, the women of their families, and locals such as village elders and military officers continuously sent complaints to the Ministry of War, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs, and in some cases to provincial authorities or the Ottoman parliament. I consider these petitions as instruments calling state authorities to take measures to prevent rapes, abductions, assaults, and threats. I argue that moral concerns lay behind the attempts at legislation regarding the protection of families. Hitherto in the historiography, these laws are examined separately. Moreover, researchers often suppose that the motivation of the state for penetrating the family was as a means of modernization. However, a close look at individual cases shows that given the circumstances of war, state involvement in the family showed a reciprocal character. In line with the previously discussed point on the changing relationship between the state and society, I argue that state intervention not only stemmed from the keen interest of the state or military alone but was also shaped by demand from below in cases concerning honor.

I consider four main attempts at legislation in this chapter. The first was a general order by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs announcing measures to be undertaken against the perpetrators of sexual attacks. Second, I focus on a provisional law by which cases of sexual assault of soldiers' relatives were taken to martial courts. Third, I explore an unsuccessful legislative attempt by the Ministry of War entitled "Adultery Draft" that would have authorized the military to file complaints and initiate the legal process against unfaithful wives on behalf of soldiers. Finally, I turn my attention to the Ottoman Rights of Family Decree of 1917 (*Hukûk-u Aile Kararnamesi*) and contextualize it within the moral dynamics.

Although statistics of morality-related crimes are not available, the frequency of attempts to legislate them along with the immense interest of

Ottoman intellectuals show that crimes violating morality resulted in the questioning of existing social norms and moral values in society. I argue that the willingness of state authorities to regulate family formation and dissolution, and intellectual concerns about the moral codes of society are interrelated. The ruling elite as well as ordinary people were thereby convinced that it should no longer be taboo to regulate the family realm. As the focus of these regulations was "protecting the honor of the soldiers," I argue that social unrest caused by sexual assaults contributed to these regulations. The sexual assaults, rapes, and abductions targeting soldiers' relatives not only contributed to concerns about morality but also contradicted official war propaganda regarding the protection of women in soldiers' families. In the long run, state intervention paved the way for more radical but legitimate steps to be taken. I evaluate the topic together with debates on social reform that were based on the degeneration of Muslim families. When advocates of family reform questioned the degeneration of Muslim families, they ended up struggling with existing moral values. Can legislation change the norms in society? Apparently, Ottoman intellectuals and reformers introduced legislation as a means of introduce new family values. The advocates of family reform linked the wellbeing of adolescents, women, and men to those of the nation, legitimizing the need for reform.

Besides the current literature on the First World War, this study is based mainly on documents in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives in Istanbul and on periodicals and newspapers that were published during the period in question. Especially chapters 3 and 4 rely on archival sources. Among the catalogs in the archives, I benefited from the documents of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs (Dahiliye Nezareti) which include files belonging to the Interior Administration (İdare-i Umumiye) and the Police Department (Emniyet-i Umumiye). I also benefited from the First World War collection in the Archives of Turkish General Staff (ATASE). Beside the archival documents of state officials, I examined letters and petitions from people banished from martial law areas to central Anatolia in order to better present the lives of people who carried the stigma of immorality. Given that petitions are among the very few sources in social history that present the voices of ordinary people, I consider the letters from soldiers and the women in their families to various

state departments as primary sources that reveal how moral anxieties played a role in state intervention in the family. In addition, such letters indicate the bilateral nature of this intervention. The stories in these documents also expose the wartime circumstances on the homefront that contributed decisively to social and political transformation in the empire. Along with archival documents, the newspaper articles and the minutes of the Ottoman parliament cited in this study help to frame the morality discussion. Articles from various journals that represent the views of the Ottoman intelligentsia offer details on how morality became contested in the turmoil of the war. The term morality was itself a battlefield.

Throughout this study, significant space is reserved for the "women issue" in morality debates. The points of departure for discussions about morality show that Muslim women's participation in social and economic life was a common question. This was partly due to the fact that as more women became visible in the public sphere, their role in the society was discussed more. As harsh economic conditions prevailed in cities, women on the Ottoman homefront – like in other belligerent countries in the First World War – were employed in war factories and state institutions as well as in municipalities and marketplaces. Many middle class women undertook active roles in war aid societies including the Red Crescent (Hilâl-i Ahmer).[94] For the first time in the history of the Empire, women had right to pursue university education following the foundation of the Women's University (İnas Darülfünunu). Although small in number, women also served in labor battalions. All these facts contributed to the heated debates about women's place in society and their political and economic rights.[95]

The Ottoman feminist movement also contributed to these debates. Starting in the 1890s, the movement demanded the inclusion of women in the public sphere in a society where gender segregation and inequality were justified with reference to Islamic law.[96] The movement questioned practices such as polygyny in Muslim families. The voices of Ottoman women in the mid- and

94 Van Os, *Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism*.

95 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 1–17.

96 Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız Inkılap*, 42–97.

late nineteenth century were echoed in literature when the literacy rate among Ottoman urbanites increased due to education campaigns and increasing participation of elite women in the press.[97] The Constitutional Revolution of 1908 completely changed the social and cultural lives of the Ottoman people, and women started to openly ask for legal rights, for family reform, for recognition in social life, to work outside the house, and to have access to higher education. Toprak argues that the ideals of the constitutional monarchy (*meşrutiyet*) paved the way for the socialization of women within the framework of a new public sphere that replaced the old, exclusively male-dominated order.[98] By the end of the war, the focus of the "women problem" had shifted from "Muslim women" to the "Turkish women" in line with rising nationalism. Despite this shift, morality continued to be a dominant aspect. For example, Nezihe Muhiddin, the leading feminist figure of the time, formulated an ideal Turkish womanhood that would respect rationality, national consciousness, and national morality.[99]

Immediately after the end of the First World War, many observers were aware that things had changed in the societies of the belligerent countries, and this change was often expressed with gloomy words such as corruption, degeneration, and disorder. Authorities and intellectuals did not welcome this change, regardless of its description. The war had created widespread moral anxiety in almost all belligerent countries including their colonies. At the end of the war, along with emphasis on the need for population growth, family and its power to regenerate the nation became major points of interest. Many works were published regarding the negative effects of war on morality. It was in this environment that the "Einstein of Sex," the German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, would write *The Sexual History of the World War.*[100] Sudhindra Lal Roy, the Indian columnist, would contribute to the literature with a book

97 Frierson, "Women in Late Ottoman Intellectual History."

98 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Popülizm*, 260.

99 Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız İnkılap*, 76–77.

100 Hirschfeld, *The Sexual History of the World War*.

correlating war and immorality, showing "the moral loss of the human society from war."[101]

The war years were reconstructed in the literary works during the early Republic of Turkey as a moment of moral polarization providing further clues to interpret the prevailing mentality of the time. Even decades later, moral degeneration stories continued to evoke the devastating effects of the war and occupation in the collective memory of the Turkish people. Leading figures of Turkish literature such as Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Reşat Nuri Güntekin, Peyami Safa, and Halide Edip were all inspired by the theme of moral crisis. The imagery of moral degeneration was influential in the formation of Turkish secularism and nationalism.

I intend this study as an integrated account that considers wider internal and external political and social developments together with the experiences of common men and women; however, I abbreviate the political and military history of the period because they have been told by many scholars in a comprehensive fashion.[102] I also limit the discussion to moral crisis, and this study does not claim to offer an exhaustive historical account of prostitution, venereal disease, sexual norms, and moral conduct.

101 Roy Sudhindra Lal, *War and Immorality*. To this list we can add Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (*Der Untergang des Abendlandes*) on the cyclical history of the decline of civilizations, which was popular when published in 1918. Spengler argues that the First World War was a further step toward the total fall of Western civilization.

102 See especially Erickson, *Ordered to Die; A Military History of the Ottomans*; Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*; Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*.

2

The Intellectual Contest Over Morality, and Interpretations of "Moral Crisis"

> *Vicdanlarda artık yaşamayan akide ve âyinleri, aile ve hükümet tarzlarını, ahlâkî vazîfe ve mefkûreleri zorla yaşatmaya çalışmak, istenilen neticelerin tamamiyle aksini tevellid eder. Binâenaleyh bugünkü ahlâk buhranının devâmından mesûl olanlar, birinci derecede yeni ahlâkı tedvîne ve neşre çalışmayan mütefekkirler ise, ikinci derecede de eski ahlâkı zorla idâmeye çalışan muhafazakâr kuvvetlerdir.*
>
> –Ziya Gökalp, *Ahlâk Buhranı*

This chapter focuses on debates about moral crisis among the Ottoman intelligentsia with a particular emphasis on the historical context of the First World War. Despite the difficulty of contextualizing a relatively abstract topic such as morality – or more precisely, immorality – the following pages attempt, in various ways, to assess the implications of discourses of moral decline with regard to wartime conditions. For this reason, I have chosen wartime periodicals that elaborate on this topic at great length. This study considers morality as a contested space; therefore, I select representative, competing ideological perspectives from the Ottoman political spectrum. The journals I

evaluate put forward polemics of moral crisis, and morality with several volumes and articles. These journals are, namely, *İslam Mecmuası* (Journal of Islam), *Yeni Mecmua* (New journal), and *Sebilürreşad* (Straight road). Throughout this chapter I use the original title of these journals instead of their English translation. Having seen that abundant references to Muslim women and their place in society were central to morality discussions, I also conducted research on women's journals of the time. By this means, I explore how women writers approached women-related morality discussions and how they pursued the problem of moral decline. However, because prominent feminist journals such as *Kadınlar Dünyası* (Women's World) were not published during the war years,[1] it was difficult to assess how women responded to the male-dominated discussion of morality in which they were often the center. Nevertheless, I outline the main points of morality debates in women's journals at the beginning and end of the war, such as *Bilgi Yurdu* (The homeland of knowledge), *Genç Kadın* (Young woman), *Kadınlar Dünyası* (Women's world), and *Seyyale* (Flowing).

As mentioned above, the journals I have chosen to evaluate in this study represent the differing standpoints among late Ottoman intellectual circles. The Islamic reformists publishing *İslam Mecmuası* were mostly Turkish nationalists including ones who had emigrated from Russia. They sought new interpretations of religion to create new possibilities for the revival of Muslim society. The chief editor of the journal was Halim Sabit, a Turkic émigré from Russia. He published *İslam Mecmuası* from February 1914 to October 1918, the very years of the First World War. Without the benefit of hindsight, one may find it odd publishing a theological journal during the war years. However, a closer look provides a better understanding of this choice. In a time when Turkish nationalist ideology consolidating power, this group sought to clarify nationalist perspectives on religion. This was also important for war propaganda, partly due to the declaration of jihad. Masami Arai, a prominent author who studied nationalist journals of the Young Turks, argues that since

1 The editors of the journal decided not to publish during the war. Publication of *Kadınlar Dünyası* resumed on March 2, 1918. For the publication history of the journal, see Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*.

nationalists believed their relation to Islam was not sufficiently set out in other journals such as *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish homeland), they founded *İslam Mecmuası* to voice their views on religion.[2] Arai translated the catchphrase of the journal as "life with religion, religion with life,"[3] but given that the journal sought to establish a new life in which religious order fit into contemporary society, a more accurate translation is "a religious life, a lively religion."

The issue of "finding true Islam" was at the core of the themes with which authors in *İslam Mecmuası* had dealt with.[4] The names appeared as authors in this journal will sound familiar to scholars of late Ottoman intellectual history: M. Şerefettin (Yaltkaya), Mansurizade Said, M. Şemseddin (Günaltay), Ziya Gökalp, Mahmud Esad, Musa Kazım, Ahmet Agayef (Ağaoğlu), Musa Carullah, Rızaeddin Fahreddin, Abdürreşid İbrahim, Bereketzade İsmail Hakkı, Ispartalı Hakkı, Besim (Atalay), Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, Köprülüzade Mehmed Fuad, Aka Gündüz, and Ömer Seyfeddin. As Arai puts it, the writers for *İslam Mecmuası* "had one characteristic in common: They obtained a modern school education alongside a traditional one; they could thereby see into Islam and its conditions in an informed way."[5] They searched for the reasons for the decline of the Muslim world and agreed that while Islam itself was not a barrier to progress, superstition was.[6] Accordingly, Islam could be progressive if "foreign" elements falsely regarded as religious rules could be eliminated. Therefore, they pioneered the translation of Quran into Turkish. The fields with which the writers dealt varied from jurisprudence (*fıkıh*) to sociology (*ictimâîyyat*) and from history to literature. The final pages of the journal were reserved for news from the Muslim world and jihad. The journal sparked significant discussions on four topics: polygyny, nationalism in Islam, the sociology of Islamic Jurisprudence (*İctimâî Usûl-ü Fıkıh*), and the delivery of sermons in Turkish (*Türkçe hutbe*). These topics became heated discussions when writers for *Sebilürreşad* harshly criticized nationalist, and reformist

2 Arai, *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, 83.

3 Ibid.

4 Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, 110.

5 Arai, *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, 86.

6 Ibid., 88–90.

interpretations of Islam. For instance, İsmail Hakkı wrote seven articles to refute Gökalp's arguments on the vast place of mores (*örf)* in Islamic Law and on the re-interpretation of jurisprudence under the heading of *İctimai Usul-ü Fıkıh*.[7] Some of these debates, such as the one on the place of nationalism in religion, provoked such heated discussions that the government intervened to silence both sides.[8] Broadly speaking, the conflict between the Islamists in *Sebilürreşad* and the nationalists in *İslam Mecmuası* was exacerbated by the question of the source of law; the nationalists were attempting to open up space for reform in religious thought.[9] By attaching importance to mores and national culture (*hars*) and claiming that there is a distinction between culture and civilization, the nationalists new interpreted religion and Islamic law anew. Through these interpretations, they touched upon realms such as family formation and dissolution, social conduct in everyday life, religious education, and religious practice. Previously, these were the strongholds of Islamists.

On the issue of morality, *İslam Mecmuası* published a column titled "Ahlâk" (Morality) which accounted for fourteen of the total of 362 articles published over its four years.[10] However, many other articles – for instance, ones in the columns "Jurisprudence" and "Sociology" – also dealt with the issue of morality. Besim Atalay (1882-1965), a teacher and director of several schools of education, was the primary commentator on morality.[11] Atalay had acquired eleven years of madrasa education before enrolling in a secular school.[12] After the First World War, as the director of culture (*Hars Müdürü*) he conducted studies on the Turkish language and brought together a book on

7 Some of these articles were transcribed in Kara, *Türkiye'de İslâmcılık Düşüncesi*.

8 Güler, "İslam Mecmuası (1914-1918) ve İçeriği," 14.

9 For a detailed assessment of these discussions, see Bakırcı, "II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi Din Sosyolojisinin Önemli Bir Kaynağı: İslam Mecmuası (1914-1918)," 177–210.

10 See Arai's table of "Classification of Articles in the İslam Mecmuası" in *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, 87.

11 He signed his articles with his titles School Director from Konya, Maraş and the İçel Teacher Training Schools (Dar'ül-muallims) respectively.

12 The only biographic information on Besim Atalay I can find is a monograph focusing on his studies on language. See Özel, *Besim Atalay*.

"pure" Turkish in 1920.[13] Later, he promoted the simplification of the Turkish language as a member of the Turkish Linguistic Society during the 1930s. His translation the Quran into Turkish in 1941 received the appreciation of İsmet İnönü, then President of the Republic of Turkey.[14] Besim Atalay is known for his studies on language rather than his early career as a writer in late Ottoman journals. To my knowledge, neither a monograph nor a study evaluating his early articles has been published. Even so, discussions on jurisprudence and polygyny overshadowed other articles in *İslam Mecmuası,* including Atalay's works. It is also interesting to note that *Sebilürreşad*'s writers never addressed Besim Atalay's articles on morality; they considered Ziya Gökalp and Mansurizade Said to be their addressees.

Other writers who wrote on morality in *İslam Mecmuası* included Ziya Gökalp, Halim Sabit, and Kazım Nami (Duru). Much has been written on Gökalp and his social and political thought in the formation of Turkish nationalism and secularism.[15] While his views on religion, culture, nation, Turkism, and Turkish history are among the most studied topics in Ottoman/Turkish historiography, his understanding of morality has remained unexplored so far.[16] Except for the insight of Zafer Toprak in his works on the emergence of sociological thought in late Ottoman Era, a detailed contextual analysis of Gökalp's use of morality has never been conducted. Throughout this chapter, I focus on Gökalp's attempt to create a "national morality" and contextualize what this prominent figure of the time meant by moral degeneration as well as how he responded to conservative arguments on morality. Generally his articles on morality were published in *Yeni Mecmua*; however, he wrote several

13 Ibid.

14 "Sevgili Atalay, Tanrı kitabının çevrilmesi için yaptığınız denemeleri zevkle ve sevinerek okudum. Başarınız büyüktür ve çok ümit vericidir. Gelecek eserlerinizi sabırsızlıkla bekliyorum." Özel, *Besim Atalay*, 25–26.

15 A prominent work in English on Ziya Gökalp's thinking is Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*. A recent study assessed Gökalp's views on reform in Islam: Kurzman, *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940*.

16 A far-right nationalist publishing house published simplified version of a compilation of his articles on morality; however, many misinterpretations are evident in this version. Cengiz and Atgın, *Türk Ahlâkı*.

articles that also touched on morality in *İslam Mecmuası*. Kazım Nami is famous for the volumes containing his memoirs which he published in the 1950s.[17] He was a pedagogue and his articles were on upbringing and pedagogy rather than morality. In 1925, he published a book for teachers on moral education in schools.[18]

With respect to morality discourses, the importance of *İslam Mecmuası* stems from its theological approach. Instead of looking for arguments completely opposed to Islamist thinking, my aim is to see whether a different approach to morality was possible within the theological framework, and if so, how? What was the nationalist approach to the issue of morality? The themes, questions, and views that were elaborated upon under the heading of morality in *İslam Mecmuası* had points in common. The idea of rejecting European morality was shared by *İslam Mecmuası*'s writers who emphasize the superiority of Islam over Christianity and Judaism with respect to moral thought. They shared the viewpoint of Islamists on the destructive effects of modernist reforms during the Tanzimat era and of Westernist thought on Ottoman Muslim society.[19] They claimed that Tanzimat reforms brought about an obscure ideology of Europeanization and created a generation who sought the reasons for decline in Islam. Referring to the emergence of Islam and the times of the prophet Mohammed, the authors attempted to revive the moral purity of Islam and to apply it to contemporary Muslim society. For reformists, the problems of false traditions and superstitions resulted in the degeneration of religion and moral values in society. For them, the Ottomans remained backward because of superstition. They argued that contrary to the emphasis on morality discernible in theological works, morality was never considered as important as other religious practices in Islam. Besim Atalay argued that morality, as it had heretofore been known, originated from Ancient Greek and Indian thought, and was thus "foreign" to Ottoman Muslim society.

17 Duru, *Arnavutluk ve Makedonya Hatıralarım*; Duru, *Cumhuriyet Devri Hatıralarım*; Duru, *İttihat ve Terakki Hatıralarım*. He also wrote a monograph on Gökalp: Duru, *Ziya Gökalp*.

18 Duru, *Mekteblerde Ahlakı Nasıl Telkin Etmeli?*

19 On the Tanzimat and its application, see Yıldız, *150. yılında Tanzimat*. Also see the articles in Alkan et al., *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Cumhuriyet'e Devreden Düşünce Mirası, Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*.

As a distinctive point, the authors in *İslam Mecmuası* attempted to combine religious views on morality with nationalism in order to create a new understanding of morality based on the duty of individuals to their nation. In line with the catchphrase of the journal – "lively religion" – they tried to make Islam useful in society. In juxtaposition to the argument of individuals' responsibility to God, they emphasized the social aspect of morality. In this framework, morality became a matter of national survival. The nationalists argued that the decline of the nation went hand in hand with the decline of morality. Accordingly, the fact that all the calamities were the result of moral degeneration confirmed that morality is collective. With respect to religious practice, the authors claimed that to be morally upright is better than to pray five times a day.

The happiness emphasized in this journal was an ultimate life goal that was achieved only through upright morality. This new understanding of morality was based on the elimination of ascetic morality (*zühdî ahlâk*) that had so far been promoted by incorrect interpretations of Islam. New ethics of work, life, and family would benefit the whole nation. In order to open up space for the interpretation of morality from the viewpoint of religion, Besim Atalay claimed that morality is not ahistorical; on the contrary, moral thought could change in time. Contrary to other articles on morality, which often referred to the Quran, hadith, or the life of the prophet, this argument was supported by references to philosophers such as Spinoza and Schopenhauer. Describing morality as a social construct, *İslam Mecmuası* emphasized the importance of education, milieu (*muhit*), and inheritance that were at the core of morality instead of religion itself. Other thinkers cited in *İslam Mecmuası* were Rousseau, Gustav Le Bon, and Durkheim. Interestingly, *İslam Mecmuası* had made few references to sexuality – particularly women's sexuality – as part of moral degeneration. Instead, dishonesty, fraud, and inciting other people were evaluated as among the most significant moral problems. Thoughts resulting in "collective destruction" – such as denying the past, disrespecting ancestors, and being pessimistic about the future – were counted among immoral behaviors.

The journal *Sebilürreşad* had a longer publication history than *İslam Mecmuası*.[20] Initially, the journal was titled *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and was published right after the declaration of the constitutional regime in 1908. The chief editor was Serezli Hafız Eşref Edib, a graduate of the School of Law (*Mekteb-i Hukuk*). The journal is considered one of the "Islamist modernist" journals in the empire, as it published translations of famous Islamist reformers such as Muhammed Abduh and Ferid Vecdi. As discussed by Somel, the writers for the journal had strong ties to the Committee of Union and Progress.[21]

When Ebul'ula Mardin quit the editorship in 1912, the name of the journal was changed to *Sebilürreşad*, and the chief editors became Eşref Edib and Mehmed Akif. As Somel argues, while *Sırat-ı Müstakim* was more tolerant of non-Islamist voices, the political perspective of the writers for *Sebilürreşad* became more radical after events such as the Balkan Wars, the Tripoli War, and the First World War.[22] Although the journal supported the War of Independence, it became a stronghold of opposition to the secularist reforms of the Early Turkish Republic. Eventually, the infamous Law on the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükûn*), which was enacted to suppress the Sheikh Said Revolt of 1925, spelled the end of this journal because of its Islamic, oppositional stance.

Today, the journal has an important place in the ideological perspective of the political Islamists movement in Turkey. The new mosque of Diyanet İşleri was named for Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, a prominent writer in *Sebilürreşad*, in 2013. Recently, the Bağcılar Municipality undertook a 25-volume transcription

20 On *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and *Sebilürreşad*, see Debus, *Sebilürreşâd*; Somel, "Sırat-ı Müstakim"; Tunaya, İslamcılık Akımı; Toprak, "Türkiye'de Fikir Dergiciliğinin Yüz Yılı."

21 Somel, "Sırat-ı Müstakim," 4–5. With respect to the difference between *İslam Mecmuası* and *Sebilürreşad,* for now it is worth noting that the CUP was not a monolithic party in which many different views were coalesced under a single name. On the other hand, the *Sebilürreşad* writers criticized the nationalists because nationalists were benefiting from modernist interpretations of Islam such as those of Afgani or Abduh to strengthen their own view. See Debus, *Sebilürreşâd*, 51.

22 Somel, "Sırat-ı Müstakim," 5–6.

of all of *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and *Sebilürreşad's* issues into the Latin alphabet.[23] The Ministry of Cultural Affairs announced 2011 as the "Year of Mehmed Akif," with a full of events including symposiums, exhibitions, and gatherings. Apart from these, there are convincing parallels between current political Islamists views and the ones defended in the journal. While conducting my research, I saw that most works by *Sebilürreşad* writers, including series of articles that were published in *Sebilürreşad*, were transliterated, simplified, and republished with the sponsorship of state institutions, particularly that of the Ministry of Culture, in the 1980s. The ideological atmosphere at the time was shaped by the 12 September 1980 coup-d'état, and the military government promoted anti-communism as an ideological basis for neoliberal politics. The new ideology, the military elites were convinced, had to embrace and synthesize Turkish nationalism and Islamism, an ideology today known as the "Turkish-Islamist Synthesis." The recirculation of *Sebilürreşad* by the state institutions of that time demonstrates that the works of *Sebilürreşad* writers were useful for feeding the religious side of this ideology.[24]

The legacy of *Sebilürreşad* in Turkish politics is evident. In addition, an interesting point in the recirculation of *Sebilürreşad* is that both the publishers and editors of these volumes treat the statements in *Sebilürreşad* as ahistorical – timeless guides to life, politics, society, and religion. No example is more

23 The Islamist writer M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ edits the series. Online access to the journal is available via the Bağcılar Municipality's website, "Sırâtımüstakim." *Bağcılar Belediyesi*, 2017. http://www.bagcilar.bel.tr/kategori/1137/6/siratimustakim.aspx.

24 On the other hand, a course titled "Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi" (religious culture and moral knowledge) became compulsory in schools in 1982. The name and content of the course indicate the unification and equalization of religiosity being moral superiority. Later, in the 1990s, right-wing publishing houses and newspapers such as *Tercüman* and *Dergah Publishing* published these works. Today, in the 2010s, a controversial endowment, Ensar Vakfı, is re-publishing some of these works through a foundation called the *Değerler Eğitimi Merkezi* (values education center) for instruction in new school courses introduced by the government called "morals/values education." For compliations recently published by the aforementioned publication houses, see Kaya, *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Osmanlı'da Ahlâk Eğitimi; Bayraktar, Son Dönem Osmanlı Ahlâk Terbiyecileri ve Ahlak Terbiyesi*. Esther Debus wrote that the articles and arguments in *Sebilürreşad* are popular also among the Turkish Islamist movement in Europe. See Debus, *Sebilürreşâd*, 286.

striking than the 1991 catalog of *Sebilürreşad* prepared in 1989 and published by the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*), which revealed the ahistorical approach.[25] One would expect a catalog of a journal published for decades to be chronological. Instead, the catalog is in alphabetical order because the statements of the *Sebilürreşad* writers are perceived useful regardless of their contexts. A contribution of this dissertation is to contextualize at least the articles on morality.

Given this long introduction to the journal, the importance of studying morality discourses in *Sebilürreşad* and how this sheds light on today's Turkey should be clear. In this chapter, I only consider articles published during the First World War and some from the year 1919 (censorship was lifted from summer 1918 until February 1919, so it is useful to see an uncensored version of the journal.) Also, only those articles referring to wartime and its relation to the moral decline fall under the scope of the study. Pages of *Sebilürreşad* were generously given over to morality issues even before the war. This vast interest in morality, in my opinion, stemmed from the fact that Islamists approached morality, the protection of morality, and moral education as the last strongholds of their intellectual, social, and political superiority.

The most important articles in *Sebilürreşad* to be contextualized in a historical framework are commentaries written in response to other views in the Ottoman press. *Sebilürreşad* commented at great length on articles on morality that were published elsewhere. These commentaries constitute important cases to be evaluated in the following pages.

The authors who dealt with morality in *Sebilürreşad* included, variously, Mehmet Akif (Ersoy), Ahmed Naim (Babanzade), Prens Said Halim Paşa, and Ahmed Hamdi (Akseki). However, most commentaries and reviews written in response to other journals and newspapers were penned by the editorial staff.

Before delving into morality debates in *Sebilürreşad*, a few introductory words need to be said about the figures mentioned above. Mehmet Akif (Ersoy) (1873-1936), was the writer of the Turkish National Anthem, famously carries the title of "national poet" of Turkey. A strong supporter of the CUP

25 Ceyhan, *Sırat-ı Müstakim ve Sebilürreşad Mecmuaları Fıhristi.*

(during the First World War he served in *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*, the underground paramilitary organization of the CUP) he supported the War of Independence with famous sermons in the mosques. Later, he was disappointed by secular reforms of the Republic of Turkey and thus abandoned the country and settled in Egypt.[26] Ahmed Naim (Baban/Babanzade) (1872-1934) received degrees from Galatasaray High School (*Galatasaray Mekteb-i Sultanisi*) and the School of Civil Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*) and subsequently became a member of the Ottoman bureaucracy. During the war years, he worked in the Ministry of Education. In the early republican years, he became the rector of Istanbul University until the forced resign during a 1933 purge that targeted academics.[27] His work opposing ethnic nationalism, titled *İslam'da Dava-yı Kavmiyet* (Nationalism in Islam) became a manifesto by which Islamists defended the unity of the Muslim *ummah* under the caliphate against Turkish nationalists.[28] Said Halim Paşa (1865-1921) was the grandson of the founder of modern Egypt, Muhammed Ali. He worked in the Ottoman bureaucracy during the Hamidian regime but was eventually exiled following a denunciation report (*jurnal*). In 1913, he became grand vizier as a member of the CUP despite his criticism of the 1908 Constitution. He remained grand vizier until his resignation – or most accurately, his removal from office by the CUP – in 1917, after the Arab Revolt of 1916. He was a known Islamist and supporter of Muslim unity, this revolt cost him his career.[29] His works, most of which were published as series of articles in *Sebilürreşad,* were brought together as a book titled *Buhranlarımız* (Our crises) in 1919. Among the crises he mentioned, I examine the social and ideological crisis with respect to which he harshly criticized Westernists and advocates of European morality. Ahmed Hamdi (Akseki) (1887-1951), a graduate of a madrasa, worked in many medreses as lecturer (*dersiam*). He became the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs

26 Şeyhun, *Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic*, 19–20.

27 Ibid., 59.

28 Ahmet Naim, *İslâmda Dava-yı Kavmiyet*.

29 Şeyhun, *Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic*, 147–152.

(*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) in 1947.[30] He wrote many books on morality, some of which were composed of the articles he wrote in *Sebilürreşad*.[31]

What were morality and immorality according to the *Sebilürreşad* writers? How did they perceive moral decline, and what was their solution to this problem? A close look at the journal's index shows that morality was one of the topics most commented upon throughout the history of the journal. In most of these articles, the main interest of the writers was to show that religion is the only source of morality. They argued that no morals, values, or manners could exist without religion. For them, because the superior religion on earth was Islam, the superior morality was Islamic morality. In this journal, morality was utilized to criticize Westernists, nationalists, feminists, reformers, materialists, and Bolsheviks. Broadly speaking, the reason for moral decline according to *Sebilürreşad* writers was deviation from religion and Islamic law in both daily life as well as in politics. Most of the writers attacked European-oriented Tanzimat reforms and also the degenerative impact of the Constitutional Revolution of 1908. Debates on the emancipation of Muslim women constituted a distinct issue in the scope of *Sebilürreşad*'s polemics of moral decline. The writers placed the political and social emancipation of women, opposition to the veil, the demands of women to join public life (especially by working outside the home alongside men), and the rights of women vis-à-vis marriage at the center, and they argued that these were incompatible with an Islamic understanding of morality. Accordingly, sexuality remained the basic issue of immorality, and the subordination of women was at its core. With frequent references to increasing prostitution (including the frivolous behavior of women), the *Sebilürreşad* writers took gender roles and sexual limits as defined by Islam as the first condition to be morally upright. Interestingly, unlike many contemporary observers, *Sebilürreşad* articles claimed that the real reason for prostitution was not economic hardships but lack of adequate religious morality.

Broadly speaking, *Sebilürreşad* writers argued that since the superiority of Muslims had always been derived from their morality – and their moral power

30 Kara, *Türkiye'de İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, 271–273.

31 Akseki, *Ahlâk İlmi ve İslâm Ahlâkı*; Akseki, *İslâm Dini, İtikat, İbâdet ve Ahlâk*.

was derived from the religion – deviation from Islam had brought about the end of this superiority. It was not knowledge or science but moral superiority that would make the Ottoman Empire great again. Science and knowledge could only be instruments to reach higher values. Since many Muslims in the Ottoman Empire disregarded Islamic law and orders in their lives, the country was cursed with unhappiness and defeat in every sphere, particularly at war. They strongly emphasized that the Ottoman Empire is the land of the caliphate and that the "whole Muslim world as well as the enemies of it" were watching it. Women, adolescents, and men had to act properly. Turning to the practices of the "age of happiness" (*asr-ı saadet*) and dispensing with Western influences were ultimate goals in order to correct people's morality.

In some cases, the *Sebilürreşad* acted as an informant vis-à-vis dubious morality. The journal published the names of writers, journals, and articles – including some excerpts from the works – to urge the government to act against immoral content. Articles on dancing, coeducational meetings, anti-veil propaganda, cinema, theater, and love poems were among these "immoral" publications listed by *Sebilürreşad*. In addition, the editors also published pieces from other papers that they appreciated from a moral point of view.

To sum, the main characteristics of the morality discussion in *Sebilürreşad* that were distinctively different from those of the nationalists were the centrality of sexuality, opposition to feminism and the women's movement, and the dilemma regarding the embrace of Western modernity. They harshly criticized the concept of "national morality" which they considered antagonistic to God's orders. On the other hand, Islamists and Turkish nationalists were united with respect to their disapproval of "Western morality."

The third journal I evaluate is *Yeni Mecmua*. The sixty-six issues of this weekly journal were published between July 1917 and October 1918, the end of the First World War. It began publishing again upon the foundation of the Republic of Turkey for a short time. Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, who was among the writers of the journal, asserted that the chief editor, Ziya Gökalp, soft to publish a politically independent, financially self-sufficient journal; however, after just a few issues, he was faced with financial problems. A leading CUP member, Küçük Talat (Muşkara), offered help to finance the journal while

guaranteeing the independence of its content. From then on, the journal was published with the sponsorship of the CUP.[32]

The writers of the journal are among prominent figures in Turkish intellectual history: Mehmed Fuat Köprülü, Ahmed Ağaoğlu, Ömer Seyfettin, Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, Halide Edip Adıvar, Avram Galanti, Refik Halid Karay, Tekin Alp, and Necmeddin Sadak. As discussed by Erol Köroğlu, this journal brought together many intellectuals including those with different views in order to increase the efficacy of the cultural output of war propaganda.[33] Together they contributed to the formation of a "national culture" by creating a new literary genre called National Literature (*Millî Edebiyat*) in the pages of *Yeni Mecmua*.[34] Moreover, sociology articles columns mostly written by Gökalp constituted the principles of the Turkish nationalist movement. Some of Gökalp's series of articles in *Yeni Mecmua* (including those on morality) would become part of his handbook on nationalism titled *Turkification, Islamization, Modernization*.[35]

Yeni Mecmua advertised itself as "weekly journal on scholarship, arts and morality" (*ilim, sanat ve ahlâka dair haftalık mecmua*). In accordance with this claim, articles on morality appeared in almost every issue. I chose this journal because it provides a better understanding of precisely what those prominent nationalists of the time who were writing in *Yeni Mecmua* thought about moral crisis, how they correlated it to the war, and how their solutions differed from those of theological and religious approaches. Morality was a central topic throughout this journal, as a concept carefully analyzed by Necmettin Sadak and Ziya Gökalp in their attempts to formulate their thinking on the establishment of a "new life."[36] They envisaged a new understanding of

32 Yahya Kemal, *Siyasi ve Edebi Portreler*, 17–18, quoted in Yamaç, "Basın Tarihinde Yeni Mecmua Muhteva Analizi ve Dizini," *x*. For the publication history of *Yeni Mecmua,* also see Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity*, 93–94.

33 Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity*, 90.

34 Ibid., 100–115.

35 Gökalp, *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak*; For selected articles of Ziya Gökalp in English, see Berkes, *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*.

36 "Yeni Hayat" was also the name of Gökalp's book of poetry published by *Yeni Mecmua* in 1918 which reflected his project of national life. Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity*, 128.

morality that would constitute the backbone of Turkish political, economic, and socio cultural life. I discuss this further under the heading "national morality."

The articles on morality were frequently in the sociology ("ictimâîyyat") column and occasionally under the title the problem of upringing (Terbiye Meselesi). Necmettin Sadak and Ziya Gökalp were the chief commentators on morality, either Gökalp or Sadak wrote on morality on a weekly basis. Necmettin Sadak is known as the Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1947 and 1950. In the late Ottoman era, he was one of few graduates in sociology and taught sociology with Gökalp at *Darülfünun* (today Istanbul University). Sadak was a journalist, as well; he founded *Akşam* newspaper in 1918.[37]

In this study, I primarily take the articles of Gökalp and Sadak in *Yeni Mecmua* into account with few exceptions. Gökalp and Sadak shared common views on morality; however, Sadak had more practical insights when contrasted with Gökalp's historical, theoretical analysis. In his articles, Gökalp argued that only through sociological analysis could the Ottoman society overcome the crisis of morality. On the other hand, Sadak usually expressed his ideas on morality vis-à-vis the issue of upbringing (*terbiye*). Gökalp and Sadak shared a mission to correct the contemporaneous views on morality and establish a theory of secular national morality. Indeed, this formulation of a new morality was a translation the *morale laïque* of the French Third Republic. The term was particularly important for education policy which came into being in the late nineteenth century and sought to replace the monopoly of religion over education. It was important in creating the "citizen" for the new republic. Emile Durkheim was the chief figure who had formulated *morale laïque* in line with his ideas on solidarity, harmonious social life, and common consciousness.[38] A cross reference of Durkheim's work with those of Sadak, Gökalp, and Atalay reveals that the Ottoman intelligentsia translated and adopted Durkheim's theoretical framework in its entirety with the exception of his understanding of society. While for Durkheim the central concept was society, for Turkish nationalists it was the nation.[39]

37 Birinci, "Necmettin Sadık Sadak (1890-1953)," 493.

38 Stock-Morton, *Moral Education for a Secular Society*, 125–139.

39 Zürcher, *Turkey*, 131.

The aim of national morality according to these authors was to bring about a secular understanding of morality that was compatible with Turkish nationalism. This understanding of morality would shape the basic notion of solidarity in society. Although many scholars have evaluated the emphasis of solidarity for the formation of Turkish nationalism, the role of morality in this formulation remains vague. I believe that nationalists formulated solidarity as a solution to the so-called "moral crisis." In addition, a broad role is attributed to morality for solving social and individual problems that had increased due to the war. The emergence of the discourse of a "crisis of morality" was a reaction to these problems – an attempt to coalesce all social and individual problems under one heading. *Yeni Mecmua*'s vast interest in morality in the very years of war stemmed from the fact that its prominent writers considered wartime as an opportunity to broaden the sphere of nationalism and hasten the involvement of the state and government in untouched realms such as family. This formulation of social revolution, called *ictimâî inkılab,* not only staked claim to the moral realm and shook its religious foundations, but also institutionalized a new morality deemed inherently superior to the religious one. Indeed, it challenged the existing social and political order.

Yeni Mecmua coined a new concept to label the time through which the Ottoman Empire was passing: the stage of transition (*intikâl devresi*). The authors claimed that the crisis of morality was indeed a natural result of this period and had been observed previously in other developed countries. The transition entailed a transition to the age of social division of labor (*ictimâî iş bölümü devresi)*. They argued that this process would soon be completed and finalized during the national period *(millî devir*). However, since the Ottoman society had not established a social morality (*ictimâî ahlâk*), this period had become one of chaos. For Gökalp and Sadak, the old "ascetic morality" that was primarily concerned with the "self" and individual salvation was being shaken worldwide, soon a new collective morality would prevail in every developed country as a condition for a happy life.

What was the new morality? For the polemicists in *Yeni Mecmua*, the sources of morality should be national. Instead of superstitions, useless traditions, and norms (that had been adopted from foreign cultures) and imitation of Western culture, the new morality should rely on the mores of the "pure

nation" and the collective conscience (*ictimâî vicdan)*. The reasons for the moral crisis were conflicts that arose between education in Western-style schools and the realities of Ottoman Muslim society. Therefore, the two scholars emphasized the importance of milieu (*muhit*) in the moral development of an individual. This did not mean that the moral values of contemporaneous Muslim society had to be accepted per se; on the contrary, by the end of the transition stage the milieu and new moral values would become compatible. The new morality was the key to coping with wartime problems, as well. For instance, the only remedy for war profiteering was to establish corporations with the principle of solidarity. The members of these corporations would have a collective understanding of morality and would never allow profiteering to happen. Due to the war, the Turkish people had come to understand the meaning of collectivity; therefore, wartime realities – despite their destructive effects on society – also open the gates for a new society.

Women's journals, on the other hand, were not involved in discussions of morality as much as the journals cited above. However, two approaches to "immorality of women" polemics can be observed. The first questions the unequal moral expectations that were set from men and women, and the second critiques the old values accompanying discourses on the need for social reform. In this respect, moral discourses on women were considered an obstacle to the emancipation of women. Moreover, the discourse of moral decline strengthened the idea of reform in the social realm. To an extent, it is possible to observe anxieties about moral decline among women writers, as well. Instead of a comprehensive analysis of women's articles, I underline the main trends with regard to discourses on moral decline. Therefore, I abbreviate discussions revolving around education, clothing, employment, and gender relations in public and private spaces.

As this study shows, the contest over morality was not only an intellectual endeavor. Morality had become a political instrument between the rival ideologies. It was also important in the context of "saving the state" from decline. The First World War, on the other hand, constituted the setting for testing out the contesting ideologies over morality in society.

§ 2.1 *İslam Mecmuası*: A Theological Perspective on the "New Morality"

In this part of the chapter, we discuss how the authors of *İslam Mecmuası* defined moral crisis and what kinds of solutions they offered from their "Islamist Turkists" perspective. In line with the journal's motto, "a lively religion," the authors of the journal considered morality to be central point for the construction of a new understanding of good and bad to be pursued in the daily lives of Ottoman Muslims. For them, morality was a point of departure for discussing conflicts between the necessities of modern times and the old doctrines of tradition and religion. Questioning the limits of Islamic Law was ideological strength of the nationalists; morality was a great weapon to control this debate. It is my contention that the Turkish nationalist formulation of the modernization of the Ottoman Empire – "adopting the technology of the West but not the Western morality" – served for purpose of avoiding being associated with "imitators of the West." For the sake of analysis, first I begin with what the old morality meant for the authors and how they criticized it. We should note that old morality mostly referred to doctrines of religion, but was not limited to them. The concept also referred to the principles of the Tanzimat era which nationalists resented its European-oriented character. Second, I compare the concept of a new morality to the old, presenting their views on contemporary morality in order to assess their definition of the moral crisis. *İslam Mecmuası* was a theoretical journal that set out the ideas of Turkish nationalists on Islam and makes theological interpretations of Islam in line with the nationalist principles. Therefore, it would be misguided to expect many references to day-to-day events or practical issues. Instead, such references were abundant in *Yeni Mecmua.*

Eventually, we demonstrate how the discourse of morality crisis was used and manipulated by nationalists for the purposes of advocating reform to the religious mentality. The nationalists embraced the concept of a moral crisis – which was frequently claimed by Islamists to emphasize the troubling consequences of modernization – and took it in the opposite direction in critique of conservatives. It is possible to summarize this view as a theological approach that claimed the moral sphere but this time to use morality in the

service of profane affairs. The First World War constituted the dramatic setting in which reformers could call for urgent, radical change.

2.1.1 *The "Old Morality" versus the "New Morality" from the Perspective of Religion*

As mentioned earlier, Ahmed Besim Atalay was among the prominent figures writing on the relationship between religion and morality. Although his writings remained within the theological framework, he developed an alternative understanding of morality to the understanding that he called old morality.

The old morality was originated from a mixture of several sources. Ahmed Besim, in his article "Morality and Religion," argued that up to then all the moralists in the Muslim world adopted the models in the ancient Greek and Indian philosophy.[40] He said Muslim scholars adopted and reproduced this "archaic perspective" in their so-called Islamic and religious works.[41] Atalay divided Muslim society into three according to perspectives on morality: The philosophical perspective, the first group in Muslim society that adopted the ancient Greek and Indian morality. This group consisted of prominent figures in Islamic scholarship including İbn-i Rüşd, Farabi, İbn-i Sina or Nasiruddin Tûsî. The second group consisted of sufis who appreciated spiritualism and discovered the virtues of high morality. However, they represented a small group and despite some original views that they derived from Islam, they too, were inspired by a foreign philosopher, Pythagoras. The third group was the common people (*avam*). Their understanding of morality did not rely on rational thought, experimentation, or self-improvement. Their understanding of morality relied only on certain false traditions (*eğri doğru birtakım*

40 Ahmet Besim, "Ahlak: Ahlak ve Din," 27. "İslam âleminde şimdiye kadar ahlâka dair eser veren zevât eski Hind ve Yunan nazariyet-i ahlâkiyyesini esas ittihaz etmiştir. İslam ulemâsının ahlâk hakkındaki düşünceleri hemen hemen Hind ve Yunan nazarlarının bir istitalesinden ibarettir."

41 Ibid. The works he referred to as "archaic" were the classics on morality in the Muslim and the Ottoman literary world, such as Kınalızâde Ali Efendi's *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* or Nasirüddin Tûsî's *Ahlâk-ı Nâsirî*.

görenekler) and teachings (*telkînat*); hence, it is impossible to assess the morality of the masses and identify the sources feeding their moral judgments.

He argued that the morality understandings of the first two groups were under "foreign influence," primarily that of Greek and Indian philosophy.[42] Therefore, he claimed that Muslims never developed independent thought on morality; on the contrary, among the three principles of Islam (*ahkâm-ı İslamiyye*) Muslims neglected conscience and social principles (*vicdâni* and *ictimâî*) and corrupted jurisprudence and theology (*fıkıh* and *kelâm*) by simply turning Muslims into "praying machines" and spreading relativity and materialism among them.[43] Consequently, Islamic scholars did not develop an authentic Islamic morality. According to him, by defining morality as "habitual" practices that need no further consideration (*nefs-i nâtıkanın bir melekesi*), Islamic scholars made the mistake of removing "reason" and "cogitation" behind human action.[44] Because these scholars had wrong interpretations on religious morality, most calamities in both the Orient and Occident stemmed from the conspiracies of immoral clerics.[45] Ahmed Besim, quoting from Rousseau and Gustave Le Bon, wrote that such "scholarship" based on poor interpretations did not advance humanity.[46] Ahmed Besim used Islamist claims – such as "being moral is superior than to making scientific discoveries" or "without morality, knowledge is useless" – and turned their arguments upside down. His formulation was that "religious scholars or clergy (*ulemâ*) are useless without morality."

As a defender of "true Islam," Besim argued that upright morals constitute the foundations of Islam. For him, the hadith of prophet Mohammed, "I was

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid. "fıkh İslamları bir ibadet makinesi haline getirdi, kelâm da onları itikad hususunda pek maddî ve pek nazariyatcı yapmıştır." He claims this is the reason for the emergence of different schools in Islam.

44 Ahmed Besim, "Din ve Ahlâk: Mânâ-yı Ahlâk," 16.

45 "Şark ve Garbde vukua gelmiş olan fenalıkların kısm-ı azminin menşei ahlaksız ulemanın çevirdikleri fırıldaklarda buluruz; tarih buna pek güzel bir şahiddir." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak ve Din 2," 7.

46 "Russo ilmden beşeriyete bir faide gelmeyeceğini ve belki zararlar iras edeceğini ve ahlakın ilme mercih bulunduğunu söylüyor; Gustav Le Bon da yakın ifadatda bulunuyor." Ibid., 8.

only sent to perfect moral character," summarizes the essence of religion. Islam gained power thanks to its emphasis on high moral standards that prioritize virtues. He referred to the importance of the historical context when Islam was initially spread. The Roman Empire was on the verge of distruction due to the moral failure of the Romans. In contrast, Islam announced morals as fundamental to human life and thus gained popularity among who resented the corruption in the Roman Empire. Islamic principles were based on the fact that morality is the only difference between a human and an animal.[47] This emphasis on morality had given rise to the advancement of Islam.

İslam Mecmuası had a mission to redefine ideals of morality according to the needs of modern times. First of all, the new morality had to serve collective (*ictimâî*) benefits, not individual ones. Ahmed Besim defined the rituals and practices in Islam (such as prayers and fasting) as part of a "habitual" understanding of morality. He condemned those "who feel sorrow if they wash their nose their left hand [by mistake] during ablution but feel nothing when destroying the lives of orphans' or accepting bribes."[48] "Evil behavior harms everyone… " he claimed, "if we search for the sources of calamities that human beings – especially Turks – have experienced, we find that they were the moral corruption of some people who acted inconsiderately and did not even deem their acts to be petty sins."[49] Claiming that the basic reason for religious practice was to remind people of their moral duty, he frequently quoted the Quran and hadith (the advice of the prophet Mohammed) to support the idea.[50] Ahmed Besim argued that adhering to high moral standards is more important

47 Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak: Din ve Ahlak 3," 11.

48 "Abdest alırken sağ eliyle burnunu temizlediği için muzdarib olan bir kimse rüşvet alırken; öksüzlerin ocağına su dökerken vicdanı hiç isyan etmemiştir." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak: Ahlak ve Din," 27.

49 "Beşeriyetin – bilhassa biz Türklerin – başına gelen felaketlerin hakiki menşei araştırılacak olursa görülür ki bazı eşhasın – mühimsemeyerek ve hatta ufak günah bile addetmeyerek – yaptıkları ahlaki yolsuzluklardır." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak: Din ve Ahlak, Nazar-ı İslam'da Ahlak," 7.

50 For instance, he quoted the hadith "Ne kadar namaz kılan kimseler vardır ki kazançları ancak yorgunluktur" which translates as "There are so many of those praying who gain nothing but tiredness." Ahmed Besim, "Din ve Ahlak, 9: İbadat-ı İslamiyye ve Ahlak," 14.

(and useful) than religious practices such as praying: "God will forgive us if we do not perform physical practices of religion, and such sins do not harm social order (*içtimâîyyat*). However, if we do not fulfill our moral duties, we disregard both the rights of God and the rights of his vassals."[51] He criticized the current understanding of "religious practice" which, according to him, was limited to "physical" activities. Instead, he claimed there is another, "spiritual" way of religious practice – namely, being moral.[52]

As morality is spiritual religious practice, it serves both the purposes of being religiously upright and the welfare of society. In fact, the new morality focused on society and collectivity rather than individual and self. In *İslam Mecmuası*, "saving the nation" was central to the effort to formulate a new morality. *Ahlak* had to have a reason (*gaye)*. Eventually, the "Muslim Turkists" sought to make use of the "spiritual" side of religion for their cause, as well. Ahmed Besim was convinced that "nations that had survived so far absolutely possessed a solid moral and spiritual foundation."[53] He considered morality to be a precondition for "progress" and "civilization," because it was not law that prevented (or encouraged) people to behave correctly, but morality.[54] He insisted that the decline of the nations, especially Muslim nations, was due to the adoption of the ancient morals of defeated nations.[55] The rise of the Roman Empire, he argued, was a result of the Romans' moral strength symbolized by resignation of the senate to return to farm.[56] For him, an upright morality was

51 "Bedenî ibadetleri yapmadığımız zaman Allah bizi affeder ve bu günahlar ictimâîyyatı etkilemez. Ama vazife-yi ahlakiyemizi ifâ etmediğimiz zaman hem hukûk-u Allahı hem de hukûk-u ibâdı ayaklar altına almış bulunuruz." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak: Din ve Ahlak, Nazar-ı İslam'da Ahlak," 7.

52 Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak, Din ve Ahlak: İbadat-ı İslamiye ve Ahlak," 14.

53 "Yaşayan milletler – mutlaka – sağlam bir ahlaka, sarsılmaz bir imana malikdirler." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak ve Din 2," 9-10.

54 Ibid., 10.

55 "Mağlub milletlerin kokmuş ahlâklarını yamamağa başlayan İslamlar terakkileri kadar sur'atle tedenni etmekde gecikmediler." Ibid., 9.

56 Ibid. He is probably referring to Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, the Roman dictator who voluntarily returned to farming after his service. "Vatanı yolunda kendini ateşe atanlar, çiftçiliği a'yan âzâlığına tercih edenler bulundukça Roma yükseldi."

similar to military training that encourages people to resist bullets.[57] All physical religious practices, in his opinion, should serve the needs of society. Fasting, for instance, produces empathy with the poor. Therefore, one should think the social benefits of religion while performing religious duties.[58] Ahmed Besim and a few other writers commented on the question of whether morality changes over time. As making social values compatible with the modern age, space (*mekân*), and community was their ultimate goal, the reformists in *İslam Mecmuası* agreed that morality changes over time. Or to put it more precisely, they argued that morality had to change. Indeed, this was the genesis of social revolution (*içtimâî inkılab)*.

In the first issue of *İslam Mecmuası*, an author called Muallim Vahyi (*Muallim* refers to his profession, a teacher) wrote an article titled "Muslim Morality."[59] Instead of engaging in a theoretical discussion, he briefly summarized how Muslims should behave in order to be morally upright. He posited four conditions for ideal Muslim morality: "strength [of the body], wisdom, diligence, and fairness."[60] He emphasized how important it is for Muslims to accumulate capital, become involved in trade, and increase their wealth as these were among the good deeds. He recommended Muslims to find practical solutions in every sphere of work, use machine power, make scientific discoveries, and be good at their jobs. He formulated new Muslim morality as such: "the heart of a Muslim beats with God while his hand works continuously."[61] One may find his advice generic; however, it is possible to read his statements as expressions reflecting the drawbacks to progress in Muslim society. He summarized these drawbacks in contemporaneous morality as: "seeing the world's despair, being hopeless, [and] falling into idleness."[62] I believe these were related to the war and psychological atmosphere of the wartime. Ahmed Besim also mentioned a pessimistic attitude among Muslims in the Ottoman

57 Ibid.

58 Ahmed Besim, "Din ve Ahlak 11: İbadat-ı İslamiye ve Ahlâk, Oruç, Hac ve Zekat," 8.

59 Muallim Vahyi, "Ahlak: Müslüman," 20.

60 "Sağlamlık, bilgicilik, çalışkanlık, adillik işte müslümanın sıfat-ı kaşifesi, bunlardır!" Ibid., 22.

