ISLAMIST POLITICAL ACTIVISM AND EDUCATION VOLUNTEERISM

A LOCAL ULEMA MOVEMENT IN THE LATE OTTOMAN KONYA,

1909-1921

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

Islamist Political Activism and Education Volunteerism:

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This thesis focuses on a certain conservative group from ulema and Nakshi-Khalidi sufis led by a particular Sheikh family in the Late Ottoman city of Konya. It tries to explain how could a traditional Sufi order turn to be a modern socio-political movement and became engaged with politics and reforming formal education at its madrasa by using modern devices. Understanding their theological perspective and looking at their anxieties over what they interpreted as innovation and secularization were keys to comprehend the story of the movement. To locate them in the general framework of the late Ottoman history, the thesis touches upon the discussions related to the Islamic modernism, and historiography over the late Ottoman ulema, which was often regarded as distinct areas of research. Therefore, this thesis deals with the the constitutional period experiences of the various late Ottoman ulema and Islamic intellectuals as much as it focused on their reflections in the local context of Konya. The city could be the most suitable place after the capital for tracing and observing the mentality and concrete applications of the opposing Muslim stances about reform and tradition on the ground. What this specific group in Konya experienced is a story of opposition and marginalization, except for small opportunities for power. By relying on a more conservative outlook, the group carried out a continuous opposition against the official Islam of the power holders in the late Ottoman period, respectively of the Hamidian regime, the CUP and its successor National Movement in Ankara.

ÖZET

Islamcı Siyasi Aktivizmi ve Eğitim Seferberliği:

Geç Osmanlı Konyası'nda Bir Ulema Hareketi, 1909-1921

Bu tez Geç Osmanlı Konyası'ndaki bir grup ulema ve Nakşi-Halidî sufinin geleneksel bir tarikat yapısından nasıl modern sosyo-politik bir harekete dönüştüğünü ele alıyor. Modern yöntemleri kullanarak geleneksel eğitimi reforme etme çabaları ve siyasete katılım yönündeki istekli çalışmaları hareketin oluşum ve sürekliliğini sağlayan ana komünal hedefleri oluşturuyor. Hareketin organizasyonu teolojik bir zemine dayanıyor ve en önemli motivasyonun sekülerizasyon olarak gördükleri tehditlere karşı çıkmak olduğu görülüyor. Bu hareketi Geç Osmanlı Dönemi çerçevesine yerleştirmek için genelde farklı çalışma alanları olarak görülen İslam Modernizmi ve ulema tarihi konularını mezcetmeye çalıştım. Bu yüzden tez Müslüman aydınların ve ulemanın Meşrutiyet dönemi tecrübelerine ve bunların Konya'ya yansımalarına odaklanıyor. Modern Müslüman görüşleri ve özellikle ulemanın arasındaki ayrışmaları müşahede etmek için geniş ulema ve medreseli nüfusuyla başkentin ardından Konya en uygun yer olabilirdi. Meşrutiyet'in ardından ülke siyasetine hakim olan birbirine muhalif Müslüman tavırların somut uygulamaları Konya yerel tarihine çok detaylı bir şekilde yansımış görünmektedir. Tezin konusu olan ulema grubunun faaliyetleri ise kısa iktidar olanakları dışında bir muhalefet ve marjinalleşme hikayesidir. Daha muhafazakar bir bakış açısına dayanarak, Geç Osmanlı dönemindeki güç odaklarının, sırasıyla Abdülhamit rejimi, İttihat ve Terakki ve Milli Mücadele Hareketi'nin resmî İslami söylemlerine karşı süreğen bir muhalefet göstermişlerdir.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: THE LATE OTTOMAN ISLAMIC MODERNISM…….……...1

1.1 Introduction…….1

1.2 Emergence and qualities of Islamic modernism in the late Ottoman context….....12

1.3 Official Islamic agenda of the Hamidian State……..…….……..……23

1.4 The rise of Islamic modernism and emergence of conservative-reformist tension in the modern Islamicate culture during the Constitutional Period…...……..26

1.5 Islamic socio-political vision of the Committee of Union and Progress…..……47

1.6 Emergence of Islamic opposition to the CUP rule and the clash of Islamic discourses: a revolt that tests a modern Islamic rhetoric…...…….61