61 "Müslüman gönlü daima hakda, eli ise hiç boş durmayub iş yapmakdadır." Ibid., 22.

62 Ibid. "Dünyayı zindan görmek, ümidsizliğe düşmek, işsizliği âdet edinmek."

Empire. Therefore, Ahmed Besim advised Muslims to turn their faces toward the future not the past.[63]

An interesting point that deserves attention in the writings of "reformists moralists" is their emphasis on happiness (*saadet*). In almost all the articles, references to happiness accompany the discourse of "progress;" it is the ultimate goal reached by means of ideal morality. Being happy was used as a contrast to pessimism and asceticism. Ahmed Besim argued that despite the firmness of Islamic morality, it is also capable of rendering happiness to humanity.[64] Being Muslim, accordingly, is to be happy through self-purification.[65] On this point, he combined his efforts to change moral rules and to achieve happiness: "We Turks were not able to generate a solid social life because initially we imitated the Persians and then the Europeans. Our morality should stem from our religion, law, customs, and contemporary mores so that it will appeal to our souls and minds and make us happy."[66] He formulated this ideal morality as a key to happiness as well as to progress: "In short, it is a morality that meets the necessities of [modern] times yet is grounded in national mores that will make human beings happy."[67] This led him to the topic of upbringing (*terbiye)* through which the new generation would gain a new understanding of morality. Once future generations received a proper education on religious morality (in line with his interpretation), "finally, real happiness will be manifested in this destitute country."[68] This brings us to the issue

63 Ahmed Besim, "Nazar-ı İslam'da Ahlak 4," 526. "Nazarların maziden ziyade atiye çevirilmesi gerekir."

64 "Din-i İslâmın ta'limi ahlâkiyyesi kat'i ve surc olduğu gibi insanlığın her türlü sa'adetini te'min edecek bir sûret-i kâmilededir." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak: Din ve Ahlak 3," 11.

65 Ibid. "[Müslümanlık] İnsanların tezkiye-yi nefs ederek mes'ud olmalarıdır."

66 "Biz Türkler bir vakitler Acemi bir vakitler Frengi taklid etmek istediğimizdendir ki koyu bir hayat-ı ictimaiyye vücuda getiremedik. Bizim ahlakımız, dinimiz, yasamız ve töremizden ve bugünün canlı örflerinden alınmalıdır ki ruhumuza ve istidadımıza muvafık gelsin ve bizi mes'ud edebilsin." Ahmed Besim, "Ahlak: Din ve Ahlak 4, Hakikat-i Ahlak," 11.

67 "Hülâsa ihtiyac-ı asra muvâfık millî örfler üzerine istinad eden ahlakdır ki beşeriyeti mes'ud kılar." Ahmed Besim, "Din ve Ahlak 6," 14.

68 "Nesl-i atiye iyi bir terbiye-yi diniyye verilir ve din muayyen İslamın düstur-u ahlakiyyesi ruhlara hissi bir suretde yerleştirilecek olursa o zaman şu garib yurtda saadet-i hakikiye tecelli eder." Ibid.

of *terbiye* through which an ideal morality bears fruit. However, before moving on this topic, a discussion is vital to understand the philosophical ground on which a new education policy was built on.

Moral change *(tebdil-i ahlâk)* was one of the most debated topics in *İslam Mecmuası*. In line with the idea of reform, "Islamist Turkists" reserved a space to put their understanding of the new morality into practice. Once the argument that "morality can change in time" was proven (from a historical point of view), then this space could be created and reserved for reform. Although Ahmed Besim supported his arguments with references to the Quran, hadith, and biographies of the prophet (*siyer*), on the issue of moral change he also cited philosophers such as Schopenhauer and Spinoza. In his article "Does Morality Change?" he argued that this is a philosophical discussion yet there is a conventional – and wrong – assumption among the people concerning the unchanging nature of morality.[69] He claimed this understanding creates wrong views with respect to upbringing and discipline. To illustrate his point, he argued that God sent prophets to correct people's morality. The understanding of morality was based on three things: milieu, heredity, and education.[70] As these are subject to change, so too is morality. In this framework, he developed a theological view of morality reform. In another article, he defended renewing the current morality by emphasizing its role in regenerating societies. Accordingly, morality serves the purposes of regenerating a nation and bringing it to the point of progress. Therefore, morality needs to be progressive. Without openly confronting, the Islamists' ideal of "going back to the *asr-ı saadet,*" he argued that the proposal to adopt medieval morality in contemporary times was nonsensical.[71] His illustration to show the drastic change in morality was

69 "Hükemâ arasında münâkaşa edilen bu mesele nasılsa – pek yanlış bir surette – halk arasına da atlamış; kök salmış ve bir kanaat şeklini almışdır. Hatta 'can çıkmadan huy çıkmaz; huy canın altındadır' gibi yanlış telakkilere kadar yol açmıştır; halk bu kanaatin bu darb-ı mesellerin pek çok zararlarını görüyorlar." Besim Atalay, "Ahlak Değişir mi?" 10-14.

70 "Peygamberlerin ba's olunması, kitabların kelimesi, şeriatın kurulması hep bunun yani ahlakın kabil-i tebdil olması üzerine müessesdir. Ahlakımız neden değişmesin?" Ibid., 10.

71 "Ancak insanlara kabul ettirebileceğimiz ve kabulune çalışacağımız kavanin-i ahlakiyye zamanı, mekanı nazar-ı itibare alarak o cemiyeti yaşatabilecek kavaid ve vesayayı cami olanıdır. Yoksa kurûn-i vüsta ahlakını bugün tavsiye etmek hem beyhude ve hem faydasızdır. Her şey

– not surprisingly – the rise of nationalism and the adoption of nationalism and patriotism as great ideals of morality.[72] The question was how to change the established understanding of morality and practice the ideals that Ahmed Besim theorized. On this topic, more so than to Besim himself, the articles of Gökalp, Halim Sabit and Kazım Nami need to be taken into account.

2.1.2 *Meşihat, Education and Regeneration of Morality*

The writers for *İslam Mecmuası* focused on the issue of *terbiye* as a way of dealing with moral decline in Ottoman Muslim society. The term *terbiye* played a key role in their understanding of the education of the masses. However, the term does not refer to scientific education – rather it translates to upbringing, discipline or instruction. They formulated *terbiye* for the adolescents of future generations as a key to progress: only through education could the Ottomans catch up to modern standards and carry the mores of a nation as well as the essence of Islam. On this topic, too, their starting point was a critique of old (and current) forms of terbiye. However, the critique targeted not only medieval understandings of education but also the policy of education initiated in the Tanzimat era. Accordingly, Gökalp wrote an article in the first issue of *İslam Mecmuası* titled "Islamic Terbiye: The Nature of Islamic Terbiye," in which he claimed that the schools of the Tanzimat inculcated modern education (*asrî terbiye*) improperly while Islamic education was under the influence of Arabic nations.[73] In his opinion, the crucial problem was a lack of a purpose (*gayesizlik*) that caused degeneration and moral decline in youth. He argued that the purpose of terbiye should be to make life meaningful and give it a purpose so that the future generations would rely on it. This education would eventually bless their souls with higher virtues and self-sacrifice in the

gibi ahlak ve nazariyet-i ahlakiyye de tebdillere, terkiblere uğramıştır." Ahmet Besim, "Ahlak: Din ve Ahlak 4 Hakikat-i Ahlak," 12.

72 "Evvelleri vatanseverlik nedir bilinmezken sonraları en büyük mezaya-yı ahlâkiyye sırasına geçmişdir." Ibid., 9.

73 Ziya Gökalp, "İslam Terbiyesi: İslam Terbiyesinin Mahiyeti," 14-17.

name of the nation and religion. Modern education would provide people with the necessary tools for national progress.[74]

Kazım Nami, in his article titled "Islamic Terbiye, Religious Terbiye," made more radical critiques of the "so-called Islamic morality."[75] He targeted the Muslim idea of an "other world": "Those who carry the idea 'Every man for himself' by calculating only their comfort in the after life are harmful burdens on social life."[76] The reformist but theological perspective of *İslam Mecmuası* on education is worth consideration, as well. Like with other topics, the ultimate goal of the reformists was to penetrate religious discourse and conquer this realm from within. Education was crucial because it would eventually become the only way to instruct an "ideal morality" in society. What is interesting (and new) in the discussion of education that took place in *İslam Mecmuası* is not an emphasis on reforming school or university curricula, but introducing a new religious body responsible for developing a new understanding of education in Muslim society. To put it briefly, they sought to reform the institution of the Office of Şeyhülislam (*Meşihat*) and establish an office of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri)* for these purposes.

Halim Sabit wrote two groundbreaking articles on the issue in *İslam Mecmuası*.[77] In line with the Durkheim's "division of labor," he suggested a reconsideration of the role of the Meşihat in the society. Accordingly, he proposed two main bodies for the Meşihat, a religious advisory organ (*dinî teşrî' heyeti*) and a religious education commission (*dinî terbiye heyeti*). He argued that the duties of the Meşihat should be limited to these two within a framework of the division of labor in order to achieve a division between the religious and secular realms. By saying that the ulema is the sole authority in religious affairs, he courted and flattered them. But he narrowed the definition of "religious affairs" and questioned "unholy" things with which the ulema was dealing,

74 Ibid.

75 Kazım Nami, "İslam Terbiyesi: Dinî Terbiye," 17.

76 "'Her koyun kendi bacağından asılır' diye yalnız ahirette nefsinin rahatını düşünenler, ictimâî hayat için muzır birer yüktür." Ibid.

77 Halim Sabit, "Dini Terbiye Heyeti," 3-5; "Velayet-i Diniyye: Meşihat-i İslamiyye Teşkilatı," 5-8.

such as legislation. He quoted following statement from the Quran, "obviously, God orders you to command [his] entrusted realms to competent [people or institutions]…"[78] and continued, "henceforth, the religious realm will be clearly defined by relieving it of its burdens."[79] He based his arguments on the "orders of God" as well as on early practices in Islam, claiming that there was separation between religious and legislative (*dinî* ve *kazaî*) orders. By using religious references, he avoided formulating his views as anti-religious statements; on the contrary, he presented his ideas as the savior of the religious realm that would bring its holiness back by lifting off worldly burdens. Strikingly, he categorized the implementation of justice as among the burdens of the religious realm and claimed them for secular institutions: "henceforth, jurisprudence, with all its institutions, including family law, should be transferred to the Ministry of Justice, while legislative power should be handed over to the sultan, the assemblies of the senate and the deputies."[80] Eventually, terbiye would be central to the duties of ulema. In accordance with the logic of the "division of labor," a hierarchy among religious offices should emerge and work for reviving religiosity and increasing the moral standards of Muslim people. In this hierarchy, the caliph was first, followed by the Şeyhülislam, and then the Directorate of Religious Education *(terbiye-yi diniyye müdüriyeti)*. In towns, muftis *(müftüler)* would be in charge of these duties, in districts preachers *(va'izler)*, in *nahiye*s orators (*hatipler),* and in villages and neighborhoods, the imams.[81] He asserted that his solution was an antidote to diminishing religiosity in society because "the mosques are silent, prayers are cold, and requests are selfish."[82] Therefore, he offered this education project to revive religion.

78 "Şüphesiz Allah emanetleri ehline tevdî etmenizi emrediyor." Halim Sabit, "Velayet-i Diniyye: Meşihat-i İslamiyye Teşkilatı," 5-8.

79 "İşte bunun için din, dine mezâhim olan şeylerden ayrılıp dinin şumûlu dairesini ta'yin etmek icab eder." Ibid.

80 "İşte bunun için adaletin tevzii hususu aile hukuku da dahil olduğu halde bütün şubeleriyle beraber taksim ve vazifeler usûlüne göre adliye nezaretine, hukukî teşri' husus da münhasıran zât-ı padişahî ile a'yan ve mebûsân heyetlerine teslim edilmelidir." Ibid., 8.

81 Halim Sabit, "Dini Terbiye Heyeti," 5.

82 "Camiler sönük, dualar hararetsiz, nidâlar ferdi…" Ibid.

Gökalp discussed the project of Diyanet İşleri in his writings to distinguish religious affairs from government ones, to limit the authority of ulema, and to claim their sphere for reform.[83] However, as in the articles of Halim Sabit, reformists running for *İslam Mecmuası* used the Islamist discourse of morality crisis itself to remind the Islamists of "their real duties." Instead of interfering in worldly affairs, they should withdraw from legislation and jurisprudence and increase the spiritual awareness of the Muslim people.

§ 2.2 *Sebilürreşad*: In Defense of Religious Morality

The *Sebilürreşad* writers published dozens of articles on morality and Islamic morality starting in the journal's early volumes. In the scope of this dissertation, I limit the discussion to those articles that dealt with the war and its relationship to moral decline. Also, instead of evaluating articles in *Sebilürreşad* that posited generic and ahistorical statements to emphasize the importance of morality in Islam, I focus on direct references to moral decline and its setting in order to assess the viewpoint of *Sebilürreşad* writers. *Sebilürreşad* editorial reviews of morality-related articles from other newspapers are emphasized because through these reviews one can best see references to wartime realities and contextualize the intellectual debates about morality. Obviously, these reviews also apprise us of other articles on moral decline in the Ottoman press.

The main concern of *Sebilürreşad*'s writers was to underscore the fact that Islam is the only source of morality and that Islamic practices are the instruments to reach a higher moral standard. In this line of thought, moral decline was the result of divergence from Islam, because religion was the source of morality. Accordingly, all the empire's calamities, including loss of land, dissolution, and social problems, stemmed from moral decline. For them, the

83 On Gökalp's views on Diyanet, see Erşahin, "The Ottoman Foundation of the Turkish Republic's Diyanet."

strength of Muslims came from faith in the greatness of God and respect for the sharia law; once religion lost its power, defeat was inevitable.[84]

In this part of the chapter, I first briefly present the points in common with respect to morality by *Sebilürreşad* writers and share insights on the importance of morality from an Islamist point of view. Second, I consider editorial reviews in *Sebilürreşad* of other articles in the Ottoman press. These reviews are important because they show the direction and policy of the journal. Most of the articles reviewed by the editorial board were excerpts from the *Tasvir-i Efkâr* or *İkdam* newspapers. *Sebilürreşad* generously reprinted articles considered to be useful for the cause of showing the depth of the problem of moral decline. These articles contain many references to the war and contemporary developments. Third, I evaluate how morality became politicized both among rival ideologies and in the international context. Provoked by an article published in the *Times* concerning the increase in venereal disease and moral decline in the Ottoman Empire, the issue of moral crisis became a significant discussion of the legitimacy of the caliphate and of lifestyles that are incompatible with Islam. One of the main concerns of *Sebilürreşad* was that moral decline might harm the future of the caliphate and thus the future of political Islam. Emphasizing that other Muslim nations were following the news about the Ottoman Empire, the writers pointed out the importance of constituting a "good example" for the Muslim world for the success of jihad. At the end of the war, the issue became more concrete thanks to the establishment of the School of Islamic Philosophy (*Dar'ül-Hikmet'ül İslamiye)* which had advised on press censorship in the name of "protecting Islamic morality." Along with debates over the *Times* article, I present a conflict that emerged following a concert that took place in the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocağı*), over which the contest over morality between nationalists and the Islamists transpired. Fourth, I evaluate lists that of disgusting publications (*iğrenç neşriyat*) published in *Sebilürreşad*. To inform readers and the authorities of the dangers of

84 Another important point is that this line of thought – namely reviving Islam and Islamic life style through morality – constituted the main argument of modern Islamic revivalist movements. These movements grounded their thinking on the notion that the source of crisis in the Islamic world was moral decline that originated in deviation from pure Islamic principles, see Şeyhun, *Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic,* 1-2.

the spread of immorality in society, *Sebilürreşad* published excerpts from contemporary journals and newspapers demanding that action be taken against them. These excerpts provide us with the opportunity to see exactly which publications were "immoral" according to the editorial board of *Sebilürreşad*. Finally, I evaluate a recurrent theme in *Sebilürreşad* most referred to as the source of moral decline: sexual morality. This evaluation demonstrates how the issues of the place of women in the society, of family, of gender roles, of veils and women's clothing, and of the feminist movement were discussed with respect to moral decline.

2.2.1 *Religion and Morality from the Perspective of* Sebilürreşad

Among the many articles in *Sebilürreşad* on morality, I would like to begin with Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi's introduction to morality literature (*ahlâkiyyat*.)[85] In this introduction to a series of articles on morality, he used two concepts to define which behaviors were moral and immoral: *fezail* and *rezail*, which I translate as "virtues" and "vices." He published dozens of articles on *ilm-i ahlak* – the science of morality. According to him, people would find the path to happiness and virtues, and distinguish good from evil thanks to this science. Not only Ahmed Hamdi but also other writers for *Sebilürreşad* referred to the concepts of *rezail* and *fezail* while defining morality and immorality. Accordingly, an individual is granted "salvation" and "happiness" in exchange for complying with Islamic practices and remaining within the borders of Islamic law. As Said Halim Paşa stated in his article on Islamization: "Islam is the most complete religion. Its morality is based on its creed, and its sociology derives from these moral principles…. The Islamic credo is the key to human happiness, as long as Muslims feel, think, and act according to the fundamental principles of this religion."[86] These two spheres, religion and morality, were therefore inseparable. Leaving one and embracing other, according to *Sebilürreşad* writers, was impossible. As Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım

85 Ahmed Hamdi Aksekili, "Ahlâkiyyat Serisi Mukaddimesi," 92.

86 These passages were taken from Said Halim Pasha's *Islamization* in manuscript form which were provided to Ahmet Şeyhun by the author's family. *Şeyhun, Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic*, 104.

asserted, "it has been argued that old religions can be replaced by a new quasi-religion, 'humanism.' According to the advocates of this new ideology, religions belong to the past and are outdated. What is needed for the modern world is a new, non-religious, secular morality: humanism. For me, such a thing is simply not possible."[87]

The biggest threat to religion that *Sebilürreşad* writers identified was materialism. Indeed, Mehmet Akif and Ahmed Hamdi translated a series of articles in *Sebilürreşad* by Mehmed Ferid Vecdi on the attack of the philosophy of materialism (*felsefe-yi maddiyun*) on the philosophy of spiritualism (*felsefe-yi ruhiyyun*) in *Sebilürreşad*.[88] The Bolshevik Revolution further increased concern over the future of religion.[89] In this context, spiritualism and morality were the strongholds of political Islam. Identifying immorality and showing its cure were the tasks for the Islamists to undertake in order to maintain political power. To defend Islam in every sphere, they resorted to the moral decline argument their explainations of the backwardness or progress of nations.

Many writers in the journal discussed the question of whether Islam was a barrier to progress. Dr. Ismail Hakkı Milaslı wrote a series of articles in which this question appeared in the title.[90] In the last of the series, he argued that there were three conditions for the progress of nations: physical, mental, and moral strength. Since Muslims derived their moral principles from Islam, their source of moral strength was Islam. He contended that "religion and

87 Ibid., 32–33.

88 Muhammed Ferid Vecdi, "Felsefe: Maddiyun Meslek Felsefesinin Edyana Hücumu," trans. Mehmed Akif, 209-211; Muhammed Ferid Vecdi, "Felsefe: Felsefe-yi Maddiyun ile Felsefe-yi Ruhiyyunun Çarpışması," trans. Ahmed Hamdi, 250-252. Muhammed Ferid Vecdi (1878-1954) was a contemporaneous Egyptian scholar known for being a follower of the Islamic modernism movement. His prominent works were translated by Mehmet Akif in *Sebilürreşad*. For more information on Muhammed Ferid Vecdi, see Yavuz, "Ferid Vecdi."

89 *Sebilürreşad* published several editorials criticizing the Bolsheviks. For instance, "Bolşevik Fikirleri: Erkân-ı Diniyyeye Karşı Hakarat ve Tecavüz," 174. The editors often referred to Bolshevism in their critique of Turkish Republican secularism. " Bolşevik Düsturları: Mekteplerde Laik Terbiyeden Maksat Ne İmiş?" 214-217.

90 İsmail Hakkı Milaslı, "Geri Kalmamızın Sebebi Dinimiz midir? Usülsüzlüğümüz müdür? Daha başka bir şey midir?" 106-107.

morality are the same" and that when Muslims lost faith, they lost their morality and thus their strength to progress.[91] He agreed about the need for a new morality in contemporary Muslim society; however, the divine referents of morality had to remain unchanged. To achieve the task of "defending Islam as the source of morality," *Sebilürreşad* directly confronted other intellectual circles particularly in the editorial reviews.[92]

2.2.2 *Reviews in* Sebilürreşad

On August 8, 1918, *Sebilürreşad* editorial congratulated the newly appointed Minister of Interior Affairs, Ismail Canbulat, for his interview in the newspaper *Tasvir-i Efkâr*. The interview was titled "The Necessity of Improving Public Morality" and in it the new minister expressed his interest in reforming the organization of the municipal police to more effectively combat violations of public morality:

> Indeed, not only the Ministry of the Interior Affairs but the entire government establishment attributes great importance to this [morality] issue. Especially the grand vizier [Talat Pasha] is concerned about the gradual decline of morality. And he firmly agreed to take all necessary precautions against this situation. Actually, in my opinion, government is always interested in morality issues. In every country, governments have moral, intellectual, and behavioral influence over society. The power of this impact is more than that of our [government]. The government has to be the one showing the right path, protecting and restoring public morality by being an example. More than anywhere

91 Ibid. "Zira Müslümanlar ahlakı dinlerinden alırlar cihetiyle ahlakca gerilik demek dince gerilik demektir. Ve hakikatte din ile ahlak birdir. Binaenaleyh bizim geriliğimiz ahlakımızın eksikliğindendir demekle dinimize tevsil etmediğimizden demek arasında fark yoktur. Ve nitekim birçoklarımız da geri kalmamız hep dini terk etmemizdendir derler ve böyle denirse bunun bir manası vardır."

92 Although it is beyond the scope of this study, the reason why the *Sebilürreşad*'s editors set aside many pages in the journal for quoting another source deserves attention. It might be partly due to the theological background of the writers and their aim to develop certain ideas in defense of religion rather than to comment on recent political developments.

else, our people need guardianship and tutelage. They slavishly imitate all the behaviors and actions of the government."[93]

Strikingly, the minister likened the ideal role of government in Ottoman society to a father in the family – the chief exemplar of good manners and morals.[94] One might interpret this expression as a critique of the previous ruling elites. Moving on from the role of government to correct public morality, he continued: "Henceforth, during my term of office, I will deal particularly with public morality. I will endeavor with great attention and care to make sure that the municipal police execute their duty with respect to the protection of morality."[95] Eventually he indicated the new gambling houses and the gradual increase in prostitution were initial problems to be addressed. He emphasized his resentment about permissions to open new brothels. Citing examples of European countries that had abolished brothels (such as Switzerland and Prussia), he concluded that government has to put obstacles in the way of immorality: "We will try to reduce the causes that produce or pave the way for moral degeneration. We expect success because in our society, the public's affinity for moral sentiment is more than other societies' disposition and nature."[96] These statements of the minister brought joy and pleasure to *Sebilürreşad*'s editorial board, and they emphasized that the new minister is famous for his views about applying the law equally for everyone; thus, finally, an "honest and ambitious person had arrived to serve the Muslim nation and prevent its disgrace."[97] It appears that Sebilürreşad shared the thoughts of the

93 "Matbuat: Ahlak-ı Umumiyenin Islahı Lüzumu ve Hükümetin Vazifesi," 265-266. See Appendix A, Quotation 1 for the source text.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid. "Binâenaleyh nezarette bulunduğum müddetçe bilhassa ahlâk-ı umûmiyye ile uğraşacağım. Zabıtanın muhafaza-i ahlâk nokta-i nazarından uhdesinde mütertib vazifeyi son derecede dikkat ve itinâ ile ifâ etmesine sa'y olacağım."

96 Ibid. "Ahlâkımızı bozan, yahud ahlâk bozulmasına tesehhil eden her dürlü esbabı azaltmağa çalışacağız, bizde amme-i nassın fıtrat ve mizacından hiss-i ahlâka meyil daha ziyade olduğu cihetle mesaimizde muvaffak olmamız da me'muldur."

97 Ibid. "İslam memleketlerinde tesis olunan umumhaneleri kapatarak, icra-yı fuhuş için tevziğ olunan vesikaları toplatarak bu son zamanlarda meydan alan rezaletlerin önüne geçmek gibi

minister on the causes of moral decline – the selective application of law in cases of the violation of public morality. The date of this interview coincided with the last months of the war, and it can be interpreted as a critique of corruption among CUP circles. Indeed, this critique is clear in one *Sebilürreşad* editorial review focused on the article of the famous Turkish nationalist, Necmeddin Sadak, an author for *Yeni Mecmua* and a follower of Ziya Gökalp.

Through the end of the war, *Sebilürreşad* increased its emphasis on morality. In some cases, half the pages of an issue were reserved for *Ahlâkiyyat*. In December 1918, immediately after the war, *Sebilürreşad* cited the article of Necmeddin Sadak titled "The Considerations on Morality" written in his own newspaper, *Akşam*.[98] At the end of the war, thanks to the lifting of censorship, the time had come to target Turkists "for their role in moral decline." Before giving details of the editorial review in *Sebilürreşad*, I briefly present the main points Necmeddin Sadak explored in the aforementioned article. His article is also the statement of a "new life" advocate on moral decline as the outcome of war:

> Obviously, over the last four years we saw that things had changed. Among these, morality is the most remarkable. Many of us have changed our consideration of morality [and] what to take from it; the borders of the concept of morality have widened. We have seen this transformation in every kind of morality. The morality of profession and duty, women and sexual morality, civil morality, etc. all gradually failed. I don't know if there is any other country in which morality had declined so quickly."[99]

Necmeddin Sadak accused this new consideration of morality of corrupting the morality and honor of the Turkish family and Turkish women because its eclectic perspectives on the concepts of progress, civilization, and modernization were incomplete. He continued: "Today we have reached the end. It is

büyük ve tarihi bir hizmeti, millet-i İslamiye ancak İsmail Canbolat gibi mert ve azimkâr nâzırlardan bekler," 266.

98 Sebilürreşad, "Matbuat: Ahlak Telakkisi."

99 Ibid., 231. See Appendix A, Quotation 2.

difficult to assess the damage that the homeland has witnessed just because of moral corruption. What is done is done; that whirlpool is left behind."[100] Finally, he explained what he meant by the "damage" caused by moral corruption:

> Here are the biggest and most catastrophic ones among these damages that need our attention…. On the one hand, there is the prosperous lifestyle that can be observed among the war profiteers and among those who currently live in comfort, apparently as a result of easily earned wealth at the expense of the country. On the other hand, there appeared a new form of womanhood, completely emancipated from sexual and familial morality, that is a so-called representation of the life of the European woman with its manners and liberal and extreme desires.[101]

Sadak put war profiteering and the emergence of a new womanhood at the core of moral corruption. According to him, because these two "damages" remained unpunished, the upbringing (*terbiye)* of young girls and boys was extremely affected. He complained that the new generation is following the example of this comfortable, easily earned life and tends to be ignorant and lazy. He urged families, schools, and the press to take action.

> If considerations of a new and moral life do not appear soon – in other words, if the *terbiye* of the family and school do not decry this and the press does not take control of this morality, there will be a more significant and final decline. Let's work to keep moral considerations in their natural, reasonable boundaries. Only then can we save the future of homeland."[102]

The *Sebilürreşad* editorial review appreciated these lines and accepted these statements as an apology.

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100 Ibid., 232. "Bugün işte nihayete vardık. Yalnız ahlak bozgunluğundan memleketin gördüğü zararları şimdi ta'yin güçdür. Olan oldu, o levtiyet geride kaldı."

101 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 3.

102 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 4.

> No doubt, it is a success to see an author of *Yeni Mecmua* – the journal that desired to overthrow our entire religious, national, social, and moral basis and replace it with fake institutions; the journal that expressed joy by chanting "a space is opening for the new life" after the gradual fall of our old religious notions of chastity – on the right path, making confessions under the heading 'Considerations on Morality.[103]

Sebilürreşad concluded the review by expressing the wish that those intellectuals unite against present calamities (*felâkât-ı hâzıre*) and work for the correction of morality.

Actually, competition over morality had increased between the Islamists and Turkish nationalists at the end of the war. As mentioned earlier, the abolition of censorship played a role in direct confrontations, but also the loss of the war and increasing political tensions given the occupation of the empire created an atmosphere in which morality became a tool of the opposition. *Sebilürreşad* deliberately followed the activities of nationalists and used the argument of immorality whenever possible. An example was a concert that took place in the Turkish Hearth (*Türk Ocağı*). On December 18, 1919, *Sebilürreşad* quoted an article by the owner and chief editor of *İkdam* newspaper, Ahmed Cevdet Bey, titled "Orient and Occident," in which he focused on the "undesirable" consequences of Westernization on women of the Orient (including Greek women.)[104] The aim of the editorial review was expressed as embarrassing the other writers in *İkdam* who appreciated the concert that took place in the Turkish Hearth.[105] The editors harshly criticized the event because women and men were mixed, because women took the stage and sang songs, and above all because of the contrasting image of the misery of the people under occupation and the pleasure of "modernists" in concert halls: "While hundreds of our Muslim brothers, orphans, desperate women, sick, old people are groaning and suffering in the mountains of Izmir, the Turkist clubbers, who

103 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 5.

104 Ahmed Cevdet, "Şark ve Garb," 118-119.

105 Ibid. "Fakat İkdam gibi ağır başlı diye telakki edilen bir gazetenin de bu erkek kadın karışık zevk-i ahenkleri ishihsan etmesi hiç de yaraşır bir hareket değildir."

give moral lectures to others, are giving concerts with women and men mixed, chanting and singing in the name of the 'celebration of Turkism.'" [106] The *Sebilürreşad* continued on to criticize Turkish nationalists in a sarcastic way: "Obviously, the club will try to reveal why it was established and attract audiences by continuing the activities of pleasure and concerts."[107] Debates over "concerts" in the Turkish Hearth would continue. Accompanied by a sarcastic tone, the *Sebilürreşad* editorial board's comments and reviews had a political agenda, as well.

2.2.3 *Morality from the Perspective of Political Islam: Thoughts on the Future of the Caliphate and Jihad in* Sebilürreşad

The role of ideology in moral decline was debated in all intellectual circles both during and after the war. Each side blamed the other for the "intellectual basis" for defeats in battle and the backwardness of Ottoman society. However, the end of the war brought another political dimension to this debate: the future of the caliphate. As the Ottoman Empire was defeated on the battlefield, the ideology surrounding the caliphate, jihad, was questioned, as well. This counter-propaganda was particularly evident in the British press which openly argued that the Ottoman Empire did not qualify for "holiness" due to immorality observed among the common Ottoman Muslims. This increased the anxiety of Islamists over moral decline and added a dimension that can be formulated as "the whole Muslim world is watching us." Here, I cite an important event that shows how moral decline became politicized.

On September 11, 1919, the *Times* published an article titled "Decadent Turkey: Muslim Virtues Fast Disappearing" claiming an "alarming increase of venereal disease in Turkey, and especially in the capital during the last few

106 Ibid. "İzmir dağlarında yüz binlerce Müslüman kardeşlerimiz, kimsesiz çocuklar, biçare kadınlar, alîl ihtiyarlar sefil ve sergerdan inliyorken burada Türkçülük bayramı altına sığınıp öte beride hamiyet dersi veren Türk ocakçıları erkek, kadın karışık hevanendeler, sazendelerle ocaklarında icra-yı ahenk ediyorlar."

107 Ibid. "Ocak maksad-ı tesisini göstermek istediği cihetle zevk-ü sefâsında, âhenk icrasında devâm etmekle müdâvim celbine çalışacağı tabiidir."

years."[108] The *Times* correspondent declared that although "long established" in Anatolia, venereal diseases were now becoming a big problem in the capital, Constantinople, with some 40,000 women and girls undergoing medical treatment "in a population of about 1.100.000 inhabitants of both sexes." The correspondent based this information on a "well-informed Turkish source." As discussed by Seçil Yılmaz, it appears his source was Abdullah Cevdet, the director of the General Health Administration and the chief editor of *Ictihad*, who was a prominent "Westernist" figure.[109] Before detailing the "fight" that took place between *Sebilürreşad* and Abdullah Cevdet, we should focus on the rest of the newspaper article to see the process of the politicization of public morality and why it became so important in that historical context.

Moving on from the increasing number of venereal diseases among Muslims, the correspondent of the *Times* depicted the situation of public morality in the Ottoman Empire.

> The Government has ceased to recognize Moslem prostitution and to enjoin the medical inspection of Moslem prostitutes, which was some slight check on the dissemination of disease, but takes no steps to close Turkish houses of ill-fame or to punish the food profiteering which is one of the chief causes of the evil. It is also handicapped by the inefficiency and venality of too many Turkish doctors, the lack of drugs and hospitals, the increase of alcoholism, and many other difficulties. It has not been able to check the growth raki drinking among the Turkish working class or the increase in the number of private gambling clubs run by effendis to any appreciable extent, and its chances of tackling the redoubtable problem of the social evil seem small.[110]

After summarizing the circumstances of "decadence," the correspondent eventually proceeded to the political ramifications of these circumstances and addressed the petition by prominent Indians that had been sent to the Prime Minister of Britain. The petition was written in solidarity with the Ottomans

108 Seçil Yılmaz shared the digital version of this article with me. "Decadent Turkey," *Times*, 9.

109 Yılmaz, "Love in the Time of Syphilis: Medicine and Sex in the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1922," 273.

110 "Decadent Turkey," *Times*, 9.

and expressed concerns over the future of Constantinople, a city that was considered "the center of Islamic civilization and morality." The correspondent found it "a pity" that "highly distinguished Indians, such as the Aga Khan" joined the solidarity with the Ottomans. Quoting from the petition in which the Indian Muslims expressed concerns after the occupation of Istanbul about the replacement of Islamic civilization "by alien civilizations with all their concomitants, casinos, gambling dens, liquor shops, and other undesirable adjuncts," he stated that either the writers of this petition were ignorant or infected by "early Victorian cant in its most odious and hypocritical form." Based on the immorality argument, the correspondent argued, "there are good reasons enough for the maintenance of some form of Turkish sovereignty at Constantinople, but it is ridiculous to urge that its present civilization is Islamic, or indeed anything but Levantine." He concluded his article with the advice to the "Indian friends of Turkey" to offer medical help to Turks suffering from syphilis and consumption (as well as a loss of manpower due to war) because, quoting a British doctor, "in a few years the Turkish problem will be medical rather than political."

This article had a great impact on the Ottoman press. Especially *Sebilürreşad* took up arms against Abdullah Cevdet, who had proposed licensing Muslim prostitutes in order to combat venereal disease.[111] The debate led to his dismissal as director of the General Health Administration a year later.[112] "Those West-lovers (*Garpperest*) who lead our women to an evil path shall read this," wrote the editors of *Sebilürreşad* when reprinting a two-page article by Cevdet, the chief editor of *Ikdam*, in which he evaluated the article in the *Times*. Here, I briefly present Ahmed Cevdet's view on the causes of moral decline because his article on the topic was written in a surprisingly explicit fashion and *Sebilürreşad* quoted it in its entirety, despite its length. According to Ahmed Cevdet, the path leading to the *Times* newspaper article resulted from several mistakes that took place in the Ottoman Empire. First off, any

111 "Ahvâl-i Sıhhiye Hakkında," 106-107.

112 This debate started with a dispute over the number of venereal disease cases indicated by Abdullah Cevdet. The Ottoman Physicians Society (*Cemiyet-i Ettiba-yi Osmaniye*) claimed that these numbers were exaggerated and incorrect, Yılmaz, "Love in the Time of Syphilis: Medicine and Sex in the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1922," 274–276.

civilization project in the Orient had to take religion into account because it was nothing if not religion from which the people of the Orient derived their moral principles. Accordingly, it was a mistake to disregard Islam. A good religious education had to be in place in school curricula. Second mistake was government legislation in various fields. Economic policies needed to prevent poverty because people sacrifice their chastity due to poverty. Another legal action that the government needed to consider was military service. Recruiting men and separating them from their wives for years, leaving them away from their families in a country that lacked adequate means of transportation, had become a problem from the perspective of morality because in the end the situation corrupted the morality of both men and women. In addition to this, another legal issue that impacted morality was divorce law which gave husbands a monopoly over divorce. Men exploited this right, Ahmed Cevdet argued, and used it extensively to remarry. He also contended that women should obey Islamic clothing rules if they expected to be respected in society. However, since times had changed, they should also have access to the university education and earn their own livelihood. "In our society the number of women is more than that of men," he said; therefore, it was no longer possible for women to "sit at home and make a living."[113] Furthermore, Ahmed Cevdet pointed out the role of contemporary literature on moral decline. He claimed novels, stories, and European literature had poisoned people's sense of spirituality; they not only caused moral decline but also spread a misunderstanding of real European civilization. He asserted that none of the authors in these genres had visited Anatolia, and none had an idea about the essence of Turks. All these works were materialistic – based solely on profane ambitions. He added a critique of CUP rulers who had not paid enough attention to this issue.

According to Ahmed Cevdet, there was an obvious problem of moral decline in Ottoman Muslim society for the aforementioned reasons. Therefore, the article in the *Times*, despite its exaggerations and political agenda, had a point. He referred to a "morally degenerate class" in Istanbul that had emerged

113 "Matbuat: Ahlâk Mes'elesi," 17. "Bahusus ki bizde kadının adedi erkekden fazladır. Binaenaleyh kadın eskisi gibi yalnız evde oturup geçinemez."

in a time of social dissolution along with the declaration of the constitution (*Meşrutiyet*). According to him, such phenomena were natural in times of turmoil; however, this class needed to be replaced by a new ruling elite, which had not yet happened in the Ottoman case. Therefore, he concluded, "we [Ottomans] are in *fetret devri*, time of troubles."[114] But he argued that the *Times* correspondent had not analyzed the situation as closely as he had, and he urged the office of the Şeyhülislam (*Bab-ı Meşihat*) to take action, particularly against publications that violates public morality.

The declaration of jihad during the First World War made the lifestyles in the Ottoman Empire, which were "incompatible" with Islam, more vulnerable to critiques. In this framework, morality was of broad and intense interest in discussions of the legitimacy of the Ottoman caliphate. The sensitiveness of the political situation had increased by the end of the war when the Ottomans were defeated. Therefore, the fight over morality became more explicit among intellectuals, particularly between Turkish nationalists and political Islamists.

We can also consider the famous dispute over the concert that took place in the Turkish Hearth in this context. The Islamists in *Sebilürreşad* had political motives when they informed authorities of immoral activities that were taking place in the country. In this case, they had a special office to with which to collaborate: the moral censorship commission in the *Dar'ül-Hikmet'il İslamiyye* (the School of Islamic Philosophy), which was established under the authority of the Şeyhülislam on March 5, 1918. The council was founded "to promulgate and circulate the high virtues of Islam, to protect religious institutions in the best possible way, and to work towards the accomplishment of a variety of goals, such as reforming the medreses (madrasas) and providing religious advice to the general public."[115] Three commissions operated under the office: the first one was called catechism (*akâid*), charged with the task "to protect Islam against philosophical attacks and superstitions;" the second one was jurisprudence (*fıkıh*) commission, which "examined the legal opinions of the Muslim jurists;" the third, and most important for our topic, was the

114 Ibid. "Biz şimdi bir fetret devresinde bulunuyoruz."

115 Hanioğlu, "Darü'l-Hikmeti'l İslamiye."

morality (*ahlâk*) commission, "charged with promulgating Islamic morals."[116] This commission would become the main censorship mechanism during the armistice period. The commission, after discussion among board members,[117] would issue declarations urging the Ministry of the Interior Affairs to take action against immoral publications.

Sebilürreşad resorted to the morality commission to complain about immoral activities and publications. The concert in the Turkish Hearth club was one such activity; thus, from this moral mindset, publications that praised the event needed to be censored. Eventually the School of Islamic Philosophy published a declaration titled "On the Inappropriateness at the Turkish Hearth," which was also reprinted by *Sebilürreşad* in appreciation of the commission's statement. An interesting aspect of this declaration was the emphasis on "the house of the caliphate, the place where the whole Muslim world is watching,"[118] where the immoral events would "incite the feelings of Muslims and surprise their enemies."[119] Finally, the commission called upon the ministry to take necessary measures against the organizers of the event as well as against the publications promoting it. The School of Islamic Philosophy mainly operated after the war; however, I believe that intellectual discussions that took place during the war together with political circumstances of the time were the actual catalysts for the establishment of this institute. During and after the war *Sebilürreşad* reported "immoral" publications to authorities, urging the latter to take action against what the journal labeled "disgusting publications" (*iğrenç neşriyat*) and "propagandas of immorality" *(ahlaksızlık propagandaları*).

116 Ibid. Notably, Mehmet Akif Ersoy was the chief scribe in this office.

117 "Twenty-six religious scholars served on the board between 1918 and 1922. The board members convened 171 times to discuss 273 different matters." Ibid.

118 "Bütün bilâd-ı İslâmiyenin tevciye-yi nazar eylemiş olduğu dâr'ül-hilafet'ül milliyede…" Sebilürreşad, "Türk Ocağındaki Münasebetsizlikler Hakkında," 119.

119 "yârı müte'essir, ağyârı mütehayyir" Ibid.

2.2.4 *Listing Immoral Publications – the "İğrenç Neşriyat" – in* Sebilürreşad

As mentioned earlier, through the end of the war the ideological contest between Turkish nationalists and Islamists increased. *Sebilürreşad* considered it a "duty" to inform authorities of publications violating public morality and spreading immorality. The editorial board published excerpts from articles as well as literary works in its pages under the headings of "immoral publications" or "immorality propaganda." The editors also commented on them, warning both readers of *Sebilürreşad* and authorities how harmful these publications were. Unsurprisingly, others would label this activity on *Sebilürreşad*'s part as denunciation (*jurnalcilik),* recalling the oppressive years of censorship under the Hamidian regime (1876-1909). However, *Sebilürreşad* would claim that its readers were demanding it "to do something" to stop such immoral publications. For instance, on August 8, 1918, *Sebilürreşad* published a letter to the editors from Konya penned by "a member of the *ulema.*"[120] The letter complained that a newspaper in Konya, *Türk Sözü,* had published an article that "invited youth to fight against Muslim veils and marriage practices and encouraged women and men to have a lengthy relationship before getting married."[121] The author asked *Sebilürreşad* to respond this article. *Sebilürreşad* stated that it had taken notice of the mentioned article; however, responding to it "would be superfluous," though the editors wished the article's author had read the series in *Sebilürreşad* titled "Diseases in the Islamic World and Their Cures."[122] Other reasons *Sebilürreşad* presented for the "denunciation" of immorality were to protect the religion and Muslim women by revealing the "real face" of its political opponents.

For our analysis, it is important to understand what was labeled "immorality" or "things causing immorality" from the perspective of *Sebilürreşad.* In

120 Sebilürreşad, "Konya'da Münteşir Türk Sözü'nün Adâb ve Ahlâka Mugâyir Neşriyatı ve Ahlâka Mugâyir Neşriyat," 265-266.

121 Ibid. "Türk Sözü gazetesinde müslümanların emr-i tesettür ve izdivaçlarına karşı gençliği ilanı isyana davet eden, kadınlarla erkekleri kabl'el-izdivaç uzun bir münasebet ve muvanesette bulunmaya teşvik eyleyen bir makaleye karşı cevab verilmesi temenni olunur."

122 Ibid. "Âlem-i İslam'ın Hastalıkları ve Çareleri."

December 1918, *Sebilürreşad* published a two-page list of excerpts from other, mostly nationalist, journals.[123] As it is clear from the sarcastic title, *Sebilürreşad* was attempting draw attention to the "contrast" between circumstances in the country and the topics with which the press was dealing. As an incipit, the *Sebilürreşad* editorial complained about the lack of regulation of such publications and asserted that "one would be ashamed of humanity after seeing this situation. Even enemies would be saddened by this much degeneration and decline."[124] *Sebilürreşad* continued with an apology to readers because it was necessary to publish excerpts of this *iğrenç neşriyat* in order to show the degree of the "calamity."[125] The first journal targeted was *Fağfur*, which was published between August and November 1918. *Sebilürreşad* considered two love poems in the journal – Faruk Nafiz's "Baş Başa" (In private) and Selami İzzet's "Beyoğlu'nun Hanımlarına" (To the ladies of Beyoğlu) – to be among the disgusting publications. Second example was the article "Büyükada Hayatı" (Life in Büyükada) in *Serbest Fikir Mecmuası*, from which these lines were quoted in the editorial: "This luxurious life is the only thing that keeps people alive. I laugh at those who don't think in this way: To those people who want to see life as misery, sorrow, and poverty brought on by the war, I pity them."[126] Another article from *Serbest Fikir* was quoted to show how the authors of such works pursue or wish to pursue the world. For instance, instead of looking for sorrow and misery, one author emphasized the beauty of women's attire in an article titled "Kadın Tuvaletleri ve Hayat" (Women's attire and life):

> I was looking for the joyful and entertaining sides of life this week. It seems it is easier to find than an abundance of misery! Today we are living a luxurious life. Especially our women; we cannot find anything

123 "Memleket Ne Hâlde, Matbuat Ne İle Meşgul," 149-150.

124 Ibid. "İnsan bu halleri görüyor da bayağı insanlıktan nefret edeceği geliyor. Bu kadar tereddi ve inhitattan düşmanlar bile müteessir olur."

125 Ibid., 149.

126 Ibid., 150. "Bu şuh hayat insanları yaşatmak için yegane kuvvettir. Ben böyle düşünmeyenlere gülerim: O insanlar ki hayatı elem içinde, ıstırab içinde, bugünkü fecii harbin sefaleti içinde görmek isterler, onlara acırım."

> more interesting and exciting than their carefully chosen elegant dresses, colors, socks, and attitudes.[127]

Lastly, *Sebilürreşad* targeted a love poem published in *Yeni Mecmua* by Enis Behic, who was also an adherent of the Syllabist Movement (*Beş Hececiler*). *Sebilürreşad* introduced the poem sarcastically: "And here is *Yeni Mecmua*, the journal that gives social and moral lessons to the Turkish community on the 'New Life.'"[128] The title of the poem was "Bir Çift İskarpin" (A couple of shoes) telling of the harmony of a man and woman's footsteps on the sidewalks.[129] Considering that *Sebilürreşad* found advocating "getting to know each other before marriage" to be immoral for Muslim couples, the "harmony" of which the poet wrote might have led its editors to label this poem immoral. Note, however, some among the authors of the "calamities" to which *Sebilürreşad* referred – such as Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel – are in the contemporary Turkish literary canon and famous for creating the national literary genre. While establishing a fresh, nationalist genre in Turkish literature during and after the war, these poets attracted the critique of the conservatives of *Sebilürreşad*.[130]

This contest over morality revealed other facts regarding wartime censorship. *Sebilürreşad* published a list of articles that, according to it, were "against the sacredness of Islam."[131] In this list, there were articles from *Serbest Fikir*, *Hürriyet-i Fikriye,* and *Sıyanet* that questioned the practice of veiling women in Islam. These journals claimed that *Sebilürreşad* was acting as an informant (*jurnalci*) and violating freedom of speech in the country. According to

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127 Ibid. "Bu hafta da hayatın zevkli, eğlenceli safhalarını arıyordum. Her halde bu ıstırabi bolluktan daha kolay bir şey! Bugün büyük lüks içinde yaşıyoruz. Bilhassa kadınlarımız, bunların pek mütena bir zevkle intihab ettikleri elbiseleri, renkleri, çorabları, tavırları kadar ruhumuzu bir mesti ile helecanlandıran başka bir şey göremiyoruz."

128 Ibid. "Türk unsuruna 'yeni hayat' için ictimâî, ahlâkî dersler veren 'Yeni Mecmua'dan."

129 Ibid. "Mini mini iskarpinler/ Ne sevimli güvercinler/ Parkelenmiş sokaklarda/ Mini mini ayaklarda/ Ne gecelerin sesi gelir/ Vurunca da neşelidir."

130 See Erol Köroğlu's work on the national literature movement and its development during the war, *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity*. It is possible that *Sebilürreşad*'s editors used this opportunity to criticize nationalist attempts to create a literary genre and used morality arguments for this purpose.

131 Sebilürreşad, "İslam'ın Mukaddesâtı Aleyhinde Neşriyat," 227-228.

Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, who wrote in answer to these critiques, it was the "duty of *Sebilürreşad* to protect Islam" against false statements about the practice of veiling. Therefore, *Sebilürreşad*'s editors drew such articles to the attention of the military administration (*askerî hükûmet*). Ahmed Hamdi also noted that the military government had intervened in the dispute and asked that the topic be closed.[132] As this case illustrates, the wartime government asked newspapers to end discussions on some "sensitive topics." It is possible to argue that due to intervention by the wartime government, disputes over morality remained relatively few compared to the post-war period. Therefore, we should keep in mind that intellectual debates during the war had certain limitations.

2.2.5 *Reflections on the War, Women, and Morality in* Sebilürreşad

As mentioned, the problem of "immorality" for Islamists was of equal importance with irreligiosity. Their statements on morality served to link morality and religion and keep it within the limits of Sharia law. According to *Sebilürreşad* writers, among the many versions of immorality, prostitution, or sexual immorality in general, was the worst. The argument that "God sends calamities to those who are immoral" was frequently espoused; however, I dig beneath the arguments to provide the peculiar context of the war and the ensuing years of armistice marked by the Allied occupation and the national resistance against it.

On December 16, 1919, the *Sebilürreşad* editorial board published an article titled "The Problem of Morality in Our Homeland" in which the editors reviewed wartime developments together with intellectual debates that – according to them – had paved the way for immorality and particularly for prostitution.[133] The article appreciated that the Ottoman press, after "ten years of

132 "[askerî hükümet] tesettür meselesi hakkında gazetelerde münakaşaların devamını arzu etmediğinden Sebilürreşad bu konuda uzun uzadıya bir reddiye makalesi neşrederek meselenin esasına girişmeyi şimdilik uygun bulmamış, yalnız tesettür hakkında din alimlerine, halis muhlis İslam olan Türk kadınına iftira ihtiva eden o makaleyi askeri hükümetin nazar-ı dikkatine arz etmekle yetinmişti." Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, "Tesettür ve Kadın Hakları Konusunda Bilinmesi Elzem Hakikatler," quoted in Kara, *Türkiye'de İslâmcılık Düşüncesi*, 283.

133 Sebilürreşad, "Memleketimizde Ahlak Meselesi," 404-406.

destruction," had finally recognized how evil immorality was and had realized that "immorality or prostitution and adultery were social wounds" to be healed.[134] Most of the complaints by the press proposed no real solutions to the immorality problem and there were common misconceptions on the issue. *Sebilürreşad* was proud of its own perspective on morality, which had never changed from the beginning despite accusations of its "bigotry."[135] While others recognized the importance of morality only after the war, *Sebilürreşad* had known the sources of the problem from the beginning: "Now, we shall say it again. The reason for the rapid spread and dissemination of all this immorality and especially prostitution and adultery was the death of religious grace – more precisely, humans forcing the distruction of spiritualism with their many words and speeches."[136] Moving on, the article presented an overview of the sources and definitions of immorality from a historical point of view. Accordingly, the problem first started with the misunderstanding of the "freedom" that was announced with the proclamation of the constitution in 1908; "some people thought freedom means being free from religious duties and doing whatever they like."[137] The initial phase of this misunderstanding was revealed with respect to the issue of veiling, the most rooted religious practice among Muslims with a history of thirteen and a half centuries. The article went on to refer to "they" without detailing to whom "they" refers. "As they anticipated that once the obstacle [of veil] is removed, the remaining religious duties would collapse more easily; they discovered that they could achieve their plans by destroying the woman's *çarşaf*[138] and pulling down the wooden curtain between *haremlik* and *selamlık*."[139] Thus, changes in clothing and gender

134 Ibid. "Allah'a şükür ki ahlâksızlığın fenâ olduğu artık teslim ediliyor. Sûi ahlâk veya husûs-u fuhuş ve zinaya ictimâî bir yara deniliyor."

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid. "Şimdi yine söyleyelim. Bu ahlaksızlıkların ve bahusus fuhşun, zinanın bu kadar sur'atle tevsiğ ve intişarına sebeb avâtıf-ı dinîyyenin ölmesi, daha doğrusu nassın maneviyatı helâka doğru zorla sürükleyen birçok lisânlarla, birçok kelâmlarla öldürülmesidir."

137 Ibid. "Birçoklarımız hürriyeti her şeyden evvel kuyyud-u dinden azâde olarak başıboş yaşamak ve nefs-i emârenin her istediğini yapmak mânâsına aldılar."

138 An outer garment that covers the entire body of women. For details, see Koçu, *Türk Giyim, Kuşam ve Süsleme Sözlüğü*, 65–68.

139 Ibid.

segregation acted as triggers in the development of moral decline. The article continued listing the "sources of evil": the opening of cinemas, theatres to women and organizing events where women and men were mixed. Keeping in mind the critique that *Sebilürreşad* made of nationalists regarding concerts in the Turkish Hearths, it is possible to assume that "they" referred to nationalists. The argument continued that the source of "immorality" was the modern understanding of life (*asrîlik)* and the project of creating the modern human *(muasır insan etmek*), to which we are familiar from the works of the prominent figure of Turkish nationalism, Ziya Gökalp. The second issue was women's participation in economic activities. Although the article did explicitly argue against the idea of women working, it emphasized that "they" indicated that Islam was an obstacle to women's participation in economic activities since it was only concerned with protecting the honor of Muslim women. Eventually, as argued in the article, young women and men "lost the control of their minds"[140] after such provocations. "Women took the *çarşaf* off saying it was too heavy and jumped into the streets wearing dresses that are reserved for sleeping"[141] and men started to engage in acts disapproved of by God *(münkerat*). The article harshly criticized the notion that "foolish women" who were obedient to their husbands were therefore under their yoke.

Unlike other accounts that considered poverty to be the main reason for prostitution, the article asserted that while "poverty might be one reason for prostitution" it was not "as significant as bringing women and men together under the same roof."[142] They blamed "so-called vanguards" in society who helped unite women and men in *Darülfünun* (imperial university) conferences and organized concerts in halls with women and men together. These "so-called vanguards" sent "young, uneducated" girls alone to European universities. They encouraged the government to employ women and eventually "filled the chambers of the state with unqualified, useless women" and wasted

140 Ibid. "Bunca telkinât-ı fasıde ile iğfal edilen genç erkeklerle kadınların akılları zıvanasından çıktı."

141 Ibid. "Kadınlar çarşaf ağır geliyor diye soyunup gecelikle sokaklara fırladılar."

142 Ibid. "Vakıa fakr-u sefâlet de fuhşun esbâb-ı şuyuundan biri olabilir. Fakat insaf edelim. Cinsiyetten iki gencin bir araya getirilmesini teshil etmek kadar müessir midir?"

public money.[143] All these constituted "the first stage of prostitution." *Sebilürreşad* was proud of its view which, according to the article, had never wavered since the beginning. The article asserted that Muslims had a pure morality bound to religion "despite shortcomings in public morality that prevented our progress." Apparently, it was not modernization that Islamists considered harmful to morality, but the "path" that nationalist elites had followed to achieve modernization. For the sake of modernization, "they" made people forget God and destroyed the "holy source" of morality. The editorial board of *Sebilürreşad* concluded with these lines:

> One should know well that this nation is Muslim. Its source of morality is Islam. It received all its graces from there. And the disgraces have been instilled in its soul and body by foreign hands. And the cure for the immorality microbe from which it suffers is to vaccinate religion at the heart of it.[144]

Another writer for *Sebilürreşad*, Mustafa Sabri, summarizes this line of thought more precisely:

> The idea of our religious reformers is, "Since we are not able to build our world, we must at least destroy our afterworld." I can only say I am not one of those who deny the material and moral decline of the Muslims, and I neither want to prevent their awakening nor the methods of reform that could improve the situation of the Muslim world. But if the progress and advancement of the Muslim world is to be obtained at the expense of their religion, by destroying Islam as a religion, I would rather Muslims stay in that miserable and wretched condition than to benefit from material advancement.[145]

The article above was indeed a summary of what Islamists thought about morality and immorality. As is clear, the problems of women's employment

143 Ibid. "Hükûmeti teşvik ede ede nihayet devâir-i devleti vukufsuz işe yaramaz kadınlarla doldurup hazineyi beyhûde ezrâr ettiler."

144 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 6.

145 Quoted in Şeyhun, *Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic*, 46–47.

during the war, their participation in social life, their veiling and clothing, and their new rights to education were at the core of "immorality" arguments. In general, the "issue of women" stood at the center of the "immorality microbe." Aggressive and exaggerated statements such as "jumping into the streets in night dresses" and claims that modernist nationalist elite projects were the reason for prostitution, constituted the ways that Islamists attempted to reclaim moral authority. In fact, *Sebilürreşad* depicted these elites as "inexperienced doctors" with no idea about the "immorality microbe." Therefore, they could do everyone a favor by "leaving the patient in bed" and stepping aside.[146]

The issue of women and its relation to immorality was a prominent topic in *Sebilürreşad*. A Muslim woman's duty was to protect her morality. Women also had power over men to correct their husbands' behaviors. Another article in *Sebilürreşad* titled "The Conditions and Duties of Women" explicitly stated that "the reason of prostitution is not economical, but spiritual."[147] Even at the end of the war, *Sebilürreşad* continued accusing Turkish women of immorality and evilness. Unlike nationalist statements depicting Turkish women as the "heroines" of the war, *Sebilürreşad* recalled the widespread "prostitution and immorality" during the First World War. On October 16, 1919, *Sebilürreşad* reviewed an article published by the nationalist newspaper *İstiklal*. The latter article had praised the sacrifices of Turkish women during the war and celebrated their steps on the path to emancipation.[148] *Sebilürreşad* wrote a sarcastic commentary manifestly accusing Turkish women of having been corrupted. The review stated, in a sarcastic tone, that "we know what the path of emancipation has been for Turkish women in the last four or five years, especially during the Great War."[149] *Sebilürreşad* used the passive voice to depict the situation of women instead of blaming them directly. The journal held an

146 "Memleketimizde Ahlak Meselesi," 404-406.

147 Sebilürreşad, "Kadınların Vaziyeti ve Vezaifleri," 105. "İktisadî sıkıntıdan değil ihtirasî sıkıntıdan kötü yola düşülüyor."

148 Sebilürreşad, "Kadınlarımız Hakkında," 19.

149 Ibid. "Türk kadını[nın] dört beş seneden beri, yani Harb-i Umûmî hengâmesinde sâlik olduğu olduğu târik-i istihlasın neden ibâret olduğu elbet malûmumuzdur."

unstated subject responsible the situation of women, thus disregarding their own agency:

> In recent years, as nobody can deny, prostitution has increased among our women and it has been observed that Muslim women are secretly engaged in prostitution. These women, abandoning and neglecting family life and their duties, were sent to the streets. Men's duties were saddled on the shoulders of these women in exchange for salaries that were unquestionably insufficient to make a living.[150]

Strongly arguing against the idea of women's struggle for emancipation, *Sebilürreşad* asserted that there was no such struggle between men and women in Muslim society.[151] It advised *İstiklal* newspaper to "think first" before publishing such articles.

§ 2.3 *Yeni Mecmua*: The "New Morality" as a Cure for Moral Decline

Yeni Mecmua set aside many pages to elaborate on the issue of morality and offered new insights for solving the problem of moral decline. Its writers approached the issue of morality from a sociological point of view. Most articles on morality were published in the sociology *(ictimaiyyat)* section to emphasize that moral values had to be discussed from a "scientific" perspective. This stemmed from the influence of Durkheim on the development of the discipline sociology among Ottoman intellectuals.[152] In line with this, the authors of *Yeni Mecmua* institutionalized moral decline debate within the confines of sociological approaches. For them, once the reasons for decline were revealed scientifically, it would be easier to solve the problem. For the sake of analysis, I highlight those articles that point to the context of war as important to the

150 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 7.

151 Ibid.

152 Many studies on the impact of Durkheim on Ottoman-Turkish intellectuals have been published. For more information, see Toprak, *Türkiye'de Popülizm*; Toprak, "Türkiye'de Durkheim Sosyolojisinin Doğuşu"; Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp*.

shortcomings of current moral values. The authors coined the concept of a transition period (*intikal devresi*) that define the war as a moment of transition into the age of the modern division of labor. In this framework, they developed a new understanding of morality based on a "new life" (*yeni hayat*), which social life based on solidarity (*tesanüd*). Ziya Gökalp called this new understanding of morality national morality (*millî ahlâk*).[153] In the context of war, moral decline, according to the commentators, was revealed especially with respect to the issue of war profiteers because a new morality based on social solidarity had not yet been established in society. To establish such virtues in society and thereby overcome the problem of moral decline, the task of upbringing (*terbiye meselesi*) had to be undertaken in a modern way. Only through education, Sadak and Gökalp emphasized, could moral decline be eliminated.

2.3.1 *The Morale Laïque and the Sociological Analysis of Morality and Moral Decline*

For the authors in *Yeni Mecmua*, morality was something to be dealt with by the discipline of sociology. Moral decline, in this sense was a sociological problem with scientific explainations if approached using the methods of sociology. Therefore, the issue fell in the realm of *ictimâîyyat*, a term that Gökalp coined as a translation of sociology.

Before detailing the statements on moral decline in *Yeni Mecmua*, an overview of the term *morale laïque* and how Durkheim's works formulated it is essential to grasp a better understanding of intellectual context. Thus, I draw parallels between contemporary European thought and the works of the Ottoman intelligentsia. Durkheim was convinced that the moral crisis in French society was derived from changes in social structure that had destroyed the common consciousness by removing the basis for ethics.[154] Some French intellectuals of the Third Republic, including Durkheim, undertook the task of

153 Zafer Toprak discusses this in the context of "social revolution" in Gökalp's thought. Social revolution was the second step in the advancement of reform in Ottoman society following the political revolution of 1908. Toprak, "Osmanlı'da Toplumbilimin Doğuşu."

154 Stock-Morton, *Moral Education for a Secular Society*, 128.

creating an official secular morality as a fundamental precondition for social integration.[155] Education was central to the project of nursing children on the new Republican values. As Morton indicates, "morality in education gradually came to mean a civic religion, with regular readings of the Declaration of Rights, civic chants and patriotic fervor as its main components."[156] Moral renewal was only possible by setting up great collective goals that united individuals around common ideals.[157]

In Durkheim's works, morality was treated as a "social fact" explicable only from the standpoint of sociology.[158] A significant part of his studies was dedicated to developing a *morale laïque* in the service of society that he envisaged would be organized according to the principle of the "division of labor."[159] He introduced the *science des moeurs* (sciences of mores) to sociology to observe the customs of a society in order to study morality.[160] Gökalp adopted this formulation and developed it in his studies of mores (*örf*) in Turkish society.

On August 23, 1917, Ziya Gökalp published an article titled "Moral Crisis" in *Yeni Mecmua*.[161] He began by defining different moralities. From his point of view, there were two different moralities: ascetic morality (*zühdî ahlâk*) and social morality (*ictimâî ahlâk*). Ascetic morality was the moral system of primitive societies (*ibtidai cemiyetler*) established on the concept of mystic "holiness" and the categories of the taboo (*haram*) and the obligatory (*vacib*). Apart from these two, there were licit (*caiz*), permitted (*mübah*), and permissible (*helal*) acts. In monotheistic religions, these categories solidified even more because they had consequences in the afterworld. In this perspective of morality, people who commit sin feel guilty whereas those who fulfill the obligatory rules feel righteous. Therefore, ascetic morality brought high moral values

155 Ibid., 5.

156 Ibid., 26.

157 Ibid., 134–135.

158 Royce, *Classical Social Theory and Modern Society*, 57–58.

159 Stock-Morton, *Moral Education for a Secular Society*, 127.

160 Ibid., 129.

161 Ziya Gökalp, "Ahlak Buhranı," 122.

to individuals and established rules in society, up to a point. However, in Gökalp's opinion, as society advanced, ascetism was transferred from the public to the private sphere, which was an inevitable consequence of the social division of labor.[162] In times of social progress, he asserted, only a few can fulfill the obligations of ascetic morality; social division of labor conflicts with public ascetics and diminishes the number of ascetic people, thus causing a decline in decency and moral quality.[163] At this point, he refers to the context in which the transformation occurred:

> Eventually, in addition to the social division of labor, on one hand, and the excessive admiration that we show towards European civilization, on the other, the spiritual earthquakes that the war caused shook ascetic morality completely, and as a result, souls and consciences tended to be freed from all moral concerns.[164]

For him, once emancipated from the influence of ascetic morality it was natural and necessary that individual desires would become rampant. And, Gökalp argued,

> that is what we call individualism *(ferdcilik*); after denouncing principles of old morality, people left moral concerns aside and only ran after personal pleasures, joys, and interests. Today, the immorality movement that harms innocent souls with tragic fate is nothing but a wretched consequence of the disease of individualism.[165]

As is clear from these lines, he defined "religious morality" as an ascetic morality that – as times changed – would inevitably diminish in society due to three developments: war, the emergence of the division of labor, and

162 Ibid.

163 Ibid.

164 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 8.

165 Ibid. "İşte ferdçilik dediğimiz şey, insanların eski bir ahlâka karşı isyan ettikten sonra ahlâk endişelerinden büsbütün vazgeçerek, ferdî ihtiraslarının, ferdî eğlence ve menfaatlerinin arkasından koşması demektir. Bugün, birçok müessif tecellileriyle henüz bozulmamış ruhları dağdar eden 'ahlâksızlık hareketi' işte, bu maraz-ı ferdciliğin menfur bir neticesinden ibarettir."

admiration for European civilization. "Religious morality" can no longer be adopted, since it belongs to another age: "Both religion and law may establish special codes in society, however; both derive their strength from morality."[166] This idea was the exact opposite of that of the religious morality defenders in *Sebilürreşad*. Gökalp indicated that morality was the source of law and religion, while *Sebilürreşad*'s authors emphasized that religion was the source of both morality and the law. Gökalp took his point further and argued that the conservatives who defended the revival of old morality to overcome crisis of morality were contributing to the current moral decline: their insistence on the old morality made the resistance of individualism to the "domination and tyranny of a diminishing morality" stronger.[167] However, more so than these "old morality defenders," the people most responsible for moral decline were intellectuals who had not worked on codifying and developing a new morality.[168]

Gökalp simplified the definition of "new morality" to a "social morality" that had to be established on sociological methods.[169] He made it explicit that "nobody would respect" principles not based on scientific evaluation "in the age of reason."[170] In order to follow the principles of morality, people had to know how those were established in the course of social advancement and then to define their purposes and benefits from the perspective of the positive sciences, not scholasticism or literary knowledge. He offered two sociological fields to cope with moral and religious decline: moral and religious sociology (*ahlakî ictimaiyyat* and *dini ictimaiyyat)*. Only these two fields of sociology could save adolescents from the apparent conflict between the positive

166 Ibid. "Din ile hukuk da kendilerine mahsus birer inzibat tesis edebilirler, fakat ikisi de kuvvetlerini ahlâktan alırlar."

167 Ibid. "Zaten, ahlâksızlık ceryanı bazen kendisini haklı ve nazariye itibariyle kuvvetli gösterebiliyorsa, hiç şübhe yoktur ki, bu kuvveti solmuş bir ahlâkın tahakküm ve istibdâdı sayesinde ihrâz edebiliyor."

168 Ibid.

169 Ibid.

170 Ibid. "Şübhesiz bugün makul olmayan yahud makuliyeti ilmî tedkikler neticesinde ortaya konulmayan kaidelere kimse itibar göstermez. Bu asır, ilm asrı, terassud ve tecrübeye müstenid akıl asrıdır."

sciences and religious and moral emotions. This conflict was what created the gap from which individualism was benefiting from. Strikingly, he not only criticized the moral understandings of materialism, biological determinism, and spiritualism – none of which were able to establish a positive moral scholarship – but also the moral perspectives of Kant, Comte, and Spencer for being agnostic (*gayr-ı münfehim*). He concluded that "sociology is the only positive science that can help maintain the current religious and moral sentiments that constitute the backbone of real duties for social order…. Therefore, we expect the cure for today's moral depression only through the true path that sociology illuminates."[171]

On the topic of individualism and the impacts of modern thought on morality, İsmail Hakkı published an article in *Yeni Mecmua* titled "Ahlak Mücahedeleri" (Moral conflicts).[172] After acknowledging the existence of a moral crisis in society, he analyzed the influence of certain philosophical trends on the decline of morality. According to him, because society was in a period of social dissolution, such trends could easily affect the people, particularly the youth. Among these trends, he considered moral nihilism (*lâ-ahlâkîlik*), biological determinism (*tabiatcılık*), idealism (*fikircilik*), particularism (*infiradcılık*), collectivism (i*ctimâîcilik*), conservatism (*muhâfazacılık*), and false idealism (*sûnî mefkûrecilik*). He strictly opposed moral ideas derived from nihilism and Darwinism. Emphasizing the nature of moral codes as social principles, he agreed that "moral Darwinism" was a misinterpretation of Darwin's "survival of the fittest," and he claimed that applying such principles to morality was wrong because it leads to a total rejection of moral judgments. Like Gökalp, he proposed the idea of solidarity to cope with the crisis of morality vis-à-vis philosophical trends stirring up conflict in society.

Returning to Gökalp's sociological analysis of moral decline, we should note that he divided morality into several forms and wrote about each separately. This was in line with his idea of sociological classification to observe "social facts" using a scientific approach. These five moralities were: individual

171 Ibid. "Binaenaleyh, ictimâiyyat ilmi cemiyetlerde el'an yaşamakda olan ve ictimâî inzibâta aid vazifelerin en canlı uzuvlarını teşkil eden dinî, ahlakî duyguların müsbet ilimlere karşı sarsılmamasını te'min edebilecek yegâne müsbet ilimdir."

172 İsmail Hakkı, "Ahlâk Mücahadeleri," 187-188.

morals, professional morals, sexual morals, family morals (he wrote twelve series of articles on family alone), and finally, general morals (*şahsî ahlâk, meslekî ahlâk, cinsî ahlâk, aile ahlâkı, umûmî ahlâk,* respectively). Accordingly, during war, "crime against property increases because the nation becomes a single family and thus it stirs the spirit of collectivity, while on the other hand economic poverty accelerates."[173] Consequently, he referred to war profiteering as easily-earned wealth shook the economic and moral foundations in society. He contended that if "professional morals and individual morals have been established in the country before the war, profiteering would not have become such a big problem and it would not have been possible to spend that illicit money in an immoral way."[174]

Gökalp considered sexual morality to be the most important part of *şahsî ahlâk*. He asserted that sexual morality deserves particular attention because the sense of crisis in terms of sexuality reached an utmost degree.[175] After giving a long historical, anthropological background of gender segregation, his main idea in overcoming crisis of sexual morality was the necessity of establishing the mutual respect of both sexes as the essence between men and women relationships. Once personality was defined as sacred and the "free will" of both woman and man was recognized, this kind of moral crisis would be eliminated. The first stage in the recognition of this free will was to legally recognize the equality of the sexes. Repeating his claim that this was the age of the division of labor, he strongly argued that old moral codes concerning veils and gender segregation created obstacles to women's participation in the division of labor and had to be eliminated. Conservatives had to accept an understanding of "mental veiling" instead of physical veiling.[176] These lines

173 Ziya Gökalp, "İctimaiyyat: Şahsî Ahlâk," 141. "Harb zamanında bir taraftan millet bir tek aile mahiyetini aldığı için, iştirakçilik ruhunun hakim olmasından, diğer taraftan iktisadî sefâletin tevsiğ etmesinden, mülkiyete tecavüz hadiseleri de artıyor."

174 Ibid. "Harbden makdem memleketimizde meslekî ahlâk ile şahsî ahlâk kuvvetle tesis etmiş olsaydı, ne ihtikarcılık bu kadar marazi bir şekil alacaktı, ne de gayr-ı meşru bir surette kazanılan paraların gayri ahlaki bir surette sarfına imkan bulunacaktı."

175 Ziya Gökalp, "İctimâiyyat: Cinsî Ahlâk," 168.

176 Ibid. "Maddî tesettür yerine manevî tesettür kâim olunmalı. Fakat öte yandan muhafazakârlar da bu tedricî tekâmülün zarûrî olduğunu artık kabul etmelidir."

might have sounded radical at the time; however, the motives of these intellectuals were about saving the state. Perhaps, the legitimacy of this aim allowed them to be radical.

Gökalp continued dealing with "the issue of women" in a series of articles titled "Family Morality." One of these articles, titled "The Love for Chevalier and Feminism" had interesting insights on morality, or in Gökalp's terms – "sick morality."[177] After arguing that feminism was misinterpreted in current intellectual circles and was confused with medieval understandings of aristocratic women chevaliers, who were accepted as superior to men, he defended feminism as a democratic movement that demanded the equality of men and women. He attacked the Tanzimat literature, especially the Servet-i Fünun genre (except for Tevfik Fikret) that adopted aesthetic judgments of women from French literature, for its role in "sick morality." In this aesthetic view, the beauty of women was reduced to their psychical appearance, whereas in other literary genres such as those of British literature, the beauty of women stems from not only appearance but also high morals. For him, "the material beauty of woman and her high morals are indivisible from each other,"[178] and "the way to unite love with morality is only possible through marriage."[179] Adopting feminism in the social and political spheres also meant educating women in national and professional morality since they heretofore lacked these qualities. On the other hand, women's sexual morality was higher than that of men, according to him, man should take the strength of woman as an example from this point of view. We should note that these arguments opposed those of *Sebilürreşad*'s authors who emphasized the weakness of women on the issue of sexual morality. Gökalp, on the other hand, recognized the "will" of women in this sense and accepted women' sexuality within this framework. His views on morality imply the fact that he was convinced that morality was socially constructed – in line with the sociological view.

177 Ziya Gökalp, "Aile Ahlakı: Şövalye Aşkı ve Feminizm," 364.

178 Ibid. "Kadının güzelliği ve ahlâkîliği bir bütündür."

179 Ibid. "Aşkın ahlâkla birleşmesi ise ancak izdivac dahilinde kalmasıyla meşrutdur."

2.3.2 *The Concept of "İntikal Devresi," Solidarism, and the Understanding of "National Morality" in* Yeni Mecmua

The authors of *Yeni Mecmua* agreed that the Ottoman Empire was undergoing a stage of transition (*intikal devresi*). Accordingly, a sense of moral crisis was a natural outcome of this stage. Used in many different contexts, the stage of transition meant a transformation from ummah to nation, from backwardness to advancement, from feudalism to modernity, and from the extended to the nuclear family. This transition had been marked by social crisis or social dissolution in those countries that had experienced it. Furthermore, the agonies accompanying the transition were evident in every sphere of life; all institutions – including morality, family, marriage, labor, business, bureaucracy, and the military – suffered from turmoils of transition. For instance, Ahmed Midhat (Metya)'s article titled "Professional Groups and Moral Life" claimed that even though it had been one and half centuries since the social turmoil of the Industrial and French Revolutions had started, the world was still struggling with moral and legal tensions.[180] As discussed, Gökalp claimed that there had been a transition from ascetic morality to social morality. Women's participation in the labor force was also a sign of the transition to the modern division of labor that would eventually necessitate legal changes to recognize women's rights in the public sphere.[181] Another author, Sadak agreed with him and claimed that it was also "a transition period in the spiritual mindset of the public."[182] He wrote in 1917 that three years of war had brought moral decline in society and argued that the old morality should be replaced with a new one. This new morality, as developed by several authors in the journal, was based on the foundation of social solidarity inspired by Emile Durkheim.

In this line of thought, all civilizations went through a similar social crisis in the transition stage; however, for Gökalp, the problem was deeper and remained unsolved in the Ottoman Empire due to the lack of "great

180 Ahmed Mithad, "Mesleki Zümreler ve Ahlaki Hayat," 258-259.

181 Ziya Gökalp, "İctimaiyyat: Cinsi Ahlak," No: 9.

182 Necmettin Sadak, "Umûmî Ahlâk, Meslekî Ahlâk," 496. "Bu devre, milletin maneviyatında istihale-i intikal devresidir."

intellectuals." Recognizing solely Tevfik Fikret as a "great intellectual," he argued that there were no other intellectuals in the spheres of morality, law, and philosophy with Fikret's intellectual caliber. These intellectuals in other countries had guided society from ascetic to moral religiosity and from ascetic to social morality.[183]

Apart from the disadvantage of not having great intellectuals during the stage of transition, the cures for overcoming the shortcomings of this period were to reform existing institutions and establish new ones as necessary according to the principles of the social division of labor. Moral problems discussed with respect to the social division of labor were war profiteering, women's participation in social, economic, and political life, and the education of adolescents. I discuss the first two here and reserve another heading for the education issue because while the first two were "immediate" projects, education was a long-term solution for moral decline, yet with a similar perspective based on solidarity.

The authors of articles dealing with war profiteering approached the issue as a moral problem. For them, getting rich off the war was the result of an individualist, self-seeking morality. War profiteers only pursued their own interests, not only economically but also socially. Refik Halid (Karay) wrote an article titled "The War Rich" in *Yeni Mecmua* and expressed that there were two major calamities in the country: louse-borne typhus and war profiteers.[184] According to him, the newly rich thought that being wealthy meant wandering around like a turkey with a full stomach and running after females in the streets. Such rich people, for Karay, did no good for their homeland or fatherland. They ate, drank, had fun, and showed off. Their money, Karay said, did no good for the country; these newly rich never donated to charity. On the contrary, their way of spending money harmed the public good. At the end of his article, he emphasized that these newly rich had emerged within Ottoman

183 Ziya Gökalp, "Ahlak Buhranı," 122.

184 Refik Halit "Harb Zengini," 301.

society; they were "domestic products."[185] Such a description of the war profiteering problem indeed had long-lasting echoes, particularly in literary works. Strikingly, the problem was not deemed a consequence of the economic policies of the ruling party. Instead of discussing the failure of the economic policies of the government, intellectuals concentrated on the immorality of businessmen.[186] Therefore, the solution to the war profiteering problem was to establish corporations and unions – or, as described by Sadak in French, *groupements professionals*. These corporations would be established on the basis of professions as units that would check the work ethics of their members. Even without any "legal" punishment, these corporations would apply "social" punishments such as exclusion from professional circles for "not comply[ing] with the national consciousness."[187] These corporations would be the tools by which individual interests would be attached to the national interest, and each corporation would share "social" duties according to the principles of the social division of labor. In other words, the logic was formulated as: "corporations would find harmony between individual and national interests and instill a national morality in the members of the professional groups."[188] For instance, Sadak said, "If we had had a proper trade [society] before the war, we would never have ended up with profiteering in such an ugly and improper way."[189] For him, people engaged in profiteering because of the lack of "national morality," – that is to say a moral understanding shaped by solidarity

185 Ibid. "Balta ormana 'sapım sizden!' demiş; bu ictimaî bıçkının da maalesef sapı içimizden çıktı; yerli malı… Evveli, zengin Frenk serveti memlekete bela olurdu. Şimdi de kendimizinki!..."

186 For example, see Ahmed Mithad, "Mesleki Zümreler ve Ahlakî Hayat," 258-259; Necmettin Sadak, "Umumi Ahlak, Mesleki Ahlak," 496; Tekin Alp, "Tesanüdcülük: Harp Zenginleri Meselesi," 313.

187 Necmettin Sadak, ibid. "itbâi mecbûrî olan bu emirlere inkıyât etmeyenler ceza görmez; fakat fa'al ve hareketleriyle ictimâî vicdani rencide ettikleri nispette efkâr-ı imanın takbih ve tel'inine uğrarlar; herkes onlardan kaçar, kimse kendileriyle münasebette bulunmaz, herkesin nefretini celp eder."

188 Ibid.

189 Ibid. "Eğer bizde ticaret muntazam bir meslek zümresi olsaydı, harp esnasında bu çirkin ve muayyıp tarzda, ihtikâr seklinde tecelli etmezdi."

and the institutions that were established on the basis of solidarity.[190] National morality, on the other hand, was the idea of considering the public interest to be superior to individual interests; this was the foundation of the "new life" and the source of all kinds of moral activity.[191]

2.3.3 *National Education as a Solution to Moral Decline*

As Berkes stated in his groundbreaking work, the "fulcrum" of reformers to liberate individuals from "the yoke of tradition" was education.[192] *Yeni Mecmua* had a separate column on the issue of education and upbringing titled "The Problem of Upbringing." Instead of restating the importance of education for modernization projects, this study limits the matter to the "healing" effects of education for moral decline. Necmeddin Sadak was the leading figure writing about ideal education in *Yeni Mecmua*. He underlined that some problems in education system had resulted in a crisis of morality. According to him, the initial problem was the conflict between the modern school curriculum and milieu (*muhit)*. Sadak asserted in his article titled "The Education of Our Young Girls" that the factor most contributing to "moral decline in the world of women" was the education that young girls received.[193] He contended that the conflict that arose between modern education – particularly the curricula of foreign schools – and the social conditions of society was the actual reason for moral decline. This education had no real basis in the society and created expectations that could never be realized. These girls found salvation by migrating to other countries or places and, in the worse scenario, by committing suicide. In order to cope with this problem, the conflict had to be eliminated; family, the social environment, and schooling had to work in harmony to educate adolescents. Girls had to be educated not only to be wives or mothers but also skilled employees. Morality had to be instilled through this

190 Ibid.

191 Ibid.

192 Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 412.

193 Sadak, "Terbiye Meselesi: Genç Kızlarımızın Terbiyesi," 15-16. "Memleketimizde kadınlık alemi oldukça mühim bir buhran geçiriyor. Buhranın en mühim amillerinden biri şübhesizdir ki genç kızların aldığı terbiyedir."

education to convey the "great ideals" of both family and the workplace. In another of his article, he criticized excessive materialism. The article titled "The Danger of Sports" argued that moral progress is superior to bodily progress.[194] The importance of education and the reform of education had become possible thanks to the war. Eventually, national education would be victorious over clerical education.[195] The morality crisis could be eliminated by a "national education" that would give to the young generation "noble causes" and "great ideals."[196] These ideals would attach the youth to their families, society, and the nation with patriotic feelings.

§ 2.4 Women's Journals on Moral Decline

Moral decline discourses often revolved around the topics related to women such as veiling, clothing, gender roles in the family and in society, polygyny, the formation and dissolution of marriages, women's behavior, and gender segregation in the public sphere. Especially veiling practices were a central issue for maintaining gender distinctions and women's morality in public space. Starting in the sixteenth century, sultanic edicts were published to preserve traditional veiling by referring to, as Nora Şeni asserts, "what has always been" as a pretext justifying the promulgation of such edicts.[197] On the other hand, Ahmed Refik wrote in *Yeni Mecmua*, Ottoman women "just like the Janissaries" had "never obeyed" these sultanic codes.[198] As discussed earlier in this study, sumptuary laws on clothing had many rationales apart from the obvious – that is, protection of the Islamic principles. For instance, Tunaya considered

194 Necmettin Sadak, "İspor Tehlikesi," 473.

195 Ernest Lewis, "Fikir Hayatı: Milli Terbiyeye Dair," 132.

196 N. Sadak, "Vatan Terbiyesi," 354.

197 Şeni, "Fashion and Women's Clothing in the Satirical Press of Istanbul at the End of the 19th Century," 27.

198 Ahmet Refik, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Kadın," 249-252. "Görülüyor ki, yeniçerilerden sonra nizam tanımayan, tabii haklarını müstebidâne ve keyfî kanunlara karşı istirdada kıyam eden kadınlardı. Divân-ı humâyûndan çıkan en sıkı hükümlerin onlar için birkaç seneden fazla te'siri olmuyordu."

the veiling issue to be a tool of political Islam to intervene in social life.[199] Accordingly, the issue became attached to the discussion on the limitations of freedom and secular law vis-à-vis sharia law. In the context of the war, the veiling issue took on yet another dimension: the reason for the country's calamities was suggested to have been women's resistance to the veil. Mehmet Tahir, for instance, published a booklet on the topic arguing against the general assumption in society that the Balkan Wars had been lost because women had uncovered themselves.[200] Fashion, indeed, had ramifications encompassing concerns over morality, identity, and autonomy. Nicole Van Os explains how women's outfits came to be perceived as a threat in the late Ottoman context.

> First, the changes in the outdoor dress of women evoked opposition from those who thought certain types of clothes were not in accordance with religious rules and national morals. Second, expenses incurring while following fashion, defined as a constantly changing of clothes without an actual necessity, were a reason for the rejection of fashion. Third, and often connected with the other reasons, there was a growing resistance amongst a part of the population to the increasing economic, political and cultural influence of "the Europeans," and the perceived subsequent loss of Ottoman independency and identity.[201]

Developing a "simple and plain national dress" was an aim of the feminists, as it sounded morally and politically correct in the atmosphere of the war.[202]

The debate about polygyny had a similar, central question: can secular law prohibit what was mandated by sharia law? Islamists defended polygyny as one of the most important aspects of Muslim societies for protecting morality and preventing prostitution.[203] Not only from the perspective of sharia law but

199 Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, 94.

200 Mehmet Tahir, *Çarşaf Mes'elesi*. In this booklet, he posed a balanced view of the problem of veiling by arguing that European clothing is no indicator of progress, either.

201 Van Os, *Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism*, 229.

202 Ibid., 230–231.

203 Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, 95.

also from a Malthusian perspective, Scott Rank posits, advocates of polygyny argued that polygyny was a "natural" condition to "reproduce" in the case of women's infertility and that it balanced the unequal ratio between men and women.[204] In times of war, especially, conservatives embraced the latter argument that the relative number of women was greater than men due to the war and that this gender imbalance would result in increases in extramarital affairs and prostitution.[205]

During my research on intellectual responses to moral decline, I was curious whether women had reacted to these discussions of morality, particularly to the ones revolving around gender inequality. Interestingly, women's journals did not deal with the morality issue as much as other journals that I examined. For the sake of analysis and to maintain the wartime context, I scanned journals starting in the years 1912 and 1913, the time of Balkan Wars, as well as some journals published right after the war.

The First World War constituted the context for a new wave of feminism in the Ottoman Empire. The concept of "Muslim Women," coined by Fatma Aliye, was later transformed into "Turkish Women" by Nezihe Muhiddin in the war years. For Nezihe Muhiddin "a national identity including a national morality" had to be the basis for the rational, secular, modern sense of womanhood.[206] On the discourse of moral decline, it is possible to observe two dominant views that prevailed among women writers of the time. One was the need for social reform that would trigger a questioning of the existing social values in society. Such values in Muslim society were considered an important obstacle to the guarantee of gender equality. Accordingly, these "corrupt" values had to change to emancipate women from the yoke of tradition as well as to bring an end to moral decline. The second view exposed the notion of equality in order to object to the central place of women in discourses of moral decline. According to this view, morality was considered narrowly as protecting the honor of women, while the rule did not apply to men. On the other

204 Rank, "Polygamy and Religious Polemics in the Late Ottoman Empire," 69.

205 Aydın, *İslâm-Osmanlı Aile Hukuku*, 192. See also, Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, 95.

206 Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız İnkılap*, 76–77.

hand, some women writers sided with discourses of moral decline arguing that Muslim women had to respect national and religious identity.

Kadınlar Dünyası has a distinctive place among Ottoman women's journals.[207] The editors and writers of the journal were comprised of women who explicitly engaged in feminism as a social movement. The owner was Ulviye Mevlan, who was also the founder of the Osmanlı Hanımları Müdâfaa-i Hukuk-ı Nisvan Cemiyeti (Ottoman society for the defense of women's rights). Many prominent figures of Ottoman feminism were among the authors of the journal including Aziz Haydar, Emine Seher Ali, Mükerrem Belkıs, Yaşar Nezihe, Belkıs Şevket, Mesudet Bedirhan, Bedia Kamran, and Meliha Zekeriya. The journal led an effective opposition to the exclusion of Muslim women from higher education, employment, and entering public space. During the Balkan Wars, the authors defended the territorial unity of the Ottoman Empire and joined the nationalist cause in condemning the war. During the First World War, the editors decided to go on hiatus due to wartime conditions and their desire to join humanitarian aid and war efforts on the homefront. Through the end of the war, *Kadınlar Dünyası* announced its return.[208]

In *Kadınlar Dünyası*, the discourses on moral corruption were accompanied by an emphasis on the need for social reform as an antidote to degeneration. For instance, Mükerrem Belkıs wrote an article titled "Harmful Traditions" in *Kadınlar Dünyası* complaining that the government was always busy with political reforms and underestimated important social reforms that would also strengthen the political ones.[209] "Establishing happy and solid families," in her formulation, had to be regarded as the backbone of reform programs including military reforms: a nation ultimately relied on the family.[210]

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207 On Kadınlar Dünyası, see Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi;* Atamaz-Hazar, *"'The Hands That Rock the Cradle Will Rise'";* Demirdirek, *Osmanlı Kadınlarının Hayat Hakkı Arayışının Bir Hikayesi*.

208 See Serpil Çakır for biographic information on the authors of this journal, its content, and its publication history, Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, 84–.

209 Mükerrem Belkıs, "Muzır Adetler," 49-50.

210 Ibid. "Hükümet her zaman inkılâb-ı siyasiyye ile uğraşıyor. Onlar emin olsunlar ki arkalarında parlak süngüler tutan müttehit, sağlam ve her şeyi yıkan bir kuvvet

For her, the first issue was arranged marriages (*görücülük*) as an obstacle to forming such families.[211] She called for the annihilation of old, harmful values in society lest they destroy "all our existence."[212]

Another article in *Kadınlar Dünyası* argued that the discourse on morality constituted an obstacle for women to participate in economic, social, and political life. After listing virtues that fall under the heading of upright morality, such as being hardworking, obedient, patriotic, charitable, just, and fair, the article, which was authored by the editorial board, contended that morality in Ottoman society had been reduced to its sexual connotations.[213] "Morality is not only about chastity," the article argued. "The homeland will not be saved merely by chastity."[214] Here again, it is possible to see that women developed a discourse of national interests that through attention to unequal expectations from men and women. The editorial board put the issue of gender inequality forward based on the fact that such righteousness was only expected from women: "Is it logical to expect chastity only from women and leave men free in the matter of prostitution?"[215] The editors considered women's equality a necessary condition for the progress of the nation and commented that arguments about immorality were irrelevant to this aim. The article went on to say that the morality argument served the purposes of preventing women from working outside the home or receiving higher education. A similar argument is found in another article in the same journal. Feride İzzet Selim wrote that many people in Ottoman society believe that if girls learn to write, they will write love letters. Due to the immorality argument, many families hesitate to

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hazırlamazlarsa hepsi hiçtir. Hepsi hiçtir. Bunlar kavi aileler teşkiline vabestedir. Aileleri nasıl mesut ve kavi olarak teşkil edebiliriz?"

211 For discussion of arranged marriages, see Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 67–87.

212 Mükerrem Belkıs, "Muzır Adetler," 49-50. "Eski adet bütün mevcudiyetimizi kemiriyor. Bir gün bizi mahvedecek. Biz onu mahvedelim de ölümden kurtulalım. Vuralım... Vuralım...Hiç Dinlemeyelim... Vuralım... Yıkılsın..."

213 Kadınlar Dünyası, "Ahlak- Hürriyet-i Mesai," 2.

214 Ibid. "Fakat ahlak yalnız iffet değildir. Yalnız iffetle bir memleket kurtarılmaz."

215 Ibid. "iffeti yalnız kadından istemek, erkekleri fuhuşta hür ve serbest bırakmak ne mantıktır?"

send their daughters to school.[216] Aziz Haydar put the question of unequal expectations from different sexes in the title of her article: "Why Is It Only Women Who Need To Be Corrected?"[217] After listing common views of how a woman "must be," including the condition of being "morally upright," she asked whether "these conditions are not necessary for men" and whether "men are – as they assume themselves – perfect."[218] Indeed, the double standard of morality constituted a major point in morality discussions among women writers.

Nezihe Hamdi, an author in *Kadınlar Dünyası*, wrote an article in September 1914 titled "Moral Anxieties" in which she questioned the double standard in morality discourses.[219] In her article, she underlined how the morality argument was instrumentalized to create an obstacle to women's participation in social life. She defined this argument as a weapon (*silah*) of those men who argued that women's participation in social life would harm their position in the family and led them to search for pleasures other than domestic family life which result in the dissolution of the family. According to her, this rationale was wrong. She argued that there were three reasons for the separation of the spouses: instinctive reasons (*garizî sebebler*), spiritual and aesthetic reasons (*ruhî ve bedîî sebebler*), and financial reasons (*iktisadî sebebler*).[220] She asserted that the real moral anxiety should be concerned about these problems to prevent the institution of family from being dissolved. To establish a balance among the spouses within the family, moral anxieties should not be an obstacle to couples getting to know each other before marriage in a natural environment – that is to say in public space. She not only opposed segregation before marriage but was also against arranged meetings before marriage. Once women began participating in social life, matrimonial candidates would find

216 Feride İzzet Selim, "Kadınlarımızda Lüzum-u Tahsil", 4-5.

217 Aziz Haydar, "Yalnız Kadınlar mı Islaha Muhtaç?" *Kadınlık*, No: 7, 30 Nisan 1914, 4-5, quoted in Demirdirek, *Osmanlı Kadınlarının Hayat Hakkı Arayışının Bir Hikayesi*, 55–56.

218 Ibid. "Şu kadınlar için elzem olan şeylerden hiçbiri erkeğe lazım değil mi?... Acaba erkekler zannettikleri gibi lâ-yuhtî midirler?"

219 Nezihe Hamdi, "Ahlaki Endişeler", 2-3.

220 Ibid.

each other in the natural course of daily life.[221] Moral anxieties, for her, were derived from traditional marriage formation practices, and the solution to this problem was to enable women to participate in social life. Defining these moral standards as male morality and a male mentality (*erkek ahlâk ve zihniyeti*), she strikingly concluded her article with a sarcastic comment on the inequality inherent in the morality argument:

> We would like to invite those who defend the exclusion of women from social life in the name of moral anxieties to a test that will quell their worries. For centuries, women have lived a secret, enslaved life for the sake of this fictitious anxiety. Nevertheless, people today know through many examples that this segregation has been useless. Therefore, is it not possible to apply the same practices to men, as well? Please, can we ask them to not participate in social life and to leave social institutions to the administration of women for a few centuries? Is it not necessary to enforce women's morality [on men] and turn the sharp side of the knife towards the men?[222]

In another journal, *Seyyale* (of which only one issue published, on June 4, 1914), an article signed with the author's initials appeared discussing the "unreasonable" aspects of "immorality" arguments. The author opposed the widespread idea of what she formulated as: "We [Ottomans] can never get used to the European lifestyle because we have something called manners (*âdâb*) about which Europeans have no idea."[223] She questioned the hypocrisy of "immorality" arguments. Initially, she began with explaining the understanding of entertainment that is generally labeled as "sin" by conservatives. For instance, she asserted that even though they claim theatergoing is a sin, members of the ulema, wearing their clerical clothes, unhesitatingly visit "the ugly imitation" of "European" theaters.[224] She asked why members of the ulema

221 Ibid.

222 Ibid. See Appendix A, Quotation 9.

223 C.S., "Âdâb-ı Umûmîye", 11-13.

224 Ibid. "[b]izim eğlenceye şiddetle düşman olduğumuza rağmen gayet çirkin tiyatro taklidleri bizde de türedi .Hatta sarıklılarımız bile kıyafet-i ilmiyeleri ile oralara gitmekte beis görmediler."

visit these ugly places while opposing the idea of civilized entertainment. Second, mixed entertainment vanues in Europe were regarded as immoral by the Ottoman public; however, the same public did not regard it as immoral when observed among Ottoman non-Muslims and even between a Muslim man and a non-Muslim woman! Therefore, the immorality argument was only valid for Muslim women. She concluded that "it is pointless to distinguish between Muslim morals and universal morals and to separate Muslims from other nations as such."[225]

As a matter of fact, feminism came to be associated with immorality by some conservative writers, as discussed in this study. They often considered feminism to be a threat to the extant social order that envisaged the control of women in the family. Women's acquisition of equal legal rights, according to this line of thought, would further contribute to moral decline in society. Feride Nihal wrote an article in *Kadınlar Dünyası* to answer these claims. She questioned the rationale of this argument: "I wonder what kind of immorality might emerge by granting women rights? My God! In order to agree with this argument, one would need to be shorn of one's reason and sense."[226]

Happiness was a key word for women writers and their projects for an ideal life. Accordingly, equality brought happiness to the family, and happiness was only possible with a spiritual understanding that emphasized the nonmaterial sides of life and morality in particular. Mükerrem Belkıs also complained that feminism was misunderstood from the perspective of morality. She argued that feminism had no intent to destroy morality or the family. "On the contrary," she wrote, "feminism is a way to realize a better happiness by observing the principles of morality."[227] For her, feminism has the same

225 Ibid. "Âdâb-ı İslâmiyeyi âdâb-ı umûmiyeden tefrik etmeye kalkışmak, müslümanları milel saireden ayırmağa çalışmak beyhûde zahmettir."

226 Feride Nihal, "Hukuk-u Nisvan," 12. "Acaba kadınların hukukunu iade etmek, ne gibi ahlaksızlığa muceb olabilir? Yarab! Buna cevab-ı müsbet verebilmek için her türlü muhakemeden, her türlü histen mahrum olmak lazımdır."

227 Mükerrem Belkıs, "Kız Mekteplerinde Ahlak ve Terbiye-yi Ahlakiye," 2-4. "Bilakis, feminizm ahlâk esaslarına ibtinâ ederek daha iyi bir sa'adetin idrakını temin eden bir yoldur."

purpose as the principles of morality: to guarantee happiness for the people. Both feminism and morality advise people to do good and avoid the bad.

In her article on the understanding of feminism among the Ottoman-Turkish women writers, Elif Mahir Metinsoy argues that despite their demands regarding women's civil and social rights, some of these women writers were reproducing patriarchal lines of thought, particularly after the war.[228] She asserted that "Turkish Muslim women's ostensible emphasis on nationalist and moral values overshadowed their agency in the women's movement and their active participation in social life."[229] Parallel to this argument, moral decadence anxiety was present among men writers of women journals, as well. For instance, Macit Şevket wrote an article in *Bilgi Yurdu* titled "Women and Morality" in which he used a metaphor to describe the need for happiness – that is to say, morality – in addition to knowledge: "Human intelligence is a source of light; it illuminates like the sun, but the sun has another duty, which is to heat. Human beings are in need of heat as much as light."[230] Therefore, he argued that scientific education and morality had to be combined to work together just like the sun. Halide Nusret Kazimi, a woman author in *Genç Kadın* who also published a few articles in *Sebilürreşad*, was a defender of Islamic values and practices, particularly ones concerning women's clothing. In one of her articles titled "On Morality: The Problem of Veiling," she described a moment of "shame" in Inas Sultanisi (Girls High School) concerning veiling. Halide Nusret wrote that some foreigner visitors wanted to see the students. Among the six hundred students at least half were adolescents, but "only three were veiled," she complained. She continued, "when I told them it is a mistake to neglect national identity to this degree, they shrugged their shoulders and laughed at me."[231] It should be noted that she wrote this article in 1919 during

228 Mahir Metinsoy, "The Limits of Feminism in Muslim-Turkish Women Writers of the Armistice Period (1918-1923)," 86.

229 Ibid., 104.

230 Macit Şevket, "Ahlak ve Kadın," 53-57. "Zekâ-yı beşer bir menba-yı ziyadır, güneş gibi etrafını aydınlatır; ama güneşin bir de hararet vermek hassası var. İnsan, yalnız aydınlanmak değil, hem de ısınma ihtiyacındadır."

231 Halide Nusret, "Ahlak: Tesettür Mes'elesi," *Genç Kadın*, No. 8, 1919, in İlengiz, *Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı 20. Yıl Özel Yayını Genç Kadın 1919 Ocak-Mayıs (Yeni*

the time of the occupation when anxiety over national identity, or Muslim identity, was heightening. A similar moral anxiety regarding the behaviors of students and graduates of the Girls Schools was expressed by Mükerrem Belkıs who wrote in *Kadınlar Dünyası* in June 1918 that she was disappointed by the "moral laxity" that she observed among educated girls. She complained that Girls' Schools, the only places that could correct the "sick morality of these girls, which they had adopted from their families and previous environments,"[232] lacked moral education. Having witnessed the calamities (*felaketler*) that these girls had experienced, she expressed her resentment of their lack of purpose in life – that they had no idea why they were educated and what was expected of them. They were extremely individualistic; and had neither interest in feminism nor in any other ideal as such. At the end of her article she contended that "the homeland is in a state of social depression."[233]

The "moral attitudes" of girls who were studying at the Girls' Schools were among prominent topics in the popular media. Another article in *Türk Kadını* argued that "many people are talking about the freedom, irreligiousness, thoughtlessness, and immorality of school girls."[234] Despite such warnings, these schoolgirls continued dressing up as if they were going somewhere else and at the end of the day heading out to the parks. While defending the women's right to access education was a prominent subject among Ottoman feminists, they also emphasized the importance of being morally upright.[235]

Harflerle), 110. "Ben 'milliyeti bu kadar unutmak doğru değil' dedikçe onlar gülerek omuz silkiyorlardı."

232 Mükerrem Belkıs, "Kız Mekteplerinde Ahlak ve Ahlak-ı Terbiye," 2-4. "Biz mekteblerden ailenin verdiği sakim âdât ve efkârı, bozulmuş seciyyeyi, muhitin telkin ettiği gayr-i ahlâkî temayülatı düzelterek yeni ve temiz hisler, kanaatler aşılayarak, ve ruhlar üzerinde sanatkar gibi işleyerek heyet-i ictimaiyyeye birer ruh doktoru, hayat doktoru, ahlâk doktoru yetiştirmesini istiyoruz."

233 Ibid. "Memleket, heyet-i ictimaiyye buhran içindedir."

234 "Genç Kızlarımıza Dair," *Türk Kadını*, No. 13, 1918, 203-204, quoted in Türe, "Images of Istanbul Women in the 1920s," 120. "Herkes, kızların serbestliğinden, dinsizliğinden, düşüncesizliğinden, ahlâksızlığından bahsediyorlar."

235 Mahir Metinsoy, "The Limits of Feminism in Muslim-Turkish Women Writers of the Armistice Period (1918-1923)," 96.

Needless to say, I have abbreviated this discussion on women and morality. I presented only patterns of thought that can be observed in the writings of prominent women writers who dealt with morality. How the image of immoral women was transformed into one of morally pure Turkish women in the context of nationalist writings needs further study. Perhaps an instance might give us a clue about this shift in discourses. The harsh critiques targeting women discussed earlier, particularly those in *Sebilürreşad* attracted the attention of "male feminists," as well. Suphi Nuri wrote in 1919 in his newspaper *İleri* that "we [men] are upsetting our women with our critiques of their morality,"[236] and he called on others to respect women and stop morality polemics that target women. It is possible to say that his extortion signified a general trend marking the end of immorality accusations targeting women.

§ 2.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter evaluated several views on morality and moral decline as expressed in wartime journals and juxtaposed them with each other. *İslam Mecmuası*, in line with its aim to further incorporate religious principles into daily life, discussed important aspects of morality from a theological perspective and referred to an emerging understanding of a new morality. The authors of the journal articulated their views on the basis of questioning the authenticity of contemporary Islamic morality. For them, an ideal new morality would not exclude Islam. However, a collectivistic interpretation of religious responsibilities and duties must be combined with the needs of the time.

The second part of the chapter evaluated the moral decline paradigm from the perspective of Islamists through a representative journal, *Sebilürreşad*. One would obviously expect to see the defense of Islam as a main reference for morality in the Islamist literature. However, the complex stories and historical context surrounding discourses of moral decline present a fertile ground to develop a better understanding of the contest over morality. By keeping morality in the realm of religion, *Sebilürreşad*'s writers attempted to build a stronghold against nationalist reform advocates. Using the flexibility

236 Suphi Nuri, "Kadınlarımıza Hürmet," 4.

of the term morality, Islamists rendered a critique of the "new life," a concept coined by nationalists. Discourses on moral decline helped Islamists to regenerate their ideology by claiming that they had been on the right path all along. In a time in which spiritual ideologies were under attack by materialism, the *Sebilürreşad* writers used a moral decline paradigm to reestablish a religious hegemony over lifestyles and public space.

What followed was a section on *Yeni Mecmua*'s stance on moral decline in Ottoman society. The journal reserved many pages for the matter because the authors regarded morality as key for solving many social problems including war profiteering, the participation of women in social life, and the absence of a national education and upbringing policy. Employing the principles of Durkheimian sociology, Gökalp, Sadak, and other authors emphasized that individualistic values and a lack of solidarism were the core problems with respect to morality. Considering moral decline as an outcome of stage of transition, they emphasized the need for change in values and moral codes to adopt this new stage of progress. The new morality had to encompass social harmony and define the duties of individuals to society. As opposed to the defenders of religious morality, *Yeni Mecmua* openly argued that the source of morality could not be religion because religious morality was individualistic. Modern times necessitated the creation of a "new person," and this person had to be equipped with contemporary values.

The last part dealt with the stance of women's journals on moral decline. The responses of women's journals on the relationship between war and moral decline were relatively limited. The war also played a role in these limited responses. Nevertheless, it is important to see how women questioned the unequal nature of immorality arguments that held women accountable for immorality while leaving men aside. On the other hand, women also used decline polemics to open up space for reform. Nevertheless, some articles by women writers clearly expressed concern about moral decline, particularly among schoolgirls.

Morality polemics had wide ramifications and were not mere philosophical activity. The debate not only encompassed the law and legal rights, it also constituted a major issue in the Ottoman political and ideological spectra. What united these ideological discourses was an insistence on an authentic

morality and their critique of the Tanzimat era. Later on, a critique of materialism added to these points in common. Apart from these two points, their analyses of moral decline differed. While *Sebilürreşad* argued for eternal, unchanging religion as the sole source of morality, *Yeni Mecmua* argued that society (or in their case, the nation) was the source of morality. On the other hand, *İslam Mecmuası* argued for basing morality on a redefined religion freed its historical legacy. From the perspective of intellectuals involved in morality polemics, discourses on moral decline served to set out ideological differences. While nationalists defended the need for a social reform involving the improvement of the condition of women in the family, Islamists used a moral decline paradigm to reestablish Islamic moral hegemony over public space. In this respect, a focus on morality was key to wartime political and intellectual discussions when most writers saw an opportunity to shape future society. While some Ottoman Muslim writers further developed this argument within the scope of feminism and advanced the need for social reform to eliminate traditional values that constituted a clear obstacle to women's participation in social life, other shared a general anxiety about moral decline.

3

The Public Morals, Prostitution, and Daily Realities

> *For a long time, the story goes, we supported a Victorian regime, and we continue to be dominated by it even today. Thus the image of the imperial prude is emblazoned on our restrained, mute, and hypocritical sexuality.*
>
> –Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*

This chapter presents an overview of regulatory measures and their limits regarding the protection of public morality on the Ottoman homefront. As shown in the following pages, military and bureaucratic attempts to protect public morality were mainly concentrated on two interrelated perspectives. First, in the course of the war, offenses violating public morality became part of growing national security concerns; and second, wartime rivalries among combatant countries manifested itself in the solidification of so-called cultural oppositions in which moral contestation played a significant role. While the former dimension entailed more practical and administrative concerns, the latter had cultural implications. Keeping these points in mind, this chapter will deal with a range of questions: How did Ottoman authorities define acts against public morality and how did they deal with these offenses? Was there a consensus among military and bureaucratic elites on definitions of

immorality? To what extent did religion play a role in measures pertaining to public morality? How were discourses on moral decline reflected in politics and legislation? Given that morality occupied an important place in public opinion, how did the Ottoman government respond to moral concerns? What were the limits of state power in this sense?