1.7 Conclusion……...…….62

CHAPTER 2: CONSERVATIVE ULEMA ORGANIZATION IN KONYA…..…..63

2.1 Introduction…….…….….63

2.2 A conservative ulema group in the Ottoman countryside as a socio-political Movement……...65

2.3 Making of the conservative ulema movement in Konya: The Hamidian Period……..……69

2.4 Organization in the Constitutional Period: *Maşrık-ı Irfân* newspaper, print house and association…….…….……..78

2.5 Organization in the field of education: *Islâh-ı Medâris-i İslâmiye*……..……..97

2.6 Conclusion……..106

CHAPTER 3: POLITICAL ACTIVISM……..107

3.1 Introduction…….107

3.2 The political organization of the movement: the establishment of Ahali Party and the conservative ulema politics…….……...107

3.3 Agenda of the conservative ulema of Konya in the Ottoman parliament…..…114

3.4 The conservative ulema participation in the Freedom and Accord Party: violent break……...……...…117

3.5 Idealized ulema-politician type……...……126

3.6 Marginalization phase of the movement and the World War I……...134

3.7 Panislamist program of the CUP during the war……136

3.8 Conclusion……..142

CHAPTER 4: MEMOIRS……...144

4.1 The representative voice of the conservative ulema movement in Konya: Abdullah Fevzi Efendi and his WWI memoirs……..…….....144

4.2 On road to civil war: violent clash of Islamic discourses…….……157

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION…….……..175

APPENDIX: PHOTOGHRAPHS…….183

REFERENCES…….188

LIST OF APPENDIX PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1: Zeynelabidin Efendi……...183

Photo 2: Ziya Efendi…….184

Photo 3: Ali Kemâli Efendi and teachers at Konya School of Law……..184

Photo 4: An ‘alim as a teacher in a secular college in Konya……...185

Photo 5-6: Introduction pages of “Devlet-i Aliyye’nin Niza’ı Ahiri- Safahât-ı Ibtila”……186

Photo 7: First page of a number of Maşrık-ı Irfan newspaper…….……187

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

After the year 1908, a conservative ulema group in Konya led by Zeynelabidin Efendi, a friend of Mustafa Sabri Efendi, one of the leading figures of the conservative ulema group in Istanbul, entered politics to defend their religious opinions as well as their professional and institutional interests in the new parliamentary system. Although they preferred Islamic democracy to the oppression *(istibdad)*, which was a common element of the Islamicate culture in the nineteenth century and an opinion that they shared with various Muslim intellectuals and agents in the Late Ottoman Empire, they recognized the capacity of modernist Islamic discourses to be outside of what they perceived as the tradition. Therefore, they started to abandon the modernist Islamic rationalizations of this intellectual ground over time. Although the thesis mostly proceeds through political history examples for illustrating political adventures of the conservative ulema, it has been tried to be placed on an intellectual context concerning the opposition of the conservative ulema, specifically those in Konya to the various Ottoman power holders before, during and after the Constitutional period.

1.1.1 Methodology

First of all, I touch on the qualities of and opportunities created by the Islamic modernist discourses for the modern Muslim thinkers. As an extension of Islamicate

cultural tradition into the nineteenth century, Islamic modernist platform provided ulema or non-ulema all Muslim activists and intellectuals a means for resisting secular modernism and the western supremacy. Since its argumentations were carried out and designed to be as the re-articulation of the tradition according to modern needs, an inclusiveness as a natural element of this combining methodology laid the ground for secular and religious Ottoman opposition to come together against the Hamidian state. The subject group of the thesis, conservative ulema and the secular elements within the CUP applied to modern Islamic rationalizations and demanded 'Islamic Constitutionalism' from the regime in this way.

The thesis aims to show, through abundant number of historiographical materials, how these 'modern Islamic rationalizations' and merging efforts, used by various secular or religious factions in the process leading to the constitutional system, have led to political divisions over time. Conservative ulema rejected the Unionist effort to revise the rules of orthodox religion that naturally emerged from these discourses. This rejection resulted in a complete disregard for this modern Islamic method for some of them (like Mustafa Sabri) at the end, specifically after a decade long failed political adventure. In the first chapter, I criticize a number of works which was far from explaining this complex political process by approaching the events selectively and perceiving them in a binary relationship of progressive and reactionist struggle in which ulema as a whole was thought to be religious reactionists and the CUP as secular progressives.