Indeed, state documents from the Turkish Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, particularly those from the catalogues of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs and the police department shed light on these questions. Moreover, the minutes of the Ottoman Parliament include debates regarding the morality concerns of ruling circles, while documents from the Archives of the Turkish General Staff (ATASE) reveal efforts of the military that were crucial for mobilization. Some articles published in Ottoman newspapers also address the "moral battle" of the government. Moving on from the questions above, I address the Ottoman notion of public morality and definitions of offenses against public morality, wartime concerns about national security and its intersection with moral crisis, prostitution and its containment, and daily realities touching on the issue of morality.

3.1.1 *Efforts to Protect Public Morality in Combatant Countries*

Before getting into the details of the Ottoman case, it should be noted that public attention to moral behavior was also observed in other combatant countries. Emphasizing that wartime brought back the "fears of degeneracy" of the late nineteenth century, Grayzel argues that "the behavior of the entire population of belligerent nations was scrutinized during the war, because it became part of the war effort to preserve an idealized society that was worth dying for and to maintain the virility and success of the competing armies."[1] Indeed, during the war, there were many examples illustrating concerns about morality in Britain, Germany, and France, particularly with respect to the moral standards of women and adolescents. For instance, in Britain, it became common belief that young girls "lost their minds" when they encountered men in uniform. The term "khaki fever" was used to describe this "epidemic

1 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 62.

disease" indicating that young women were behaving immodestly and acting "in dangerous ways" when confronted with the military men.[2] Although, "khaki fever" was observed mostly among young British women between the ages of thirteen to sixteen (the age of consent was sixteen) from poor working class families, it was believed that the "disease" threatened the middle class, as well, marking "the First World War as a climactic time of concern about young women's social and sexual behavior."[3] This discourse, indeed, paved the way for the establishment of the Women Patrols Committee and Women Police Service by middle class women to control these young girls in cinemas, dancing halls, and bars and prevent them from having "dangerous" interactions with soldiers.[4] In France, a solidarity campaign that invited French women to become godmothers (*marraines*) of soldiers sparked debates on moral laxity when soldiers started to seek women through such advertisements: "I have no need for socks, but would be very happy to correspond with a young, pretty, affectionate *marraine*."[5] In Germany, Ute Daniel underscores, state policies were especially focused on male adolescents. According to her, this stemmed from the fact that this group was both a resource for the army and a source of labor during the war.[6] Every kind of behavior among adolescents was under police surveillance. "Youth decrees" (*Jugenderlasse*) were issued by municipalities announcing that adolescents were forbidden to smoke in public places, to frequent bars after 9 p.m., and to go to the movies, in addition to an evening curfew.[7] However, the most remarkable measure to control the youth was compulsary saving enforcement which was announced on March 18, 1916, allowing all male and female juveniles, to spend only eighteen marks from their weekly wages and a third of their remaining earnings until they reach the age of eighteen. Employers deposited the rest in bank accounts to which adolescents and their families had access only if they obtained consent from the

2 Woollacott, "'Khaki Fever' and Its Control," 325.

3 Ibid., 325.

4 Ibid., 327-335.

5 Grayzel, "Mothers, Marraines, and Prostitutes," 72.

6 Daniel, *The War from within*, 160.

7 Ibid., 166.

aldermen of their place of residence.[8] It was partly true that there was a rise in crime (especially against property) among young workers, but the main concern was how young workers spent their wartime earnings.[9] In other words, morality was instrumentalized to cut the wages of young workers.

We should take "war babies" scandals – that is to say the illegitimate offspring of soldiers which became a social problem during the war – into account as part of morality debates. Grayzel argues that while such instances contributed to concerns over moral decay, some governments recognized the status of these children in an attempt to decrease the number of illegitimate births and encourage population growth. In Britain, for example, if a woman could prove that a soldier had made a home for her and her children, she could get an allowance from the government. As Grayzel puts it: "War babies, therefore, received their protected status through their paternity and their problematic nature through their maternity."[10] In France, the government allowed soldiers to marry by proxy and legitimized their children, even after their deaths. Eventually, the ratio of illegitimate children fell from 15.9 percent in 1914 to 9.9 percent in 1915 and 1917.[11]

Public attention to the behavior of working women constituted another central issue. The First World War was unique in the history of women's employment and presence in public space. The question of whether war work contributed to the emancipation of women remained a heated topic in the war historiography for decades.[12] However, recent studies on gender relations and war work show that gender roles were maintained in society despite women's participation in war work. Nicole van Os comments on the contemporary war and gender literature: "During the First World War the objective position of women in society indeed changed, but their relative (subjective) position did

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., 162-163.

10 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 66.

11 Ibid.

12 Early accounts emphasized that working during the war played an "emancipatory" role for women without questioning the concept of "emancipation" itself. For instance, see Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 231–239.

not."[13] Women workers were under strict moral control in their work places through gender segregation. Their ways of spending money, their interaction with males, and their attire in public space constituted focuses of interest. For instance, in Britain a perceived change in women attitudes was the fashion of shorter mid-calf skirts and trousers, and going out without the company of chaperons.[14] In some cases, as Laura Lee Downs shows in her work on gender division in metalworking industries during the war, women workers' behavior – including their political demands and engagements – were attributed to their moral weakness, and policemen assumed that "among women, labor militancy (or any aggressively asserted political stance) sprang from unchecked sexuality."[15] Surveillance of women workers became institutionalized in some cases. In Britain, National Union of Women Workers established the League of Decency and Honor in order to watch women worker's moral behavior.[16]

Fighting against prostitution and venereal disease constituted the major interest of belligerent governments in the realm of morality. Unregistered prostitution was an obstacle to the incorporation and mobilization of the homefront. First of all, it eroded the so-called reason for the war as a defense of honor. Secondly, it risked public health as such diseases were spreading both on the homefront and in the army. The new type of clandestine prostitutes was called "amateur girls" in Britain and "secret" or "wild" prostitutes in Germany.[17] As for the Ottoman Empire, Ahmet Rasim called this new kind of prostitution simply "new prostitution" (*fuhş-i cedid*).[18] Belligerent governments cracked down on unregistered and clandestine prostitution. The British government issued many orders to prevent unregulated prostitution, even allowing military authorities to expel prostitutes from specific areas via a regulation called "Defense of the Realm Act." To eliminate the spread of venereal

13 Van Os, *Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism*, 285.

14 Beckett, *Home Front*, 1914-1918, 98.

15 Downs, *Manufacturing Inequality*, 140–141.

16 Thom, *Nice Girls and Rude Girls*, 20.

17 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 70–72.

18 Ahmed Rasim, *Eski Fuhuş Hayatı: Fuhş-i Âtik*, 209–210.

disease among soldiers, prostitutes were kept under surveillance and arbitrarily arrested. The women's supposed ignorance of disease was not an acceptable excuse.[19] In Germany, measures against uncontrolled prostitution – mainly to protect against venereal disease – were strict. Members of the army who were caught carrying a disease had to identify the women who might have transmitted it, and those women were imprisoned. Women who had sex with several men in the span of a month were labeled prostitutes after two warnings, regardless of whether they were paid. The bars in Berlin, where women hostesses were working, were closed. The military doctors were responsible for examining prostitutes for venereal disease.[20]

On the other hand, army-controlled prostitution was tolerated in the areas behind the fronts provided that prostitutes had regular, mandatory medical examinations. French and German military authorities opened and regulated brothels segregated according to military rank along the Western Front. While soldiers among the lower ranks visited cheap houses, officers had access to expensive brothels. The Habsburg military also opened brothels for soldiers. On the other hand, Great Britain, and its dominions, and former colonies forbade such controlled prostitution near the front. While the United States army officially barred soldiers from visiting brothels, officers were tolerant of those who did yet required medical examinations.[21]

Immorality or morality would also become part of war propaganda during the First World War. Combatant countries accused enemies of being immoral, thus justifying their own causes based on an argument of moral superiority and inferiority. For instance, in 1916, rumors that Germany and France promoted bigamy or polygamy because of huge losses on the battlefield created "a horrified reaction" among the public.[22] German soldiers who occupied Belgium were depicted in the British press as horrible and barbaric: "To remember Belgium is to remember the alleged immorality of the German armies and

19 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 71.

20 Ibid., 72.

21 Journey, "Prostitution | International Encyclopedia of the First World War (WW1)."

22 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 67.

to take up arms against them."[23] In German propaganda depictions of the enemy were in line with a gendered aspect of morality. While military newspapers depicted Russian soldiers in East Prussia as rapists, the women of enemy nations were portrayed as unfaithful and of immoral character.[24] "Black shame" propaganda in Germany served to create a negative image of French colonial soldiers by portraying black soldiers raping white women.[25] Moreover, the "immorality" of enemy nations served the purpose of waging a "legitimate" war. For instance, the Habsburg invasion of Serbia during the war was justified with a discourse of the "moral inferiority" of the Serbs.[26] In order to demoralize enemy soldiers, war propaganda also addressed the honor and morality of civilians on the homefront. As discussed in chapter 4, soldiers' families were at the center of such propaganda.



Figure 3.1 Canadian recruitment poster from the First World War. (Archives of Ontario, Online War Poster Collection, Reference Code: C 233-2-4-0-263)

23 Albrinck, "Humanitarians and He-Men," 317.

24 Nelson, "German Comrades-Slavic Whores: Images in the German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War."

25 Koller, "Enemy Images: Race and Gender Stereotypes in the Discussion on Colonial Troops. A Franco-German Comparison, 1914-1923," 142–143.

26 Knezevic, "Prostitutes as a Threat to National Honor in Habsburg-Occupied Serbia during the Great War," 315.

Wartime regulations on the protection of public morality in belligerent countries were mainly focused on uncontrolled prostitution, venereal disease, working women, and the behaviors or habits of adolescents (who were potential future soldiers) and mothers – especially their entertainment habits and educational goals. It is possible to observe an emphasis on national security in the responses to "immoral" acts. On the other hand, morality became part of propaganda rhetoric justifying war aims and underscoring "differences" among rival countries. There were both similar and different dynamics regarding the protection of public morality in the Ottoman case.

3.1.2 *The Ottoman Terminology of Immorality and Peculiarities of the Ottoman Case*

The state documents in the Ottoman Archives employed several expressions to define or condemn immorality: Acts against morality (*ahlâka mugâyir hareketler*), immorality (*ahlâksızlık*), immorality or bad morality (*sûî ahlâk*), and violation of public morality (*ahlâk-ı umûmîyeye hıyanet*). In some cases, the concept of "violating public morality" was used interchangeably with "violating public order" in state documents. In this regard, I argue that Ottoman authorities approached the protection of public morality within the wider framework of maintaining public order and security. This was partly because of the fear that public reaction, such as gatherings or protests against violations of morality, might cause the deterioration of public order. Also, as detailed in the following pages, it was believed that moral corruption brought about a chain reaction of criminality causing further increases in the number of incidents disrupting discipline and order. Together with public order concerns, the cultural atmosphere of war in which morality became part of international rivalry needs to be taken into account. Given that the Ottoman Empire was the only Muslim-majority country in the war, it is possible that further emphasis on authentic Muslim morality was employed to further mark the differences. Therefore, immorality emerged as a social illness constituting a threat not only to public order but also to the prestige of the Ottoman Empire. Other expressions of immorality in state documents illustrate the latter in a more striking fashion: acts against Islamic manners (*âdâb-ı İslâmiyeye mugâyir*), acts against Islamic principles (*hilâf-ı İslâmiyeye mugâyir*), acts against the principles of

Islam and national manners of the Ottomans (*şe'arir-i İslâmiye ve âdâb-ı millîye-yi Osmaniyeye mugâyir olarak*), and acts against the dignity of Islam (*haysiyet-i İslâmiyeye mugâyir*). This emphasis on Islam rather than ethnicity was peculiar to the Ottoman Empire not only because it was the only Muslim-majority country in the war but also because the Ottoman war effort relied on Islam given the declaration of jihad. Thus, immorality was associated with acting against Islamic principles – principles that were crucial to efforts to wage "holy war against the infidels." Eventually, the quest for authentic Muslim identity in a country where official political agenda had yet "to catch up with the West" constituted a great tension for morality. Hence, the points that marked the so-called differences between East and West became main issues in morality discussions.

As shown in this chapter, some political and economic developments in wartime in the Ottoman Empire that contributed, on one hand, to the efforts of the government to take more effective steps to eliminate immorality while at the same time limited those efforts due to the country's financial needs, on the other. For instance, the abolishment of capitulations in 1914 constituted a remarkable moment in the combat of prostitution. Previously, brothels owned by foreigners were subject to the same commercial laws and privileged position as any other foreign enterprise in the empire. This resulted in relative flexibility with respect to the operation of the sex industry within the borders of the empire. At the outbreak of the war, the Ottoman government unilaterally abolished capitulations and thus took control over such houses. The hunt for traffickers of women became part of the Ottoman effort to save the prestige of the empire. Prostitutes and procurers who were foreign passport holders found themselves "enemy aliens" on the Ottoman homefront despite years spent in the empire. Furthermore, their requests for Ottoman citizenship would be denied on the basis of their famed "immorality." The proclamation of martial law and suspension of constitutional rights in those areas where martial law was declared were other dynamics contributing to the protection of morality. Expelling prostitutes or "immoral people" from these areas became a widespread practice in the Ottoman Empire during the war. These operations were conducted in the name of national security and public order.

On the other hand, turning to daily realities, the measures against immorality, immoral acts, and things causing moral decay were limited. Particularly with respect to the control of entertainment venues and regulation of alcohol consumption, there was a tension between the country's financial needs – that is, its need to excise taxes – and maintaining high moral standards. To a degree, frequenting European-style entertainment venues such as theaters and cinemas and habits such as alcohol consumption were associated with moral laxity and regarded as a submission to European culture among conservative circles. The Ottoman government, far from being so radical, approached these vices in a pragmatic way by exacting taxes on pleasure to increase funds for war relief. At the same, state authorities maintained the agenda of protecting public order and eliminating crisis of morality critique for the sake of war propaganda. Public attention to morality, however, was revealed in the moral critiques of war profiteering and conspicuous consumption which established a sharp contrast with the poverty of the masses and the purity of the soldiers on the battlefield.

§ 3.1 Morality and Public Order Under Martial Law

During the First World War, martial law became a tool to protect homefront morality within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. People accused of "immorality" were expelled from martial law territories as they constituted internal threats to public order (*asayiş)* and discipline in the homeland (*inzibat-ı memleket*) and were thus to be kept under control for the sake of national security.[27] Although spatial isolation of prostitution had a long history in the Empire, the emphasis during wartime was different than earlier practices. During the war, I argue that the use of national security discourses to fight prostitution constituted the main distinctive point.

Martial law became part of routine administration in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire. Starting in the Russo-Ottoman War (1877-1878), martial

27 For a detailed assessment of security practices and concepts from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries in the Ottoman Empire, see the articles in the edited work of Lévy, Özbek, and Toumarkine, *Osmanlı'da Asayiş, Suç ve Ceza*.

law proclamations continued during the crises of the constitutional era. Resorting to martial law meant suspending constitutional rights if they conflicted with military measures. Initially to suppress and prevent separatist revolts, especially in the Balkans, martial law became institutionalized as part of mobilization efforts during the First World War.[28]

The Article 113 of the constitution of 1876 defined the conditions for the establishment of military law. Accordingly, in times of upheaval, martial law could be proclaimed in a specific place and articles of the constitution that conflicted with martial law could be suspended. Those who violated the security of the state would be deported or exiled by imperial decree.[29] According to Osman Köksal, the concept of *idare-i örfiyye* originated from the fact that soldiers had been in administrative positions in Ottoman provinces since the classical period. These rulers with a military background were called *ehl-i örf* meaning "men of customary law," in contrast to the "men of religious law" such as *kadı*s.[30] Eventually, military administration became associated with the term *örfî* and became a single term *idare-i örfiyye*. Moreover, the term *divân-ı harb* was coined in the Military Penal Code of 1870 and referred to courts that dealt with cases concerning soldiers.[31] However, with the first proclamation of martial administration, these courts came to be known as *divân-ı harbi örfî* and were distinguished from their predecessor because it had the authority to try civilians. The martial courts could operate only in those places where martial law had been proclaimed.[32] While, under usual circumstances, the constitution precluded the trials in different courts apart from secular (*Nizâmî*) and religious (*Şer'î*) courts, Article 113 became the legal basis for trying civilians in martial courts.[33] As Noemi Levy-Aksu discusses, the proclamation of martial law was an Ottoman version of the "state of siege" and must

28 On the application of martial law in the Balkans, see Zeren, "The Formation of Constitutional Rule: The Politics of Ottomanism between de Jure and de Facto (1908-1913)."

29 Köksal, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sıkıyönetim ile İlgili Mevzuat Üzerine bir Deneme," 157.

30 Köksal, "Tarihsel Süreci İçerisinde Bir Özel Yargı Organı Olarak Dîvân-ı Harb-i Örfîler,(1877–1922)," 16.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., 10.

33 Ibid., 36-37.

be considered in light of encounters between the Islamic legal tradition and contemporaneous European legal developments occurring within the political and social context of the late Ottoman Empire.[34]

For the first time in the Ottoman history, parliament proclaimed martial law in Istanbul on May 24, 1877, amidst the increasing tensions following the Russian occupation of Ardahan during the Russo-Ottoman War.[35] While this event started a tradition of martial law declarations in late Ottoman history, the first institutional framework for military rule followed a few months later, on October 2, 1877, with a decree that constituted the basis for all subsequent martial law declarations. This decree consisted of thirteen articles that ultimately transferred the powers of civil-bureaucratic administration to the administration by the military (*hükûmet-i askeriyye*).[36] The text was called the *İdâre-i Örfiyye Kararnâmesi* which means Martial Administration Decree. Accordingly, the execution of the decree was under the jurisdiction of *divân-ı harb*, the martial courts. The Article 2 of the decree suspended any articles of the constitution that were not compatible with military law. Terms such as "discipline" and "order" constituted major concerns of the text. The decree proclaimed the following types of cases would be tried: a) those who were perpetrators or collaborators of crimes and murders that violated state's internal and external security; b) those who carried out assassinations of government officials on duty; c) those who committed crimes mentioned in item (a) before the declaration of martial law but had not yet been sentenced; d) those who committed ordinary crimes and murders related to crimes and murders under the jurisdiction of martial courts; e) all associations, even if established before the declaration of martial law; and f) those who involved in events that caused the declaration of martial law, even if they reside outside the territory of martial administration.[37]

For our purposes, the most important part is Article 6 of the decree which constituted the legal basis for exiling and deportation.

34 Lévy-Aksu, "An Ottoman Variation on the State of Siege," 20.

35 Köksal, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sıkıyönetim ile İlgili Mevzuat Üzerine Bir Deneme," 169.

36 "İdare-i Örfiye Kararnamesi," *Düstur*, Vol. I. No. 4., 71–72.

37 Ibid.

> The military government shall have power to; first, search residences when necessary, day or night; second, deport and exile those who are convicts or suspects and those who are not officially registered residents from martial law areas to some other place; third, confiscate weapons and munitions of the people; fourth, ban newspapers that publish objectionable content and similarly ban such organizations.[38]

It seems that this article became the measure most applied to the civilian population. The right to search residences openly violated the principle of the constitution safeguarding private property, yet it allowed the Ottoman police to operate raids. Also, it is important to note that even if the crimes described above have been committed before the proclamation of martial law, the case could be transferred to the martial courts.

On August 2, 1914, the day full mobilization was declared in the empire, an imperial decree proclaimed martial law throughout the country.[39] Indeed, martial law was in effect in Istanbul from 1909 to 24 July 1912 when Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha, the grand vizier, abolished martial law. When his government shut down parliament amidst strong disagreement with Unionist deputies, tensions in Istanbul increased. Consequently, martial law was proclaimed again on 17 September.[40] As Stanford Shaw discusses, a proclaimation of martial law in the beginning of the war could not be carried out throughout the country as a whole at once; therefore it was imposed gradually in different provinces.[41] I should also add that throughout the war, both the spatial and legal boundaries of martial courts were matters of negotiation and discussion between civilian and military authorities. However, some parts of the country

38 Ibid. "Hükûmet-i askeriye evvela lüzum görünen eşhâsın leyl-ü nihare ikametgâhlarını taharriye; saniyen şübheli ve sabıkalı güruhundan olub taraf-ı hükümetten ahz-ü girift olunanları idare-i örfiye altına alınan mahalde ikametgahları olmayan eşhas mahal-i ahire tard ve teb'ide; salisen ahalinin esliha ve cephanesini toplamağa; rabian tahdiş-i ezhanı muceb neşriyatta bulunan gazeteleri derhal tatil etmeğe ve her türlü bu cemiyetleri men etmeğe mezundur."

39 Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 172–173.

40 Köksal, "Tarihsel Süreci İçerisinde Bir Özel Yargı Organı Olarak Divan-ı Harb-i Örfiler (1877–1922)," 21.

41 Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, 172–173.

were considered more vulnerable given the circumstances of the mobilization and remained continuously under military administration. Unregistered prostitutes, procurers, and traffickers of women were often sent away from martial law territories to central Anatolia where railway connections were limited and the place was far enough from the battle fronts. Their acts were considered an obstacle to mobilization and national security as official correspondence reveals: "prostitutes are violating local morality and consequently leading the violation of security and degeneration of the country."[42] Strikingly, these people were not tried in the courts, yet based on information that local police or authorities provided to the military, they were exiled under the scope of administrative decisions. This situation calls for a careful analysis of understanding of public order in the late Ottoman era, particularly the period in question. As discussed by Deniz Dölek Sever, ensuring public order on the Ottoman homefront went beyond concerns about preventing crime:

> Since at that time there was a perception of high "internal threat" from the state's point of view, a series of extraordinary measures were put into practice. Groups of people who were not regarded as potentially dangerous during peacetime came to be seen as principal targets for state's control. In this respect, the state made use of harsher punishment, oppression and control mechanisms in the name of the well-being of society. Thus, the state attempted at legitimizing its violence through the maintenance of public order for the sake of "public good."[43]

Therefore, we should consider operations against immorality from the perspective of protecting public order. As shown through some example cases, the use of martial law to fight immorality demonstrates the prevalence of national security concerns.

42 BOA. DH. EUM. ADL. 33/23, 1335 Ş 25. "fahişeler ahlâk-ı mahalliyeyi ifsad ve bi'l-netice asayiş-i memleketi ihlal ve teğiyyide sebeb oldukları…"

43 Dölek Sever, "War and Imperial Capital: Public Order, Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1914-1918," 29.

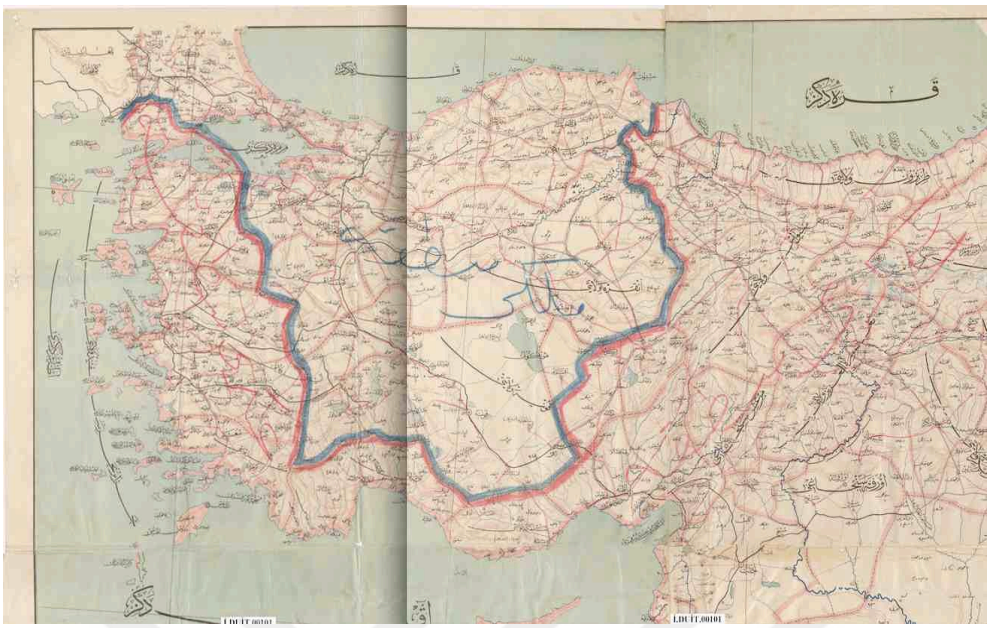


Figure 3.2 Martial law was abolished in districts marked in blue in 1917 (except for Istanbul) (BOA, İ.DUİT. 101/101.)

§ 3.2 Fighting Against Prostitution and Exiling "Immoral" People from Martial Law Territories

As mentioned earlier, fighting against prostitution was a major task to protect public morality on the homefront. In the Ottoman Empire, neither prostitution nor its regulation were peculiar to the war.[44] The novelty of wartime was unregistered prostitution, which came to be conceived as part of daily life.[45]

44 On the history of regulation of prostitution in the Ottoman Empire, see Toprak, "Istanbul'da Fuhuş ve Salgın Hastalıklar"; Özbek, "The Regulation of Prostitution in Beyoğlu (1875–1915)"; Wyers, "*Wicked" Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*. Toprak later published a more detailed version of the aforementioned article in his book; Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 113–153.

45 On the regulation of prostitution during the First World War on the Ottoman homefront, see Oğuz, "Prostitution (Ottoman Empire)," *International Encyclopedia of the First World War (WW1)."*

According to Ahmed Rasim, social circumstances during the First World War paved the way for debauchery in Ottoman society, and prostitution took on new forms to spread among Muslim people.[46] Ahmed Emin asserts that this new form of prostitution was more common among Muslim women in the Ottoman Empire than among non-Muslims.[47] Fears about the spread of this new prostitution were closely related to violations of public morality. Such clandestine prostitution constituted the major reason for the spread of venereal disease among civilians and soldiers.

One remarkable measure of the Ottoman wartime government was the declaration of a new regulation to combat venereal disease. While this regulation showed the extent of the problem, it provided official recognition of the brothels at the same time. In 1915, the government issued a detailed regulation on prostitution called the *Regulation on Preventing of the Spread of Venereal Disease*.[48] Whereas the previous regulation concerning brothels from 1884 was limited to certain areas of Istanbul such as Beyoğlu, the new regulation embraced all of the provinces and defined a legal framework along with detailed directions.[49] As is clear from the title, the purpose was to keep the spread of venereal disease under control. To achieve this task, the regulation subjected brothels to state control, registered prostitutes, and kept them under medical surveillance. A variety of fines and punishments were meted out to those who violated the regulatory measures. However, as Toprak notes, this regulation was liberal and mainly targeting controlled prostitution rather than prohibiting it entirely.[50] A considerable number of articles in the regulation concerned only the elimination of venereal disease and sanitary measures. The morality aspect of prostitution was not explicitly mentioned. Yet the regulation established a classification of prostitution that needs further elaboration because the state defined the limits of prostitution through this regulation.

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46 Ahmed Rasim, *Eski Fuhuş Hayatı: Fuhş-i Âtik*, 209–210.

47 Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 244.

48 *Emraz-ı Zühreviyenin Men'i Sirayetine Dair Neşr Olunan Nizamnameye Mütealik Talimatname*. A shortened Turkish translation of the regulation is available in Alyot, *Türkiye'de Zabıta*, 570–586.

49 Wyers, *"Wicked" Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, 67.

50 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 117.

The 1915 regulation begins by defining a prostitute: "In return for an interest or as habit, those who work to gratify the pleasure of others by having intercourse with more than one man are called prostitutes." The places where two or more women visited or resided for the purpose of prostitution were euphemistically called *public* or *common houses*. The regulation contends that pensions or hotels used for the same purposes, be called public houses, as well. Properties that are rented or owned for the purposes of prostitution or procuration are called meeting points – like French *rendezvous* houses. Furthermore, other relationships out of wedlock with a similar nature to prostitution were considered by the regulation. For instance, *sluts* were considered prostitutes, as well, and were described as those women who wander around for the purposes of engaging in prostitution. They had to reside in brothels and were also to be registered. *Mistresses*, described in the regulation as those who had intercourse with only one man, would be registered. If they continued with it as an occupation, they would be subject to the same regulation as prostitutes.

I propose rethinking the regulation of venereal disease from the aforementioned perspective of national security. As mentioned earlier, the war increased anxieties about morality in many combatant countries and triggered a submission to the collective good regarding so-called dangers or threats to social order. Prostitution in general and venereal disease in particular were among such dangers that had the potential to destroy the collective good – that is to say, the public health of a nation.

On war and regulation of prostitution, Judith Smart provides valuable insights in her work on venereal disease regulations in Australia during the First World War. In her study, she presents a multi-layered approach towards the regulation of prostitution and venereal disease that shows how such regulations of sexuality came to fall in the scope of national defense measures.

> If defence needs and duties of citizenship made the conscription of young men's bodies possible, the same requirements of total war for involvement by the whole society made the control of young women's bodies seem equally necessary because their unconstrained sexuality

> was represented as being dangerous to the fighting strength of the armed forces and to the reproducibility of the nation.[51]

She also takes into account the patrolling of public space with regard to such regulations that concerned women's sexuality. Certain categories of prostitution were introduced in these regulations to clarify the "public woman" from the "private" one, distinguishing the "good" from the "bad." In this sense, there are similarities between the Ottoman regulation concerning venereal disease and the Australian one given their common concern with classifying the woman and thereby containing prostitution.

On the other hand, it should be noted that – whether in great or small number – the very existence of venereal disease among soldiers and civilians indeed contributed to the solidification of anxieties about morality. After all, such diseases had a fame of immorality and were regarded as consequences of immorality. Venereal disease stood between moral and medical discourses.[52] In the context of war, as Chapter 2 discusses, the spread of venereal disease became a tool for propaganda opposing Ottoman claims to represent Muslim civilization. Particularly in this political context, as Seçil Yılmaz argues "syphilis and prostitution became grounds for the political contestation of public morality" for the "national and religious prestige" of the empire.[53] Apart from these, morality discourses were regarded as part of a "mental struggle" against venereal disease due to the lack of adequate medical controls.[54]

On another level, the aims of employment campaigns for women can be evaluated within the broader framework of protecting homefront morality. As discourses on the "promiscuity" of working women began to be voiced aloud, government and semi-governmental organizations explicitly propagandized employment campaigns to protect the honor and morality of Muslim women. For instance, the Society for the Employment of Ottoman Muslim Women explicitly indicated this fact in its mission. "The aim of this society is to find jobs

51 Smart, "Sex, the State and the 'Scarlet Scourge'," 25.

52 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 114–115.

53 Yılmaz, "Love in the Time of Syphilis: Medicine and Sex in the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1922," 280–281.

54 Ibid, 260.

for women and to safeguard them while customizing them to honorable ways of earning money."[55] This organization not only provided jobs but also made marriage by the age of twenty compulsory for women workers. The organization actively took part in arranging marriages, provided a trousseau for prospective brides, and investigated potential grooms with the help of the police department.[56] Moreover, similar institutions encouraged women to become seamstresses or undertake similar activities because these jobs had the advantage of maintaining gender segregation. For instance, in 1914, a garment house called Biçki Yurdu was established to teach poor Muslim women to sew, and Behire Hakkı Hanım, who published sewing books on behalf of this institute, achieved a medal for her efforts.[57] There was consensus among some women intellectuals as well as government and semi-government organizations that dressmaking was the best job to prevent Muslim women from interacting with foreign men.[58]

Instead of focusing on prostitution itself as a wartime phenomenon, discussing how wartime dynamics played a role in the prevention of "immorality" for the sake of the war efforts is significant to grasp a better understanding of the sense of moral crisis and its relation to national security. With reference to correspondences between military and civil authorities and petitions by convicts, I shed light on specific measures against the violation of public

55 *Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti İslamiyesi Nizamnamesi*. A copy of the regulation can be found in BOA. DH.İ.UM.EK. 37/6 (9).

56 If a potential groom was unable to provide a living for the new family, the organization took on the responsibility of finding him a job. The salaries of women who did not agree to the arranged marriages were decreased by 15 percent and women were fired from the organization if there was any further disagreement. Those who married received a 20 percent increase in their daily wages plus an additional 20 percent increase for every child she bore. In order to match couples, the names and backgrounds of candidates were published in newspapers. Spectacular public weddings were promoted to encourage single people to marry. Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 236. See also Toprak, "The Family, Feminism, and the State During the Young Turk Period, 1908-1918"; Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*; Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire*; Oktar, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Kadının Çalışma Yaşamı*.

57 Oktar, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Kadının Çalışma Yaşamı*, 88.

58 Ibid., 80.

morality in martial law areas. Prevention of "immorality" by military measures was a significant phenomenon during the war, contextualizing morality as a national security concern.

During the war, "undesirables" who were considered harmful to the war effort and mobilization were dismissed from martial law territories and relocated to other parts of the empire.[59] The documents indicate that the punishment for morality offenses was usually banishment from martial law territories due to the acts against public morals (*âdâb-ı ahlâk-ı umûmiye mugâyir if'alden dolayı idâre-i örfiye mıntıkası hâricine te'bid*). In the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, much correspondence is about banished prostitutes and procurers sent to Anatolian cities such as Kayseri, Konya, and Kütahya. Some of these people were initially sent to Ankara before a final decision about them was made. Many were free to settle wherever they chose except for places close to railways or battle zones.

In most cases, the governor in the martial law territory was responsible for identifying people who violated public morality. These governors informed the Ministry of the Interior about people engaged in prostitution or procuring, or that harbored such activities. For instance, the governor of Bursa, Ali Osman, sent a list of such women via encrypted telegram and requested the ministry to obtain martial court orders to banish them to a "proper" place.[60] Therefore, the process began with local civil authorities, was then passed to the Ministry of the Interior, and lastly approved by the courts martial.

Since finding a means of livelihood for people who had been banished was a prominent problem, archival documents on such cases are abundant. Petitions written by banished people who seeking a livelihood enable us to follow their stories. Through these stories, it is also possible to see whether the "ostracism" of immorality went beyond the limits of the military measures and

59 As discussed by Deniz Dölek Sever, during the war, the Ottoman government issued measures to control civilian travel on the home front. Travel permits were re-introduced and new security units were established to control people's movement. "Undesirables" such as vagabonds, beggars, and idlers – most of which were poor people – were sent away from Istanbul as they were regarded as the "usual suspects." See Dölek Sever, "War and Imperial Capital: Public Order, Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1914-1918," 152–206.

60 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 477/72 1331 H 14 (27 Haziran 1915).

became a social phenomenon. How did these people make a living in exile? How did local authorities approach them?

In most cases exiled people had many difficulties in the places where they were sent. They were living like fugitives, traveling from one place to another, had neither jobs nor the skills to get a job, and carried a history of past "immorality." Keeping up bad old habits was not a wise choice, but in many instances that was the case. For example, Zeyneb bint-i Ibrahim was a woman residing in Istanbul. Together with her companion, Süreyya, she was banned from the martial law territory upon a decision of the military government (*hükümet-i askeriyye)* for the offense of operating brothel without a license. The court martial decided to imprison them for twenty-five days for this offense.[61] However, after they released from prison, they kept on "breaking the peace" according to the documents. Eventually, the military government banished them from Istanbul to Ankara on February 22, 1916. A document dated May 17, 1916, indicates that the two women were in Bilecik (a city on the border of Hüdâvendigar province). Local authorities kept them there since they had neither money nor any allowance to continue to Ankara.[62] On March 29, 1917, the local governor of Kütahya sent a letter to the Ministry of the Interior, indicating that Zeyneb was sent to Ankara upon a martial court order, but she ran away from Ankara and went to Kütahya.[63] The governor told the ministry that Zeyneb had no relatives, neither money nor someone to send her stipends, and she had a tendency for "inappropriate behavior." He asked if it was possible for the ministry to pay her a daily stipend. However, the Ministry of the Interior refused the request and informed the governor that people deported by the martial courts were allowed to travel to other districts (apart from military law territories) to make a living. Therefore, Zeyneb was free to stay in Kütahya. Paying stipends for such people was not possible; the ministry advised that in order to provide her with a living, the district should employ her in a proper job.

61 DH.EUM.ADL. 21/35 1334 N 08 (9 July 1916).

62 Ibid.

63 DH. EUM. 6. ŞB. 54/59 1335 C 16 (10 March 1917).

In some cases, local governors took the initiative to provide the daily sustenance (a bread) for banished prostitutes. On December 26, 1915, the governor of Konya informed the Ministry of the Interior that some sixteen women were "encouraging prostitution among youngsters by engaging in illicit relationships and thus violating the order and discipline in the homeland."[64] The court martial in Konya decided to banish them as a punishment to encourage self-rehabilitation (*ıslah-ı nefs)*. Execution of the decision took three months, and these sixteen women were exiled to different parts of the city. Later on, documents in the same folder indicate that six of these women were banished to the town of Bozkır without even sufficient money to buy bread. The local governor of Bozkır said that the municipality had spent 600 *kuruş* to buy daily bread for these women over fifty days. Eventually, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs agreed to reimburse this amount from its discretionary fund *(tahsisât-ı mestûre)*.

Many prostitutes and procurers were banished from Istanbul to Kayseri by court martial orders. As the battle zones broadened in the course of the war, the scope of the martial law widened accordingly. On March 7, 1917, the local governor of Niğde sent a letter to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs expressing his opinions on fighting prostitution and protecting morality which is worth quoting here.

> From Kayseri province and from others, as well, certain prostitutes were banished to Niğde on the basis that they were violating public morality and thus upsetting public order. This practice of banishment will not have a positive effect on the improvement of morality. It is certain that eight-tenths of these women engage in prostitution due to hunger. Therefore, instead of banishing them, they should be provided with employment in workshops for a while until it is obvious that they will avoid such misbehavior. However, without such measures in place, it is enough to notify a policeman to exile these women from one place to another. Who will assure that these women won't break the peace

64 "Münâsebet-i gayr-i meşrâda bulunarak birtakım gençleri fuhşiyata tahrik ve bu sebeple asayiş ve inzibât-ı memleketi ihlal etmelerinden dolayı" DH.EUM.ADL. 18/8 1334 C 12 (26 December 1915).

> wherever they go? It is obviously more efficient for local authorities to attempt to discipline these women. Especially those with property or any ties to a place should be encouraged to stay there. Another option, if it is not possible to employ women in jobs offered by the municipality or the local administration, is to keep them under the protection of their parents or wardens. Therefore, it is requested that this situation come to an end through the orders of the ministry.[65]

As a matter of fact, officials in the Ministry were astonished to hear that a provincial governor had been issuing banishments without the approval of the military. A note by Aziz Bey of the ministry was attached to this letter questioning why civilian authorities undertook such measures without court martial decisions.[66]

The Ministry of the Interior contacted the Kayseri governor about this issue. The governor replied that two women who were had been exiled to Kayseri settled near Sivas (which was part of Kayseri province), but the place they settled was in close proximity to the battlefront. The Third Army decided to relocate prostitutes further to Niğde. Another woman who continued living off prostitution was exiled to Niğde upon the approval of the head of the Recruiting Office of Fifteenth Division (*On Beşinci Fırka Ahz-ı Asker Kalemi Reisi*).[67]

Providing a livelihood was even more difficult for foreigners who had no economic means other than procuring or prostitution. According to the General Directorate of Police (*Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyeti*), two Russian citizens, Fişel [*sic*] and his wife Anna, were banished from Istanbul since they were "wandering in Istanbul" without property or wealth and were engaging in procuring (*muhabbet dellallığı*). On December 21, 1914, the governor of Ankara wrote to the ministry that these two Russian citizens had been temporarily sent to Ankara to be resettled in a place "far from railways and without

65 DH.EUM.ADL. 33/23 1335 Ş 25 (16 June 1917). For the original text, see Appendix B, Quotation 1.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

administrative difficulties."[68] They had no wealth or skills to find a job. They spoke Russian, German and a bit of Arabic. The governor said there was neither a position in which to employ them nor a place to which to send them where they could earn a living. Eventually, he asked for a way to provide a livelihood for this couple.[69] Both the directorate and the ministry agreed in their correspondence that the local municipality had to deal with the subsistence of such people. The governor of Ankara replied, indicating with reference to the local municipal assembly reports that the municipality had used up its entire budget allocated for such cases and therefore needed additional funds. Upon this answer, the General Directorate of Police asked the grand vizierate for special permission to provide a stipend for these cases from the war subsidy.[70]

In order to make a living, some deported people asked the police for permission to travel to other districts. Some documents demonstrate that initially local police departments and governors did not allow them to travel to other cities and kept them under strict control. Therefore, a general order was declared indicating that these people were free to travel except in military zones.[71] On March 4, 1916, the General Directorate of Police declared this order, to be applied in all the provinces. In the order, it was indicated that traffickers of women, vagrants, and suspects (*maznu-î sûi*) were banished from Istanbul (a martial law administration area) to other cities. The directorate pointed out that due to constant complaints from these people, it was clear that local authorities were not even allowing them to travel to other parts of the empire where the military law had not been established. The directorate stated that these people were free to travel anywhere to make a living except for martial law areas and especially not Istanbul.[72]

68 "şimendifer güzergâhı olmayan ve mahzûr-u idârisi bulunmayan." DH. EUM. 5. Şb. 9/26 1333 Ra 29 (21 December 1914).

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

71 DH.EUM.SSM 1335 N 25 11/74 (15 July 1917).

72 DH.EUM.ADL. 28/38 1335 Ra 20 (4 March 1916).

Both deported people and their relatives constantly petitioned for pardons from the Ministry of the Interior Affairs. These petitions reveal details about public morality offenses. The case of Marika de Lamiçe [*sic*] is one of these cases. She was accused of procuring Muslim women. The details of her offense were described in the document as "inviting honorable Muslim women over to her house, making them wear hats, and introducing them to foreigners for the purposes of prostitution."[73] Eventually, Marika was banished from Istanbul to Konya on April 16, 1917. After a year, Marika's relatives wrote a petition to the Ministry of the Interior asking for her pardon. They indicated that Marika had written many petitions claiming that she was innocent. Even though she was guilty, they wrote, a year of exile was enough for the mother of two fatherless children, a sixteen-year-old daughter and a twelve-year-old son.[74] Nevertheless, there is no indication in the archives that she received a pardon.

A case from Eskişehir shows that not only courts martial but also local actors took initiatives to combat prostitution in their own cities. The governor, together with other local authorities, arranged marriages for such women and sent some of them to villages to work for the harvest. This story was revealed on account of Ziynet and Aişe, two women from Eskişehir who sent telegrams to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs complaining that they have been banished on false accusations of prostitution in July 1917.[75] The General Directorate of Police asked for an investigation report from the local Eskişehir governor to determine whether the banishment was in accordance with the law. The governor corresponded with a long letter revealing how he dealt with the issue of "public morality" in his district. Based on the fact that prostitution was spreading among honorable families due to poverty, he admitted that they were attempting several preventative measures. First, local authorities investigated whether these women had relatives or properties in Eskişehir. Then they

73 "Marika de Lamiçe'nin muhadderât-ı İslamiye'yi hanesine kabul ve şapka iksa ettirip ecnebilerle icra-yı fuhuşlarına vesatat ettiğinden dolayı karar-ı askeri ile 16 Nisan 1333 tarihinde Konya'ya teb'id edildiği bi't-tahkik anlaşılmış..." DH.EUM. 3. Şb. 25/53 1336 Ş 09 (20 May 1918).

74 Ibid.

75 DH. EUM. 6. Şb. 18/52 1335 L 17 (6 August 1917).

took them for medical examination to see if they had venereal disease. The ones who did not have diseases but had relatives in surrounding villages were sent to those villages where the Council of Elders (*Köy Heyet-i İhtiyarisi*) arranged their marriages to village men. If marriage was not an option, prostitutes were banished to other villages of their relatives or parents where they were made to work for the harvest. According to the governor, because men were absent due to the war agriculture relied almost exclusively on the labor of women, and prostitutes could make a contribution. Some prostitutes were even unable to find such employment, and thus, eventually returned to Eskişehir. When soldiers' relatives engaged in prostitution, the governor reported their names to the Military Recruitment Office. The soldiers' families remained in Eskişehir and were neither "punished" by serving in agriculture nor forced to submit to arranged marriages. Eventually, he denied the allegations of Aişe and Ziynet and wrote that the two women were still in Eskişehir contrary to their claim that they had been banished.[76]

Strikingly, even under conditions of war, Ottoman authorities did not stigmatize these people to the extent of leaving them on their own to starve. The scope of banishment measures was limited to keeping these people out of martial law territories. Rather than evaluating this as a sign of tolerance, I believe it stemmed from fear of further moral decline and further deterioration of public order which could accelerate due to poverty.

As mentioned earlier, although the spatial isolation of prostitution and the banning of immoral people from living in specific places was not a new measure, its implementation during the war was different from previous implementations. It is important to see the new way of dealing with the violation of public morality and unregistered prostitution within the scope of military measures undertaken for the sake of national security. To focus more on the national security and its relation to morality, the issue of foreigners and immorality, which was at the intersection of cultural and political developments regarding public morality and the discourses of moral decline, provides a fruitful ground for inquiry.

76 Ibid.

§ 3.3 "The Immoral Foreigner": The Role of Political and Cultural References in Moral Perceptions

In February 1915, the New York Times published an article titled "Curb White Slavery in Constantinople: Ambassador Morgenthau's Efforts Effectively Seconded by Sultan's Police."[77] The correspondent reported that due to the capitulations "the suppression of the white slave traffic was practically impossible" in the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, traffickers held passports from several countries in order to maintain their commercial privileges. In some cases, some also held Ottoman citizenship in case it became necessary. The Ottoman government abolished capitulations at the outbreak of the war, so "the time for the authorities to attack white slavery in the capital had therefore come." Indeed, while the Ottoman police could take measures against the trafficking of Muslim women, the trafficking of foreign women remained "ambiguous," as Wyers noted.[78] The abolishment of capitulations added another dimension to the public morality debate by giving the Ottoman government the opportunity to increase control over the sex trade. However, the situation was not as simple as keeping prostitution under control. Prostitution and trafficking of women had different implications with regard to cultural and political contests for moral superiority, particularly during the war. In the Ottoman Empire, non-Muslims and foreign passport holders were considered to be the ones who had dominated the sex trade due to commercial privileges granted to foreign citizens and the relatively lesser surveillance of non-Muslim communities. Indeed, this situation was reflected in the cultural and political realm as "foreigners promote moral degeneration."[79] As mentioned in chapter 2, many polemicists indicated that the adoption of European values was the

77 "Curb White Slavery in Constantinople: Ambassador Morgenthau's Efforts Effectively Seconded by the Sultan's Police," *New York Times*, February 27, 1915. Also discussed in Wyers, "*Wicked" Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, 90–91.

78 Ibid., 86.

79 It is possible to observe this discourse in various sources including journal articles and literary works. For instance, an article titled "The Issue of Morality" in Sebilürreşad argued that immorality was "instilled into the Muslim nation by foreign hands." See "Memleketimizde Ahlak Mes'elesi," 404-406.

source of moral decline in the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, this was not a new perception. Syphilis was called *frengi* in the Ottoman Empire, implying the disease had originated in the West. (The Ottomans used to call Europeans "Frenk".) On the other hand, in France the disease was called the "disease of Naples," while Italians called it the "French disease."[80] During the First World War, the increasingly nationalist tone of propaganda contributed to the rise of anti-foreigner sentiments in morality discourses. In Turkish literary works, it is possible to observe that moral degeneration was attributed to foreigners or non-Muslims, especially during the war and the occupation that followed it. Yakup Kadri's *Sodom ve Gomore* is a great example of a work in which Istanbul under occupation is presented as a city "drowned in moral and spiritual corruption" in contrast to "pure and moral" Anatolia and the Anatolian Turks.[81]

Irvin Cemil Schick argues that despite the existence of brothels in Kadıköy and Üsküdar owned by the Muslims and the fact that a wide spectrum of ethno-religious groups were involved in the sex trade, proponents of Turkish nationalism accused non-Muslim elements of the Ottoman society of being the owners of the sex business.[82] He states that public health was not the real agenda behind attacks on prostitution; rather, it was political and aimed at

80 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm* (1908-1935), 115. Frith summarizes what people from different countries called syphilis: "Syphilis had a variety of names, usually people naming it after an enemy or a country they thought responsible for it. The French called it the 'Neapolitan disease', the 'disease of Naples' or the 'Spanish disease', and later grande verole or grosse verole, the 'great pox', the English and Italians called it the 'French disease', the 'Gallic disease', the 'morbus Gallicus', or the 'French pox', the Germans called it the 'French evil', the Scottish called it the 'grandgore', the Russians called it the 'Polish disease', the Polish and the Persians called it the 'Turkish disease', the Turkish called it the 'Christian disease', the Tahitians called it the 'British disease', in India it was called the 'Portuguese disease', in Japan it was called the 'Chinese pox', and there are some references to it being called the 'Persian fire'," John Frith, "Syphilis – Its Early History and Treatment until Penicillin and the Debate on Its Origins," 49.

81 Karaosmanoğlu, *Sodom ve Gomore* (first edition 1924). For other examples from literary works on the occupation, see Törenek, *Türk Romanında İşgal Istanbul'u*.

82 Schick, "Nationalism Meets the Sex Trade: Istanbul's District of Beyoğlu/Pera During the Early Twentieth Century."

discrediting cosmopolitanism.[83] Arus Yumul poses a similar argument through the story of the marginalization of the Pera quarter where a real cosmopolitan public sphere had emerged in the late Ottoman era. According to him, the cosmopolitan nature of Pera challenged the nationalist ideology of the Early Turkish Republic from a spatial perspective: It was neither "in" nor "out."[84] In her article "Limits of the Imaginable in the Early Turkish Novel: Non-Muslim Prostitutes and Their Ottoman Muslim Clients," Hülya Yıldız evaluates the reasons why particularly non-Muslim women were depicted in Turkish novels as prostitutes. According to her, this representation served as an aesthetic symbol of the "encounter between Ottoman society and the 'Other' that is both inside and outside its boundaries."[85]

Rifat Bali's work sheds light on the assumed role of foreign Jews in prostitution and trafficking of women in *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople: 1854-1922*.[86] Given the geographic position of Istanbul, the city was a major transit for the trafficking of women between the East and West.[87] Some foreign Jews who fled persecution or military service in Russia, Rumania, and Hungary arrived in Istanbul and established a trafficking network. These traffickers even had their own synagogue, *Or Hadash*, since people engaged in this business were not allowed to enter the main Ashkenazi synagogue. Bertha Pappenheim, a leading feminist figure who combatted the trafficking of women and founded Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women, came to the Ottoman Empire to observe the participation of Jews in prostitutions network and established a foundation to prevent it. She was shocked by the very existence of traffickers' synagogue, and stated her opinions in a letter sent to a friend during her 1911 tour of the Ottoman Jewish enclaves.

> Here among the Jews [is] a complete lack of ability to understand that this trade in humans as something dishonorable, a moral defect that in any case derives from living together with the Turks, or – what

83 Ibid., 5.

84 Yumul, "'A Prostitute Lodging in the Bosom of Turkishness,'" 66.

85 Yıldız, "Limits of the Imaginable in the Early Turkish Novel," 540.

86 Bali, *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople, 1854-1922*.

87 Ibid., 12-14.

> appears to me more probable – a hereditary mindset among the oriental Jews. The "sexuality" here has not given rise to any moral outrage.[88]

The attitude towards the Orient and the association of the Orient with moral laxity was the other side of the coin. In Edward Said's formulation of Orientalism, sexuality constituted a major departing point. He drew attention to the persistent association of sexuality with the Orient by European novelists such as Flaubert.[89] Therefore, for both sides, immoral was the "other." For instance, Allied propaganda presented the Orient as the greedy consumer of European females – that is to say, "white women" – and contrasted the Orient with the superior morality of the West.[90] Not surprisingly, this became a propaganda tool against the Ottomans during the First World War.[91] Malte Fuhrmann discusses this point in anti-prostitution campaigns in his article "'Western Perversions' at the Threshold of Felicity: The European Prostitutes of Galata-Pera (1870–1915)" and emphasized how gender, imperialism, and nationalism played a role in the fight against or tolerance of the trafficking of women. He argues that the issue of controlling sexuality became part of a broader political debate "in the context of colonial and semi-colonial struggles for hegemony."[92] Prostitutes and their nationalities had symbolic meanings that implied the moral and thus political inferiority of the country from which came. "The subjugation of women's sexuality metaphorically represented the subjugation of their country," writes Fuhrmann on how national profiles of prostitutes and

88 Pappenheim, *Sisyphus-Arbeit Reisebriefe aus den Jahren 1911 und 1912*, Leipzig: Linder, 1924, 50, quoted in: Bali, *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople, 1854-1922*, 36.

89 "In all of his novels Flaubert associates the Orient with the escapism of sexual fantasy. Emma Bavaey and Frederic Moreau pine for what in their drab (or harried) bourgeois lives they do not have, and what they realize they want comes easily to their daydreams packed inside Oriental cliches: harems, princesses, princes, slaves, veils, dancing girls and boys, sherbets, ointments, and so on. The repertoire is familiar, not so much because it reminds us of Flaubert's own voyages in and obsession with the Orient, but because, once again, the association is clearly made between the Orient and the freedom of licentious sex," Said, *Orientalism*, 190.

90 On the reproduction of sexual and cultural differences within the discourse of Orientalism, see Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*.

91 Wyers, "'*Wicked' Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, 94.

92 Fuhrmann, "'Western Perversions' at the Threshold of Felicity," 164.

traffickers led generalizations about the immorality of certain nations and jeopardized the political and social interests of those nations.[93] Indeed, Ottoman authorities were "willing to turn a blind eye or even be protective of traffickers' and pimps' networks in their capital because of their corrosive effects on European supremacy."[94]

To a degree, Ottoman authorities did approach non-Muslim immorality differently than Muslim immorality. Samuel Cohen, for example, illustrated this point in an enquiry made for the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women in June 1914.

> The Turks do not shrink from making use of the public brothels, although they are very strict about their own women folk not leading immoral lives. The answer generally given by them when asked why the present state of affairs is permitted, is that the matter does not concern them so long as the inmates of the brothels do not belong to the Mohammedan faith. With regard to the prostitutes of other faiths, they do not see why they should interfere. Their argument is that if other nations and other religions permit women to act as prostitutes in their own country, why should they be prohibited from doing so in Turkey.[95]

Assuming that a certain society lacked moral values was part of a political contest that created the "other" and put a distance between a certain identity

93 Ibid., 164-165.

94 Ibid., 168.

95 Quoted in Bali, *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople, 1854-1922*, 78. Some archival documents support the argument regarding the particular attention that Ottoman authorities paid to preventing Muslim women from engaging in prostitution. There is a case demonstrating that even Talat Paşa was involved in to rescue a daughter of Paşa who was to be sent to her ill-reputed mother in Ankara. Talat Paşa intervened to save this girl from her mother and offered her a job in a workshop, BOA. DH. EUM.ADL. 6/8 14 Haz 1331 (27 June 1915). Furthermore, it seems that policemen paid special attention when a Muslim woman began working in the Beyoğlu brothels. When the police heard that a certain Fatma, the daughter of a deceased colonel, was living in a brothel in Beyoğlu, officers stormed the brothel and took everybody into custody to investigate who had encouraged her to prostitute herself. See BOA. DH.EUM.EMN 74/6 1332 C 27 (23 April 1914).

and the authentic one. This became particularly important in the context of First World War when national rivalries among combatant countries intensified.

Apart from ideological and cultural background that played a role in shaping perspectives on morality and prostitution, it is also true that before the abolition of capitulations, Ottoman authorities could not take control over the brothels and prostitutes for practical reasons. For instance, in 1876 the Ottoman Ministry of Justice loaded two ships with foreign prostitutes for deportation; however, European consuls intervened and forced the Ottoman government to abandon the operation.[96] In several previous confrontations prior to the war, the Great Powers defended the rights of their citizens in order not to risk their commercial privileges for some prostitutes.[97] In March 1914, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent requests to the French, Russian, Italian, and Austro-Hungarian embassies requesting special permission to conduct sanitary inspections of brothels run by citizens of their countries. The embassies responded positively on the conditions that they are informed of the addresses of these houses and that doctors alone be in charge of the inspections.[98] It was a diplomatic matter to visit non-Ottoman commercial offices or residences. In the same dossier, a document written by the Legal Counselor of the Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âlî Hukuk Müşaviri*) stated that because "most clandestine prostitutes were foreigners who resided in their own residences instead of in brothels," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needed to ask for the cooperation of foreign embassies to regulate and inspect clandestine prostitution.[99] Legal

96 Wyers, *"Wicked" Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, 87.

97 Bertha Pappenheim's words are worth quoting here: "The German Embassy has set itself against my desire to either undermine or [somehow] break through the Capitulatory rights [of Europeans in the Ottoman Empire]! They deem it unnecessary [to do so simply] on behalf of the few German girls who are in circulation. As for the Greek, Catholic and Jewish [girls], they aren't worth the effort to move heaven and earth!!?" Pappenheim, *Sisyphus-Arbeit Reisebriefe aus den Jahren 1911 und 1912*, Leipzig: Verlag Paul E. Linder, 1924, 58-60, quoted in: Bali, *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople, 1854-1922*, 40.

98 BOA. HR. İD. 1585/41 09 June 1914.

99 "Ötekine berikine sarkıntılık eden – kendi ikametgâhı olan alüfte kadınların ekserisi ecnebidir." Ibid.

concessions to non-Muslims made them more resistant to the Ottoman law regarding control over the sex industry.[100]

The setting for harsher measures vis-à-vis immorality was multi-layered. While the abolishment of capitulations lifted legal restrictions on "sex business," the proclamation of martial law suspended constitutional rights, precisely those regarding the protection of private property. Before martial law, local authorities from provinces and Istanbul constantly complained that constitutional rights prevented them from undertaking stricter measures to stop prostitution. As the governor of Hüdavendigâr province put it in 1910, "despite government decrees to prevent prostitution, constitutional rights that prohibit the violation of private property discourages further investigations."[101]

A discourse on human rights accompanied the diplomatic and political rivalries among combatant countries and various actors with respect to eliminating the problem of the trafficking of women. Morality-related arguments, most of which concerned prostitution and the international network that fed it, were of great importance from the standpoint of the national and international prestige of the states concerned. For instance, the American ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau (1856-1946) actively and proudly took part in preventing the trafficking of women in Istanbul during his service. In his memoirs, he indicated that he had advised Bedri Bey, the Ottoman Chief of Police, to eliminate the white women trade in Istanbul when Bedri Bey had asked "whether he could not do something that would justify me portraying him in a more favourable light" when he heard that Morgenthau was planning to write a book.[102] Accordingly, he used this opportunity as head of a committee established to fight against trafficking of women. In order to save his reputation by becoming the person to save the city from this "disgrace," Bedri Bey, thus conducted an effective operation: "In a few days every white-slave trader in Constantinople was scurrying for safety; most were arrested, a few

100 Wyers, "*Wicked" Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, 88.

101 "bir emr-ü sami var ise de Kânûn-i Esâsî ile temin olunan mesâkinin tedehhinden mâsuniyeti esasına göre bu emrin halen tazyikinde tereddüd edilmekde olduğundan..." BOA. DH.İD. 89-1 1329 Ra 7 (1 April 1911).

102 Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 324.

made their escape; such as were foreigners, after serving terms in jail, were expelled from the country."[103] Morgenthau subsequently made the *New York Times* to report on the event to honor Bedri Bey for his achievement, and after this he established a good friendship with him.

Archival documents shed light on the banishment and deportation of alleged traffickers of women. A six-page notebook in the archives shows some details about the banishment and deportation of traffickers and prostitutes.[104] The notebook contains a list of 167 people of which 151 were deported, and eleven were exiled to Sivas, and five were sent to Kayseri. This notebook was prepared by the Istanbul Police Directorate for the Ministry of the Interior Affairs. It provides names, father's names, citizenships, places of residence, short indications of crimes (all of which were trafficking of white women), and dates of deportation. Among these people were Russian, French, Austrian, Romanian, and Ottoman citizens who mostly resided in Galata. For some, no date of banishment was indicated; instead, it was reported that they were "banished with the first group." In other cases, the dates were January 31, and February 1, 1915. Following these deportations, on February 3, 1915, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs introduced a general decree regarding public morality offenses and measures to be taken. Unfortunately, this decree was not among the archival documents even though widely referred widely to in the correspondences.

Owing to petitions written by the alleged traffickers of women, we can follow their time in exile. Madam Yaş Şodaç [*sic*] and Ernestiya [*sic*] were sent to Kayseri on February 1, 1915, along with many people who were accused of the same crime. Their names were among those on the six-pages list of the first round of deportation. These two women claimed they were victims of a slander. Indicating that there was no rabbi in Kayseri with whom they could perform their religious duties, they asked to go back Istanbul or at least to be resettled in Konya. They added that they were suffering extreme misery and poverty – *sefalet ve perişaninin son noktasındayız*. However, according to the General Directorate of Police, these women violated security and were

103 Ibid., 325.

104 BOA. DH.EUM.ADL 12/16 1334 M 13 (21 November 1915).

constantly acting suspiciously – *ahvâl ve harekâtının selb-i emniyet ve dâimi şübhe bulunmağla* – and since they had engaged in an international crime, that is to say, trafficking of women, they could not be pardoned.[105]

Among archival documents regarding banishments, Dina Kalazar's case is the most detailed.[106] Her case is revealed through the correspondence between the General Directorate of Police and the Ministry of the Interior Affairs in addition to petitions. She was known as "Sarı Madam," and was famous for owning five brothels in Galata. Apparently, she was a central figure in international trafficking of women. She was banished from Istanbul to Kayseri on January 31, 1915, for the offense of trafficking of white women. Her offense was indicated in the documents as "*ahlâk-ı umûmiyeye hıyânet*" which means violation of public morality. The police department indicated that she had been involved in trafficking for many years together with her husband, Marko. Eventually, Marko was banished to Sivas and Dina was sent to Kayseri. Dina wrote many petitions some of which were collectively signed by other female companions in Kayseri. They began sending petitions to the Kayseri governor and the ministry as soon as they were settled there. They tried many ways to be relocated elsewhere. First Dina signed a petition complaining her lack of livelihood. Later she signed a collective one claiming that there was no rabbi in Kayseri with whom they could perform their religious duties. And she kept on writing in the end claiming that the climate of Kayseri did not agree with her. Eventually, she received permission to travel to Eskişehir and settle there.

Dina's case also reveals facts related to the banishment process and life in exile. For instance, the local governor of Kayseri indicated in one correspondence that these women made their livings for a while by selling their belongings. Dina, Agtiana Gala Naka [*sic*], Sultana, and Viktorya wrote a petition on May 25, 1915.

> Your servants it's been a while since [we] opened brothels. We are Ottoman citizens and we belong to the Jewish community. When martial

105 BOA. DH.EUM. 5. Şb. 27/46 1334 L 06 (6 August 1916).

106 Bali mentions a certain Dina Coshter, who was among the notorious Jewish procurers engaged in the trafficking of women. She might be the same Dina I mention in this case. See Bali, *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople, 1854-1922*, 56.

> law was proclaimed, they deported us from Istanbul and banished us to Kayseri. We are not men; we have no profession to make a living. We cannot meet even our basic needs in Kayseri. It is known that we never had problems in brothels that we ran. We cannot adapt to the climate in Kayseri, our children are in Dersaadet, and our husbands are in Sivas – all of us are in misery. It has been five months now; only God and we know how we have suffered. If we are not – and never will be – allowed to work in this profession, we are ready to sign documents guaranteeing that we will never run brothels.[107]

Another petition in the same folder was signed by Sultana, Viktorya and Mari İzdaç [*sic*]. They claimed that one of them had a son and he was a soldier in the Ottoman army. They wrote that they served important households in Istanbul, and they had been punished while the real owners of the brothels were still in Istanbul. Also, Dina's sister Fiska Yenirman [*sic*] wrote a petition on March 21, 1916, to the General Directorate of Police. After briefly summarizing the events, Fiska asserted that her sister possessed wealth; she would live an honorable life in Dersaadet if she were allowed to return. However, the answer was unfavorable; the directorate emphasized that trafficking of women could not be pardoned.[108]

After two years of banishment, on January 1, 1917, Dina wrote another petition in which she indicated that upon her own request she had moved to Ankara (Eskişehir) from Kayseri with special permission. Her husband (apparently back to Istanbul) had typhoid fever, and she asked for special permission from the province of Eskişehir to return in order to take care of her husband in Istanbul. As soon as she arrived in Istanbul, police took her into custody and sent her back to Kayseri, the place where she was first banished. She asked the ministry to travel back to Eskişehir saying that she could not make a living in Kayseri. "Two years ago, I was banished to Kayseri due to a trafficking of women offense. However, I could not adapt to the weather there.

107 BOA. DH.EUM.ADL 12/31 1334 M 24 (2 December 1915). For the original text, see Appendix B, Quotation 2.

108 BOA. DH.EUM.5.Şb. 22/47 1334 Ca 28 (2 May 1916).

I asked permission to go to Ankara, and they allowed me to do so. As soon as I heard that my husband had typhoid fever, I went to Dersaadet wit special permission. They said I came without notifying the authorities. They sent me back to Kayseri with my six-year-old child."[109] Eventually, she received permission to go back to Eskişehir.[110]

It is interesting to note that the General Directorate of Police indicated that Dina's punishment was not based on a decision of the court martial. The directorate commented that it was unnecessary to get a court decision for these cases since trafficking of women was an international crime; moreover, the government had announced a preventive measure that such people be banished even without a conviction.[111] This shows that Dina was banished by the directorate. However, she wrote in one petition that she had been banished due to the proclamation of martial law.[112] The most reasonable explanation is that the Ministry of the Interior had established preventive measures at the outbreak of the war and applied them without even referring to the martial order.

Non-Ottoman citizens who were deported or banished due to immorality offenses applied for Ottoman citizenship with the hope of receiving a pardon or guaranteeing their ability to stay within the borders of the empire. However, such applications were declined immediately after reports indicating their "immorality" were sent by the General Directorate of Police to the Ministry of the Interior. Even though a person had not been convicted of a "morality" crime, she or he had no chance of receiving Ottoman citizenship due to "immorality fame." Now, I elaborate on cases of refusals to grant Ottoman citizenship due to "immorality" reports.

109 BOA. DH.EUM.ADL. 49/26 1335 Ra 6 (19 January 1917).

110 BOA. DH.EUM.ADL. 48/13 1335 Ca 30 (24 March 1917).

111 BOA. DH.EUM.ADL. 49/20 1334 Z 25 (23 September 1916).

112 Ibid. "Dersaadet'ten idare-i örfiye ilan olunduğu esnada cariyelerini ? İstanbul'dan kaldırarak Kayseri'ye menfi' gönderildik."

3.3.1 *Morality as a Requirement for the Acquisition of Ottoman Citizenship*

During the First World War, the citizenship status of foreign passport holders in the Ottoman Empire became a matter of interest for several reasons. Especially civilians who held the citizenship of one of the Entente Powers were faced with harsh measures as part of the battle itself. These people had a long history in the empire not only as visitors, businessmen, or workers but also as permanent residents. Evaluating citizenship applications by foreign passport holders who allegedly violated public morality and were subsequently banished or deported demonstrates how morality became a significant impetus at the intersection of multiple dynamics. In addition to wartime measures, the abolishment of capitulations at the outbreak of the war meant that being a non-Ottoman citizen within the borders of the Empire was no longer a privileged position. The abolition curbed interest in sex trade, and military surveillance of morality resulted in great unrest for non-Ottomans. As will be shown with archival documents, the dates of citizenship applications suggest this argument. Almost all applications I studied in the scope of this project were submitted in the beginning of 1915, some months after the declaration of mobilization and right after the government's announcement of measures concerning both the situation of non-Ottoman citizens and the protection of morality in martial law areas. These cases, show that morality was an important requirement to be granted Ottoman citizenship. Many of the cases considered here are related to prostitution, trafficking of women, or procuring. The fact that none of the applicants managed to receive citizenship shows how moral judgments worked together with national security concerns and how wartime measures enabled the "undesirable" elements in society to be eliminated.

The catalogues of the Ministry of the Interior are full of such demands, petitions, and applications of alleged "prostitutes and procurers" to become citizens. However, their applications were declined immediately whenever the police department's investigation reports were sent to the Ministry of the Interior. Even applicants who had not been convicted or banished due to morality crimes were rejected when their police report indicated that they were immoral – *ahlaksız*. No further investigations were carried for that individual

and their application would be declined immediately. Furthermore, thanks to the investigation, he or she would get charged as well.

It should be noted that after the abolishment of capitulations, on March 15, 1915, a preliminary law was issued regarding residence and travel regulations for foreign citizens in the empire.[113] According to this preliminary law, provincial and local governors, after informing the Ministry of the Interior Affairs, had the right to banish or deport foreigners who violated peace and order within the borders of their towns or cities. Those who were deported could not return to the empire without formal permission. Breaking this law would entail imprisonment of up to six months and/or a fine of up to fifty gold Ottoman coins.[114] Mişel Salomovic was among traffickers of women deported from the Empire on January 29, 1916.[115] His wife, Madam Bertahlamovic, petitioned the Imperial Secretary (*Mabeyn-i Hümayun Başkitabet Dairesi*) and asked for a pardon emphasizing Mişel's old age and that there had been others who had returned to the country whose cases were similar to Mişel's. Upon her petition, several departments held an investigation. Finally, the directorate of police answered the Ministry of the Interior as follows:

> Due to trafficking of white women offenses, foreign passport holders were deported from the country while Ottoman citizens were exiled to other Ottoman cities. Mişel Salomoviç, a Russian citizen, convicted of women trafficking was deported from the country along with others on January 29, 1916. Since his return would violate the seventh article of the foreigner's law, the request has been rejected.[116]

While the abolition of capitulations clearly broke the previous contract between foreign passport holders and Ottoman authorities, the preliminary law

113 "Ecnebilerin Memalik-i Osmaniye'de Seyahat ve İkametleri Hakkında Kanun-u Muvakkat," Düstur, Vol. 2, No. 7, 484–485.

114 Ibid.

115 A certain Michael Moses Salamovitz, alias Michel Pasha, was indicated as the person who ran the synagogue to which traffickers attend in Morgenthau's reports that were cited in Rifat Bali's work. It is possible he was the same person. Bali, *The Jews and Prostitution in Constantinople, 1854-1922*, 55.

116 BOA. DH. EUM. ADL. 14/34 1334 Ra 20 (26 January 1916). See Appendix B, Quotation 2.

on foreigners of 1915 brought about new measures to keep foreign citizens under control and punish them in cases of violations of order. Combined with the mobilization efforts – that is to say, martial law wartime was characterized by the increasing power of civil and military offices over civilians.

There were many shortcomings of being a citizen of an Entente Power in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. For example, reprisals against civilians became integral to fighting the enemy during the war. Civilians were punished with deportation or banishment in retaliation for bombings targeting Ottoman citizens. For instance, as payback for Entente bombings in Köyceğiz, a person named Ferguson was to be exiled to Kastamonu. However, since he had left the country, the Ottoman police tried to find his father. Unable to find none of them, the police found another foreigner, Robert McGill to banish in retaliation.[117] Apart from retaliations, non-Ottoman citizens, including Muslim ones, were under the surveillance of Ottoman security forces. They were subject to a special curfew that restricted their movements at night.[118] A general circular by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs to the provinces prescribed the banishment of "harmful" (*muzır*) citizens from Allied countries to "non-prohibited zones" – that is, provinces under civil administration.[119] But in Syria, which was under the command of the Fourth Army, all citizens of Allied powers, regardless of whether they were "harmful or not," were banished to Urfa. As a precaution against spying, the harboring of spies, or the conducting anti-government or anti-war propaganda, many were banished to central Anatolia to less-connected regions such as Kastamonu, Sivas, Çorum, Konya and Kayseri as well as to cities far from military deployment routes. The Black Sea, Aegean, and Marmara coasts were considered especially vulnerable to naval attacks and were considered the places where spies were potentially being harbored.[120]

The act of banishment served not only as punishment for political offenses as mentioned above, was also a mechanism for the preservation of public

117 BOA. DH. EUM. 5., ŞB., 80/57 (4 June 1914).

118 ATASE, 277/1136 001 12.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

order. Such public order cases varied from drunkenness to pickpocketing and from prostitution to loose morals. While banishment was generally the result of a court martial decision, some were *idareten sürgün* meaning an administrative order for banishment.[121]

The "morality requirement" is explicitly observed in official documents regarding citizenship applications. On January 10, 1915, Terzi Povayir [*sic*], Vitali, and Tesab Arş [*sic*] applied for Ottoman citizenship through the Citizenship Directorate of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezareti Tâbiiyyet Müdüriyeti*). The ministry sent the cases to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs to be investigated by the police department. According to police reports, all there men were residents of Şeftali Street in Galata, and had been previously banished for making a living by encouraging prostitution; thus, their cases did not deserve further investigation and their applications were denied immediately.[122]

In another case, the denied request of a Russian citizen, Eşmil Aron veledi Birkof Gerson [*sic*], who was a barber in Şeftali Street Galata, was based on the fact he was involved in trafficking of women. The document reported that his application was denied because "such people do not deserve the honor of receiving Ottoman citizenship," and moreover, he should be charged for this offense.[123] Here, it should be noted that Eşmil Aron had neither been convicted

121 On administrative decisions regarding banishment, see Ata, "I. Dünya Savaşı İçinde Bozkır'a Yapılan Sürgünler." Whether foreigners were subject to courts martial orders deserves further investigation. During the First World War, military law was imposed on foreigners, showing a trend of "extraterritoriality" in the application of military law. This point, indeed, caused heated debate prior to the war between the Ottoman government and foreign powers. See Noemi Levy-Aksu's work for further discussion. Lévy-Aksu, "An Ottoman Variation on the State of Siege." See also Zeren's study in which he discussed extraterritoriality in law in the framework of the establishment of constitutional rule in the Ottoman Balkans. Zeren, "The Formation of Constitutional Rule: The Politics of Ottomanism between de Jure and de Facto (1908-1913)."

122 "kadınları fuhşa teşvik ile gayr-i meşru' bir surette te'min-i mâişet eyleme" DH. İ. UM. 29-1/15 1333 Ra 16 (1 February 1915).

123 "bu misüllü eşhâsın tâbiyet-i Osmaniye şerefini ihraza şâyân görülmediği derkâr bulunmuş" BOA. DH.EUM.ECB. 4/45 1334 C 21 (25 April 1916).

nor banished previously for trafficking of women. He applied to citizenship from his place of residence.

Although the documents did not give further information about how the police had investigated the case and how they reached such conclusions, the records of some cases suggest that personal accounts during the investigation mattered, as well. For example, the case of Rafyan reveals that police relied on personal accounts during the background investigation to evaluate his citizenship application. Rafyan applied for Ottoman citizenship on December 3, 1914. He was a Jew, a citizen of Russia, lived in Karaoğlan Street, Galata, and worked as a street vendor. Six years earlier he had deserted from military service in Russia and settled in Istanbul. Apparently, as he was a fugitive in Istanbul, he had never submitted a document to the Russian Consulate. According to the police report, he had a relationship with a prostitute in one of the Galata brothels, and he made his living from this relationship. The report went on to say that he was known as "immoral Rafyan" among the people.[124] Eventually, his application was denied. A similar case was that of Rolmeş veled-i Volef Karonfelk's [*sic*] who applied for citizenship on December 21, 1914. He was a street vendor and resident of Karaoğlan Street, Galata. His application was denied on the basis that he earned his living from his relationship with a prostitute.[125]

Not only men but also women foreign nationals applied for Ottoman citizenship in order to secure their living and situation in the country during the war. For example, Liza bint-i Mendel, a Russian citizen and resident ten-year resident in Karaoğlan Street, Galata applied for citizenship on December 31, 1914. Since she was operating a brothel, the document reports, "she does not deserve to be registered and accepted as an Ottoman citizen."[126] Another case was Elis from Adana's Taşçıkan neighborhood who applied for Ottoman citizenship in February 1915 claiming that she was American. However, she could

124 "beyn'el-halk ahlaksız takımından 'Rafyan' olarak tanınmakta bulunduğu anlaşılmağla..." BOA. DH.İ.UM. 29-1/4 1333 S 13 (31 December 1914).

125 BOA. DH. İD. 61-1/46 1333 S 25 (12 January 1915).

126 BOA. DH.İD: 61-1/44 25 Kanunievvel 1330 (7 January 1915). "Mezburenin ahvâl-i umûmiyesine nazaran tâbiyet-i Osmaniyeye kayd ve kabule şâyân görülemediği..."

not provide any documentation of her citizenship other than her command of English. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs declined her application foremost because she could not prove her country of origin and second because her immorality was "well known."[127]

There are cases of religious conversions not being accepted, as well, due to immorality accusations. An Armenian woman, Mari, a resident of Kumkapı, and the daughter of Giragos the gardener, applied to the Ministry of Justice and Religious Denominations (*Adliye ve Mezâhib Nezâreti*) to convert Islam on July 6, 1917. After an investigation by the Istanbul Police Department, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs concluded that she was earning her living from prostitution. Her application was denied, and she was not allowed to convert to Islam.[128] In another case, local authorities in Istanbul approached the conversion of an English man differently. This case is also interesting since it involved an interreligious relationship between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man. Arthur Talin [*sic*], an English citizen, was banished from Istanbul to the town of Bozkır in 1915 when police discovered his affair with a Muslim woman. After three months in exile he converted to Islam, changed his name to Ahmed Arif, and asked the Ministry of Justice and Religious Denominations to approve his conversion. Having received his application, the Ministry found it suspicious and asked for more information about his motives for religious conversion. The Ministry of the Interior Affairs reported that Arthur had converted to Islam to marry a Muslim woman. Emphasizing that he had obtained permission to marry from the father of that Muslim woman, his application was accepted, and he was allowed to return to Istanbul.[129]

As these cases demonstrate, the Ottoman government conducted special investigations regarding the moral qualities of citizenship applicants. Given the circumstances that foreigners in the empire experienced as citizens of enemy countries, many applied for Ottoman citizenship in order to secure their residence in the empire. However, Ottoman authorities imposed strict background checks and denied the applications of foreigners in cases of suspected of immorality.

127 "sû'î ahlâkı ma'ruf bulunduğu hasebiyle" BOA. DH.SN.THR. 69/68 1334 N 14 (16 June 1916).

128 BOA. DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 26/2 1334 L 12 (12 August 1916).

129 BOA. DH. EUM. 5. ŞB. 19/1 24 Ağustos 1331 (6 September 1915).

§ 3.4 Morality Between Discourse and Daily Realities

Although the most powerful discourse on morality manifested itself in the polemics on prostitution and sexual behavior, other topics in the domain of morality were more central to everyday life. Prostitution, indeed, was part of a broader discussion on public morality in which vices, conspicuous consumption, and European cultural penetration into the Muslim community became rallying points. Neither ill-reputed behaviors nor critique of them were peculiar to wartime; however; the obvious context of war contributed to a rise of moral considerations and added new dynamics. Nevertheless, this did not mean that Ottoman authorities, whether bureaucratic or military, achieved absolute authority over public morality.

The recurrent themes in morality polemics revolved around the broad categories of entertainment and leisure as vices causing further moral decadence. Entertainment and leisure activities had become the subject of heated debates due to their role in the penetration of European cultural influence into Muslim societies. As discussed in chapter 2, advocates of Islamic morality pointed to this influence as the primary reason for moral degeneration in the Ottoman Empire. From the conservative point of view, compliance with or resistance to this influence constituted the grounds for moral standards. Like prostitution, habits such as alcohol consumption and gambling – and to a certain degree frequenting modern entertainment places where European "vices" were on display, such as theaters, cinemas, and taverns – were associated with immorality. Increased hostility toward enemy countries during the First World War strengthened discourses on "imported immorality."[130] Apart from religious conservatives and authentic morality advocates, other intellectual elites were also among those targeting such entertainment and leisure activities due to their degenerative impact on society. Some popular perceptions regarding morality, or more precisely immorality, were accompanied by fears inspired

130 One exception to this critique was Germany, the Ottoman ally during the war. Mehmet Akif admired the way the German Emperor and commanders expressed their gratitude to God on every occasion, and he wrote that this was something that should be expected from pious Muslims. He complained that the Germans had become an example for the Muslims other than vice versa. Mehmed Akif, "Harb-i Hâzıradan Alınan Dersler," 432.

from biblical stories of calamity. Jihad – the holy war – added a religious dimension to discourses on morality. On the other hand, in the eyes of the state authorities public morality was part of a broader framework of public order. As long as public order was not concerned, there are few references regarding individual's "private" lives in official documents. What did alarm state authorities was possible social upheaval (*halkın galeyana gelmesi*) that could be stirred up by the violation of public morality. For instance, conspicuous consumption and excessive entertainment on the homefront could attract public reaction and spark protests. Moreover, discourses of moral decline might affect the motivation of soldiers on the battlefield who were fighting for nothing else but their honor. Despite these concerns, the Ottoman state approached the issue pragmatically and used spending on entertainment to increase its own revenues. Given the context of the war, such revenues obviously became indispensable for the state budget. While semi-government war relief organizations invested in entertainment to collect this revenue, the moral instruction and nationalist propaganda achieved limited success due to the conflict between financial interests and the expectations of spectators. Therefore, in this study, I suggest that entertainment and the vices associated with immorality were part of a moral contest among various actors with various agendas. Also, turning our attention to the daily aspects of morality provides a more complete, complex picture of the vast reach of morality discourses.

The link between public order and public morality can be observed in a regulation issued prior to the First World War, on March 12, 1912. This was a supplementary law added to the Article 99 of the Penal Code stipulating new measures for maintaining discipline and order in the country and preventing the violation of public manners, morality, principles of health.[131] The decree consisted of six articles that prevented ex-convicts from carrying weapons,

131 "Kanun-i Cezanın Doksan Dokuzuncu Maddesinin Altıncı Cumadelahire 1329 Tarihli Dördüncü Zeyli Mucibince Riayet Edilmesi Lazım Gelen Ba'zı Kavaid Hakkında Kararname," *Düstur*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 311. "Tedâbir-i inzibatiye-yi memleketin takviyesi ve âdâb ve ahlâk-ı umûmîye ve zavabıt-ı sıhhıyenin halelden vekâyesi ile emn-ü huzur-u 'amihanın bir kat daha idâmesi zımnında kanun-i cezanın doksan dokuzuncu maddesi üçüncü zeyli mucibince mevcud olan imkân ve cevaza müsteniden halkın riyaet etmesi lazım gelen bazı kavaidi havi layiha ahkâmının mevkî-i icraya vaz'ine Meclis-i Vükelâ kararıyla me'zuniyet verilmiştir."

asked full cooperation of travelers with police requesting they show their documents; made it compulsory for landlords and hotel owners to inform the police departments of the identities of their tenants and guests within twenty-four hours; prohibited theater plays that might insult or humiliate religions and madhabs recognized by the Ottoman state as well as the ones that violated public manners, morality or public order; prohibited the opening of brothels in forbidden areas; and lastly, banned any kinds of attempts explicitly stirring up public turmoil and violating manners and the practice of religion in Ottoman lands. Indeed, these points constituted the backbone of the main issues of public order and public morality in the eyes of Ottoman authorities.

Keeping these points in mind, first, I first discuss popular perceptions regarding war and immorality. Second, I focus on conspicuous consumption and war profiteering to show how morality discourses were central to the critique of social inequalities during the war. Third, I evaluate official attempts to regulate entertainment venues with an emphasis on the government's dilemma concerning financial profit and moral control. The same dilemma is observed in the last part which focuses on gambling and alcohol. Through these points that shed light on the complexity of public morality discourses, I also aim at addressing early versions of current debates on "lifestyle" and its relationship to morality.

3.4.1 *Popular Perceptions of Moral Decline and the Violation of Public Morality*

Is it possible to list the things deemed a threat to public morality in the course of everyday life? Was there a common discourse, or a popular perception on the signs of immorality? If so, how did this discourse intersect with the context of war? Although less documented, it is possible to find some clues about a mentality that assumed a relationship between immorality and calamities throughout Ottoman history. Prohibition on alcohol consumption, for instance, constituted a result of the assumed link between immorality and calamity. Prohibitive discourses served to reproduce the authority of traditional elites by establishing their moral authority over society. For example, after pestilence and a fire disaster in Istanbul in the seventeenth century, the Ottoman ulema started a campaign that blamed practices that deviated from Islam.

They achieved their aim to prohibit the sale of wine in the city.[132] According to Kırlı, in the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, sumptuary laws and the moralizing discourses of ruling elites intensified in the Ottoman Empire as a consequence of challenges by new social forces against the existing order.[133] The moral decline polemicists in the early modern Ottoman Empire thus attempted to preserve their hegemony and extent social hierarchies through sumptuary regulations that emphasize the degeneration of moral order. Kırlı stated that this hegemony not only maintained the political position of the ruling classes, it was also an ideological hegemony that explains the prevalence of moral discourses among those of the same opinion about declining moral values even though they were not part of the ruling class.[134] The moral discourses that emerged in the early modern era targeted "urban public spaces" such as coffeehouses, places that "represented the breakdown of social hierarchy and thus served as a metaphor for urban disorder."[135] Sultan Mahmud II's regime, which coincided with social upheaval and radical reform, strongly emphasized orthodoxy and morality during the abolishment of the Janissary corps. The heterodox Bektashi order (infamous for drinking) was closed, and their properties were handed over to the orthodox Nakshibendi order.

Public spaces such as coffeehouses were also mistrusted because they constituted the locations from which gossip and rumors spread, including political commentaries.[136] In the nineteenth century public attention intensified on "heterogeneous" public spaces such as theaters, cinemas, parks, pubs, and cafés where "unrelated men and women could mingle."[137] Throughout the

132 Matthee, "Alcohol in the Islamic Middle East," 112.

133 The period in question was marked by "social fluidity and the gradual disintegration of existing hierarchies" owing to domestic migration that was a consequence of population growth and the dissolution of the *tımar* land system. Kırlı, "The Struggle over Space," 42.

134 Ibid., 42-43.

135 Kırlı, "The Struggle over Space," 49.

136 For more information, see Kırlı, *Sultan ve Kamuoyu*.

137 Yıldız, "Limits of the Imaginable in the Early Turkish Novel," 555. Regarding initial introduction of cinema and cinema-going in the Ottoman Empire, see Çeliktemel-Thomen, "The Curtain of Dreams: Early Cinema in Istanbul (1896-1923)."

nineteenth century, the spatio-temporal organization of urban life attracted the attention of the ruling classes both from the standpoint of modernity and public order. In the previous system, urban order and moral control had been provided within defined spatial units among which the *mahalle* constituted the basic unit. In this system, personal surety (*kefalet*) played an important role in stipulating collective responsibility for maintaining public order and morality.[138] Nighttime, however, offered opportunities to those bent on evading society's existent norms.[139] When the streets began to be illuminated in the nineteenth century, the night became subject to the growing control of state authorities. However, as Nurçin İleri argues, there was a paradox between a more efficient system of surveilling and controlling the night and the "cultivation of nocturnal sociability."

> The Ottoman authorities and elites tried to tolerate nocturnal conviviality because they knew that some urban vitality was crucial as sign of progress. Yet at the same time, they tried to monitor night life by surveilling public gathering places, entertainment venues, taverns, and activities like drinking, gambling, and prostitution that were primarily associated with nighttime transgression.[140]

The illumination of the night created new spaces for leisure activities that came to be associated with disorder and immorality – and at the same time

138 Zarinebaf gives a detailed account of how the kefalet system worked, see *Zarinebaf, Crime and Punishment in Istanbul*, 132–133.

139 Wishnitzer describes how "different" nighttime could be for different groups of people: "The powerful norms of public morality and the constant gaze of the neighborhood community shaped nocturnal life in different ways for different people there were those who did not venture beyond the accepted, or further from the neighborhood coffee-house. Others tried to use darkness to evade the sensitive threads of the community network at night while leading a respectable life during the day. Still others, who were socially marginal and fell below the standards of public morality anyway, engaged more openly in social drinking and other stigmatized behaviors. Finally, there were those who were powerful enough to disregard the social norms of the *mahalle*. For all of these groups, darkness carried benefits that daytime could not offer." Wishnitzer, "Into The Dark," 518.

140 İleri, "A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siécle Istanbul," 24.

with modern life and economic progress.[141] The "moral order" defenders, thus, targeted not only the entertainment places but also established parallels between moral decline and European cultural influence based on the fact that such entertainment places were the products of Western civilization.

The initial phase of the late Ottoman version of what I call "the immorality chain," began with the instillation of degenerate values through theater and cinema. This type of entertainment brought to men and women together at the same stage, thus disregarding gender segregation and holding up the "private" lives of other people and their corrupt values as examples to the youth. Furthermore, alcohol, which is explicitly forbidden in Islam, lowered inhibition and prepared an environment in which illicit sex and prostitution might occur. Since prostitution requires money, men would resort to gambling and risk the income of their families. Eventually, such people were cursed with the stigma of venereal disease. To some extent this line of thought can be observed not only in conservative circles but also among nationalists with respect to their critiques of immorality. While religious moralists preferred to cite stories of divine punishment, such as the famous story of Sodom and Gomorrah, nationalist narratives focused on social and national destruction as consequences of immorality.[142] In the upheaval of the war and also during the armistice period, the latter narrative of collective destruction gained momentum.

During the First World War, some members of the Ottoman ulema used the proclamation of Jihad as an opportunity to revive the narrative of immorality and divine punishment. A madrasa teacher from the Temple Mount (*Harem-i Şerif*) wrote a letter to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs at the beginning of the war claiming that if the government hoped to succeed in Jihad, it had to watch people's morality, in particular that of women's, because "the first rebellion [against God] happened in this world because of women."[143] He proposed steps be taken for the sake of jihad including:

141 Ibid., 204–205.

142 Karaosmanoğlu, *Sodom ve Gomore* (first edition in 1924).

143 BOA. DH.EUM. 7. Şb. 1333 Ra 3 (3/1) (19 January 1915). "dünyada hasıl olan ilk ma'siyet kadınlar sebebinden neş'et etti."

> The prohibition of all acts that were incompatible with Islam; the closing taverns and coffeehouses; the prohibition of alcohol and gambling for Muslims; the prohibition of those things causing or encouraging adultery; the obligation of women to behave with perfect manners (*kemâl-i edeb*) in bazaars, theaters, and parks; and the ban of those kinds of women's clothing that were incompatible with Islamic principles.[144]

For him, the theaters in which women were dancing with "uncovered chests" and provoking illicit love affairs were the places where immorality was spread among Muslims and Muslim youth. He asserted that to tolerate such instances would harm the holy cause and have a negative impact on other Muslim countries. Another medrese teacher, Abdullah Fevzi Efendi, joined the army during the First World War and wrote in his memoirs that "the fire from howitzers and planes are just as it was told in Quran: calamities arriving from the sky to the earth" that were God's punishment for sins that Ottoman soldiers had committed.[145]

Ordinary people also shared similar opinions about immorality. "To serve humanity," they sent letters to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs asking measures be taken against immorality. These letters presented lists of houses where illicit sex allegedly occurred.[146] A notable man from Kayseri requesting the prohibition of brothels in the city asserted in a letter that calamities such as earthquakes, fires, disasters, shortage of rain, lack of profits and insufficient harvests were the consequences of a curse brought by immorality.[147] The

144 Ibid. "Nusret ve muvaffakiyet husûlü için beyne'l-ahali vaki olan maasi ve muharremat meni ve izalesi. Bilcümle meyhane ve kahvehaneler Müslümanlar içki ve müskirat içmemesi ve kumar oynamaması ve zinayı muceb olan esbab ve teşvikatın men edilmesi, hanımlar çarşı ve tiyatro ve bağçelerde kemâl-i edeble hareket ettirilmesi ve âdâb-ı İslâmiyeye muhalif çarşaf ve elbise-i gayr-i layıka hanımlarca isti'mal edilmesinin men olunması."

145 Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde Bir Müderris*, 112.

146 A certain Abdi Hulusi wrote a letter to the ministry listing the houses being used for prostitution. He stated his aim in writing this letter as "to serve humanity" "*hidmet-i insaniye namına,*" see BOA. DH. EUM. 3. Şb. 8/74 1333 Za 11 (20 September 1915).

147 "Ahlakı bozulan yerler felaket ve mesaibden hiçbir an halli kalamaz. Bugün binlerce insanları pençe-i kahrında inil inil inleten zelzeleler, harikler, gaileler, imtar-ı matar, noksan-ı hasılat,

author of this letter used the same "chain of immorality" to illustrate the links between moral and social disorder.[148]

Despite the bitter tone against violations of public morality, the main motive of authorities was to take measures to protect public order. The approach was relatively flexible, official discourse notwithstanding. Even Abdullah Fevzi Efendi, who cursed Ottoman soldiers for their immorality, wrote in his memoirs that "those who accomplish their duties" need joy and entertainment, and it can be tolerated so long as it was "once in a while" and without public display. These "rules," indeed, constituted public approbation or toleration of immorality. As long as immoral acts remained "secret" and occurred only "once in a while," both the public and state authorities would tolerate them. In the case of open violations, punishment could be severe. Carousal (*işret*) and paying women to dance (*kadın oynatmak*) were among the most documented violations of public morality.[149] It seems that this type of entertainment was especially common among the bureaucratic and military elites in the provincial areas. It came to be documented in archival correspondence when conflicts arose when security forces intervened or local people complained to the police. Again, these events were documented for breaking the peace and public order because they created an uproar among the local community.[150] The

fikdan-ı semerât gibi dürlü dürlü felaketler ancak ahlaksızlığın tevellid ettiği…" BOA. DH. EUM. 6. Şb. 42/52 (3) 17 Ağustos 1334 (17 August 1918).

148 This letter, indeed, seems to have been inspired by the new Minister of the Interior Affairs, İsmail Canbulat, who promised to take strict measures against prostitution while in office. See chapter 2.

149 In 1911, a new article was issued as a supplemant to Article 202 of the Ottoman Penal Code stipulating imprisonment for a period from one month to one year for the act of women dancing. See İleri, "A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siécle Istanbul," 266.

150 A case demonstrates the power of "public enthusiasm" vis-à-vis the violation of public morality. In Isparta, the local gendarme commander (*jandarma bölük kumandanı*), Kazım Efendi, along with the retired lieutenant (*mülâzım*) Hacı Bey and the telegraph bureau officer Mehmed Şevket Efendi, were arrested after public protest of women dancing in Kazım Efendi's house, BOA. DH. H. 48/5 1331 Ca 04 (24 April 1913).

military or bureaucratic officers caught drinking and watching women dance were tried in courts martial.[151]

Perhaps, it is worth considering the public impact and imagery of occasions when soldiers and high ranking military men were involved. İhsan Turjman, a soldier based in Jerusalem, vividly described such representative stories of social as well as military life in 1915 and 1916 in his diary.[152] He often contrasted the misery of ordinary people and low ranking soldiers with the indulgence of those of high rank. He was disgusted by the "whoring and drinking" parties of higher ranking men taking place at a time when the Ottoman army was fighting in Çanakkale and where thousands of soldiers lost their lives.

> Ahmad Cemal Pasha issued an order today, in celebration of the anniversary of Sultan Mehmet Rashad V's ascension to the throne, to distribute mutton and sweets to members of the armed forces… A big party was being prepared at the Commissariat, to be presided over by the two Cemals [Cemal Pasha and Küçük Cemal] and Ruşen Bey [Commander and Residence Inspector][153] and other senior admirals and officers… A number of Jerusalem prostitutes were also invited to entertain the officers. I was told that at least 50 well-known whores were among the invitees… While this was happening, our brothers were fighting in the Dardanelles… I suddenly became despondent and very sad for our condition.[154]

151 Archival correspondence gives a sample case on the topic. In the town of Mecidözü, a member of the local administrative council (*meclis-i idare âzâsı*), Pirzade İbrahim, the Director of the Subsistance Office (*mal müdürü*), Hakkı, and the commander for tracking down the deserters (*firarî takip müfrezesi kumandanı*) Captain İbrahim were caught watching women dancing, and their case was transferred to the courts martial. See BOA. DH. EUM. KLU. 12/30. 1335 R 05 (29 January 1917).

152 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*.

153 The title "Residence Inspector" refers to an Ottoman military rank *Menzil Müfettişi* which should be translated "Station Inspector."

154 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 111–112.

Obviously, Cemal Paşa was among the three most significant figures of the CUP and had privileges over low ranks. He was notorious among the local population of Greater Syria as he had ordered the deportation and execution of many leading figures on the basis of accusations of spying while the locals were struggling with famine as well as locust attacks. His reputation of immorality added yet another dimension to this story of a type that attracted vast interest among the locals. Abigail Jacobson's discussion about Turjman's testimony details how such occasions sparked an "identity crisis" that shook the Ottoman collectivity and estranged Arab soldiers from Ottoman identity.[155]

In another context, reputation for immorality played an important role in expressing ethnic discontent. A French Lazarist Priest in Syria wrote in 1917 about the Cemal Paşa case. "Apostasies are the order of the day in the cities. How many have given themselves to Muslims, or have given up their honor for a morsel of bread…All of the Turkish officers, Jemal Pasha at their head, can't have enough Christian girls to sacrifice to their perversions."[156] During the Arab Revolt of 1916, the Sharifian propaganda against the Ottoman rule was based on the idea that Sharif Hussein was doing his duty against those who violated the Sharia by introducing secular laws and lifestyles. The Sharif of Mecca targeted Cemal Paşa's perversions in his anti-Ottoman propaganda including his role in employing women in state offices which for the Sharif it signified the fact that Ottomans were not qualified to rule the Muslims.[157] Reputation for immorality played a role in constructing the "other" at the international level and contributed to the contest of practicing "true Islam" and legitimate Islamic governance.

3.4.2 *Moral Decline and Conspicuous Consumption, Debauchery, and Wartime Profiteering*

A moral discourse often accompanied critiques of war profiteering which almost obscured the political failure of the "national economy program" from

155 Jacobson, "Negotiating Ottomanism in Times of War."

156 Cited in: Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 27.

157 Teitelbaum, "The Man Who Would Be Caliph: Sharifian Propaganda in World War I," 290–91.

which the profiteers benefited. Especially after the Balkan Wars, when the CUP seized full control of the Ottoman government, a new economic policy called the National Economy (*Millî iktisat*) was pursued in order to empower Muslim businessmen. The new economic policy had a simple formula to save the Ottoman Empire: to create an alternative Muslim bourgeoisie.[158] Accordingly, the traditional Ottoman bourgeoisie, comprised mainly of non-Muslims, was eliminated from commercial networks due to perceived sympathy for foreign powers. The accumulation of wealth was to be left in the hands of the Muslim bourgeoisie. In fact, the war provided many opportunities to actualize this project. The First World War became a huge opportunity for profiteers to bypass previous rules of commerce through political engagement with the CUP. The national economy policy facilitated war profiteering by providing transportation rights, credits, and privileges to Muslim entrepreneurs. Not only large enterprises but even small merchants profiteered, especially on urgently needed goods such as oil, gas, sugar, and flour. Meanwhile large landowners benefited from the ambitious agricultural policies of the government. New companies were established under state protection and benefited from privileges designed to keep commerce in the hands of Muslim entrepreneurs.[159] Black-marketing of goods in demand made it possible for many to make huge profits during the war.

Istanbul was significantly affected by privation, due to its reliance on imported goods. At the beginning of the war, the city met its consumption needs through existing stocks, but as the war went on, local merchants speculated and stored the resources. This food crisis provided the basis for a transfer of wealth from non-Muslim merchants to the Muslim bourgeoisie. Some

158 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat, 1908-1918*, 174 (first edition in 1982). Zürcher discusses whether "millî" refers to Turkish nationalism, Ottomanism, or Islamism in Young Turk social and economic policies and concludes that the unionists' policies were primarily motivated by the idea of promoting an "Ottoman Muslim" state, Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, 230–231.

159 Ibid., 45-48.

organizations, such as the National Defense Society and the Artisans' Society, played significant roles in this transfer.[160]

On May 24, 1917, under the pressure of public opinion, the Ottoman government issued a provisional law to prevent speculation. The courts martial were in charge of executing the penalties from then on. An Anti-profiteering Commission (*Men-i İhtikâr Heyeti*) was established to enforce the law. Although the efforts of the government to end the black market were initially successful, the political agenda of creating a national economy conflicted with these efforts in the chaotic atmosphere of the war.[161] Those who were able to stock goods thanks to transportation rights, credits, and state protection accumulated immense wealth.[162]

Consequently, a new class of war profiteers (*harb zengini*) emerged. War profiteers, a specific group of merchants, became the most resented in Ottoman public opinion. Their way of living, which was often affiliated with debauchery and corruption, was a major theme in Turkish literature of the postwar period.[163] In most of these narratives, the main character is a formerly pious Muslim man who easily acquired wealth owing to the circumstances cited above. As soon as he becomes rich, he frequents nightlife venues popular among business circles – such as Hotel Tokatlıyan – to meet new acquaintances and display his wealth. To increase his reputation and make his name more presentable in high society, he makes up a family name with the suffix "-zade" meaning "descendant of." Leaving his old traditional *konak* house behind, he moves into an apartment flat and furnishes it in a European bourgeoisie fashion. His moral laxity that allows him to benefit from privation is evident in his new habits such as hiring a mistress, consuming alcohol, gambling, and partaking of saloon entertainment.[164] In the end, he is a vulgar

160 Ahmad, *İttihatçılıktan Kemalizme*, 44–45.

161 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat*, 1908-1918, 538.

162 Vehbi Koç (1901-1996), patriarch of one of the wealthiest families in contemporary Turkey, displays in his memoirs how transportating goods from Ankara to Istanbul brought him a good profit during the war years. Koç, *Hayat Hikâyem*, 20–21.

163 For a companion of these literary works, see Deren Van Het Hof, "Erken Dönem Cumhuriyet Romanında Zenginler ve Zenginlik," 81-106.

164 For a representative story, see Alus, *Harp Zengininin Gelini*.

imitation of the modern bourgeoisie – a parasite of society who made a fortune through political connections in a time of crisis. Therefore, these wealthy men did not hesitate to cooperate with the new political powers that be, the Allies, who occupied Istanbul in 1920 in the aftermath of the war.[165] The critique targeting the lifestyle of this wealthy class was different than the early criticisms in the Tanzimat era, however. A new narrative of treason and social destruction replaced stories of individual destruction as a result of over-Westernization.[166] According to Akın, war profiteers and their ways of acquiring wealth created a tension that would eventually result in the "loss of legitimacy" of state authority; indeed, public criticism targeting "injustice" curbed the war effort.[167]

Strikingly, as discussed in chapter 2, most contemporary writers approached the problem of war profiteering as a problem of morality, thus making it part of a discussion of moral decline instead of considering the role of politics in the rise of profiteering. This is further evidence that political and social discontent was translated and melted into the discourse of morality. In fact, a similar tendency was evident in other belligerent countries, as well. For example, Jean-Louis Robert discusses the association of immorality with profiteering in his study of wartime caricatures. He argues that wartime caricature "redefined the internal social order" through contrasting, moralized images.

> In different ways and at different times they arrayed home versus the front; city versus countryside; men versus women; consumers versus merchants; munitions makers versus the rest; the nouveau riche versus the ordinary man; as well as the time honoured opposition of capital and labour. Most of these images focus on the question of consumption, and the shortages of basic commodities which affected different groups in different ways. This is not surprising, since it is precisely what the readership experienced. But if this evidence reinforces our

165 Leyla and her family in Yakup Kadri's *Sodom ve Gomore* is a perfect example of this typology. See Karaosmanoğlu, *Sodom ve Gomore*.

166 Deren Van Het Hof, "Erken Dönem Cumhuriyet Romanında Zenginler ve Zenginlik," 96.

167 Akın, "War Profiteers."

> sense of material grievance, it also provides good grounds for concluding that the Great War crystallized a set of moral codes, which can be seen in the popular press.[168]

The immoral imagery of Ottoman war profiteers can be evaluated within this framework. During the war, a moralizing rhetoric was often employed as a way to express social inequalities. Novels and popular works displaying such a moral dichotomy dominated Turkish literature for decades after the war demonstrating that the collective memory of the war was shaped by this moralized imagery of wartime inequalities. The profiteers were represented in the collective memory as being morally lax and having degenerate values.



Figure 3.3 "The World of the Nouveau Riche" as depicted in Sedad Simavi's cartoon album. (Yeni Zenginler/Les Néo-Riches, Istanbul, 1918 (rep. Adam Yayıncılık, ed. Turgut Çeviker, 1993)).

168 Robert, "The Image of the Profiteer," 132.

3.4.3 *Entertainment and Leisure: Between Moral Control and Financial Profit*

A closer look at the regulation of entertainment venues (*lubiyyat mahalleri*) during the First World War presents a complex story in which several factors played a role. Besides religiously-motivated objections, entertainment venues were subject to concerns over urban control and social order as these venues posed a potential threat to the political and cultural order.[169] On the other hand, the approach of the Ottoman state regarding these venues was pragmatic, as they constituted a significant source of revenue for the treasury. The war added new dynamics to this ambivalent approach towards entertainment venues.[170]

While war profiteers were enjoying their time in the Pera Palace Hotel or in the Hotel Tokatlıyan, cinemas and theaters constituted the main locations of mass entertainment for the lower classes during the war. As discussed in this study, the means of entertainment in these venues attracted criticism with respect to their role in moral decline. During the war, a new critique emerged from nationalist sensibilities that such places distracted people's attention from the war and contributed to a lack of interest in the future of the nation. Therefore, a formulation combining moral and financial interests emerged during the war by which private entrepreneurs were levied with heavy taxes and semi-government war relief organizations were encouraged to collect revenues through nationalist shows. Also, owing to the abolition of capitulations, venues formerly belonging to foreign companies became subject to Ottoman law, and thus taxes could be imposed on them.[171] However, as shown in the following pages, regulated content and nationalist shows did not bring in the

169 Jens Hanssen discusses this argument focusing on Beirut, see Hanssen, "Public Morality and Marginality in Fin de siècle Beirut," 201. Nurçin İleri also discusses this point in her study: "Entertainment venues and other public places such as Turkish baths or printing houses were considered as 'habitats of crime' because the rebels and criminals could blend in public in these venues." İleri, "A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siécle Istanbul," 207.

170 For a brief assessment of the topic in Turkish, see Oğuz, "Millî Mesele ve Maddî Gereksinim Arasında: Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Eğlence Yerlerini Düzenleme Çabaları."

171 BOA. DH.MTV. 35/7 1333 S 04 (22 December 1914).

anticipated income due to lack of public interest. The ideal of creating "respectable popular leisure activities"[172] thus conflicted with financial interests.