On the contrary, I state that there was no exception for the Sultan Abdulhamid II, the CUP or any Ottoman political agent in adopting a certain way of Islamic understanding as a program or at least as a discourse, which became more possible through this common modern Islamicate culture, fertile international context

for propagating Panislamism and the internal political context shaped after the rapid increase in the number of Muslims in the remaining empire. Such discursive factors enabled the representatives of the Official Islam (Hamidian state and CUP respectively) to find partners among the ulama. I briefly referred to the CUP allies among them which Amit Bein calls the reformist ulama, as they were related with the thesis subject as anti-conservatives.

Nevertheless, the reliance of these political agents on Islamic rhetoric did not prevent the conservative ulama from opposing either the Hamidian regime or the CUP. Although the thesis deals with a specific conservative group, an ulama movement in Konya, I regarded that it was necessary to deal with the 31 March Rebellion in detail in the first chapter, as being the first reaction emerging out of the conservative ulema circles.

The motivating force in the rebellion, some ulema and madrasa students from the Muhammedan Union maintained the discourse of Islamic constitutionalism even after the CUP government was overthrown and so acted in a way according to the preaching of modern Islamic sentiments. I tried to illustrate how the rebels did try to locate the rebellion against the 'secular segment' within the CUP, excluding some Unionist figures like Enver Bey who was thought to be Muslim revivalist.

On the other hand, I should have referred that some authors of the conservative ulema's newspaper *Maşrık-ı Irfan* in Konya also praised the rebellion in Istanbul. In the existing literature, the initial response of the the Association for Scholars (*Cemiyet-i İlmiye)* against rebellion, which made up the majority of conservative ulama in Istanbul, had remained ambiguous. It was needed to reveal that even if the conservative ulema was quick to curse the rebellion, this was a tactic

for giving a chance for parliamentary politics for demanding and implementing Sharia. The demand for Sharia in the conservative ulema circles in both Istanbul and Konya was not a customary means of seeking justice, and stemmed from an enthusiasm for the application of religious criminal law according to the orthodox understanding even if their demand of Sharia (relying on Mecelle) also had modern elements.

Although it is not possible to see the conservative ulema as a whole body acting together, it is possible to define the conservative ulema group in Konya, the ideological kin of Cemiyet-i İlmiye, as a movement. In this thesis, I discuss the political experiences of the conservative ulema group in Konya relying on their newspaper Maşrık-ı Irfan. The reforming madrasas, the place of ulema and religious institutions in politics, and competing secularization-revivalism discourses stemming from competing fıqh understandings are among the subjects for which this group did political activism.

Throughout the thesis I cited the historiographical material which was related or belonged to the members of the movement. To illustrate how defensive inclined and Sharia-minded stance of this certain group led them to a turbulent political adventure for a decade is the main objective of the thesis. That's why I looked for a common theological and psychological ground in some of the seemingly unrelated events in which the students or the members of the group attended. From a student fight among the madrasa and industrial school students in Konya in 1906, to a series of rebellions in Konya between 1919 and 1921, I tried to grasp motivational force and psychological situation of this organization. Showing change and continuity was among the main aims of this thesis, as the literature was concerned with carrying out one of them for their specific agendas.

It should be kept in mind that specific events and certain personas in the way, like Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, had a greater impact and agency on the secular future of Turkey. Therefore, it was my principal in this thesis to evaluate Islamic argumentations and ideas of the late Ottoman intellectuals, including pro-CUP ones which were described in the literature as the 'representative' of the certain ideologies like Turkism, Westernism etc. as 'sincere' arguments without essentially connecting them to the republican period. The questioning of so called 'sincerity' in regard to modernist or Islamic aims of these late Ottoman thinkers emerged out of the political divisions among secularists and conservatives during the republican period. Both sides developed certain forgetting and remembering strategies in their versions of the historiography of the Late Ottoman and specifically the National Struggle periods. For the sake of a reasonable past for a progressive Turkish identity, the image of 'backward' ulema and Islamists was fortified with attribution of treason by the official narrative, while it was Mehmed Akif, an Islamist intellectual, who did write a national anthem for it. On other side, many conservatives followed a similar stategy and ignored the opposition of the Caliph and some ulema to the National Struggle.