The war relief semi-government war relief organizations, namely, the Society for National Defense (*Müdâfaa-i Millîye Cemiyeti*), the Naval Society (*Donanma Cemiyeti*), and the Red Crescent (*Hilâl-i Ahmer*), considered entertainment as a source of income in addition to being a tool to make war propaganda. As Özbek argues, these aid organizations constituted a "political public sphere" that emerged from an attempt of the CUP government "to direct civic activity and public enthusiasm towards the nationalist and militarist policy concerns of the party."[173] The first pamphlet of the Naval Society advertising coming theater shows clearly indicated this political agenda underlying the entertainment: "We found a new way for people who want to help the Naval Society… Thanks to this initiative [of establishing a theater], the Society will not only receive financial support. This initiative will also contribute our people in social and national aspects [and] – with due respect – perhaps teach them great lessons."[174] While these institutions were exempt from special taxes, other entertainment companies were subject to a 10 percent tax transferred to the budget for the Poorhouse (*Darülaceze*).[175] During the war, in order to guarantee this important source of revenue, the police were charged with monitoring tickets sales and issuing bans if the venues refuse to pay the taxes for the Poorhouse.[176] In addition to the Poorhouse tax, all the tickets were subject to a stamp duty for Hedjaz Railways (*Hicaz Demiryolları*) with a value of twenty *para*.[177] Through the end of the war, new taxes were introduced for

172 I borrowed this term from Jens Hanssen. Hanssen, "Public Morality and Marginality in Fin de Siècle Beirut," 198.

173 Özbek, "Defining the Public Sphere during the Late Ottoman Empire," 801–807.

174 Sevengil, *Türk Tiyatrosu Tarihi: Meşrutiyet Tiyatrosu*, 227.

175 BOA. DH. UMVM. 116/40 1335 Ca 20 (13 April 1917). During Ramadan, when nighttime became particularly active, inspectors of the Poorhouse visited the theaters themselves and collected this revenue on a daily basis, see *Yıldırım, İstanbul Darülaceze Müessesesi Tarihi*, 124.

176 BOA. BEO 4482/336127 1335 Za 11 (28 September 1917).

177 Apart from these taxes there were also license tax, stamp tax, and a tax issued by the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (Düyun-u Umumiye). An actor, Burhaneddin Bey submitted a petition to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs regarding the excessive taxation of theaters, and

the tickets of cinemas, theaters, concerts, proms, horse races, and similar activities as the state expenses increased due to the war.[178] As indicated in an archival document, the Ottoman government undertook similar financial measures as other belligerent countries and collected taxes on pleasure and joy (*zevk-ü keyf*) rather than vital needs (*ihtiyacât-ı hakikiyye*). While small enterprises were hit by heavy taxation, war relief institutions enjoyed the opportunity to offer "legitimate" entertainment.[179]

Entertainment venues became subject to morality debates in two respects: first, moral instruction and war propaganda through entertainment, and second, the elimination of content that violated public morality and sparked public protest. War relief entertainment, however, did not appeal to public taste. The masses did not frequent the highly intellectual moral instruction shows. Initially, these organizations sought to save the entertainment industry from vulgar shows by replacing them with moral and educational shows; however, they soon realized that they had to win popular approval to make profit. To increase revenues, it became apparent that the shows had to appeal to a broad audience which meant compromising enlightening ideals and moral instruction through entertainment.

When the Ottoman Fine Arts School (*Dârülbedâyi)* was established in 1914, there was enthusiasm among intellectuals who hoped to educate masses through entertainment. Abdullah Cevdet celebrated the arrival of André Antoine, who came to Istanbul to establish Dârülbedâyi's theater organization saying: "Our friends told us that this country needs many things before theaters. We can't prohibit entertainment in society, but we can save our people from dirty, ugly, and vulgar entertainment venues and take them to the foot of the theater stage which teaches high ideals."[180] The first play staged in

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he wrote that these taxes were the main obstacle to the development of local theater initiatives because they were only imposed on local companies. Yıldırım, *Istanbul Darülaceze Müessesesi Tarihi*, 124.

178 BOA. A.) DVN. MKL. 64/27 06.04.1918.

179 It is possible to find letters from theater directors from distant provinces such as Basra complaining that they are unable to run their companies anymore because of the heavy taxes, BOA. DH. H. 1332.4.27 17/40 (25 March 1914).

180 Quoted in: Sevengil, *Türk Tiyatrosu Tarihi: Meşrutiyet Tiyatrosu*, 182.

Dârülbedâyi was Emile Fabre's *La Maison d'Argile* (*Çürük Temel*), a family drama allegorically referring to the dissolving Empire. All the revenues of the shows were transferred to the Women's Society for Soldiers' Families (*Asker Ailelerine Yardımcı Hanımlar Cemiyeti*). However, after being staged a few times, the hall remained empty because spectators were not interested. Instead, improvisational plays (*tulûat kumpanyası*), and comedies were attracting spectators.[181] Therefore, organizers of war relief entertainment found a middle road by performing comedies immediately after national and historical dramas.[182]

The quality of shows staged in these institutions attracted intellectual criticism due to their lack of moral instruction. Muhsin Ertuğrul, who was among the leading theater and cinema figures in the late Ottoman and early Republican era, had to leave his job in Dârülbedâyi as a consequence of the conflict between profitable and educational plays. In 1918, he wrote in *Temaşa* journal – a journal that was published by intellectuals who opposed the vulgar war relief entertainment – and asserted that moral and social plays are not popular in society; therefore, these plays are not profitable.[183] He commented that theaters should help increase morality and educate society, and he complained that in order to a make profit, plays served only the purpose of attracting popular attention, thus decreasing the quality of the art.

In addition to intellectual reflections on the impact of entertainment on morality, there were also bureaucratic and military perspectives that focused on regulation from the viewpoint of protecting public morality. The foremost issue that deserves attention is censorship. At the beginning of the war, the Ottoman High Command (*Başkumandanlık Vekâleti*) published Instruction on Censorship (*Sansür Tâlimâtnâmesi*) consisting of sixty-one articles that brought about heavy censorship of the press and personal mail, as well as theater plays and cinema films.[184] Accordingly, censorship centers were established in all important cities and these places would be responsible for the

181 Ibid.

182 Ozansoy, *Darülbedayi Devrinin Eski Günlerinde*, 55.

183 Ertuğrul Muhsin, "Garpta Tiyatroculuk, Bizde Tiyatroculuk," 5.

184 Turgut, "I. Dünya Savaşı'nda Osmanlı Posta Sansürü."

elimination of "harmful" content, particularly that curbing war efforts and affecting the morale of the Ottoman people.[185] However, censorship of theater plays was the subject of several debates. On February 23, 1915, the Ottoman High Command sent a general decree to all provinces announcing that the police would be in charge of censoring theater plays instead of the military.[186] This decision was taken upon an incident that were considered as a "negligent" act of the Beyoğlu Military Censorship Commission (*Beyoğlu Askerî Sansür Heyeti*) who approved a play titled *Great Vartan* in Armenian in which the battles of ancient Armenia were staged. The decree announced that due to the heavy workload of military censorship offices, and given the extraordinary circumstances of war, for the sake of public morals, security, and the safety of the state, theater plays (especially non-Turkish ones) were to be investigated by the police.[187]

After charging the police with censorship, the Chief Police Department started preparations to regulate entertainment venues. In 1916, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs issued a detailed "Regulation of Theatres, Cinemas, Café Chantants and Outdoor Performances."[188] Among the sixty articles of regulation, there were also the ones dealing with the issue of public morality. The regulation stipulated the ban of theater plays that could offend the religions or ethnicities of the Ottoman people for that could harm national values and public morality. In the third part – on Café Chantants, musical coffee houses, and concert cafés – it was stated that women singers and actresses were not allowed to show up or dance in the presence of customers. Adolescents younger than eighteen and students in uniform were not allowed to enter these places. Other types of entertainment, such as horse and tightrope acrobatic shows, circuses, storytelling shows, and puppet theaters, were required

185 Ibid. Gizem Tongo Overfield Shaw directed my attention to this transcribed, simplified version of "Instruction of Censorship" which can be found online: Türk Filatelli Akademisi, *1330 (1914) Senesinde Selimiye Askerî Matbaada Basılan 'Sansür Talimatnamesi*,' last modified October 22, 2016, http://turkfilateliakademisi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/sansur.pdf.

186 BOA. DH. EUM. 5. Şb. 9/51 1333 R 07 (22 February 1915).

187 Ibid.

188 BOA. DH.EUM. 6. Şb. 38/12 1336 Ş 18 (29 May 1918).

to obtain a license from the police. Street performances and tent theaters were only allowed if the venues were sufficiently close to a fire station and police department. However, to my knowledge, this regulation did not get implemented during the war, at least not officially. Corroborating this assumption, the last document I came across, dated March 24, 1918, was correspondence by the Ministry of the Interior to the Council of State asserting the urgency of the approval of the regulation "for the sake of discipline and order."[189]

The regulation prepared by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs was the result of a long process during which local police quarters were interviewed and measures that were being implemented in other European countries were reviewed.[190] In contrast to this meticulous preparation, orders directly issued by Enver Paşa, the Minister of War, attempted to bring harsh and more immediate measures. On February 5, 1918, Enver Paşa sent an order to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs regarding excessive advertisement of entertainment in the Ottoman press and on street posters.

> In order not to break our soldiers' endurance to withstand the difficulties of war, from now on the Ottoman press is neither allowed to publish any advertisement in newspapers or for distribution on the streets that promotes pleasure, extravagancy, and luxury; nor any advertisement for entertainment, theaters, cinemas, concerts, songs or feasts except for ones sponsored by war institutions and for war relief. These kinds of advertisements can only be displayed inside the

189 Ibid. "nizamnâme lâyihalarının bir çok seneden beri tedkikatı şûra-yı müşarûnileyhce icra edilememesine ve esâsen inzibatî birer mâhiyeti haiz olan mezkur nizamnâmelerin bir an evvel mevki-i tatbike adem-i vazî memleketin inzibatına sûî te'sir icra eylemekte bulunmasına binâen..."

190 The ministry asked the opinions of local police regarding the feasibility of regulations, see BOA. DH.EUM.MEM 72/29 1334 S 24 (1 January 1916). The Ministry of Interior Affairs asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send examples of regulations being implemented in other countries such as Bulgaria, Sweden, and Austria, see BOA. DH.EUM.VRK 29/8 1336 Za 14 (21 August 1918); DH.EUM.VRK 29/7 1336 Za 13 (20 August 1918); and DH.EUM.VRK 29/3 1336 L 25 (3 August 1918).

> entertainment venues. Secondly, those who do not comply with this order shall be prosecuted by the military courts.[191]

The General Police Department replied and asserted that to prosecute these people, the Council of Ministers had to approve the decision; moreover, it was impossible to ban all advertisements for luxury. Enver Paşa answered this with another letter agreeing about the procedure yet urging the police to realize the measure: "Therefore, I ask the Police Department to investigate these cases [to be transferred to the Council]. Advertisements of items that are not among vital and natural needs, such as those published by costume houses and beauty rooms (*tuvalet ve zarâfethâneler)* to attract customers, can be counted among luxuries."[192] Eventually, on March 4, 1918, the military ordered that all cinemas and photography shops in and near Istanbul to obtain a license from the intelligence division of Military Headquarters in Istanbul (*Karargâh-ı Umûmî İstihbârat Şûbesi*).[193] This case demonstrates that leading figures of the Ottoman military were aware that during a war, violations of public morality in the sense of excessive entertainment and consumption, shattered the spirit of collectivity.

As shown, regulating entertainment venues during the First World War had several purposes besides protecting public morality, such as making propaganda and collecting revenue. A remarkable point at the intersection of these aims was bureaucratic and military approaches to content that violated public morality were closely associated with concerns for public order and national unity. While the government was able to take more effective measures to regulate entertainment venues owing to the abolition of capitulations and by resorting to military measures, other factors – mainly the generation of income through entertainment – conflicted with the project of refinement the content of mass entertainment.

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191 BOA. DH.EUM.6.Şb. 31/29 1336 Ca 05 (18 Mart 1918). See Appendix B, Quotation 3.

192 "Herhalde bu memnu'iyet ahkâmının Istanbul polis müdüriyeti umûmîsince tâ'kib ve ? te'minini istirham ederim. Zarûrî ve tabii ihtiyaçlar sırasında olmayan ilânlar ezcümle tuvalet ve zerâfethânelerin müşteri celbine müteâlik reklamları müzeyyinattan mâdûd olabilir." Ibid. This, I believe, also shows a tension between the military and bureaucratic authorities on the legislation procedures.

193 BOA. DH. EUM. VRK 28/51 1336 C 4 (17 March 1918).

3.4.4 *Gambling and Drinking: The Mother of All Vices and Taxes*

The dilemma between regulatory measures and financial interests was revealed in debates over alcohol and gambling, as well. Starting in the seventeenth century and continuing throughout Ottoman history, there were many attempts to ban alcohol or limit its sale. Such measures specifically targeted Muslim drinkers, because as Georgeon states "a drinking Muslim," after all, would find himself in places where non-Muslim communities socialized thus constituted a threat to Ottoman order founded on the separation of ethno-religious communities.[194] According to Kırlı, "taverns were entrapped by a vicious circle," "…. While they were closed down on the basis of 'deteriorating public morality,' they were reopened since state finances could not bear the burden of being deprived of the tax revenue generated from alcoholic beverages."[195]

A brief history of attempts to regulate alcohol consumption in the nineteenth century confirms the argument regarding the association of public order with public morality. For instance, the 1858 Ottoman Penal Code and the 1858 Streets Regulations stipulated that drinking was to be punished only when it caused serious disturbances to public peace, morality, and security.[196] In several other regulations, similar anxieties associating public morality and public order are evident. In 1862, a new regulation was issued titled "Regulations on Alcoholic Beverages" (*Müskirât Nizamnâmesi*) and concentrated on the spatial organization of alcohol-selling businesses.[197] In 1878, new taxes were introduced on coffeehouses, casinos, and alcohol selling places. In his attempt to emphasize Islam and Islamic principles, Abdülhamid II limited the amount that shops or places serving alcohol could sell.[198] In 1912, a new regulation was issued regarding the opening hours of places selling alcohol.[199]

194 Georgeon, "Ottomans and Drinkers," 14.

195 Kırlı, "The Struggle over Space," 58.

196 İleri, "A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siécle Istanbul," 232.

197 Ibid.

198 Hanssen, "Public Morality and Marginality in Fin-de-siècle Beirut," 200.

199 Ibid., 203. Closing hours were particularly important with regard to regulations on alcohol consumption and the reorganization of entertainment venues. Nurçin İleri asserts that

Taxes from such establishments greatly contributed to municipal budgets, as well. As Hanssen states, over a quarter of the annual income for the municipal budget of Beirut in 1913 came from taxes on petrol, alcohol, and gambling.[200]

A closer look at prohibitive measures shows that they were far from effective. Along with financial interests, the factor of "resistance of drinkers" contributed to the failure of prohibitive projects.[201] Although alcohol was strictly prohibited by Islam and labeled the "mother of all vices," the Ottoman Muslims enjoyed alcoholic spirits quite in a liberal fashion. As Matthee indicates, alcohol consumption paradoxically "always played a surprisingly important role in male elite circles in the Middle East."[202] Until the nineteenth century, this habit was "hidden" from the public. Starting in the second half of the nineteenth century, alcohol consumption was embraced by the Ottoman Muslim elite as "an indicator of the modern lifestyle."[203] This allowed religious critics to label alcohol consumption the result of "over-westernization" and to identify it with the decline of Muslim morality. This moralistic discourse was later reinforced by the rise of a medical discourse against alcohol.[204]

Starting in the nineteenth century, both prohibitive and liberal discourses regarding alcohol had political and cultural implications. Embracing such habits or rejecting them constituted the basis for discussions about perceptions of European civilization. In religiously-motivated circles, prohibitive discourses on alcohol served the purpose of establishing moral authority.[205] In

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attempts of authorities to close the venues on time stemmed from their assumption that a strict closing hour regulation would preserve the balance between morality and modernity. İleri, "A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siécle Istanbul," 208.

200 Hanssen, "Public Morality and Marginality in Fin-de-siècle Beirut," 201.

201 Georgeon, "Ottomans and Drinkers," 10.

202 Matthee, "Alcohol in the Islamic Middle East," 112.

203 Georgeon, "Ottomans and Drinkers," 16-17.

204 Ibid.

205 The topic still sparks widespread political and ideological debate in contemporary Turkey. Growing interference of the government into private lives motivated by regenerating the population as well as reviving an Islamic discourse have served to strengthen what I call the "moral polarization" between the two different sides. On the topic, see Karaömerlioğlu, "Nüfus Mühendisliğinden Gezi Parkı Direnişine."

this respect, the morality discourse went hand in hand with the contest over the public space.[206]

Critiques of alcohol consumption in the early modern Ottoman Empire used the "calamity" argument to ban alcohol in the Empire. During the Tanzimat era, consuming alcohol became affiliated with being civilized and culturally open to progress, though by the end of the nineteenth century, a strong medical argument accompanied the religious objections. Following the war, when Istanbul was occupied in 1920, Allied military authorities used "chaotic and unruly nature of Istanbul at night" and the "protection of public morality" to justify their interventions in the city.[207] The Ankara government prohibited alcohol in 1920 as a consequence of "an unanticipated union of traditional populists (and Islamists) from the *İkinci Grup* (who advocated prohibition on religious and moral grounds) and medical and public health officials (equipped with medical and social science)."[208] Later on, in Kemalist Turkey, alcohol consumption reemerged "as an even more prominent marker of Turkey's status as a Western and modern nation-state."[209]

On the issue of the war and alcohol, Ahmed Emin held up the gradual increase in *rakı* production – which doubled from 1914 to 1917 – as an indicator of moral decline.[210] On the other hand, the government also benefited (or attempted to benefit) from the consumption of alcohol, particularly during the war. On July 8, 1915, the Ottoman government introduced a tax tariff to be imposed on mail and telegrams as well as on tobacco and alcohol in order to fund the establishment of scientific and industrial institutions for the

206 For instance, during the Gezi Events in 2013, raising a glass became a form of protest against prohibitive measures. For discussion on how alcohol consumption became politicized in this context, see Evered and Evered, "From Rakı to Ayran."

207 MacArthur-Seal, "Intoxication and Imperialism," 300.

208 Evered and Evered, "From Rakı to Ayran," 43. In addition, this measure also curbed the interests of non-Muslim alcohol sellers. As the law eliminated most private enterprises, it also served the purpose of establishing a state monopoly (*tekel*) on alcohol. See Karahanoğulları, *Birinci Meclisin İçki Yasağı (Men-i Müskirat Kanunu)*.

209 Ibid., 44.

210 Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 242–243.

education of children of martyrs (*evlâd-ı şühedâ*).[211] Whether a dispute over the moral dilemma of using alcohol taxes to support the children of martrys' would have broken out in the parliament is unclear because it was not convening when the government passed this law.

In the Ottoman parliament, the imposing of taxes on playing cards, for instance, had led to a discussion on whether the priority of the government should be to protect public morality or to collect regular but small tax amounts on such items to benefit the budget. On December 17, 1917, draft legislation on the taxation of playing cards was discussed among Ottoman parliamentarians.[212] The proposed draft stipulated a five *kuruş* tax on each pack of cards. Ahmet Ağaoğlu, the deputy from Karahisarı Sahib, argued that the state should not rely on such revenues, otherwise "public morality would be under a serious threat."[213] He proposed that the government should adopt a "prohibitive" approach regarding gambling and increase the tax to 50 kuruş in order to fight against what, according to him had become an "epidemic disease" in the country. [214] After him, Şeyh Saffet Efendi, the deputy from Urfa, took the floor and proposed to increase the tax to 100 kuruş because, "according to the Ottoman Constitution, the religion of the state is Islam." Thus above this constitution there was a "holy constitution" – that is, the Quran – which explicitly prohibits Muslims from gambling. As his title indicates, he was a cleric. For him the Ottoman Empire was the land of "the Great Caliphate of Islam," so the government had to respect divine orders and take steps to correct public morality. He argued that the draft was not intended to discourage gambling; instead, it benefit from it through taxes. Following these words, other deputies

211 "Madde 4: 5 Ağustos 1328 tarihli kanunun altıncı maddesi mucibince rakılardan alınmakta olan harb vergisinin bir misli (evvelce resm-i mirisi verilmiş olduğu halde mevcud bulunan rakı ve ispirtolar sebt-i defter edilecek ve bunlardan bir misli daha resm-i miri alınacaktır)." *Düstur*, "Evlâd-ı Şühedânın Ta'lim ve Terbiyesiçün Vücuda Getirilecek Mü'essesat Mesarifine Muktezî Vâridat Hakkında Kanun-u Muvakkat," Vol. 1, No. 7, 642–643.

212 *MMZC*, Term 3 Vol. 4 Year: 1, 19.

213 Ibid. "Devlet makinesinin çevrilmesi için bir memba gibi telakki edilirse, o vakit ahlâk-ı umûmîyye gayet vahim bir tehlikeye maruz kalır ve elbette ki memleket ve devlet, esas itibariyle böyle bir vergiyi kabul etmez."

214 Ibid. "Sari bir hastalık"

took the floor and delivered excited speeches regarding the protection of public morality while other deputies showed sympathy and chanted "Bravo!." In this enthusiastic atmosphere, some deputies proposed increasing the amount of the tax to 500 kuruş per pack of cards. On the other hand, some deputies called on the others "to leave the discussion of permissible and impermissible (*haram-helal*)," noting that "taxes are also imposed on pork and wine," and he also received support from some deputies.[215] Finally, the Minister of Finance, Mehmet Cavit Bey, took the floor and gave a speech on the dilemma of the government between the sake of morality (*menfâ'at-i ahlâkiyye*) and the sake of economy *(menfâ'at-i mâliye*), particularly with respect to topics related to pleasures *(mükeyyifat*). He argued that prohibitive approaches would pave the way for a black market, thus eventually violating yet another ethical rule. After his speech, the deputies agreed on the amount of five kuruş for the tax.[216] Indeed, his words explicitly illustrated the moral dilemma of the Ottoman government.

Ahmed Emin asserts that during the First World War, the Ottoman government passed an anti-gambling law but only enforced it rigidly for a few days.[217] However, as indicated in the newspaper *Tanin*, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs did not issue a new anti-gambling law. Instead, the office merely recirculated what was already stipulated in the Ottoman Penal Code regarding gambling and ordered that these cases be taken to the courts.[218] Strikingly, despite some public expectations regarding prohibitive measures on gambling, the Ottoman government relied on the discretion of the courts to punish gambling.

215 Ibid. Hacı Şefik Bey, Deputy of Istanbul: "Helal, haram bahsine gelince: Domuzdan alınan resim de haramdır, şaraptan alınan resim de haramdır. Onlar geçmiş, babam geçmiş!"

216 Gambling was subject to punishment of up to six months imprisonment and a fine according to the 242nd Article of the 1858 Ottoman Penal Code, see İleri, "A Nocturnal History of Fin de Siécle Istanbul," 244.

217 Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 243.

218 *Tanin*, "Kumar Oynayanlar Hakkında," 31 August 1918.

§ 3.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter discussed the protection of public morality from political and social perspective in the context of the First World War. As shown, anxiety over public morality had ramifications beyond a simple rhetoric of preventing prostitution and controlling sexuality. Particularly on the topic of foreigners and immorality, I propose to take the setting of the war and rivalry between combatant countries seriously because immorality discourses served political and cultural claims. Moreover, some developments such as the abolition of capitulations and military measures, including the search of private houses, banishment, and deportation from martial law territories, constituted an opportunity for Ottoman authorities to "clean up" the homefront, especially in martial law areas. As some cases illustrate, morality was a concrete requirement – a condition of eligibility to obtain Ottoman citizenship or convert to Islam.

Years later, the Republic of Turkey would take further measures to keep prostitution out of the country. In 1930, the government enacted an abolitionist law on prostitution mandating the deportation of all foreign prostitutes. Nationalist motives were accompanied by critiques that Istanbul was the global center for the trafficking of women.[219] It is possible to argue that the wartime measures mentioned in this study were the early stages of this "clean-up campaign" of the 1920s and 1930s designed to increase the prestige and reputation of the country. On the issue of alcohol, again, it was the Ankara Government in 1920 prohibiting alcohol. My contention is that the First World War was also a transitory period from moral to medical discourse.

A close look at the topics that fell under the domain of public morality in the daily life shows the fault lines in contemporaneous discussions on the link between lifestyle and morality. Although these moral encounters emerged in the vast context of the nineteenth century, the war constituted a peak and intermingling of the national and cultural anxieties. Moreover, such moral encounters in daily life became the markers of the differences between rich and

219 Wyers, *"Wicked" Istanbul: The Regulation of Prostitution in the Early Turkish Republic*, 177–179. The League of Nations 1927 report on the trafficking of women severely criticized Turkish authorities for being tolerant of traffickers. Ibid., 107-108.

poor and combatant and noncombatant. However, attempts to protect public morality remained limited due to the financial interests of the government vis-à-vis expenditures on pleasure.

At the end of the war, polemics of moral decline carried yet another political implication. The dichotomy was not Muslim morality versus European morality, but Anatolian versus Istanbulite. For instance, the wartime image of immoral Muslim women disappeared and made way for the image of heroic Turkish women. The category of "immoral women" was reduced to just those women of the Istanbul elite who collaborated with Allied forces. This sharp image that established itself through morality deserves further attention, but the topic is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

4

Family at the Center of Moral Decline: Legislation Targeting the Regeneration and Protection of Ottoman Muslim Families

> *Bu ahlaksızlığın esbâbını böyle derince araştırırsanız ine ine aile içine girersiniz. Ve buradaki meşhudâtınıza ağlarsınız.*
>
> –Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi,
> *Avrupalılaşmak Felâketlerimizin Esbâbı*

During a visit to my hometown, Sivas, a man whom I met coincidentally, asked what I was studying. I told him the First World War and added: "specifically the homefront." He immediately replied excitedly and said, "I know a lot about that!" He continued, "when the war broke out and the people heard about the mobilization, men said 'shoot [kill] all the crippled and one-handed men'." Not following at first, I asked the reason, and he said, "because, only crippled men would remain in the town and the fellows did not want to leave the women to them!"

"Hunger and love are what moves the world."[1] As mass mobilization started in the Empire, a population of mainly women, children, and elders remained on the homefront. They suffered not only from the absence of their breadwinners, but also from the lack of a sense of patriarchal protection. The family as an institution was heavily affected by wartime conditions. The formidable problem of manpower was accompanied by heavy taxation on agricultural products in towns and villages. Amid economic deprivations, the Ottoman countryside witnessed a chaotic situation regarding the protection of soldiers' families from sexually exploitation. The absence of the male members of the household brought about concern about the involvement of soldiers' female relatives in extramarital sexual activities. As discussed in the following pages, this "uncontrolled" environment was referred to as "the form of moral decline in rural areas" in the writings of Ottoman intellectuals and state elites. The scope of this moral decline surpassed the capacity of civilian authorities to cope, and the Ottoman government (and military authorities) found new ways to deal with the problem.

I begin my analysis with an overview of the impact of the war on the family, contextualizing how family life was affected by wartime circumstances but also presenting the background for changing perceptions of the family. I then turn to the forms of state intervention in family affairs in terms of taking control over sexual relationships that potentially threatened the family as an institution. I demonstrate how the wartime legislation that targeted the family was driven by moral concerns. Examining gender-related aspects of war contributes to the understanding of political developments, particularly those related to "civic order."[2] I contend that the turmoil of the wartime tested and

1 Sigmund Freud quoted these lines of the famous eighteenth-century poet-philosopher Schiller as a starting point for his ego-instinct and object-instinct drive theory: "In what was at first my utter perplexity, I took as my starting-point a saying of the poet-philosopher, Schiller, that 'hunger and love are what moves the world'. Hunger could be taken to represent the instincts which aim at preserving the individual; while love strives after objects, and its chief function, favoured in every way by nature, is the preservation of the species." Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 34.

2 I owe this formulation to the work of Elizabeth Thompson in which she casts light on the political and social reflections of the gender crisis in terms of authority and identity. In her

revealed the vulnerability of once solid, traditional norms and values. As the foundations of the old order were shaken, several legislative attempts were made paving the way for a new understanding of the family in which state intervention is legitimate. As a distinctive feature of this study, I consider morality discourses and moral concerns as the common point behind several legislative attempts. These legislation attempts, which so far in the historiography have been elaborated separately, are thus evaluated together in a wider framework. First, I focus on the forms of sexual assault targeting the female members of soldiers' families. Given that such cases explicitly contradicted official war propaganda based on the protection of honor and family, the state enacted a provisional law authorizing courts martial to handle sexual assaults on soldiers' families. Indeed, this legislation marked the beginning of state intervention in the family. However, instead of evaluating this intervention as the natural outcome of increasing sexual assault cases, I point out the role of individuals – both men and women – in shaping the reciprocal relationship between citizens and the state. By holding the state accountable for a lack of protection from sexual violence, victims of and witnesses to these crimes explicitly asked for further state involvement so that the perpetrators be punished in a more effective way.

The second part of this chapter examines a heretofore unexplored legislative attempt, the Adultery Bill of 1916, and the debates surrounding it. The Adultery Bill was proposed by the Ministry of War to authorize the military to police the sexual conduct of "unfaithful" wives. Although this draft was not put into force, the endeavor shows the extent of moral considerations and the approach of military authorities to the problem of moral decline. I examine how the draft law instigated debates on the understanding of morality crimes, the nature of law, and limits of public and private law. By contextualizing the punishment of such crimes in the Ottoman Empire in Islamic Law as well as

work, she used the term "civic order" to evaluate a broader context of state-society interaction: "The civic order embodies norms and institutions that govern relations among citizens and between citizens and the state. It is within the civic order that the terms of citizenship and state power are both expressed and continually renegotiated among agents of the formal state apparatus, its unofficial agents, and their clients." Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 1.

Sultanic Codes (*kanunname*s), I show the significance – and uniqueness – of such interventions in the history of the empire.

Finally, I evaluate the Ottoman Family Rights Decree of 1917 as part of the growing intervention of the state in the family. Here, my aim is not to rewrite the narratives on the widely discussed Family Decree, but establish links between references to norms, values, and morality and the justification for the law. I argue that discourses on morality and national regeneration played an important role in shaping the body of the law. In a way, discourses on the need for social reform went hand in hand with arguments about how outdated and degenerate were the values that encompassed the family. This was a pretext for lifting taboos regarding the privacy of the family and paved the way for the introduction of family reform.

§ 4.1 War and the Family

Specialized studies have enhanced our understanding on the impacts of the First World War on the family as an institution. The First World War triggered long-lasting change as in the perceptions of family, women, and children in many combatant countries. Among them, I believe we should also consider moral values surrounding family formation and dissolution as well as factors that are a menace to family order. In the Ottoman case, the First World War served to attach new meanings to the family in terms of defining its function within society. The impact of total war also manifested itself in patriarchal norms and traditional gender roles in a manner that redefined the relationship between individuals and the state.

The families of soldiers received attention from military and bureaucratic authorities in combatant countries. More than anything else, this attention derived from the fact that war propaganda during the First World War highlighted the protection of women and children more than any other reasons were waging war against the enemy. Paradoxically, the absence of their men in pursuit of the very same cause left women and children defenseless against several forms of violence on the homefront. The gendered aspect of war propaganda added to these concerns. As Susan Grayzel put it, "in part because the war was justified as a defense of women and children, and thus implicitly of

traditional gender roles, there was a good deal of concern about how wartime circumstances might alter these."[3]

The initial policies regarding the family were driven by the motive of compensation in the absence of breadwinners. In many combatant countries, special "family aid" measures were introduced in order to support families.[4] Obviously, the issue of leaving money to the discretion of the women went hand in hand with a form of moral control over consumption, putting women and adolescents under the microscope of social and political control.[5]

During the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman government introduced a provisional law providing family allowance (*muinsiz aile maaşı*) for the families whose sole breadwinners had been conscripted into the army. Aid became central to the new Provisional Law on Military Service issued in May 1914 and affected more families due to the large-scale mobilization.[6] By means of this aid program, the government financially compensated families for the absence of breadwinners, thus establishing a tacit contract with soldiers pertaining to their sacrifice. Mehmet Beşikçi explains this tacit contract between conscripted men and the state as follows:

> 1) His and his family's basic needs were provided by the state in return for his service; 2) his collaboration with the state increased his social status; 3) he was to be assured that the war effort was worth sacrificing himself for; 4) the duration and conditions of his military service

3 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 64.

4 On Family Aid in several countries, see Daniel, *The War from within*; Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War*; Pedersen, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State*.

5 Women and adolescents of conscripted soldiers' families were constantly under public surveillance with regard to their sexuality, their socialization, and their communication with the soldiers in the battlefield. Their way of spending Family Aid were subject to a debate among the press, police, and several bureaucratic offices. In Germany, some municipalities announced that women who spend money for cinema-going would not be eligible to receive Family Aid anymore. In Britain, restrictions were put on alcohol consumption, which was allegedly spreading among women in reaction to the uncertainties and hardships of wartime. See Daniel, *The War from within*, 143–147; Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 67.

6 Van Os, "Taking Care of Soldiers' Families: The Ottoman State and the Muinsiz Aile Maaşı," 96–97; Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 141–143.

> remained unchanged from his initial mobilization. Failure to maintain this tacit contract could produce various forms of resistance to the mobilization effort.[7]

In practice, the allowance was ineffective due to the irregularity of payments, as well as bad or unfair treatment of women by provisioning officers (*iaşe memurları),* including the abuses of corrupt officers who took advantage of their position to engage in sexual relationships with women in need.[8] Both in the countryside and in cities there was a sense of increasing prostitution as such. When such news arrived to soldiers at the battlefront, desertion became an inevitable consequence. In 1917, during the war, the Ministry of War mandated the death penalty for officers who caused such incidents for facilitating desertion.[9] Ahmed Emin describes the situation as follows: "As the waves of debauchery behind the front caused heads of families to grow apprehensive for the safety of their homes and to desert the front line, special courts-martial were set up to handle the task of safeguarding public morals."[10]

The families of soldiers became more important as the war dragged on. The need for their collaboration with the state to continue waging the war had significant effects especially with respect to morale on the front. As many scholars agree, this era was marked by a new concept of a relationship between

7 See Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War*, 8.

8 In villages, the situation worsened as well due to the lack of manpower and the high taxes on products, Van Os, "Taking Care of Soldiers' Families: The Ottoman State and the Muinsiz Aile Maaşı," 102. Akın cites similar stories from first hand accounts of the situation. For instance, the local head of the CUP in Giresun wrote that officers were abusing their positions for such purposes: "Honor was trampled to satisfy their sensual appetite." Quoted in: Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 166–168. In his memoirs, İrfan Orga tells how they treated families in the revenue office in Istanbul. His mother, after being insulted by the officers, did not go there to collect the aid and instead sent Orga to receive it. When he went to the office, a man who helped him talk to the officer physically abused him. After the incident, none among the family members visited the office again. He says the allowance they received was anyway not enough to live on due to increasing prices. Orga, *Bir Türk Ailesinin Öyküsü*, 149–150.

9 Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 160.

10 Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 246.

women and the state. This relationship was more direct than before, without husbands or male relatives as intermediaries. According to Grayzel, "what made this war such a compelling moment in women history is that it provides an opportunity for many women to forge a new relationship with their nation-states."[11] In the Ottoman case, Akın argues, attempts of the government to relieve the financial burden of families and to protect them from various forms of violence resulted in the "transformation of women's identities vis-à-vis the state," and pave the way for a new direct relationship between the state and women in the absence of men.[12] Toprak addresses this changing relationship vis-à-vis the formation of the nation-state. According to Toprak, the war radically changed the perception of women's role in the society due to the need for a female workforce, and this contributed to the promotion of the nuclear family as the main component of a national state. During the war years, Ottoman society witnessed radical transformation particularly in the urban context triggered both by the intellectual environment of the Young Turk family ideology and Ottoman feminism, as well as by wartime social and demographic changes.[13] Yet, it is hard to say that the war emancipated Muslim women. Traditional gender roles persisted, holding women back from achieving equality.[14]

The interest in the family in many belligerent countries derived from the idea that the family as an institution was on the verge of losing its main functions. These functions, according to Daniel, can be defined under two headings: a) Physical, psychological, and societal reproduction of people including the raising and socialization of children and the reproduction of adults in terms of their psychological and physical components, material support, psychological stabilization, and sexuality; and b) production and consumption of

11 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 117.

12 Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 135–136.

13 Toprak, "The Family, Feminism, and the State During the Young Turk Period, 1908-1918," 441–452.

14 For a discussion on the emancipation of women both in early Turkish Republican and contemporary contexts, see Kandiyoti, "Emancipated but Unliberated?"; Arat, "From Emancipation To Liberation: The Changing Role of Women in Turkey's Public Realm."

food.[15] Accordingly, during the war, the reproductive function of the family decreased, but the consumption and production of goods increased. When the balance between reproduction and production was broken by wartime circumstances, the sole function of the family remained an economic one.

> It is my contention that it was exactly this decline in the reproductive functions of the family caused by the war, in other words the separation of many families, the decline in the birth and marriage rates and the increase in the number of women who no longer lived either with a husband or other family members outlined above, that moved those aspects of human coexistence previously situated in the context of the family into the arena of the public interest, where they were then defined as symptoms of a crisis affecting the entire society.[16]

These assumptions are indeed in line with the crisis of paternity cited at the beginning of this study. However, in the Ottoman Empire interest in the family had wider implications transcending discussions on the basic functions of the family. Owing to strict moral codes along with religious approbation, all forms of man-woman encounters in both the private and public sphere were scrutinized within a larger perspective of the family institution.

In the aftermath of the Constitutional Revolution of 1908, family became a major point of interest in the Ottoman press.[17] Debates on family included references to a so-called family crisis (*aile buhranı*) which encompassed morality discourses. Cem Behar and Alan Duben considers the family crisis spoken of by Ottoman intellectuals as a "cultural crisis" following the emergence of the nuclear family.[18] According to them, even though domestic gender roles were not radically changed, traditional elites in society and their distinctive way of living (*konak* life) were undermined by the formation of a new wealthy class – that is war profiteers.[19] Başak Tuğ argues that the point of departure for

15 Daniel, *The War from within*, 127.

16 Ibid., 138.

17 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Popülizm*, 264.

18 Duben and Behar, *Istanbul Households*.

19 Ibid., 200–201.

the family crisis debate among Ottoman intellectuals was not the transformation from large to nuclear families, but instead was the individualistic, loose family ties in Ottoman society.[20] Toprak's studies show that the main agenda of reformist intellectuals such as Ziya Gökalp was to promote the nuclear family model among Ottoman Muslim families. They attributed a great role to morality in their vision of the national family (*millî aile*) model.[21]

In a way, the concerns over family in the context of the war had wider implications for the maintainenance of the collective effort dedicated to mobilization. These implications extended to a broader framework of sexuality transcending the borders of the family as an institution per se. To illuminate this point further, I should note that the concept of "soldiers' family" refers not to family as an institution, but to family members, particularly to the women of the family.[22] Therefore, the central issue was their sexuality and sexual encounters on the homefront.

4.1.1 *Contextualizing State Intervention in Sexual Violence, Rape, and Assaults in the Ottoman Empire*

According to Islamic Law, relationships out of wedlock are considered acts of adultery (*zina,* or in Ottoman word *fi'il-i şen'i*). Adultery aside, the punishment for rape and similar acts is not defined clearly among the *hadd*.[23]

20 Tuğ, "The Claims on Modernity and Tradition," 99.

21 Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm (1908-1935)*, 14–16; Toprak, *Türkiye'de Popülizm*, 263–264.

22 Nicole van Os reminded me that such uses of the term family usually refer to women. I should also add that while in contemporary Turkish the word *tecavüz* means rape, in the Ottoman context it meant "crossing the lines" and violating the rights of someone else. For the dictionary meaning of the word, see Sami, *Kâmûs-î Türkî*, 481.

23 See Oxford Islamic Studies Online for the definition *hadd* in Islam: "Limit or prohibition; pl. *hudud*. A punishment fixed in the Quran and hadith for crimes considered to be against the rights of God. The six crimes for which punishments are fixed are theft (amputation of the hand), illicit sexual relations (death by stoning or one hundred lashes), making unproven accusations of illicit sex (eighty lashes), drinking intoxicants (eighty lashes), apostasy (death or banishment), and highway robbery (death). Strict requirements for evidence (including eyewitnesses) have severely limited the application of *hudud* penalties. Punishment for all other

Accordingly, rape (*ırza geçme* or *hetk-i ırz*) was considered under the heading of adultery, yet courts had discretionary power (*ta'zir)* to determine the punishment.[24] There were three types of punishment for adultery: one hundred lashes, banishment, and stoning to death.[25] In the Ottoman Empire, the *kanunname*s (Sultanic Codes) of Sultans Mehmed II, Beyazıd II, Süleyman I, and Selim I supplemented Islamic Law with respect to rape crimes, and issued different punishments of the act.[26] For instance, a case study from the town of Balıkesir in the seventeenth century shows that adultery was generally punished with banishment.[27] Only in the 1858 Ottoman Penal Code, which was the first penal code in the modern sense, were crimes of adultery subject to standardized punishments.[28] This code differed from the *kanunname*s since the law applied to everyone, while the previous codes defined punishments based on whether the crime was committed by Muslims or Non-Muslims, slaves or free people.[29] Articles 197-200 of the 1858 Penal Code was reserved for the gender violence cases, rape, and crimes against morality.[30] The punishment of the crime of rape was hard labor. If the victim was a virgin, the perpetrator had to pay recompense in addition to doing hard labor sentence. The severity of the punishment increased if the victim was a minor or if the perpetrator was among family members who were supposedly guardians of the victim. If the perpetrator was a state officer, he was fired from his position

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crimes is left to the discretion of the court; these punishments are called *ta'zir*." "Hadd - Oxford Islamic Studies Online." On the discussion of *hadd* and *zina,* see Sonbol, "Rape and Law in Ottoman and Modern Egypt," 214–232.

24 Dönmezer, *Ceza Hukuku*, 31–32. For prophetic and sectarian traditions of punishment in *zina* cases, see Sonbol, "Rape and Law in Ottoman and Modern Egypt," 215–219.

25 Konan, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Tecavüz Suçu," 152–155.

26 Ibid., 157–162. Semerdjian, "Gender Violence in Kanunnames and Fetvas of the Sixteenth Century," 180–197.

27 Yağcı, "Osmanlı Taşrasında Kadına Yönelik Cinsel Suçlarda Adalet Arama Geleneği," 51–81.

28 Konan, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Tecavüz Suçu," 162–163; Dönmezer, *Umumı Adab ve Aile Nizamı Aleyhinde Cürümler*, 27–28.

29 Konan, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Tecavüz Suçu," 168. This aspect of law was also discussed in the case of Egypt, see Sonbol, "Rape and Law in Ottoman and Modern Egypt," 225.

30 For a transliterated version of the articles, see *Akgündüz, Mukayeseli İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku Külliyatı*, 864–866.

immediately. If the crime of rape was committed together with other crimes such as homicide, banditry, or theft, the punishment became more severe: a life-long sentence of hard labor or the death penalty.[31] In the course of the nineteenth century, several supplementary articles were appended to this part of the Penal Code.

The Ottoman Penal Code of 1858 was inspired by the French Code of 1810. An historian of comparative law, Sulhi Dönmezer, points out that as a general principle of lawmaking throughout the nineteenth century, state intervention in private affairs and family relationships was considered "unnecessary" because it was perceived that such interventions would further deteriorate family order and peace.[32] For him this principle explains the reason for the limited number of articles devoted to sexual violence, violating morality, and family-related crimes in the penal code. Accordingly, from the second half of the eighteenth century to the First World War, philosophy prevailed and a strong reaction against the intervention of law in the sphere of individual morality developed. As a consequence, the list of morality crimes remained limited in the penal codes of the time since most were considered crimes without victims or harmless to the state. Even though strict legislation stipulated punishments for immorality in Britain and its colonies, the individualist mentality was particularly evident in the French Penal Code of 1810. Only acts violating the freedom of another individual or those openly inciting public morality were punished. However, the First World War was a watershed event that marked the beginning of a new understanding for the punishment of morality crimes and crimes against family.[33] Especially crimes against the family constituted an essential part of several penal codes after the war. While some, such as the Italian Penal Code of 1931, greatly stressed such acts, more liberal codes such as that of the Swiss kept the list of morality crimes limited. The redefinition of crimes against morality and family derived from the wartime developments because of which the previous approaches toward the limits of private sphere were

31 Konan, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Tecavüz Suçu," 162–166; Dönmezer, *Umumi Adab ve Aile Nizamı Aleyhinde Cürümler*, 27–28.

32 Dönmezer, *Ceza Hukuku*, 19–21.

33 *Dönmezer, Umumi Adab ve Aile Nizamı Aleyhinde Cürümler*, 20–28.

transformed. Also, new offenses were added to the penal code such as abandonment of the family. According to Dönmezer, this was due to intense migration in the aftermath of the First World War that resulted in the separation of many spouses. He added that the war opened a path to the return of patriarchy leading to further state intervention to the family.[34] "Saving the family" by establishing severe penalties became a matter for the state (especially for Fascist governments) as a result of the war.

What transpired during the First World War was that both the code and its application vis-à-vis gender violence were insufficient in a time of turmoil. The war shook the foundation of what had been considered private up to then. Not only in the Ottoman Empire and republican Turkey, but also in many other countries, the First World War opened a new page on the punishment of acts against public morality and crimes against family. Specifically, crimes against family constituted an essential part of several penal codes after the war due to the concern about population decline.[35] I suggest reconsidering the Ottoman state's and military's intervention in this private sphere during the First World War from this perspective. For the first time in the history of the Ottoman Empire, crimes against morality and family during the First World War were tried in military courts. This intervention created a discussion of the limits of the public and private spheres. There was a specific moment that this situation triggered an important discussion among bureaucrats: the Ministry of War's proposal of the Adultery Bill in 1916, which is discussed at length in the following pages.

4.1.2 *Sexual Assaults Targeting Soldiers' Families Before the First World War*

Archival documents suggest that sexual assault cases against members of soldiers' families were common even prior to the First World War. An overview of similar cases during the Balkan Wars reveals that female members of soldiers' families were faced with several forms of sexual assault. However,

34 Ibid., 24.

35 Emphasis on population growth was particularly evident in the penal codes of fascist countries, see Quine, *Population Politics in Twentieth-Century Europe*.

during those years the judicial process worked differently; charges brought up and trials for such cases were under the authority of the civilian bureaucracy, unlike during the First World War. In many cases, soldiers themselves petitioned the Ministry of War regarding their families' situation. The Ministry of War brought cases to the attention of civilian authorities such as the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior Affairs. Sometimes in a bitter tone in the correspondence, the Ministry of War urged civilian authorities that the government's initial duty was to protect soldiers' female relatives. For instance, Mehmed Ali bin Mehmed Ali, a soldier stationed at Anadolu Kavağı (a district along the Bosporus), wrote a petition on May 3, 1913, to the Ministry of War claiming that his wife had been abducted and raped by some of his fellow townsmen from Kastamonu. The Ministry of War passed the complaint on to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs and added, "needless to say, the first responsibility of the government is to protect the women in soldiers' families from attack or assault."[36] As this case illustrates, the process was initiated by the Ministry of War, and the Ministry of the Interior Affairs then started an investigation through the provincial governor. In addition to petitions written by soldiers, wives who were attacked or assaulted also sent complaints to the Ministry of War. For example, Fatma from Adana petitioned the ministry complaining that she had been assaulted and robbed by fifteen men on her way to the city. During her journey to Adana for the purposes of work, the perpetrators stopped her, stole her money and earrings, and assaulted her sexually. She sent a telegram to the Ministry of War and signed it "a soldier's wife, Fatma." The Ministry of War passed her petition along to both the Ministry of the Interior Affairs and the Ministry of Justice on October 4, 1913.[37] The Ministry of the Interior Affairs forwarded the complaint to the provincial governor of Adana requesting an investigation. Another case shows that complaints by soldiers regarding the protection of their families were more effective than those by civilian members of the family. For instance, Arif bin Emin,

36 BOA. DH.H. 43/66 4 Nisan 1329 (17 April 1913). "Beyandan âzâde olduğu üzere efrâd-ı askeriye muhareminin her dürlü taarruzat ve tecavüzatdan masûn bulundurulmaları hükümetin de akdem-i vezâifinden olmağla…"

37 BOA. DH.H. 46/01 (04) 21 Eylül 1329 (21 September 1913).

a soldier, petitioned the Ministry of War complaining that local authorities in his hometown of Ürgüb had not heeded his sister Fatma's case.[38] Fatma had been attacked and raped by a certain Çir [*sic*] Ali and his companions. They cut Fatma's husband's fingers while he defended Fatma against the attackers. Fatma's four-month-old child died during the incident. The family had applied to local authorities, but no investigation had been initiated. Arif bin Emin, as a member of the military, submitted the case to the Ministry of War demanding justice for his sister. The Ministry of War passed the case on to the Ministries of Justice and Interior Affairs on October 30, 1913, asserting that such incidents have a negative impact on the morale of both the soldier whose family was involved and the battalion of which that soldier was a member.[39] Before the First World War, the Ministry of War passed these cases along to civilian authorities urging them to conduct investigations. Due to the bureaucratic exchanges involved in the process, investigations could last a long time. As the number of conscripted men increased during the First World War, leaving many women on the homefront without protection, the Ministry of War initiated more straightforward solutions to bypass such bureaucracy.

§ 4.2 In Search of State Protection: Who Will Protect the Honor of the Soldiers?

As discussed in chapter 3, the war brought about the expansion of military power throughout the country owing to the declaration of the martial law. At the beginning of the war, on January 3, 1915, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs issued a general order to all provinces which read: "We are informed that in some places, the families of those soldiers – our soldiers who are ready to die to protect the faith, honor, and homeland – are being attacked and assaulted in their hometowns. As it is not desirable to hear of such cases, the protection of soldiers' families is of great importance. Thus, such attacks should be

38 BOA. DH.H. 48/06 (026) 17 Te 1328 (30 October 1912).

39 Ibid. "efrâd ailelerinin bu misüllü tecavüzat ve ta'adiyata düçâr olmaları hem kendü üzerlerinde ve hem de mensub oldukları kıta'at-ı askeriyece ne derecelerde sûi tesir hâsıl eyleyeceği…"

prevented and those who dare to act to the contrary shall be arrested and summoned before the courts martial and condemned to severe penalties."[40] This general circular was issued even before the proclamation of the provisional law authorizing courts martial to handle sexual assault cases involving soldiers' families. This means the courts martial operated under an administrative measure (*idârî karar*) until the proclamation of the provisional law. On September 8, 1915, the Council of Ministers approved the official provisional law mandating that sexual assaults of members of soldiers' families be taken to courts martial. The text in the Ottoman Code Book (*Düstur*) provides a brief description of the provisional law. The law stipulated that in times of mobilization – during the proclamation and continuation of martial law – rapes and assaults against wives, children, or any female relatives of soldiers be tried by martial courts and punished according to Article 206 of the Penal Code.[41] The bill was not in accordance with usual procedure for such cases. Under usual circumstances, the punishment of civilians who assaulted soldiers' families was not under the jurisdiction of military authorities. Correspondence written by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs reads: "As a matter of fact, rape cases involving soldiers' wives or family members are not among military offenses. Nevertheless, it became necessary in the course of the war to investigate and punish those crimes in the military courts."[42] Military as well as civilian authorities might have thought that trials in courts martial would be more effective given that there was no supreme court above the military courts to reinvestigate the case. Their decisions were immediately applied. Thus, Ottoman authorities (especially the Ministry of War) attempted to prevent rape and violence targeting soldiers' families by authorizing the courts martial and

40 BOA.DH.EUM.MTK 79/34 1333 S 16 (3 January 1915).

41 "Seferberlikte idâre-i örfiyyenin ilân ve devamı müddetince berrü ve bahri erkân ve ümerâ ve zâbitan ve zabıt vekilleri ve zabıt namzetleri ve küçük zâbitan ve onbaşı ve neferât ve mensûbin-i askeriyenin zevce ve evlâdlarına ve ailelerinde bulunan mahremine karşı kânûn-i umûmî-i cezânın ikinci bâbının üçüncü faslıyla kânûn-u mezkurun iki yüz altıncı maddesinde münderic ef'alden birini irtikab edenlerin tâ'kib ve muhâkemesi divân-ı harblere aiddir." *Düstur*, Vol.2, No.7, 716.

42 BOA. DH. EUM. ADL 23/31, 26 Temmuz 1332 (8 August 1916). "asker aileleri ve muharemine tecavüz esasen askeri bir cürm olmayub ancak hal-i harbin tevellid ettiği bir zaruret üzerine tecavüzat-ı vakıanın takib ve muhakemesi dîvân-ı harblere tevdi' olunmuş…"

executing sentences more effectively. At this point, it is important to underline the role of individuals calling on the state to take measures against such cases and to point out the bilateral relationship behind the state's measures. The social background of wartime legislation and policies, in which moral considerations played an important role, transformed perspectives on the limits of the private and public spheres with regard to family.

Let me now examine the exchanges between soldiers' families and state authorities with respect to sexual assault. First, I present the voices of women through the petitions they submitted to legal authorities. Second, I discuss the petitions of soldiers' addressed to the Ministry of War or to the Ottoman Parliament regarding sexual assaults that their families had suffered. Third, I consider complaints filed by locals, *muhtars*, and village elders. Finally, I mention reports written by local military officers such as those of Recruiting Office Chiefs (*Ahz-ı Asker Riyaseti*) and Gendarmerie Commanders (*Jandarma Alay Kumandanlığı*).

Throughout the war, many women communicated with the government by submitting individual or collective petitions.[43] These petitions have been evaluated by several researchers from different perspectives.[44] In this study, I consider these petitions as sources through which the extent of sexual violence as part of the homefront dynamic can be ascertained. Women as well as soldiers used petitioning as an instrument to remind the state of its duty to protect honor (*namus*) and dignity (*şeref*). They explicitly held the state accountable for rapes, abductions, assaults, and threats, thus inviting the government

43 In the scope of this study I include only the petitions of Muslim women in Anatolia. For a study on the petitions of Armenian women, see Kutluata, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Ermeni Kadınların Yazdıkları Arzuhaller." For a study evaluating sexual assaults and rape crimes of Armenian women, see Bjornlund, "'A Fate Worse Than Dying': Sexual Violence during the Armenian Genocide."

44 Petitions are useful sources through which one can get an idea on people's demands from the government during the wartime. Many women submitted petitions to complain about privations, hunger, and other problems on the homefront. See Van Os, "Taking Care of Soldiers' Families: The Ottoman State and the Muinsiz Aile Maaşı," 103–104; Akın, "War, Women, and the State," 25–28; Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 122–178; Mahir Metinsoy, "Osmanlı Kadınlarının Gıda ve Erzak Savaşı," 56–61.

to take severe measures against the perpetrators of such offenses. As a result, the state gradually began intervening in the realm of the family. In part, this intervention was invited. However, it would be misleading to ignore the agency of military authorities to take strict measures as such affairs curbed the war effort.

The most common phrase in women's complaints regarding sexual assault is, in Ottoman Turkish, "ırzımızı paymal ettiler," meaning "they trampled our honor." Two women, Emine and her sister Havva from Akkilise, a village near the city of Konya, sent a telegram on November 24, 1915, directly to Talat Pasha, the Minister of the Interior Affairs.[45] They accused Captain Osman Ağa and his companions as rapists and aggressors who had trampled their honor. Emine and Havva said, "our husbands are fighting for the faith and the state, but here, Captain Osman Ağa's gangsters are raping us. We are sisters. They beat us and abducted us from our village."[46] The statement "fighting for the faith and the state" is a phrase commonly found in these petitions. Emine and Havva added something interesting at the end of their telegram: "For God's sake, please save us from these Muscovites."[47] By this, they equated an Ottoman military captain to those of the enemy nation.[48]

Another case exemplifies solidarity between families of soldiers with respect to a sexual assault that involved a war widow. Three women from İnegöl, Bursa, wrote a petition on December 25, 1914 to the president of Ottoman parliament addressing him as "father of our nation."[49] They informed him that a

45 BOA. DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1, (003) 11 Teşrinisani 1331 (24 November 1915). The letter begins with "we, the three of us, are soldiers' wives;" however, it was signed by only two women.

46 Ibid. "Üçümüz de asker karısıyız. Kocalarımız orada elyevm din devlet için muharebe ediyor fakat burada Yüzbaşı Osman ağanın çeteleri zorla bizim ırzımıza geçiyorlar. Biz iki kız kardeşiz. Köyümüzden döğerek tekmeliyerek başka köye götürdüler."

47 Ibid. "Allah aşkına bizi bu Moskoflardan kurtarınız."

48 Ibid. The second item of correspondence in this file was from the governor of Konya. The governor said that an investigation had been conducted about this case. He claimed that Captain Osman had been appointed to track bandits and that these petitions were meant to prevent him from doing so. Eventually, the martial court found him not guilty.

49 BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1, (102) 12 Kanunuevvel 1330 (25 December 1914). "Millet[in] babası efendimiz."

municipal council member from Bursa, Hacı Ahmed, had abducted a war widow, Ayşe, and taken her to his farm. These three women emphasized crucial points in their attempt to attract the attention of parliament. They employed key concepts of war propaganda such as protection of the faith, the nation, justice, and honor in their letter. Moreover, they wisely articulated the wartime circumstances with which soldiers' families were faced on the homefront. The letter begins: "We are at war with the enemies of Islam and faith. Our sons are being martyred. Their women are the honor of faith and fatherland."[50] These expressions equated their own situation with the honor of religion and the state and were among common phrases that can be found in such letters. They continued as follows:

> They took the widow of a martyr from İnegöl to Bursa promising to pay her a salary [family allowance]. They kept her at municipal council member Hacı Ahmed's farm. They raped her. They made her a whore. Hacı Ahmed has syphilis. Now this soldier's desperate widow has syphilis, too. She is still at Hacı Ahmed's place as a concubine.[51]

It is interesting that they used notions of honor, faith, and nation to defend Ayşe against a municipal official. The mention of venereal disease could also be a conscious means of stigmatizing Hacı Ahmed. In the next part of their letter, the women reminded the government of its promises at the beginning of the mobilization, and they finished their letter with a demand for justice.

> The honor of a soldier, honor of the faith and state have been destroyed. How can this happen? How does your dignity accept this? Will the homeland embrace the syphilitic man who took a Muslim woman as his concubine? For the love of God, please, avenge the honor of a Muslim martyr. We beg your mercy. In the newspapers we see the promises that our national assembly has made. God forgive you.

50 Ibid. "Cümle İslam din düşmanları ile muharebe ediyoruz. Evladlarımız muhârebede şehid oluyor. Haremleri din ve devlet namusudur."

51 Ibid. See Appendix C, Quotation 1.

> Investigate the cruelty of infidels who destroy honor. We want justice, dear sir.[52]

They signed the letter with reference to their own belonging to soldiers' families: wife of soldier, Ayşe; a soldier's mother-in-law, Fatma, and the widow of a martyr Medri [*sic*]. It is possible to interpret this solidarity as a signifier of the demand for justice for all soldiers' families which stemmed from fear that in the absence of their men, others in the town - officials, wealthy townsmen, or local military commanders – would be encouraged to attack soldiers' families if their vulnerability was exposed as such. By establishing relations between different connotations and notions, such as the reasons for the war as propagandized by the government itself – "protecting the state and faith" – and the state's promises to soldiers and their families, they sought justice for a widow, emphasizing her Muslim identity. Upon receiving this letter, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs sent it to the province of Hüdavendigar (Bursa) and asked for an investigation. The governor wrote a detailed answer which is worth quoting here.

> It was notified to our office that Ayşe bint-i Meryem was abducted and taken to the farm of a member of the municipal council, Hacı Ahmed, as a concubine. The aforementioned woman's husband did not return from the Balkan Wars and she was not welcomed into her mother-in-law's place. Therefore, she was drifted around, and at one point she went to Ankara and then to İnegöl, where she was accused of immorality together with another woman called Meryem. Thus, she was taken to Bursa again and was suspected of having a criminal [prostitution] background according to police and gendarmerie reports. Eventually, she began working for Hacı Ahmed Efendi as a servant where she is taken care of just like an adopted child. Since Hacı Ahmed Efendi discouraged her from prostitution, in our opinion it is better for her to stay there instead of wandering around vagrantly. Thus, our

52 Ibid. See Appendix C, Quotation 2.

police department decided there is no need to take Hacı Ahmed's case to court.[53]

Obviously, we cannot know which story is true, but it is unlikely that these three women who wrote to parliament had anything to gain by giving false or misleading information. Most probably they knew Ayşe from their town. The women considered each other's situations to be alike in the sense that they were all soldiers' families. They might have thought that once rumors emerged that widows, mothers, or any other relatives of soldiers were not under the protection of the government – and even worse, that the government turned a blind eye to abductions, rapes, and assaults – nothing would stop other men from taking advantage of this. In Ayşe's case, the government apparently turned a blind eye by leaving Ayşe at Hacı Ahmed's place instead of paying her an allowance.

Among the archival documents there are similar complaints filed by soldiers themselves. Apparently, their families informed them about such instances in letters asking for help. The soldiers deliberately reported these cases to the Ministry of War or to the Ottoman parliament. One interesting case involved a soldier's sister. Mustafa from the village of Kemer near the town of Salihli in Aydın province was a member of Second Army stationed in Edirne. Mustafa wrote a petition on January 9, 1915 to the Ministry of Justice to be conveyed to the president of the Ottoman parliament. In his letter he said that fifteen days earlier, townsmen raided his sister's house and attacked her. The perpetrators threatened her continuously after the event. He wrote that he had informed local authorities in Edirne and asked the office to inform the Ministry of Justice of the case. After a few days, he received another telegram from his sister saying that she was again attacked in the middle of the night and that other women in the neighborhood had rescued her. Mustafa wrote to the Edirne prosecutor once again and was told that because of the lack of gendarmerie forces in that village, the attackers had not been arrested. After detailing the negligence of local authorities, he continued his letter, reminding the

53 BOA.DH.EUM.2. Şb. 35/ 1, (104) 9 Şubat 1330 (22 February 1915). See Appendix C, Quotation 3.

Ottoman government and parliament of its promises at the beginning of the war regarding the protection of soldiers' families.

> Your honor, the declarations of the Deputies and the Notables Chamber addressing the military were read to our units on December 24, 1914. Here, I would like to write down those words as far as I remember. "The day of revenge that the whole nation, from elders to the young and from martyrs to the living, has been awaiting has come at last. You, together with our allies, are fighting against the Muscovites again, the biggest enemy of the Ottomans and the Muslims. Take revenge for those houses they burned, the wounds they opened, and the martyrs they stepped on. Do not ever think about the families you left behind. They are entrusted to us by God." Your honor! I expect only the protection of my sister's rights and the punishment for the perpetrators by our constitutional government of the Ottoman State.[54]

Mustafa almost quoted the declaration by the government that had been read in military units with special emphasis on the protection of families.[55] This implied the contract between the government and the soldier in which they were united on the idea of "protecting honor." Finally, Mustafa asked not only for the perpetrators to be punished but also the police officers in his town for their negligence. He continued, "[I ask you to punish them] because I am soldier. I cannot leave here and go there to follow up on this case. I can only entrust my family to the great conscience and justice of our government of the Constitutional Ottoman State with my best thoughts for the victory of our nation, army, and navy."[56] These lines indicate the basic contract between soldiers and the state regarding the protection of their families. Also, the way that

54 BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1, (92). 27 Kanunuevvel 1330 (4 January 1915). See Appendix C, Quotation 4.

55 For the original statement see *MMZC*, Term 3, Vol. 1, Year. 1, 21 December 1914, 26.

56 BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1 (92), 27 Kanunuevvel 1330 (4 January 1915). "Çünkü bendeniz askerim. Tâkib-i dâ'va için oralara kadar gidip intikam alamayacağımdan hükümet-i meşrûtî-yi Osmaniyemizin adaletine havale ederek milletimizin ordumuzun donanmamızın muzaffer olmasını niyâz ederek pek âlî olan vicdânınıza ailemi terk ederim."

he signed his letter in which he emphasized his Turkish identity is related to the same concern: "From the Second Army unit, yours, ready to renounce his life for the nation, son of Turk, soldier of the Turks."[57] In contrast to his bitter tone throughout, he added a desperate postscript to his letter: "As telegrams arrive [from my sister], I crave to commit suicide. I can't talk about this to any of my companions and will never do so…. My sister filed a complaint, as well, yet it seems that the police prosecutors did not pay attention to it. I present this case to your conscience and kiss your hands your honor, sir."[58] Finally, the Ministry of the Interior Affairs sent a notice to the province of Aydın asking them it to investigate the events. The province replied that the perpetrators were arrested but not taken to the court martial since the event occurred before the general order authorizating martial courts to protect soldiers' families.[59]

In some cases, Recruitment Offices (*ahz-ı asker şubeleri*) attempted to initiate investigations regarding assaults of soldiers' families with no official complaint from women or soldiers. For instance, on January 18, 1917, the Third Army Command (*Üçüncü Ordu Kumandanlığı*) reported that the office had carried out an investigation following gossip in the city that a certain Salih Beyzade Mehmed, a notable of from Tokat, had been seducing desperate women with the help of his own wife.[60] The commander stated that Salih "a man of dubious morals" sat behind curtains and doors and secretly watched the women who visited his wife at home. With the help of his wife and, the commander wrote, owing to the "women's weakness and factors of necessity" (*zaifiyet-i nisvan ve saike-yi zaruret*), he seduced those whom he fancied. Recently, the letter read, gossip had arrived to the commander that Salih had seduced the daughters of Osman Bey (who was a deceased colonel of the gendarmerie) in the same way. The commander sent his report to the Ministry of

57 Ibid. "ikinci ordu efradından milleti için hayatını vakf eylemiş olan Türk oğlu Türk askeri"

58 Ibid. "Telgraf geldikçe intihar edeceğim geliyor. Hiçbir asker arkadaşıma meseleyi açamıyorum ve açmayacağım.... Hemşirem da'va ettiği halde kaza-yı mezkur müddeî umûmi komiser bey nazar-ı ehemmiyete almadığı anlaşılıyor. Vicdan-ı selimiye yine havale ederek birader-i 'alilerinin ellerinden öperim efendim hazretleri.

59 BOA. DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1 (106) 12 Şubat 1330 (25 February 1915) .

60 BOA. DH. EUM. ADL. 32/28 (011) 1335 B 16 (8 May 1917).

War urging it to take action against those insulting the morality and honor of soldiers' families. He added that soldiers should be spared any worries regarding the honor of their families in order to stay focused on their military duties in battle. The commander requested the banishment of Salih as an administrative measure because current law did not apply to his case. However, gossip was not reason enough to enforce the law in Salih's case. The office of the governor of Sivas (the province of which Tokat was an administrative district) indicated this fact in correspondence addressed to Enver Pasha. The office concluded that despite the gossip regarding Salih's relationship with the daughters of Osman Bey, authorities were unable to prove it and no official complaints had been filed by the women.[61] Eventually, trial or administrative measure was taken against him. However, cases like this prompted discussions among civil and military officials about how to react to illicit relationships if no complaints of sexual assault were filed or if the relationship was established on a voluntary basis. Could or should military or civilian authorities intervene in such cases? This topic will be discussed under the heading of Adultery Bill in the following section.

Another source through which sexual assaults are revealed the weekly reports by local military authorities, especially gendarmerie forces, to the governors of their districts. For instance, the commander of gendarmerie regiment (*jandarma alay kumandanı*) in Hüdavendigar province reported four criminal cases in the districts (*liva*s) of Söğüt and Ertuğrul on December 30, 1915.[62] Two of the four were sexual assaults and the other two were cases of theft. One concerned an attack of five women, among whom was a soldier's wife, while they were on their way to Eskişehir together with the local headman (*muhtar*) of their village, Hasan Ağa, to go shopping. Some other armed villagers stopped them along the way, stabbed the *muhtar,* and raped the women. The attackers were arrested and summoned before the courts martial. Another case concerned Captain Süleyman, the Head of the Subsistence Office (*İaşe Memurluğu*), who was caught raping Ali Osman. (It was not indicated whether Ali Osman was a minor.) The document says Ali Osman was

61 Ibid.

62 BOA. DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1 (028) 17 Kanunuevvel 1331 (30 December 1915).

rescued; moreover, the captain had been previously caught having an affair with a woman. The subsistence offices were the main points from which food was distributed during the First World War. Apparently, Captain Süleyman used his position to abuse men (or boys) and women who were in need. There is plenty of evidence in the archives similar to the case of Captain Süleyman in which military officers themselves were accused of sexual assault.[63]

It is arguable that the Ottoman Anatolian countryside was in complete disorder due to the high number of rapes, abductions, and assaults against women in soldiers' families. The old codes of moral principles – the "collective guardianship" of morality – were shaken by the wartime circumstances, and apart from severe punishment no mechanism remained to protect soldiers' families from sexual exploitation.[64] This situation contributed to the perception of moral degeneration and social crisis (*ictimai buhran*) during and after the war. On the other hand, victims of such crimes called for action and held the state accountable for their vulnerability. Eventually, this contributed to the widening of the scope of state intervention in the sphere of family issues.

4.2.1 *Punishing Sexual Assaults: The Legal Process in Martial Courts*

It is easier to find the final decisions of sexual assault trials than the initial complaints or petitions that would more fully complete the story. As discussed earlier, starting in early 1915, the courts martial began trying sexual assault

63 For instance, in a telegram eleven men from Malatya complained to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs that their "honor was trampled by a few gendarmeries in the region" see BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1 (071) 18 Ağustos 1331 (31 Ağustos 1915). The ministry received not only cases of sexual assault, but also cases of property violation and homicide cases for which the members of the military were accused. For a homicide case in which two soldiers attacked and murdered two women, see BOA. BEO. 4495/337074 11 Kanunuevvel 1333 (11 December 1917); for a case of the violation of private property by gendarme and its investigation which was instigated upon the receipt of a telegram from five women (soldiers' wives) from Bursa, see BOA. DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1 (034). Eventually, the Directorate of Police issued a circular to all provinces on May 27, 1915, ordering that attacks on soldiers' properties be prevented. See BOA. DH. EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1 (142) 14 Mayıs 1331 (27 Mayıs 1915).

64 Ahmed Emin described traditional forms of moral surveillance of women in a neighborhood as "collective guardianship," see Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 232. See also chapter three on the issue of collective responsibility for protecting morality.

cases involving members of soldiers' families. Some exemplars in the archives demonstrate a pattern in the punishments of such offenses as well as the procedures of the military tribunals. The military courts tried rape and sex crimes according to the Ottoman Penal Code and forwarded their decisions to the Ministry of War. In most cases, Articles 206 and 198 were applied. While the former stipulated the punishment for rapes involving victims of fifteen years old or younger, the latter applied to rape cases that included abduction. The Minister of War, Enver Pasha approved the decisions to be issued as an imperial order (*irade-i seniyye*), generally on his own initiative. Once the decision was approved by imperial order, the Ministry of War executed it. The punishment for a rape crime involving a soldiers' female relative (usually his daughter or wife) was three years of hard labor. The offender faced harsher penalties if he had resorted to violence, caused damage (either physical and mental), or committed the rape together with another offense such as theft or breaking into private property. In such cases the punishment could increase to up to seven years of hard labor accompanied by the loss of one's civil rights (*hukûk-u medeniyyeden ıskat*) in addition to paying all the expenses of the witnesses and the court. As a general rule, court martial decisions included the public disclosure of the offender (*teşhir*) as part of the punishment. In some cases, soldiers themselves were the perpetrators of such crimes and were punished according to the Ottoman Penal Code as well as the Military Penal Code. The cases below illustrate the decisions in such tribunals.

The case of Menevişe [*sic*], a soldiers' wife from the village of Çakıl near the town of Harput, was brought before the martial court in Elaziz. A certain Hacı Ibrahim was accused of breaking into her house and raping her. The court sentenced him to three years of hard labor based on Artile 198 of the penal code. The decision was approved by an imperial order on May 20, 1916. The Ministry of War was the executor of the order.[65] In another case, the Konya court martial tried a certain Hacı Hüseyin for the abduction and defloration of Feride, the sister of the soldier Mehmed. Hacı Hüseyin was sentenced in absentia to death – moreover, the confiscation of his property was ordered –

65 BOA. İ. DUİT 171/12 7 Mayıs 1332 (20 Mayıs 1916).

according to the Article 206 of the penal code. The court decision arrived at the grand vizierate signed by Enver Pasha. The vizierate approved the court decision but decided to retry Hacı Hüseyin upon his arrest.[66] In another case, Dimitri was sentenced to three years of hard labor after he was accused of raping a fourteen-year-old daughter of a soldier.[67] In another case, a Circassian refugee named Hasan broke into a soldier's wives house in the night and raped her. The court martial of Izmir sentenced him to seven years of hard labor based on the Article 198 of the Penal Code, relieved him of his civil rights, and charged him court expenses together with the expenses of witnesses (amounting to 249 piasters).[68] In another case, a certain İbrahim abducted a soldier's wife and raped her.[69] He was sentenced to the same punishment as Hasan. In a case of abduction and rape, the court martial of Ankara sentenced a perpetrator to five years of hard labor.[70] The court martial of Ankara sentenced two townsmen accused of raping Azime, a soldier's wife, to three years of hard labor.[71] However, if rape was not accompanied by abduction or breaking and entering, the standard punishment was three years of hard labor.

In a case before the Izmir martial court, the perpetrator was a soldier while the victim was the wife of another soldier. A labor battalion sergeant named İsmail had raped Cemile, the wife of the soldier Veli, and the court sentenced him to five years of hard labor according to Article 198 of the penal code, demoted his military rank, and relieved him of his civil rights.[72] There are many cases in which soldiers were the perpetrators of rapes ranging from statutory rape to forced intercourse with fellow townswomen. They were sentenced to heavy penalties such as the confiscation of their property, dismissal from duty (in the case of homosexuality), and the standard penalty of hard labor.[73]

66 BOA. İ. DUİT. 174/20 2 Haziran 1333 (2 Haziran 1917).

67 BOA. İ. DUİT. 173/59 21 Teşrinievvel 1332 (3 November 1916).

68 BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/99 9 Temmuz 1332 (22 July 1916).

69 BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/68 26 Haziran 1332 (9 July 1916).

70 BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/10 7 Mayıs 1332 (20 May 1916).

71 BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/28 11 Mayıs 1332 (24 May 1916).

72 BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/7 27 Mayıs 1332 (9 June 1916).

73 For such cases see, BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/41 11 Mayıs 1332 (24 May 1916) , İ.DUİT. 171/35 18 Mayıs 1332 (31 May 1916), İ. DUİT. 171/33 15 Mayıs 1332 (28 May 1916).

For an example of an adultery case – intercourse with the consent of both parties – Hatice's trial in the Ankara martial court can be examined. A soldier's wife, Hatice, was involved in consensual intercourse with Osman, a fellow townsman from her village of Kuruçay. She became pregnant, and in order not that it not be revealed, she committed feticide. The martial court in Ankara sentenced Hatice to fifteen years of hard labor on June 22, 1917, based on Article 174 of the penal code.[74]

These cases are abundant in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives. The main duty of the martial courts was to ensure that the current Ottoman Penal Code was thoroughly applied; it was not to introduce new law on the punishment of sexual assault. The involvement of the Ministry of War indeed served this purpose as it was actively involved in the trial processes.

§ 4.3 Punishing "Unfaithful" Wives: The Adultery Bill of 1916

Cases of infidelity involving soldiers' wives was a major concern in combatant countries. Although these cases were treated as crimes, infidelity and adultery are mutually established relationships, and thus there is no victim. As Lisa M. Todd stated in her article on German women and sexual infidelity, this kind of relationship troubled German authorities:

> As we have seen again and again, whether in reports of a teenager flirting with soldiers in Düsseldorf or a married woman sneaking around with a Russian in Regensburg, it was not so much the sexual activity that disturbed Germans, it was the fact that many of these women were entering affairs of their own free will - engaging in intimate activities because they wanted to, not out of marital or financial obligation.[75]

The imagery of wives who were "enjoying their lives" openly contradicted the service that was expected from them.

During the First World War, a remarkable measure by combatant countries to protect morality was to segregate women on the homefront from

74 BOA. İ. DUİT. 171/66 22 Haziran 1332 (5 Temmuz 1916).

75 Todd, "'The Soldier's Wife Who Ran Away with the Russian,'" 277.

prisoners of war (POWs) and from soldiers that arrived from the colonies. In Germany, radical measures were taken to prevent the interaction of women with POWs working in industry or agriculture, such as declaring the names of "immoral" women in newspapers and taking legal measures beyond public sanctions.[76] Based on the Prussian Siege Law of 1851, German authorities introduced measures to prevent contact between POWs and civilians. Todd stated that thousands of German women were arrested as a result of relationships with POWs.[77] Furthermore, on the local level, the names of these "promiscuous" women were posted on the church doors as public humiliation. German authorities identified these cases of "moral decline" in German society with "national decline."

> One reason for this tendency to conflate female licentiousness and national decline was the pervasive, albeit contested, bourgeois code of sexual behavior and separate spheres, both of which were predicated on the innate purity and sobriety of women. For many Germans, 'Deutsche Frau - Deutsche Treue' was more than a truism. The immoral behavior of war wives seemed to challenge that image. Wartime reports increasingly complained that "the scandalous behavior of German women is starting to tarnish our reputation abroad." One of the roles of the wartime German woman was to express the gravity of the situation at the front by the seriousness of their activities on the homefront. Women's chief tasks therefore included preserving the moral bedrock of society on which to build a successful postwar nation.[78]

In another context, the war was characterized by fear of the "mixture of races" due to the mobilization of men in the colonies. Black troops in the United States and the French colonial army were considered threats to the preservation of morality on the homefront. Nonwhite troops were isolated from white ones even in their place of work. Especially in France, Senegalese troops were

76 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 67. Todd called this situation "press pillory." See Todd, "'The Soldier's Wife Who Ran Away with the Russian,'" 269.

77 Todd, "'The Soldier's Wife Who Ran Away with the Russian,'" 264.

78 Ibid., 271.

both praised for their skill as warriors, but at the same time these "savage qualities made them a potential sexual and moral threat to the French civilians."[79] A similar attitude was present in the British army vis-à-vis Indian troops. It was feared that the war would eliminate established inequalities between white women and Indian men.[80] Not only men but also the women of colonized regions were a danger. An Australian government minister declared that "Cairo will do infinitely more harm to Australia than all the Turks will do in Gallipoli."[81] Race and nation appeared as further standards for moral control.

In the Ottoman Empire, the connotations of adultery were similar to those in other major combatant countries with respect to moral decline. However, the concerns did not result from interaction among foreign nationals or POWs with Ottoman women. Mostly it was due to the consensual relationships of soldiers' wives. In this regard, I evaluate a legislative attempt by the Ottoman Ministry of War that indicates the growing concern for preventing adultery among the female relatives of soldiers, particularly their wives. I believe that this attempt has remained unexplored because the bill was not enacted. However, this detail does not change the fact that such an attempt by itself importantly reveals the extent of the "problem" and the willingness of the military to intervene in sexuality in the name of protecting family.

Almost a year after the martial courts were authorized to try sexual assault cases involving soldiers' families, a new debate started concerning the authorization of Military Chiefs of the Recruitment Offices (*ahz-ı asker şube-yi reisi*) and high-ranking commanders to litigate in adultery (*fi'il-i şen'i*) cases – that is to say, whether military men should be able to file complaints and initiate a legal process on behalf of soldiers against their unfaithful wives. On April 26, 1916, the Ministry of War presented a draft of a new provisional law that supplements the earlier one regarding the protection of soldiers' families. The draft read,

> according to Article 201 of the Penal Code, adultery charges can be brought only by the husband, or by parents (legal guardians) in the

79 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, 74.

80 Ibid., 76.

81 Ibid., 72.

> husband's absence. If no complaints are filed by these parties, the martial courts cannot undertake an investigation. The fact that soldiers fighting on the battlefront or taken as prisoners of war have no means to file complaints raises the issue of the morale of soldiers. And because allowing soldiers' female relatives who commit adultery to go unpunished would provoke protests in the public opinion, a bill appears to be vital that would substitute the complaints of husbands or parents with those of the highest ranking military commanders and the Chiefs of Recruitment Offices in order to protect the honor of soldiers.[82]

Although the bill was not enacted, debate over the bill strikingly relates to the morality concerns. On one hand, initiatives taken by the Ministry of War enlarged the purview of public realm, bringing private cases under the jurisdiction of martial courts. On the other, once this distinction between public and private was blurred, the notion within Ottoman law on family affairs – which strictly defined the boundaries of private and public matters – was invalidated. From this point of view, morality, honor, and family cases stood in the center between public and private law.

Again, the context of war is crucial for making sense of military intervention in such a delicate issue. The possible grounds for this intervention can be summarized as follows: First, many women who seeking financial help or a means of protection engaged in extramarital relationships, or else they were encouraged to have such relationships as a fate better than prostitution. Second, rumors of unfaithful wives deeply affected the morale of soldiers and in many cases resulted in their desertion. Third, the lack of protection for soldiers' families, especially for women, discredited the propaganda of the Ottoman government during the First World War. For example, leaflets dropped by British planes provoked soldiers by mentioning unfaithful wives and hungry children on the homefront.[83] Of course, not all extramarital relationships were the result of wartime hardship; there were consensual relationships in the absence of dominant males. The draft law on adultery was aimed at

82 BOA. BEO. 4430/332225 13 Nisan 1332 (26 April 1916). See Appendix C, Quotation 5.

83 Quoted in: Akın, "The Ottoman Home Front during World War I," 161.

preventing such voluntary relationships by charging the military with the policing morality.

The draft required approval of the Council of State to be enacted. The Council of State consulted with the Ministry of Justice on the feasibility of such a regulation. Eventually, the Ministry of Justice prepared a detailed inquiry into the possible consequences of the bill and concluded that it was not proper to issue it as a law. The statement of the Ministry of Justice argued that adultery offenses belong to the realm of private law, but the bill prepared by the Ministry of War would bring the issue into the purview of criminal law. This point was central to the issue of the legal and social status of soldiers' female relatives. Is the promise to protecting families valid in cases where the woman was in a voluntary relationship with other man? If so, whose rights should be protected: those of the women or the soldiers?

The Ministry of Justice listed two main arguments against the bill. The first issue concerned the elimination of the agency of husbands. Accordingly, if local military officials could be litigants, this would result in ignoring the rights of the husband to claim or disclaim charges made on his behalf. Second, the statement emphasized the "nature of adultery" with reference to "moral degeneration." It was asserted that moral degeneration does not appear suddenly; therefore, it needs to be observed over time. According to the statement, only the close relatives of a woman can ascertain moral degeneration and take action accordingly. The only person to decide whether to file a complaint and consider it thoroughly is the husband, because he is the only one who knows the bitter consequences of accusing his wife of adultery. Thus, the husband was expected to behave meticulous enough to bring the case to the court. The statement bitterly criticized the adultery bill in the sense that it substituted litigators (husband or parents) with military authorities, thus forcing prosecution offices to try women who had allegedly committed adultery. Under usual conditions, if someone other than the husband or parents informed prosecutors of adultery cases, their claims would remain as an act of informing, *ihbar*. However, if the draft were accepted and military authorities gained the right to open cases on behalf of husbands or parents, prosecution offices would have to charge the woman immediately. The military was seeking the right to be the sole authority over the control of extramarital relationships, as

if it were a party to – that is, "victim of" – the crime. Accordingly, transferring adultery cases from private to criminal law would result in conflicts. The Ministry of Justice clearly noted that while private cases can be dropped by the decision of the litigator, public cases remain open until a final decision is made. The statement also referred to the elimination of the power of civilian authorities. While a mechanism of denunciation was in effect for adultery cases in which prosecutors had discretionary power to decide whether a case should be taken to court, the draft law proposed that the complaints – *şikayet* – of military officials were equivalent to those of husband or parents. Therefore, the discretionary power of civilian authorities would be eliminated. Another point of objection was that the bill contradicted the principle of "unity of law." It would apply only to a certain social group in specific cases. For these reasons, the Ministry of Justice opposed the adultery bill. The Council of Ministers, deferring to the reports of the Ministry of Justice and the Council of State, rejected the draft law proposed by the Ministry of War.[84] For our purposes, the draft shows the willingness of military authorities to regulate male/female relationships based on concerns about protecting morality so that these relationships would not harm mobilization efforts.

My contention is that the authorization of military courts to try sexual assaults of soldiers' female relatives was the beginning of subsequent interventions into the family during the First World War. It was followed by unsuccessful legislation – the Adultery Bill – and continued with a more deliberate step: the Family Decree of 1917. The objections of the Ministry of Justice summarized above would partly be eliminated in the legislation on family formation and dissolution.

§ 4.4 The Ottoman Rights of Family Decree of 1917

The Ottoman Rights of Family Decree of 1917 (*Hukuk-u Aile Kararnamesi*) is among the most controversial legislation of the war. First, its content and particularly its articles regarding women's right to divorce constitute an ongoing

84 BOA. MV. 203/34 1334 Za 15 (13 Eylül 1916).

debate in the literature.[85] Second, the timing of the introduction of family reform raises an important question: why did Ottoman governments bypass family reform in the age of the Tanzimat and introduce it only during the turmoil of the First World War?[86] The literature on the Family Decree has emphasized two dynamics in answer to this question: one, the ruling party benefited from wartime conditions and issued a family law that had long been on its agenda, and two – less emphasized in the literature –wartime conditions necessitated the profound change in state intervention in the realm of the family. To present a balanced view, it is possible to claim both are true. The family issue and reform had been on the agenda of intellectuals since the mid-nineteenth century, but the social conditions that war brought about constituted the foundation for family reform. The war affected many families, caused great disturbances in the formation and dissolution of families, and diminished the basic functions of the family. A recent study by Nihan Altınbaş argues that social conditions were central to legislation on the family.[87] She considers the modernist motives of the ruling party in addition to the expectations of Muslim middle-class women including the construction of the nuclear family among the reasons for the introduction of a family law. She also mentions that the new family law allowed remarriage for lower-class women who had lost their husbands, by which they could make a living, constituting another

85 For instance, Judith Tucker concentrated on whether the Family Law was a step towards gender equality and the limitation of male social power. She compared the old and new regimes with regard to marital rights, marriage obligations, and female-initiated divorce in Ottoman Syria and Palestine. She concluded that the Ottoman Family Law of 1917 did not expand women's right to divorce because the previous application of the Hanafi doctrine was already quite flexible. See Tucker, "Revisiting Reform." A comprehensive review of the literature on the Family Decree of 1917 is beyond the scope of this study. For a survey of this literature, see Altınbaş, "Marriage and Divorce in Early Twentieth Century Ottoman Society: The Law of Family Rights of 1917," 2–9.

86 This question, as far as I could tell, was posed in one of the first accounts of the Family Decree: Fındıkoğlu, "Aile Hukukumuzun Tedvini Meselesi." In fact, during the Tanzimat era several steps were taken by the government to remove the burden of traditions such as "brideprice" from marriage ceremonies. See Alkan, "Tanzimat'tan Sonra 'Kadın'ın Hukuksal Statüsü," 90–91; Ortaylı, "Ottoman Family Law and the State in the Nineteenth Century," 327.

87 Altınbaş, "Marriage and Divorce in the Late Ottoman Empire," 114–125.

reason for the introduction of the family law.[88] İlber Ortaylı's article evaluates the Family Decree within the context of legal developments and the adoption of a modern legal system throughout the nineteenth century.[89] He considers the Family Decree to be part of the attempts at standardization by the Ottoman government (since the decree embraced all subjects of the Ottoman Empire regardless of religious affiliation) starting from the time of Mahmud II.[90] He emphasizes the role of modernist ideology in such institutional changes. "Changes in such institutions as marriage, divorce and inheritance oftentimes were surprisingly far-reaching. The essential importance of these changes lies in the presence behind them of a modernist ideology and of a debate supporting that ideology."[91] Accordingly, the Family Decree was a "natural outgrowth" of other financial and administrative reforms as well as social and legal changes initiated by the Tanzimat bureaucracy which brought about a new perspective on the family as a financial unit to be controlled and inspected by the state.[92] On the other hand, other scholars emphasize the religious nature of the decree – the articles were adapted from the four main Sunni schools – and claim that due to the religious underpinning of the legislation, it is misleading to evaluate it within the context of attempts at modernization. Fındıkoğlu argues against this line of thought and presents the abolishment of the decree in 1919 upon the opposition of both Muslims and non-Muslim religious scholars as proof that the decree was neither welcomed nor accepted as a "religious" text.[93] The religious underpinning of the legislation, according to him, as well as to other scholars, was just a means of eliminating religious opposition and legitimizing the legislation.[94]

Instead of dealing with these questions, I direct my attention to aspects that situate family reform in the wider context of discourses of moral decline. To this end, the following pages answer two questions: How did critiques of

88 Ibid., 116.

89 Ortaylı, "Ottoman Family Law and the State in the Nineteenth Century."

90 Ibid., 321–322.

91 Ibid., 322.

92 Ibid., 324.

93 Fındıkoğlu, "Aile Hukukumuzun Tedvini Meselesi," 709.

94 Aydın, *İslâm-Osmanlı Aile Hukuku*, 178.

dominant social values and norms play a role in the introduction of family reform? How were moral concerns and the idea of regenerating the family reflected in the legislation? To address the latter, I use the justificatory text (*esbâb-ı mucibe lâyihası*) together with the body of the legislation, while to answer the former, I present critical voices in the late Ottoman intelligentsia that paved the way for fruitful debate on the limits of Islamic Law and the role of social norms in Ottoman Muslim family formation.

4.4.1 *Mores and Laws*

As mentioned earlier, the discourse on moral decline was associated with a so-called family crisis in the late Ottoman context. A close look at the works of late Ottoman intellectuals reveals narratives mostly centered on family and the relationships between men and women. The themes of the emancipation of women, family tragedy, critique of over-Westernization along with critique of backwardness were endemic to Ottoman literary works.[95] The destructive effect of war was reflected in themes calling for urgent discussion of national revival. A national revival was only possible by modernizing the family; however, the social values and superstitions of the society stood in the way. The main point of this theme is as follows: The ways of forming families (segregating women and men until marriage is realized) weakens the foundations of the family resulting in an unhappy marriage. Spouses remain bound to each other because divorce is not welcomed in the society. This unhappy environment such couple's children who reproduce this unhappiness in every sphere of their lives. The values of such families have no rational basis; roles and responsibilities of family members are not defined. The children are not sufficiently educated within the family (due to the early marriage or simple

95 For a good summary of these literary works, see Mardin, "Super Westernization in Urban Life in the Ottoman Empire in the Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century." For an epistemological evaluation of Tanzimat novels, see Parla, *Babalar ve Oğullar*. In Cem Behar and Alan Duben's work one can follow how family tragedies were reflected in the narratives of the turn-of-the-century novelists. See *Duben and Behar, Istanbul Households*. Also see Zafer Toprak's analysis of novels focused on family and women in the context of the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century: Toprak, *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm* (1908-1935).

ignorance of the parents), and they reproduce the same problems in their own families.

The crisis of family came to be associated with the crisis of morality because the foundations of the family as an institution are integral to the values of a given society. For instance, what prevented women and men from getting to know each other before marriage? The answer is the moral codes of the society. What prevented women from taking an active role in Ottoman public space? Why did Muslim women not work outside their homes in the cities? These questions are multiple, but the answer is more or less the same. Eventually, norms had to change in order to regenerate the Ottoman family and strengthen the idea of family reform. The Family Decree is a result of these concerns attempting to change the perception of morality, recognize the "will" of women, and define duties and rights, both of which are strongly related to morality. The First World War revealed hideous realities and functioned as an engine for legal and perceptional change in the realm of the family. But how does one change the norms that constitute the basis of lawmaking? Islamic Law had claimed the realm of the family for hundreds of years; how could secular powers intervene in this sphere without provoking an enormous reaction? I believe two factors played important roles: first, new interpretations of lawmaking in Islam, and second, the discourse of the salvation of the nation. While the former enabled the possibility of reform in the family, the latter strengthened it by emphasizing wartime circumstances and linking the well-being of the family with that of the nation. The persistence idea was that the degeneration of Muslim families – and thus the foundation of Muslim society – had occurred to an extent that family reform was inevitable.

Without intellectual debates challenging traditional sources of law, family reform was impossible. The advocates of family reform, most of whom were Turkish nationalists, agreed on the superiority of Islamic Law and spoke within a theological framework. They took mores (*örf*) that had prevailed in old Turkish communities as significant inputs for lawmaking. This, indeed, increased the tension between the Islamists and nationalists. Both the Islamists and nationalists shared the assumption that Muslim civilization was in decline. Both agreed on the need for reforms to overcome this problem. According to Berkes, the core of the debate was to identify the limits of Islamic Law

so that areas for reform could be clearly defined. Berkes states that "in spite of their docility and progressiveness," the Islamists opposed to limiting the areas covered by Şeriat because the "real Şeriat, they knew, was shielded by a thick cultural crust containing elements ranging from the form of government to the mode of cleaning one's teeth."[96] For Islamists there were no areas that Islamic Law excludes. Indeed, the debate was of fundamental importance in critical years on which the fate of the empire depended.

Ziya Gökalp, the chief theorist of the nationalists and a well-known advocate of family reform, formulated his thoughts on the idea that mores (*örf*) have an important place in the codification of Islamic Law.[97] By giving examples from the history of the Islam (including its early years) as well as from the golden age of the Ottoman Empire, he emphasized the major role of mores upon which the rulers relied. Contrary to Islamists arguments on the need for a "pure" adaptation of Islamic Law, he reserved a space for mores in lawmaking in order to realize family reform. He claimed that mores should be regarded as equally important as classical sources of Islamic Law in order that the law be widely accepted in society. By attaching importance to the "words of the rulers," he sought to eliminate the "divine" interpretation upon which Islamic scholars relied. Emphasizing the need for change, he stated the importance of new values for shaping the new codification. Inevitably, these values needed to be compatible with the modern world and the social realities of Ottoman society. Mansurizade Said, who was a professor of jurisprudence, strengthened the thesis of Gökalp regarding the authority of legislators over the sanction or prohibition of polygamy in Islam.[98] It is possible to argue that

96 Ibid.

97 He coined the term *ictimâî usûl-u fıkh* as a method of harmonizing religious interpretation with social needs and customs in society. Accordingly, he claimed the customs and needs should be more central in lawmaking. See the discussion between Islamists and Turkists on the sources of lawmaking: Şener, "İctimai Usul-i Fıkh Tartışmaları." Also see Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*.

98 Mansurizade wrote: "Just as neither telegraphs nor telephones need a fatwa, nor are they subject to any sharia provision, the sharia could not prescribe permissibility in matters of marriage, divorce, and polygamy. The legislator can very well enact laws on them in accordance with the desires of the nation and of the age." See Mansurizade Said. "Taaddüd-ü Zevcat

this debate over the sources of law, the authority of legislators, and the compatibility of the law with modern times paved the way for the Family Decree. As the old moral order was in decline, progressive norms and values in the shape of mores acted as principles of lawmaking.

On the other hand, discourses on the relationship between the regeneration of family and that of the nation constituted another point of departure in the justification of family reform. Similar assertions were made during the Balkan Wars in the Ottoman press. Eyal Ginio's work on the Ottoman culture of defeat in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars presents how feelings of revenge and loss of honor were combined with discourses on national awakening and the renewal of the nation.

> Frequently aired in the Ottoman literature of defeat were the notions of awakening and renewal. These keywords involved a far-reaching reappraisal of Ottoman politics and society that would include a reformulation of the most basic definitions and categorizations of Ottoman community. Regeneration of the Ottoman nation seemed to many Ottoman authors the only way to emerge from the disaster. Under exceedingly difficult circumstances related to the catastrophe in the Balkans, they were now contemplating a new and better future for the Ottoman nation. To convince the people to regenerate it was necessary to awaken them (*intibah*).[99]

In the "Ottoman literature of defeat," the regeneration of the nation was not independent of that of the family and of women.[100] For commentators, social reform was necessary for political success. A contemporary woman writer, Mükerrem Belkıs, explicitly argued that remaining ambivalent about demolishing old customs – particularly insisting on the segregation of the sexes until

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İslamiyette Men Olunabilir," *İslam Mecmuası*, No. 8, (1914), 233-38. Also discussed in Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 391.

99 Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat*, 131.

100 Ibid., 121.

marriage – amounted to treason.[101] The discourses on "saving the nation" during both the Balkan Wars and the First World War were a pretext to demand state intervention in the family sphere. Serpil Çakır shows that contemporary women writers correlated defeat on the battlefield with desperation at home – that is, with the environment in which the soldiers grew up.[102] In this line of thought, happiness in the family was key to success in battle. One of the major arguments Ziya Gökalp makes in his series of articles on the family morality was that the principle of equality in politics can only be realized if equality in the family is established.[103] According to him, the Family Decree was an outcome of this concern.

As discussed earlier, the war tested the vulnerability of Ottoman Muslim families to the burdens of war. Especially in the countryside, increasing numbers of adultery, abduction, and rape cases strengthened this view. A close look at the articles of the Family Decree as well as its justificatory text (*esbâb-ı mucibe lâyihası)* allows us to interpret the rationale behind the decree and to establish links between discourses of moral decline and the need for family reform. First, a serious problem in the countryside regarding the formation of families was marriages made under coercion that were generally followed by abductions (particularly of minor girls). Tüccarzade addressed this problem which for him signified moral decline in the provincial areas. "We are aware of the conditions in the big cities. It is also not good what is happening in even the small towns of Anatolia. There, most cases [of moral decline] manifest themselves in the shape of abductions of girls and adultery."[104] Article 57 of the Family Decree attempted to prevent such marriages by invalidating marriage contracts signed under coercion. The justificatory memorandum (*esbab-ı mucibe layihası)* gives clues about how this article came to be introduced.

101 "Vatanın selameti için yapılacak bu teşebbüslerde evham vatana hıyanetliktir." Mükerrem Belkıs, "Muzur Adetleri Yıkmak Farzdır," *Kadınlar Dünyası*, No: 83, 1329 (1913), 2.

102 Çakır, "Meşrutiyet Devri Kadınlarının Aile Anlayışı."

103 Ziya Gökalp, "Aile Ahlakı-3: Konak," *Yeni Mecmua*, No: 12-17, 1917.

104 "Büyük şehirlerimizde cereyan eden ahvâl meçhulumuz değil. Anadolu'da en küçük kasabalara kadar cereyan eden ahvâl de pek iyi değil. Ora mehâkiminde cereyan eden deavinin nısfından ziyadesi kız kaçırmak, fi'il-i şen'i vukûatı teşkil ediyor." Tüccarzade, "Aile Hayatımızda Avrupalılaşmanın Tesiri," 234.

> Many Muslim women have been abducted and forced violently to marry unworthy people, and the attempts of families to save these girls have failed, thus resulting in huge disasters. On the other hand, the doctrine of İmam Şafii opposes such marriages; therefore, [it] was adopted in Article 57 to prevent such misconduct.[105]

Previously, the Hanefi school accepted even marriages contracted under coercion.[106]

Second, the Family Decree addressed the problem of adolescent education in the family. As the *esbâb-ı mûcibe layihası* puts it, early marriage was one main reason for the "degeneration of the Muslim community" (*İslam unsurunun tedennîsi*) in Ottoman society. "Less-educated" adolescents make a family and establish a lifestyle without being capable of controlling it. Strikingly, the *esbâb-ı mâcibe lâyihası* underscored wartime as the moment of breakdown when family formation and family life in Ottoman society became unsustainable.

> Although the authorities of Islamic law endorsed the marriages of children arranged by their tutors and such marriage contracts were conducted up to now, given the changing conditions in our era, a different attitude is deemed necessary. That is to say, in every era, and above all in this era in which the struggle to survive has become extreme, the first duty of parents to their children should be to educate them and raise them to be strong in this world of battles and to form a proper family, but our parents keep neglecting education and the instruction of their children, either to see them marry or – that they gain inheritance rights – to arrange marriage contracts when the kids are in the cradle. Eventually, these poor children who are ignorant of the world are married and their catastrophic future is determined in marriage ceremonies. These children who never attended a school, cannot read or write in their native language, do not know the principles of

105 "Münakahat ve Müfarakat Kararnamesi Esbab-ı Mucibe Layihası." See Appendix C, Quotation, 6.

106 Aydın, *İslâm-Osmanlı Aile Hukuku*, 192.

> religion, are establishing families that are born to die, condemned to decompose in the first months of the marriage. This is one of the reasons why families in our country are not established on strong foundations.[107]

The *esbab-ı mucibe layihası* emphasized concerns for the marriage of minor girls in particular.

> The wife and husband, in constituting a family and managing it, shall act together. While boys are allowed to spend time playing in the streets, girls of the same age are overwhelmed by the greatest burden in human society: being a mother and the manager of a family. These poor girls, whose physical constitution is not yet sufficiently complete to be a mother, live in misery all their lives and suffer anxiety. The children to which they give birth are vulnerable and nervous, causing the gradual degeneration of the Muslim community.[108]

For the first time in the history of the Ottoman Empire, the decree recognized adolescents as new category. Previously, Sharia law acknowledged only two categories: childhood and adulthood. The law forbade the marriage of children under a certain age irrespective of the consent of their families. This age limit was twelve for boys and nine for girls, and the age for independent marriages without consent of the families was seventeen for women and eighteen for men. In this way, not only were child marriages prevented, but an intended change in family norms was triggered. The family had to educate children and prepare them for the future. This was the formulation that was believed would improve the standards of Muslim families and thus of the Ottoman nation.

The problem of remarriage was another issue that related the Family Decree to discourses on morality. Since marriages were not registered in Islam and were maintained only as a verbal promise, the only proof of marriage was the testimony of witnesses. In their absence, women or their families might claim that she was not married. The *esbâb-ı mûcibe lâyihası* particularly

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107 "Münakahat ve Müfarakat Kararnamesi Esbâb-ı Mûcibe Lâyihası." See Appendix C, Quotation, 7.

108 Ibid. See Appendix C, Quotation 8.

emphasized the situation of women who remarried while she already had a husband. Women or their families might take advantage of the absence of husbands due to the war and establish (or in some cases be forced to establish) new marriage contracts for various reasons. By means of the decree, the government sought to control marriage contracts by charging courts with the task of announcing the marriage before judges and finalizing the marriage contract in the absence of objections. So far, scholars have interpreted this point in the legislation as an attempt to standardize marriage and control over population. However, as can be seen in the *esbâb-ı mûcibe lâyihası,* the real reason behind this measure was to prevent remarriages which had become widespread especially in the countryside. "Many frauds have occurred due to the lack of a proper way of making such an important contract, thus resulting in the remarriages of women despite the Sharia's orders. Therefore, the Article 37 is being introduced."[109]

Such remarriages binding women to another man in the absence of her husband were arranged by village elders or relatives.[110] As far as I could find in the archives, letters arrived to various offices from soldiers as well as their wives claiming that married women were forced to marry again (or sometimes willingly did so) in the absence of their husband during the Balkan Wars.[111] In order to prevent this, marriages had to be registered so that the rights of the

109 Ibid. "böyle mühim bir akdin intizam dairesinde cereyan etmemesinden pek çok yolsuzluklular husûle gelmiş ve mevâni-i şeriyyesi olan nice kadınların icra-yı akd ile eşhas-ı sairenin ibtal-i hukuku cihetine gidilmiştir. 37inci madde bu yüzden konuldu."

110 Celal Nuri addressed this problem in his work *Kadınlarımız* (Our women) in 1911. According to him, the vast autonomy of the husband in Islamic Law contributed to the degeneration of Muslim families. As there were no legal impositions such as civil law limiting the authority of the husband in cases of divorce, remarriage, and illegitimate children, the family remained in disarray, see Nuri, *Kadınlarımız*.

111 For instance, on April 17, 1913 a certain Aişe wrote a petition from Kastamonu claiming that village elders were forcing her to marry someone else since she had not received news from her husband who had been in the military service for a while. Although this case was during the Balkan Wars, such instances presumably increased during the First World War, see DH.H. 43/61 4 Nisan 1329 (17 April 1913). In another case, a soldier claimed that his fiancee had been forced to marry, and he asked an official investigation. The Ministry of the Interior Affairs decided to investigate the roles of the imam, *muhtar* and village elders and to punish them, see DH.H. 47/63 27 May 1913.

husband as well as those of the wife could be preserved in the circumstances of war. The registry would also include information about the *mehr*, the amount to be paid to the woman in case of divorce in order to guarantee her livelihood. Moreover, another article was introduced to allow the remarriage of those women who had lost their husbands at war or whose husbands had gone missing in the course of the war. Accordingly, if a husband is lost during the war, the wife will be considered out of wedlock after the combatant countries sign the armistice and one year passes after the prisoners of war on both sides go back to their homeland. If a woman married without following this rule and her first husband reappeared, her second marriage was invalidated. If she did follow the rule and the husband, who was considered to have died during the war, appeared later on, the second marriage would still be invalidated. Those who married or witnessed the marriage of already married women would be sentenced to imprisonment of up to three years.

Another issue signifying the relationship between morality concerns and the Family Decree was the prevention of temporary marriages. The Article 55 of Family Decree strictly banned temporary marriage contracts (*nikah-ı mut'a* or *nikâh-ı muvakkat*). This practice was particularly common among Muslims. It was believed that if couples entered into a temporary marriage contract (in a religious vein) before having sexual intercourse, sex would not be considered a sin or as adultery. A madrasa teacher from Konya, Abdullah Fevzi Efendi, who had joined the army during the First World War and also served as an imam, claimed that these contracts were quite common among the military ranks. In his memoirs which he wrote in Arabic, he titled one chapter *Morality in the Army* and started it with this sentence: "Damn the amorality of the members of the Islamic army and soldiers in this century."[112] He claims that he witnessed many temporary marriages of military officers in Iraq: "In Hüseyinabad, a village near Hemedan, moral corruption and instances of temporary marriage (*mut'a*) increased further."[113] He stated that official orders

112 "*Vâ esefâ ale'l-ahlâk fî ceyşi'l-İslam fî hâze'l-asr*! Yaşadığımız yüzyılda İslam ordusu ve askerinde mevcut ahlaka yazıklar olsun!" Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde Bir Müderris*, 156.

113 "Hemedan'da Hüseyinabad köyünde iken ahlaki düşüklükler, geçici evlilikler (mut'a) daha da arttı." Ibid., 179.

were introduced to prevent such cases and military commanders issued penalties to imams who took part in temporary marriages. These marriages, according to him, caused moral decay as well as the spread of venereal disease in the military.[114] Article 55 of the decree might be related to concern about the practice of temporary marriages which had especially increased with the mass mobilization of the army.[115]

Finally, enabling women to divorce under particular conditions (which had to be indicated by the women in the marriage contract) can also be evaluated within the framework of regenerating the family. A woman's right to divorce, adopted from the Maliki school, was a distinctive point of the decree. In cases of disagreement, women gained the right to divorce with the consent of a "family council" appointed by the court. Women could also demand divorce on account of illness (including venereal disease), feeblemindedness, and impotency, but only after a one-year period of recovery. This, I believe, was designed to dissolve those families that had lost their function for society – such as "reproduction" – and to enable the reformation of new families by empowering women to do so. Among the articles on marriage, that on polygamy was the most debated. Although not forbidden, woman had the right to indicate whether she accepted polygamy. If she did not and the man insisted, she had the right to divorce. The Hanbeli school was taken as a basis for this article. Many Islamists opposed this point and claimed that at the end of the war there would be more women than men, so polygamy would be a social necessity.[116] However, for lawmakers the important thing was the regeneration

114 Ibid., 182–183.

115 On February 14, 1915, the Council of Ministers issued an official decree enacting mandatory retirement of amoral (*suî ahlak*) or incompetent (*adem-i liyakat*) members of the military. Although not expounded upon further in the document, such instances concerned immorality, see MV. 196/75 1333 Ra 29 (14 February 1915).

116 Aydın, *İslâm-Osmanlı Aile Hukuku*, 192. Also see Scott Rank's article on the famous debate between Fatma Aliye and Mahmud Es'ad on polygamy in which Mahmud Es'ad defended polygamy as a means of maintaining a balanced ratio of women and men in the population. He also argued that men instinctively tend to marry multiple women, which according to him prevents immorality in society, Rank, "Polygamy and Religious Polemics in the Late Ottoman Empire."

of family, not the distribution of men and women according to the population ratio. In order to regenerate family, women first had to be empowered within marriage.[117]

Can legislation change norms in society? Or does law reflect norms that already exist in that society? We tend to think lawmaking is the result of structural change, not the converse. However, it seems that Ottoman intellectuals and reformers approached legislation as a way to introduce new family values and thus a new understanding of morality. This point, in fact, was in line with Durkheimian sociology, Durkheim's analysis of norms, and his pragmatic approach to science through which a prescription for the future is possible. According to this approach, an individual or group of people can solve the disparity between the rules of morality and the actual state of society.[118]

Morality and family reform were related in the sense that the problems of Ottoman family formation and dissolution were associated with moral decay. The advocates of family reform linked the wellbeing of adolescents, women, and men to those of the nation in order to legitimize the need for reform. On the other hand, that the Family Decree was inspired by these insights and concern about moral decline can be ascertained from its articles.

§ 4.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter addressed the relation of moral decline discourses and discourses on the Ottoman Muslim family in the context of the First World War. By linking the circumstances faced by Ottoman Muslim families during the war and the discourses of moral decline on the Ottoman homefront, I argue that state intervention in family had reflected concerns about moral decline. In cases of rape, sexual assault, and abduction, the victims asked for active state protection in return for their contribution to the war effort. I consider the Adultery Bill of 1916 as a further instance of state intervention into the family in order to protect homefront morality. Although the legislation was unsuccessful, the

117 For instance, Tüccarzade stated that only "law" can save Muslim women from their inferiority in society. Tüccarzade, "Aile Hayatımızda Avrupalılaşmanın Tesiri," 235.

118 Stock-Morton, *Moral Education for a Secular Society*, 133.

content of the bill caused intense debate on the extent of state's role in regulating sexual relationships. Finally, I evaluate the Family Decree of 1917 as part many attempts of the Ottoman government to protect families during the war. By establishing a close link between the well-being of the nation and that of the family, Ottoman intellectuals and reformers attributed great importance to moral values for the formation, dissolution, and function of families. As Salim Tamari asserted, we tend to see the destructive effects of the war, but there was an "unanticipated emancipatory impact" of the war "that opened up new social horizons," as well.[119] Perhaps, the Family Decree of 1917 can be considered part of this side of the war.

119 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 7.

5

Conclusion

Morality was instrumental in discourses regarding the preservation of social and political order throughout the history of the Ottoman Empire. Political and social crises were often translated into concerns over morality making it the ultimate touchstone of whether the state was doing its duty. Morality came to be considered part of the principles of religion, and the role of the Ottoman ulema in maintaining moral order meant that their moral authority was established in legislation as well as in jurisdiction. In the course of the nineteenth century, with a shift in the perception of state power, public order, and the formation of a broad intellectual and public space, morality became a contested realm among several actors.

This study analyzes the preconditions that led to emergence of moral decay debates in the society and among the ruling elites together with discourses of morality and moral decay in the context of the First World War. It focuses on how morality became instrumental for polemics on several issues around political, cultural, and social developments. Throughout this dissertation, I argue that debates over morality had new political, social, and cultural implications closely associated with the circumstances of war.

The approach of this study differs from previous ones to discourses of moral decline as it presents a multifaceted scrutiny of moral decline beyond debates about prostitution, on which other approaches primarily focus. Also, instead of taking moral decline as reality per se, I consider it as a discourse

echoing important political and social implications. I study the discourse in juxtaposition with the historical context, and in this way, I demonstrate the vast space that morality occupied in various realms. I argue that moral space was highly politicized and was intermingled with several issues that were fundamental to the social and political transformation of the empire. Throughout this study, I sought to answer the question how morality related to the war. This simple question was crucial for shedding a light on the Ottoman experience of the First World War.

Opinionated articles on morality in the Ottoman press lead one to assume that prostitution and venereal disease should dominate a study on morality as these were considered and perceived as major threats to public morality. However, as demonstrated in this work, both morality and moral decline had wider definitions and implications in the period in question. The sense of moral decline was triggered not only as a result of war-induced anxieties, but also due to domestic and external developments. In their quest to save the state and form a new society, the Ottoman intelligentsia directed its attention to morality which was the priority among realms to be reformed. It was crucial for the progress, regeneration, and revival of the nation. The problem of morality reveals a common anxiety regarding the national regeneration. As the First World War was a watershed event for envisaging the future nation, debates on morality became urgent in discussions of the social and intellectual structure on which the nation should rely. From the standpoint of morality polemicists, the system of values and social norms constituted obstacles to the advancement of the Ottoman Muslim society and contributed to the decline of the empire.

Similar to contemporary debates about morality, the issue of women was central to morality discussions. The war created a common anxiety about the consequences of the broader participation of women in social and economic life vis-à-vis the future of the patriarchal order. As most women had to fend for themselves during the war, concerns about the degradation of norms surrounding the patriarchal family dominated morality debates. A common anxiety was evident in debates on what should replace the old moral order. In the highly politicized atmosphere of the war, nationalism met morality, marking a moment of transformation between the old moral order and a new one.

This study explores three major realms for the study of wartime morality, namely ideologies defended by the intelligentsia, official measures and policies implemented by political and military elites, and state interventions into the family and female sexuality. Undoubtedly, these three areas of inquiry are not mutually exclusive. As shown throughout this dissertation, these layers continuously feed one another. For the sake of the simplicity of presentation, I presented them under separate headings.

First, I present intellectual discussions of morality through several journals representing different ideological standpoints among the Ottoman intelligentsia. Among the major publications covering morality and moral decline, I evaluated *İslam Mecmuası*, *Yeni Mecmua* and *Sebilürreşad*. While *Sebilürreşad* represented the Islamist wing of the Ottoman political spectrum, *Yeni Mecmua* and *İslam Mecmuası* belonged to Turkish nationalists whose popularity was increasing at the time. Of these two journals, *İslam Mecmuası* was the instrument by which nationalists clarified their views on religion. Evaluating *İslam Mecmuası* from the point of morality is crucial to see how new interpretations of religion and Islamic law intersected with the reformists' search for a new morality. The journal has a different theological approach to morality whereby Turkish nationalists developed to weaken the arguments of Islamists. The nationalist version of Islamic morality sought to establish a new morality based on collectivism, solidarity, and modern needs. On the other hand, *Yeni Mecmua* employed a more explicit sociological approach to morality and moral decline which thoroughly reflected the views of the nationalists. Moral decline as deliberately evaluated by Necmettin Sadak and Ziya Gökalp in this journal served the objectives of establishing a new life and envisaging a new future for the Turkish society. Gökalp's ideas have been subject to several inquiries in various fields of research. However, his approach to the issue of morality has never been studied in detail. In this respect, an analysis of Gökalp's understanding of morality is vital to shed light on his intellectual and political legacy. In this study, I explore his concept of "national morality" and evaluate it as part of the nascent secular ideals of the intelligentsia. Adopting the Durkheimian *morale laïque* and the ideology of the French Third Republic, the nationalists approached moral decline as an instrument to stress the need for political and legal change. They discovered that morality plays is a

unifying power in society and incorporated it into debates around solidarism. Discussion of the new morality went hand in hand with emphasis on the need for reform in realms such as education, family, and professional life. While reforms in education would establish the foundation of national morality, legal reforms would strengthen ties binding individuals to one another. A rational understanding of morality in professional life would solve war-induced problems such as profiteering. Similarly, the establishment of rational morality would regenerate Muslim families by eliminating the power of traditions and superstitions surrounding the formation and dissolution of family.

The writers in *Sebilürreşad*, on the other hand, were exasperated by these comments on new morality. The main concern of *Sebilürreşad*'s writers was to underscore the facts that Islam is the only source of morality and that Islamic practices are the instruments for reaching a higher moral standard. According to this line of thought, moral decline was the result of divergence from Islam because religion was the only source of morality. Accordingly, all calamities, including the loss of land, the dissolution of the empire, and social problems, stemmed from moral decline. For them, the strength of the Muslims was their faith in the greatness of God and their respect of the Sharia; once religion lost its power, defeat was inevitable. The discourses of moral decline in this journal aimed to bolster critiques of European cultural influence. The main characteristics of the morality discussion in *Sebilürreşad* – which were distinctively different from those of the nationalists on morality – were the centrality of sexuality, opposition to the feminist movement, and critique of Western modernity. They harshly criticized the concept of "national morality" which they considered antagonistic to God's orders. The editors of *Sebilürreşad* employed discourses of moral decline to attack nationalists, asserting that they contributed to moral degeneration by advocating for the rights of women through the concept of a new life and freedom. In a time when spiritual ideologies were under attack by materialism, the writers of *Sebilürreşad* used the moral decline paradigm to reestablish a religious hegemony over lifestyles and public space. As the judicial and executive power of the Ottoman ulema was at risk, the morality argument became an urgent means to reclaim these powers.

Going through women's journals shows how women responded to gendered polemics on moral decline. Through the articles in women's journals such as *Kadınlar Dünyası*, *Genç Kadın*, *Bilgi Yurdu*, and *Seyyale* I present an overview of the main discussions on moral decline and morality from the perspective of Muslim women. While some of the women writers in these journals expressed their discontent over the double standard of moral expectations, others shared patriarchal approaches towards morality. For female advocates of family reform, the morality issue became a political tool for questioning traditional values in the society that constituted an obstacle to women's participation in social life. The war context is crucial for understanding this point because these women established their ideas on the fact that during the war many Muslim women had to fend for themselves in the absence of men.

In short, intellectual discussions about moral decline show how morality was politicized in the context of the war. The rise of materialism, the declaration of jihad, ideological contests over political and public space, critiques of previous reforms, the search for a new life, the war-induced social problem of profiteering, and women's labor and political rights constituted the major topics of polemics of moral decline. Moral decline debates offered several prominent intellectual figures an opportunity to discuss and question extant daily and social practices in their quest for social reform and a new spirit. Once an obstacle to progress, morality became an ideal starting point to penetrate in previously untouched institutions. This study deliberately puts the discussion in its historical political and social context in order to understand the increased emphasis on morality.

In a second layer of analysis, I focus on official approaches to the problem of immorality in manners that included the concept of public morality. By drawing attention to wartime regulations regarding the protection of public morality in combatant countries, I argue that moral anxieties created a common discourse intermingled with concern about both the practical and political implications of moral decline. In the course of the war, violations of public morality became part of the growing concern for national security; meanwhile, the wartime rivalry among combatant countries constituted the backbone of a cultural opposition in which moral contestation played a significant

role. The Ottoman Empire prioritized moral considerations over other concerns, as evidenced by official propaganda underscoring the superiority of Muslim identity. By exploring wartime developments such as the court martial orders regarding immorality and the role of the abolishment of capitulations in the fight against prostitution and the trafficking of women, I argue that there was an increasing emphasis on national security in response to "immoral" behavior. These findings underpin the initial claim of this dissertation that morality reflects political and social change instead of being an independent set of cultural norms. I believe this approach enables an evaluation of the First World War period as a moment of transition from an old moralistic discourse to the new medical moralism which gained momentum in 1930s eugenic thought in the Republic of Turkey.

The analysis of foreigners' applications for citizenship which were elaborated on in chapter 3 underpins this basic finding. These applications were denied on the basis of moral quality of the applicant, corroborating the assertion that moral judgments corresponded to national security concerns and wartime measures to rid society of "undesirable" elements. As discussed in chapter 3, the nationality of foreigners was important for identifying the "other" in the atmosphere of the war and labeling them as immoral. The basis of their exclusion was legitimized by using the etiquettes of morality.

The present study examines an unexplored wartime measure against the violation of morality, namely that unregistered, illegal prostitutes and morally weak individuals were sent out from martial law territories to places where there were no railway connections. Using the archival documents from several departments of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs together with petitions sent to them, I determine whether the "ostracism" of immoral individuals went beyond the military measures and became a social phenomenon. Interestingly, Ottoman authorities did not stigmatize these people to the extent of leaving them unemployed. I contend that this was partly because the Ottoman government associated the violation of public morality with the violation of public order. I interpret this an indicator of the fear of further moral decline and the deterioration of public order that could accelerate due to poverty.

In quotidian life, the protection of public morality was vital for maintaining public order. However, this did not mean that Ottoman authorities,

whether bureaucratic or military, established absolute authority over public morality. Entertainment, leisure activities, and "vices" such as alcohol and gambling constituted a source of revenue for the state. Therefore, the government had a pragmatic approach towards such expenses. Among the conservative public, such vices signified moral corruption as they symbolized the immorality of Western civilization. On the other hand, a second, new critique emerged out of nationalist sentiment that such places distract people's attention from the war. In an effort to sublimate moral and financial interests, semi-governmental war relief organizations became dominant in the organization of entertainment. Eventually, moral instruction and war propaganda conflicted with the need to increase revenue as the public showed little interest in regulated entertainment.

A common trend was that many social, economic, and political problems were translated into the discourse of moral decline in the popular perception of morality. This was particularly valid for the problem of war profiteering, demonstrating that the collective memory of the war was shaped by the moralistic imagery of wartime inequality between the rich and the poor. The literary products of the postwar era explicitly reflect this tension through the representation of wealthy profiteers. The stories of debauchery of such characters attracted wider audiences than political critiques.

When the object of analysis is morality in traditional societies, family is an inevitable subject. Ottoman society was no exception in this regard. Therefore, widespread concerns about morality, values, traditions, and norms vis-à-vis the wartime family is one of the major topics of this study. As detailed in chapter 4, there was evident concern about family and women in many combatant countries, but the Ottoman case had its own peculiarities. In the Ottoman case, attention was directed not only towards the family per se, but to all forms of encounter between men and women. I consider the family in this wider context of gender, sexuality, and patriarchy. The relations between men and women were surrounded by a set of norms interwoven with Islamic law and customs regulating sexual conduct.

Legislations on family during the First World War sought to regenerate Muslim families while controlling sexual relationships on the homefront. I demonstrate how wartime legislation that targeted the family was driven by

moral concerns, and I argue that morality discourses reveal the interaction of social and political conditions with ideas about the establishment of a new civic order. The latter was established on the basis of changing perceptions of the family, sexuality, and morality.

This study is as much about the social circumstances in which Ottoman people lived as it is about intellectual discussions. Contrary to widespread contentions among researchers that prioritize the ideological motive of state elites to modernize the family, I analyzed the demands of the women and soldiers' who asked for protection from the state, reminding it of the government's duties and promises. In this respect, I consider the provisional law authorizing martial courts to try the cases of sexual assault of soldiers' family members as a first step of legislative intervention in the family. As a complementary, I explore another attempt to regulate sexual relationships on the homefront, namely the Adultery Bill of 1916. This proposal stipulated that high ranking military officials would be permitted to file complaints to initiate legal processes on behalf of soldiers against their unfaithful wives. This attempt was futile due to debates on the nature of the law and the limits of the public and private realms. In this study, the Ottoman Rights of Family Decree is evaluated as one legislative attempt to regulate and protect the family. Instead of considering state intervention in the family as a step towards modernization, I evaluate the preconditions of the Family Decree within a framework of social circumstances that triggered the profound change. The present study demonstrates that to understand family reform, one must consider intellectual debates about the limitations of Islamic Law, the role of mores and values in the foundation of Ottoman Muslim families and socioeconomic conditions on the homefront. Furthermore, this study reveals how discourses on the regeneration of the nation coincided with discourses of moral decline, shaping the assertion of the need for social reform. The quest for a new family envisioned by the reformist intelligentsia was inherent to the projects of new life and new morality which were based on secular and rational foundations.

The sources used in this study reflect the wide scope of morality debates. Their variety also demonstrates how morality was incorporated into politics, lawmaking, daily life, and intellectual debates. Despite censorship of certain

topics, it is possible to say that the morality issue was discussed at length in the Ottoman press.

Morality and moral decline debates have been the subject of a few studies of the Ottoman Empire, albeit on a limited scale. In the scope of this study, I mainly focus on the central notion of *ahlâk* in the particular context of the First World War. However, further research covering the periods between the Tanzimat era and early republican Turkey will reveal the changing discourses of morality more comprehensively. Since morality is at the intersection of topics such as education, family, law, education, and social life, I believe further studies on morality from historical perspective will contribute to the historiography of the Ottoman Empire in several contexts and shed a new light on topics that have been studied previously.

Morality still has a distinct place in debates over secularism, gender, and modernity reflected in different views on lifestyle, school education, male and female relationships, public order, and law making. Debates that took place over a hundred years ago are important for understanding the contemporary ideological and political atmosphere of the Republic of Turkey.

Appendix A

QUOTATION 1

"Matbuat: Ahlâk-ı Umûmiyenin Islahı Lüzumu ve Hükümetin Vazifesi." *Sebilürreşad*, no: 364 (August 1918): 265-266.

Evet yalnız Dahiliye nezareti değil bütün heyet-i hükümet bu mes'eleye [ahlâk-ı umûmiye] çok ehemmiyet atf ediyor. Bilhassa sadrazam paşa, ahlak-ı umumiyenin gittikçe pek ziyade inhitat etmesinden müte'essir oluyorlar. Ve bu hale karşı mümkün olabilecek her türlü tedbiri el birliğiyle ittihaza karar-ı kat'i vermiş bulunuyorlar.

Esâsen benim fikrimce ahlâk meselesiyle hükümet her vakit alakâdar olmuştur. Her memlekette hükümetler halkın ahlâkî, fikrî hareketi üzerinde icrâ-yı te'sir ederler. Hükümetin bu te'siri bilhassa bizden ziyadedir. Hükümet halka tarik-i müstakimi göstermeğe, bu hususda bizzat kendisi rehber olarak ahlâk-ı umûmîyenin harisi, zamini olmağa mecburdur. Her yerden ziyade bizim memlekette halk muhtâc-ı vesayit ve velayettir. Âdeta if'al ve hareketini hükümetin hareketine tamamı tamamına tevfik eder.

QUOTATION 2

"Matbuat: Akşam Gazetesinden Ahlâk Telâkkîsi." *Sebilürreşad*, no. 376 (December 1918): 231-232.

Her halde dört seneden beri değişmiş birçok şeyler görüyoruz. Bunlar içinde en göze çarpan ahlâkdır. Aramızda birçokları ahlâk hakkındaki telakkîlerini "ahlâk" kelimesinden anladıkları mânâyı iyice değiştirmişler; ahlâk mefhûmunun hududlarını alabildiğine açmışlardır. Bu tahavvül ahlâkın her nev'inde gördük. Meslek ve vazife ahlâkı, kadın ve cinsiyet ahlâkı, medenî ahlâk, ilh. Hepsi yavaş yavaş iflasa doğru yürüdü. Ahlâkın böyle birden bire sükût ettiği bir memleket var mıdır bilmem.

QUOTATION 3

"Matbuat: Akşam Gazetesinden Ahlâk Telâkkîsi." *Sebilürreşad*, no. 376 (December 1918): 232.

Bu kirliliklerin husûle getirdiği muayyen bir mahiyet ve o mahiyetin bugün ta'yin etmiş bir zihniyeti, hayat hakkında çirkin bir telakkisi var ki hergün etrafa daha ziyade taşmak, te'sirini daha ilerilere götürmek kudretini gösteriyor. Bir taraftan kolayca ve memleketin zararına olarak kazanılmış bol paraların te'min eder gibi göründüğü müreffeh bir hayat var ki harb zenginleriyle para çalmış ve el-an âsûde yaşayan adamlarda tecellî ediyor. Diğer tarafdan tavırları, serbest ve aşırı zevkleriyle Avrupa kadın hayatını temsil eder gibi gösterilen ve aile ahlâkı, cinsiyet ahlâkı kat'i rabıta etmiş olan bir kadınlık hayatı teşkil etti.

QUOTATION 4

"Matbuat: Akşam Gazetesinden Ahlâk Telâkkîsi." *Sebilürreşad*, no. 376 (December 1918): 232.

Yeni ve ahlâklı bir hayatın aks-ü âmelleri şimdiden kendini göstermezse, yani gerek şiddetli takbihleri aile ve mekteb terbiyemizin, matbuatın telkinleri bu ahlâk dizginlerini biraz kurub toplamazsa daha büyük ve kat'i bir iflas karşısında kalır. Ahlâk telâkkîsini hâl-i tabiîdeki mâkûl hudûdları dâhiline irca'a çalışalım. Memleketin âtisini ancak o zaman kurtarabiliriz.

QUOTATION 5

"Commentary by *Sebilürreşad."* no. 376 (December 1918): 232.

Dinî, millî, ictimâî, ahlâkî bütün esasâtımızı devirerek yerine nazari birtakım müessesât-ı mevhûme ikâme etmek isteyen ve eski hayat-ı diniyyeye tezyif ettikleri şi'ar-ı nezihemizin birer birer yıkıldığını gördükce 'yeni hayat için saha açılıyor' teraneleriyle ilân-ı şadmâni eden Yeni Mecmua'nın muharrirlerinden velev birini olsun artık yola gelmiş, ahlâk telâkkîleri unvânı altında şu elyevm itirafında bulunmuş gördük, hiç şüphe yokdur ki bir muvaffakiyettir.

QUOTATION 6

"Memleketimizde Ahlâk Meselesi." *Sebilürreşad*, no. 387 (December 1919): 404-406.

Şurasını iyi bilmelidir ki bu millet müslümandır. Ahlâkının menbâi din-i islamdır. Fezâileti oradan almıştır. Rezâili de beden ve ruhuna yabancı ellerle aşılanmıştır. Ve giriftdar olduğu maraz-ı ahlâk mikrobunun deva-yı acili kalbine kuvvetli bir 'din' şırıngası yapmaktır.

QUOTATION 7

"Kadınlarımız Hakkında." *Sebilürreşad*, no. 444 (October 1919): 19.

Son senelerde hiç kimsenin inkar edemeyeceği vechile – kadınlarımız arasında fuhşun izdiyadi ve İslam kadınlarına gizli bir suretde ve sâik-i fuhş ve fücurun i'ta edildiği görüldü. Kadınlar hayat-ı aile ve vezâif-i bitiye-yi [*sic*] terk ve ihmâl ile sokaklara döktürüldü. Hayatlarını katiyyen te'min edemeyecek cüz'i meblağlar mukabilinde erkeğin vezâifi de onlara yükledildi.

QUOTATION 8

Ziya Gökalp, "Ahlâk Buhranı." *Yeni Mecmua*, no. 7 (August 1917): 122.

İşte bugün ictimâî iş bölümüne zamime olarak, bir taraftan Avrupa medeniyetine gösterdiğimiz müfrit meclûbiyet diğer taraftan cihan harbinin husûle getirdiği mânevî tezelzüller, zühdî ahlâkı büsbütün sarsmağa başlamış ve bunun neticesi olarak ruhlar ve vicdanlar her türlü ahlâk endişelerinden boş kalmağa yüz tutmuştur.

QUOTATION 9

Nezihe Hamdi, "Ahlâkî Endişeler." *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 191 (December 1914): 2-3.

Kadının cemiyet hayatına dahil olmamasını ahlâkî endişeler nâmına taleb edenleri bir izâletin icrâsına davet etmek isteriz. Asırlardan beri kadınlar böyle mevhûm bir endişe nâmına kapalı ve esir bir hayat yaşadılar. Halbuki bugün kadının ayrı yaşamasından azâmî bir istifade te'min edilemediğini birçok misalleriyle herkes biliyor. Binâenaleyh, aynı usûlü bir de erkeklere karşı tatbik etmek mümkün olamaz mı? Lütfen birkaç asır da onların cemiyet haricinde yaşamalarını ve cemiyetin bütün teşkilâtını bizzat kadınların idaresine tevdî etmelerini taleb edebilir miyiz? Biraz da kadın ahlâkının meri' olması ve bıçağın keskin tarafının biraz da erkeklere teveccüh edilmesi lazım gelmiyor mu?

Appendix B

QUOTATION 1

"*Niğde Mutasarrıflığı'ndan Dâhiliye Nezâreti'ne.*" BOA. DH. EUM. ADL. 33/23 1335 Ş 25 (June 16, 1917).

Dâhiliye Nezâret-i Celilesine 7 Mart 1333

Kayseri sancağıyla bazı vilayetlerden birtakım fahişeler ahlâk-ı mahalliyeyi ifsâd ve bi'l-netice asâyiş-i memleketi ihlâl ve teğiyyide sebeb oldukları mutalaasıyla Niğde'ye te'bid olunuyor. Bu te'bid keyfiyeti hiçbir vechile tehzîb-i ahlâk için muassır bir tedbir olamaz. Bu misüllü kadınların onda sekizinin bu yola selükleri mâhâzâ açlıktan neşa'et ettiği muhakkaktır. Şu halde teb'idden ise mahallerince bu kadınların birtakım zanaathanelerde istihdâmı ile mâişetleri te'min olunursa ve bir müddet bu sûretle eşgal edilirlerse tabîen bu mezmûm hareketten sarf-ı nazar edecekleri bedîhattandır. Halbuki bu yolda hiçbir tedbire müracaat edilmeksizin zabıtanın bir jurnali üzerine teb'id muâmelesinin icrâsı birçok kadınların ötede beride sürünerek mahvlarını intâc etmekle beraber ahlâk ve asâyiş-i mahalliyi ifsâd ve teğiyyid etmeleri mutaalasıyla memleketlerinden çıkarılan bu gibi kadınlar gittikleri mahallerin ahlâkını ifsâd ve asâyişini ihlâl etmeyeceklerine ne gibi bir esbâb-ı makûle gösterilebilir. Hiçbir tedbir ve hükm-ü mahiyetini haiz olmayan bu nefy keyfiyetlerini ta'dil ve mahallerince ıslahları çaresine tevsil edilmek ve daha mü'essir naki olacağı aşikardır. Ba'husus bir memlekette hane ve emlak vesaire suretle alakâları olanların te'bidleri herhalde muvafık bir muamele olmasa gerektir. Belediye veya mahalli hükümetlerce te'sis olunacak sınâîhanelerde işgalleri mümkün olmayanları da veli ve vâsîlerinin taht-ı muhafazalarına tevdî edilmeleri de bir tedbir diğer teşkil eder. Binâenaleyh artık bu gibi ahvâle nihâyet vermek üzere nezâret-i celilerince iktizâ-yı salık icra ve emr ve inbâsına müsaade buyurulması ma'ruzdur.

QUOTATION 2

Petition by Dina Galaza [*sic*], Ağtiyana Gala Naka [*sic*], Sultana, and Viktorya, BOA. DH.EUM.ADL 12/31 1334 M 24 (December 2, 1915).

Cariyeleri öteden beri Galata'da umumhâneler isti'car edip şu zanaatla meşgûle idik. Ve cümlemiz de tebaa-yı Osmaniyeden ve Yahudi milletindeniz. Bu defa Dersaadet'ten idare-i örfîye ilan olunduğu esnada cariyelerini? Istanbul'dan kaldırarak Kayseri'ye menfî gönderildik. Cariyeleri erkek değiliz hiçbir zanaatla mükellef değiliz ki zanaatımızla medâr-ı te'min edelim. Kayseri'de havayîc-i zarûrimizden dahi aciz kaldık. ? şimdiye değin ahvâlimiz malûm ve meşhûd olup işletmekte olduğumuz hanelerde dahi hiçbir vukûat zuhûr etmediği alenen ve zahiren malûmdur. Kayseriye'nin havasıyla dahi imtizâc edemediğimiz şöyle dursun kendimiz burada çocuklarımız Dersaadet'te zevclerimiz Sivas'ta perperişandırlar. Dersaadet'ten çıkalı tam beşinci aydır. Şimdiye değin çektiğimizi bir biz bir de Allah bilir. Eğer bizim Istanbul'da bu zanaatla meşgûl olmamıza müsaade buyurulmaz yahud buyurulamayacaksa bizi kefaletle imza ile hükümet-i seniyyeyi temin etmekle bundan böyle bu işle meşgûl olmayacağız diye şu halde lütfen fakir halimize ve bir ? göz yaşlarımıza merhameten işbu istidâ-i cariyelerinizin lazım gelenlere emr-ü havale buyurulmasını adalet nâmına temennî ve istirham ederiz.

QUOTATION 3

"Başkumandan Vekili Enver Paşa'dan Dahiliye Nezâreti'ne." BOA. DH.EUM.6.Şb. 31/29 1336 Ca 05 (18 Mart 1918).

1 Cihe-yi harblerdeki kıt'aat-ı askerîmizin meşâkk-i harbe tahammüllerini kesr etmemek için bâ'dema matbûat-ı Osmaniyede harb muhtâcinini ve müessesatı harbiye menfaatine olanlardan başka tiyatro ve sinema ve konser, şarkı ve ziyâfetler gibi lubiyyata zevk ve israfa ve havayic-i zarûrîden olmayan müzeyyinata mütealik ilân ve mütalaatın neşri ve bunlara âid i'lânatın fürûhhatı ve sokaklarda tesallik ve teşhiri memnûdur. Bu ilânların yalnız oyun ve teşhir binalarında taslikine müsaade olunmuştur.

2 Hilâf-ı memnu'iyyet harekette bulunanlar divân-ı askeriyeye tevdî olunacaklardır.

Appendix C

QUOTATION 1

Petition by Asker Haremi Aişe, Asker Haremi Validesi Fatma, Şehid Haremi Medri [*sic*]. BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1, (102) 12 Kanunuevvel 1330 (December 25, 1914).

Şehid düşmüş bir askerin haremi maaş yapacağız dediler İnegöl'den Bursa'ya aldırdılar. Belediye âzâsı Hacı Ahmed'in çiftliğine kapadılar. Irzına geçdiler. Orospu yaptılar. Hacı Ahmed frengi illetindedir. Bîçare asker haremi de frengi oldu. Hâlâ şimdi Hacı Ahmed'in yanında kapatmadır.

QUOTATION 2

Petition by Asker Haremi Aişe, Asker haremi validesi Fatma, Şehid Haremi Medri [*sic*]. BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1, (102) 12 Kanunuevvel 1330 (December 25, 1914).

Hem asker namusu kırıldı hem din devlet ırz yıkıldı. Bu nasıl olur? Sizin namusunuz kabul eder mi. Memleket frengi illetinden olan bu adem ile kapatması Müslüman için haiz midir. Allah aşkına Müslüman asker şehid namusunu arayınız merhametinize düşdük. Kazetelerde millet meclisinin verdiği sözleri görüyoruz. Sizi Allah bağışlasın. Namus kıran kâfirlerin şerrini tahkîk ediniz. Adalet isteriz efendimiz.

QUOTATION 3

Hüdâvendigar Vali Vekili'nden Dahiliye Nezâreti'ne, BOA.DH.EUM.2. Şb. 35/1, (104) 9 Şubat 1330 (February 22, 1915).

Belediye âzâsından Hacı Ahmed efendinin çiftliğinde kapattığının ihbâr olunduğu iş'ar buyurulan Aişe bint-i Meryemin zevcinin Balkan Muharebesi'nden avdet etmemesine ve kendisi kainvalidesi tarafından kabul edilmemesine mebni serseriyane dolaştığı ve hatta bir aralık Meryem isminde

diğer bir kadınla Ankara ve İnegöl'e de giderek oralarda görülen ahlaksızlığından dolayı Bursa'ya iade edildiği ve burada dahi sabıkalı sanıldığı polis ve jandarma dairelerince icra ettirilmiş tahkikatta anlaşılmış ve nihayet Hacı Ahmed efendinin nezdine hizmetçilikle dahil olarak kendisine evlâd gibi bakıldığı ifade edilib şu halde Hacı Ahmed efendinin mezbureyi fuhşiyata sevk etmemiş olduğu ve mamafih mezburenin şurada burada sefilane ve serseriyane dolaşmaktan ise Hacı Ahmed efendinin çiftliğinde bulunması muvafık olacağı cihetle mumaileyhin bu babda dîvân-ı harbe sevkini mûceb bir hal ve hareketi meşhûd bulunmadığı polis müdüriyetinden ba-derkenar ifade olunmağla...

QUOTATION 4

Petition by Soldier Mustafa to the Ministry of Justice. BOA.DH.EUM. 2. Şb. 35/1, (92). 27 Kanunuevvel 1330 (January 4, 1915).

Meclisi Mebusan Reisi Muhteremi Vasıtasıyla Adliye Nezareti Celilesine

Muhterem bey efendi hazretleri Meclis-i Mebûsan ve Âyân tarafından orduya hitâben göndermiş olduğunuz beyannâmeler 11 Kânûnuevvel 1330 tarihinde bölüklerde kıra'at edilmiş ve hatırımda birazını muhafaza etmiş olduğum sözleri aynen yazıyorum.

"Milletin ihtiyarından gencine şehidlerinden dirilerine varıncaya kadar asırlardan berü beklediği intikam günü işte geldi. Osmanlılığın ve Müslümanlığın en büyük düşmanı olan Moskoflarla müttefikler yine karşu karşuya bulunuyorsunuz. Onları ? ve şimdiye kadar söndürdükleri ocakların ve açtıkları yaraların ve ayaklar altında bıraktıkları şehidlerin intikamını alınız. Arkanızda bıraktığınız evlâd ve ailenizi ocaklarınızı hiç düşünmeyiniz. Onlar bize vediatullahtır."

Ey muhterem bey efendi hazretleri hükümet-i meşrûtî-i Osmaniyemizin adaletinden beklediğim ancak hemşiremin hukukunu muhafaza ve faillerin cezasını vermektir.

QUOTATION 5

Adultery Bill of 1916. BEO. 4430/332225 13 Nisan 1332 (April 26, 1916).

[k]ânûn-i cezânın 201. maddesi zeyli icabınca bir hatunun bir şahs-ı aher ile rızaen icra eylediği fi'il-i şen'iden dolayı aleyhinde tâ'kibat icrası zevcinin ve zevci olmadığı takdirde velinin iştikasına mütevakıf ve bu yolda bir iştika vuku' bulmadığı halde dîvân-ı harbler tâ'kibat-ı kânûniye icrasıyla itâ-yı hüküm ve karardan memnu' olub halbuki sahne-i harbde bulunan veyahud dûçar-ı esâret olan zâbitan ve efrâd ve mensûbin-i askeriyenin zevce ve evlâd ve saire mahreminden bi'l-rıza fi'il-i şen'i icra edenler hakkında zevc veya velilerinin hakk-ı iştikalarını isti'male ve ikâme-i da'vaya imkân bulamamaları hasebiyle tâ'kibat-ı kânûniye icra ve tertib-i mücâzat edilememesi zâbitan ve mensûbin-i askeriye üzerinde te'siratı şedideyi mûceb olacağı gibi zâbitan ve efrâd-ı askeriyenin zevce ve evlâd ve mahreminden bi'l-rıza fi'il-i şen'i icra eyleyenler hakkında ne suretle ta'kibat-ı kânûniye ifâ olunacağının ta'yin eylemesi elzem bulunmasına ve bâis-i şübhe olan bu kâbil if'al-i zanaatkâraneyi irtikab eyleyenlerin cezasız kalmaları da min küll-il vücûh rûhiyye cevaz olamayacağına mebnî bu kâbil if'al mürtekebleri hakkında namus-u askeriyi muhafazaen bulundukları mahallin en büyük kumandanı veya ahz-i asker rüesası tarafından vâkî olacak talebin ahvâl-i muhâselede ma-ba'd-tâkib olan zevce veya veli şikayeti makamına kâim olacağına dair bir madde-i kânûniye vaz'ine lüzum görünmüş...

QUOTATION 6

Excerpts from the Official Justificatory Memorandum on the Ottoman Rights of Family Decree of 1917 (*Münâkâhat ve Müfâkârat Kararnâmesi Esbâb-ı Mûcibe Lâyihası*)

Nice muhadderat kaçırılarak i'mal-i cebr ve şiddet ile eşirrâdan birine nikâh edilmiş ve muahharen ailelerin kızlarını kurtarmak için vukû bulan teşebbüsleri âkim kalıp bu hâl çok kere büyük felâketler intac eylemiştir. Halbuki nikâh-ı mükrehin adem-i sihhatine kail olan İmam Şafii

rahmetüllahi aleyh hazretlerinin kavli kabul edildiği takdirde bu türlü fenalıkların önü alınmış olacağından 57inci madde müşarun ileyhin re'yine tevfikan tanzim edildi.

QUOTATION 7

Excerpts from the Official Justificatory Memorandum on the Ottoman Rights of Family Decree of 1917 (*Münâkâhat ve Müfâkârat Kararnâmesi Esbâb-ı Mûcibe Lâyihası*)

Sâğîr ve sâğîrenin tezvîci. Sağir ve sağirenin velileri tarafından cevâz-ı tezvîcine amme-i erba'a rahimehümüllah hazerâtı kâil olduklarından şimdiye kadar mu'amele bu yolda cereyan etmiş ise de zamanımızda ahvâlin tebeddülüne binâen diğer bir usûl ittihazına lüzûm görülmüştür. Şöyle ki her zamanda ve bilhassa hayat için mücadelenin son derece kesb-i şiddet ettiği şu zamanda çocuklar hakkında ebeveynin ilk vazifesi onları tâlim ve terbiye ederek işbu alem-i cidalde nâil-i zafer olacak muntazam bir aile teşkil edebilecek bir hale getirmekten ibaret iken bizde ebeveyn ale'l-ekser çocuklarının tahsil ve terbiyesini bi'l-külliye ihmâl ederek mücerred mürüvvetlerini görmek veya nâil-i miras kılmak maksadıyla onları daha beşikte iken nişanlayagelmişlerdir. Netice biçareler dünyalarını görmeksizin tezvîc ve âtiyen felâketlerine düğünlerle vaz'ı esas edilmiştir. Hiçbir mekteb yüzü görmeyen ve lisânını okuyup yazmaktan kat'i nazar emr-i dine dair bir kelimeye bile muttali' olmayan bu türlü çocukların teşkil edegeldikleri ailelerden çoğu cenin-i mürdezâd gibi zifaflarının daha ilk aylarında infisaha mahkûm olmuştur. Memleketimizde ailelerin temelsizliğini mûcib olan esbâbdan biri de budur.

QUOTATION 8

Excerpts from the Official Justificatory Memorandum on the Ottoman Rights of Family Decree of 1917 (*Münâkâhat ve Müfâkârat Kararnâmesi Esbâb-ı Mûcibe Lâyihası*)

Bu babda en ziyade nazar-ı merhamete alınması lazım gelen kızlardır. Zevc ile zevcenin aileyi teşkil ve idare hususunda müşterek oldukları derkâr iken erkek çocukların sokakta oyun oynamakla imrâr-ı vakt etmesi ma'zur göründüğü bir sinde kız çocuklara cemiyyet-i beşeriyyece en büyük bir vazife yani bir ailenin validesi ve müdir-i umuru olmak vazifesi tevdi' olunuyor. Henüz teşkilat-ı bedeniyyesi teşekkül etmemiş olan bir biçare kız valide olmakla asabı ilâ-âhiri'l-ömr perişan oluyor, ilel-i günâ gün iktisab ediyor, ondan tevellüd eden çocuk cılız ve pek asabî bir şey olup unsûre-yi İslamın gittikçe tedennîsi esbâbına inzimam ediyor.

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Samenvatting

Dit onderzoek richt zich op de kwestie van een "zedencrisis", wat een veelbesproken onderwerp vormde onder de Osmaanse intellectuelen. Deze studie gaat voorbij aan de gebruikelijke visie dat de "zedencrisis" een hoogtepunt bereikte tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog, en onderzoekt hoe zedelijkheid gerelateerd was aan de oorlog en aan de randvoorwaarden die de perceptie van een zedelijkheidscrisis teweegbrachten. Het onderzoek weegt de belangrijkste referentiepunten waarop verhandelingen over zedelijk verval gestoeld werden en plaatst de debatten in de context van de oorlog.

Deze studie betoogt dat zedelijkheid een betwist vlak was onder intellectuelen en verklaart hoe rivaliserende ideologieën hun eigen politieke stellingnames uiteenzetten op basis van verschillende opvattingen over zedelijkheid. Voor de staat, aan de andere kant, werd zedelijk verval een zaak van nationale veiligheid tijdens de oorlog. Het onderzoek laat zien hoe rivaliteiten tijdens de oorlog weerspiegeld werden op cultureel gebied door verhandelingen over zedelijkheid. In de publieke opinie en politieke kringen werd onzedelijkheid over het algemeen beschouwd als een sociaal probleem dat was geïmporteerd vanuit Europese landen. Op het sociale vlak richt het onderzoek zich op familie, vrouwen, en zedenmisdrijven met een nadruk op de invloed van oorlog op de traditionele gezinshiërarchie. Het proefschrift werpt licht op de plaats van zedelijkheid in processen van wetgeving, ideeën over hervormingen en vooruitgang, en plannen voor een nieuwe maatschappij. Het suggereert ook de historische achtergrond van contemporaine debatten over zedelijkheid ten opzichte van levensstijl, identiteit, en de invloed van zedelijke opvattingen op de vorming van politieke identiteit.

Het voor u liggende werk onderzoekt verhandelingen over zedelijk verval in de context van de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Deze oorlog breidde niet alleen de weg voor het territoriale uiteenvallen van het rijk, maar droeg ook beslissend bij aan de socioculturele transformatie waarop de Republiek Turkije zou worden gesticht. Ondanks de voortdurende debatten onder laat-Osmaanse intellectuelen over zedelijkheid als een belangrijk aspect van de Osmaanse Moslim identiteit, is dit onderzoeksveld grotendeels onberoerd gebleven in de Osmaans-Turkse historiografie, met uitzondering van enkele studies.

In dit onderzoek weerhoud ik mij ervan om een enkelvoudige definitie te geven van "zedelijk verval". Daarentegen betoog ik dat dit concept abstract is en slechts begrepen wordt als het wordt toegepast om zekere fenomenen te definiëren. In tegenstelling tot de gebruikelijke visie dat zedelijk verval slechts een gevolg is van toenemende prostitutie, biedt dit onderzoek een brede opvatting over zedelijkheid en een nieuw perspectief, welke politieke, culturele, en sociale dynamieken omvat. Over het algemeen werd de term zedelijk verval vaak gebruikt om te verwijzen naar de ontaarding van sociale en morele waarden onder de Osmaanse Moslims. Naar mijn weten ontkenden geen van de intellectuelen, die commentaar leverden op zedelijkheid gedurende deze tijd, het bestaan van zedelijk verval. Echter, de definities van dat verval en de oplossingen ervoor varieerden. Overal in dit onderzoek evalueer ik deze ideeën door ze naast elkaar te beschouwen. Omdat de context van de Eerste Wereldoorlog een diep inzicht geeft in speerpunten van de debatten, probeer ik sommige randvoorwaarden van zedelijk verval in de context van de oorlog te in te perken.

Hoofdstuk twee richt zich op debatten over zedelijke crises onder de Osmaanse intellectuelen met een bijzondere nadruk op de historische context van de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Om deze reden heb ik gekozen voor periodieken uit de oorlog die groots uitweiden over dit onderwerp. Dit onderzoek beschouwt zedelijkheid als een betwist vlak; daarom selecteer ik representatieve en concurrerende ideologische perspectieven uit het Osmaanse politieke spectrum. The tijdschriften die ik evalueer brengen polemieken over zedelijke crisis, en ook zedelijkheid, naar voren in verschillende edities en artikelen. Deze tijdschriften zijn, namelijk, *İslam Mecmuası (Tijdschrift van Islam), Yeni Mecmua (Nieuw tijdschrift), en Sebilürreşad (Rechte weg). Gezien hebbende dat de overvloedige verwijzingen naar Moslimvrouwen en hun plek in de samenleving centraal stonden in discussies over zedelijkheid, heb ik ook onderzoek verricht naar vrouwentijdschriften uit deze tijd. Op deze manier onderzoek ik hoe vrouwelijke auteurs de zich op vrouwen richtende discussies over zedelijkheid benaderden, en hoe zij het probleem van zedelijk verval behandelden. Ik schets de belangrijkste punten van de debatten over zedelijkheid in vrouwentijdschriften uit het begin en uit het einde van de oorlog, zoals Bilgi Yurdu* (Het thuisland van kennis), *Genç Kadın* (Jonge vrouw), *Kadınlar*

Dünyası (Vrouwenwereld), en *Seyyale* (Stromen). Dit hoofdstuk laat zien dat polemieken over zedelijkheid grote gevolgen hadden en niet slechts filosofische activiteiten betroffen. Het debat omvatte niet alleen de wet en wettelijke rechten, maar vormde ook een belangrijke aangelegenheid binnen de Osmaanse politieke en ideologische spectra. Terwijl *Sebilürreşad* stelling nam voor een eeuwige, onveranderlijke religie als de bron van zedelijkheid, betoogde *Yeni Mecmua* dat de samenleving (of in hun geval, de natie) de enige bron was van zedelijkheid. Aan de andere kant stelde *İslam Mecmuası* voor om zedelijkheid te baseren op een opnieuw gedefinieerde religie bevrijd van haar historische nalatenschap. De auteurs in de vrouwentijdschriften zetten hun vraagtekens bij de ongelijke aard van de standpunten over onzedelijkheid, welke vrouwen verantwoordelijk hield voor onzedelijkheid, terwijl mannen buiten schot bleven. Aan de andere kant gebruikten vrouwen ook polemieken over verval om ruimte te openen voor hervormingen. Desalniettemin, sommige artikelen door vrouwelijke auteurs gaven duidelijk blijk van bezorgdheid over zedelijk verval, in het bijzonder onder schoolmeisjes.

Hoofdstuk drie presenteert een overzicht van regelgevende maatregelen en hun beperkingen met betrekking tot de bescherming van de openbare zedelijkheid aan het Osmaanse thuisfront. Dit hoofdstuk betoogt dat militaire en bureaucratische pogingen om de openbare zedelijkheid te beschermen zich over het algemeen richtten op twee vervlochten perspectieven. Ten eerste werden gedurende de oorlog misdrijven die de openbare zedelijkheid schenden deel van de toenemende zorgen omtrent nationale veiligheid. Ten tweede manifesteerden rivaliteiten tussen de strijdende staten tijdens de oorlog zich in de verharding van zogenaamde culturele tegenstellingen, waarin zedelijke twisten een belangrijke rol speelden. Terwijl de eerste dimensie meer de praktische en bestuurlijke zorgen betrof, had de laatste culturele implicaties. Aanvankelijk gaat het hoofdstuk in op de publieke aandacht voor zedelijk gedrag in andere strijdende landen. Gedurende de oorlog waren er inderdaad vele voorbeelden die de bezorgdheid over zedelijkheid illustreerden in Groot-Brittannië, Duitsland, en Frankrijk, in het bijzonder met betrekking tot de zedelijke normen van vrouwen en adolescenten. Nadat ik de Osmaanse terminologie over onzedelijkheid in staatsdocumenten heb opgesomd, betoog ik dat Osmaanse gezagsdragers de bescherming van openbare zedelijkheid

benaderden binnen het grotere kader van het bewaren van de openbare orde en veiligheid. Dit was deels vanwege de angst dat de publieke reacties, zoals bijeenkomsten en protesten tegen de schendingen van zedelijkheid, de verslechtering van de openbare orde zouden veroorzaken. Zoals ik heb laten zien in dit hoofdstuk, hadden sommige politieke en economische ontwikkelingen gedurende de oorlog in het Osmaanse Rijk aan de ene kant bijgedragen aan de pogingen van de regering om effectievere stappen te zetten om onzedelijkheid te elimineren, terwijl aan de andere kant tegelijkertijd deze pogingen werden ingeperkt vanwege de financiële behoeften van het land. In 1914 vormden de afschaffing van de capitulaties en het uitroepen van de staat van beleg bijvoorbeeld belangrijke momenten in de bestrijding van prostitutie en vrouwenhandel. Zoals sommige gevallen illustreren was zedelijkheid een concreet vereiste - een voorwaarde om in aanmerking te komen voor Osmaans burgerschap of de status van bekeerling tot Islam. Aan de andere kant, als we kijken naar de alledaagse werkelijkheid, werden de maatregelen tegen onzedelijkheid, onzedige handelingen, en zaken die zedelijk verval veroorzaakten, ingeperkt. In het bijzonder met betrekking tot de controle over uitgaansgelegenheden en de regulering van alcoholgebruik bestond er een spanning tussen de financiële behoeften van het land – oftewel de noodzaak om belasting te heffen – en het behouden van hoge zedelijke normen. Publieke aandacht voor zedelijkheid werd echter onthuld in de zedelijke kritieken op oorlog-gerelateerd winstbejag en op in het oog springende consumptie, welke een scherp contrast vormden met de armoede van het gewone volk en de kuisheid van de soldaten op het slagveld.

Hoofdstuk vier begint met een overzicht van de invloed van de oorlog op het gezin, om te contextualiseren hoe het gezinsleven werd getroffen door oorlogsomstandigheden en om een achtergrond te geven van de veranderende percepties van het gezin. Daarna richt het zich op de vormen van staatsbemoeienis met gezinsaangelegenheden in de zin van controleneming over seksuele verhoudingen die potentieel het gezin als instituut bedreigden. Ik laat zien hoe wetgeving tijdens de oorlog, die zich richtte op het gezin, voortgedreven werd door zedelijke zorgen. Deze wetsvoorstellen, welke tot nu toe in de historiografie apart behandeld zijn, worden dus in een breder kader samen geëvalueerd. Eerst kijk ik naar de de vormen van seksueel geweld

gericht tegen de vrouwelijke leden van de gezinnen van soldaten. Ten tweede onderzoek ik een tot nu toe genegeerd wetsvoorstel, de Overspel Wet van 1916, en de debatten eromheen. Ik onderzoek hoe het wetsontwerp debatten ontketende over de opvattingen over zedendelicten, de aard van het recht, en de grenzen van publiek en privaat recht. Tenslotte evalueer ik het Osmaanse Gezinsrechten Decreet van 1917 als onderdeel van de groeiende bemoeienis van de staat met het gezin. Ik betoog dat verhandelingen over zedelijkheid en nationale wedergeboorte een belangrijke rol speelden in het vormen van het lichaam van de wet. Niettemin, anders dan het beschouwen van deze bemoeienissen als een natuurlijk resultaat van toenemende seksuele geweldszaken, wijs ik op de rol van individuen – zowel mannen als vrouwen – in het vormen van de wederkerige verhouding tussen burgers en de staat. Door de staat aansprakelijk te houden voor een gebrek aan bescherming tegen seksueel geweld vroegen slachtoffers en getuigen van deze misdaden expliciet om verdere staatsbemoeienis om ervoor te zorgen dat de daders effectiever bestraft konden worden.

Naast de huidige literatuur over de Eerste Wereldoorlog is dit onderzoek voornamelijk gebaseerd op documenten uit de Eerste Minister Osmaanse Archieven in Istanboel en op periodieken en kranten die gepubliceerd werden gedurende de periode in kwestie. Onder de catalogi in de archieven heb ik het meeste geprofiteerd van de documenten van het Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken (Dahiliye Nezareti), waaronder ook documenten van het Binnenlands Bestuur (İdare-i Umumiye) en het Politie Departement (Emniyet-i Umumiye) zich bevinden. Ik heb ook profijt gehad van de Eerste Wereldoorlog collectie in de Archieven van de Turkse Generale Staf (ATASE). Naast de archiefdocumenten van staatsfunctionarissen heb ik brieven en petities van mensen die verbannen werden uit gebieden in centraal Anatolië onder staat van beleg geraadpleegd, om beter de levens te kunnen weergeven van mensen die het stigma van onzedelijkheid met zich meedroegen. Omdat petities een van de schaarse bronnen van sociale geschiedenis vormen die de stemmen van gewone mensen laten horen, beschouw ik de brieven van soldaten en de vrouwen in hun gezinnen naar de verschillende staatsdepartementen als primaire bronnen die onthullen hoe zedelijke zorgen een rol speelden in de staatsbemoeienis met het gezin. Naast archiefdocumenten, helpen de

krantenartikelen en de notulen van het Osmaanse parlement die geciteerd worden in dit onderzoek om de discussies over zedelijkheid in te kaderen. Artikelen van verschillende tijdschriften, die de zienswijzen van de Osmaanse intellectuelen vertegenwoordigen, bieden details over hoe zedelijkheid betwist zou gaan worden te midden van de beroering van de oorlog.

Concluderend beschouw ik zedelijkheid als een betwist vlak waarop verschillende spelers betrokken waren, welke zowel de externe als de interne ontwikkelingen in de bredere context van de oorlog omvatten. De spelers omvatten intellectuelen, militairen, gewone mensen, staatelites en alles ertussenin. Als bijdrage aan de literatuur vestigt dit onderzoek de aandacht op de sterke parallellen tussen huidige en honderd jaar-oude debatten over zedelijkheid en werpt het licht op de sociale en culturele kanten van de Osmaanse belevenis van de Eerste Wereldoorlog.