1.1.2 Primary sources

As I focused on a specific group, my main sources consist of what they produced and could survive to this day. These are the newspapers of the movement, *Maşrık-ı Irfân* in Konya which was my main source of information and its ideological kin *Beyanu'l Hak* of Cemiyet-i İlmiye in Istanbul that I appealed occasionally. Around 150 issues and 600 pages of *Maşrık-ı Irfan* including newly found numbers that have never been used before was read and partly transcripted for the thesis. The Ottoman Archives

and Parliamentary records were quite helpful to fil the gaps in chronological order and to look at the various actions the movement undertook in line with what they declared in the newspapers. As the Constitutional Period presented ample historiographical material, specifically in terms of journals and newspapers, it was almost impossible for an MA thesis to look at all press in Konya. Therefore, I intentionally limited the scope of these materials to just those of the subject group. Even if this situation poses some limits to evaluate in detail and compare two opposite Islamic discourses in local politics, it was not so hard for me to have the impression of what the opposite side proposed in discussions, since their intellectual formulations were not so complicated. Besides, the memoirs of Abdullah Fevzi Efendi, one of the figures of the conservative ulema movement in Konya, constitute a valuable resource in which he reflected a detailed account of his close circles' way of thinking. Since these memoirs have been written under the conditions of war and rebellion, they reflect his emotional intensity and contain very vivid and detailed descriptions of Fevzi's ideological formation. To this day, Fevzi's memoirs was not considered and examined in the frameworks of specific history writings such as rebellions during the National Struggle, Ottoman ulema and madrasa etc. They remained somewhat hidden probably because the memoirs were victims of the editorial interventions in which the original texts were often manipulated, taken out of the context and presented with misleading titles. Therefore, I worked a lot to distinguish the original text from additions and to locate the material on its original order and format that I obtained from the notebooks of Abdullah Fevzi in the Koyunoğlu Library in Konya.

1.1.3 Literature review

The literature review here is only about the works that directly contribute to my approach on Islamic discourses and programs of various power holders in the late Ottoman Empire. The review of other literature, which deals with different approaches on "Islamism", takes place at the beginning of the upcoming section. The first source that I hugely benefitted from regarding the late Ottoman ulema was Amit Bein's doctoral thesis, "The Ulema, Their Institutions and Politics in the Late Ottoman Empire (1876-1924)". The main agenda of the thesis seems to be the classification of the ulema according to their theo-political points of division during the Constitutional Period. Conservative ulema phenomenon, on the example of Mustafa Sabri, was handled in detailed in a combination of intellectual and political histories that I also modelled. However, there was hardly any contact with or mention of the non-ulama Islamic intellectuals and focused only on the rival ulema establishments like pro-CUP The Committee of Scholars (*Heyet-i İlmiye)* and the opponent Cemiyet-i İlmiye. In this MA thesis, I tried to fill partly the gap about civilian Muslim intellectual participation about what he called reformism. On the other hand, Bein focused only on the Istanbul for highlighting various political stances of ulema. I pulled the focus on the Anatolian countryside, the city of Konya where was famous with its religious institutions, and tried to show the visibility of madrasa students and political activism of lower class, conservative and countryside ulema by relying on the experiences of a certain group in Konya.

Monica Ringer's "Islamic Modernism and the Reenchment of Sacred in the Age of History" provides reader to grasp the foundations of modern Islamic thought in the late Ottoman period by showing how Islamic modernism emerged out of secular modernist challenges to religion. She draws intellectual schemes of the

prominent global figures of Islamic modernism and illustrate how enlightenment and religion could be made compatible with each other thanks to new iterations of the faith. Their historicist epistemological methodology allowed Islamic modernists to develop interpretations of religion based on tradition but tailored to modern needs like searching root for democracy in the religious encouragement over consultation in rule. This book provides an important conceptual framework by examining Islamic modernism as a unique phenomenon within the framework of 'multiple modernities'.

Ercüment Asil's Phd dissertation "The Pursuit of the Modern Mind: Popularization of Science, The Development of the Middle Classes and Religious Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1880", deals with the relationship of science and religion in the modern times. The thesis examined the Ottoman middle class demand for novel strategies for religious modes of reasoning from the ulema and Islamic intellectuals for disseminating modern natural sciences in a 'proper' Islamic way. It seems what M. Ringer conceptualized as Islamic Modernism was taken within the boundaries of 're-articulation of Islamicate cultural tradition' by Asil through which he emphasized the modern Islamic worries in regard to preserving identity, tradition and obtaining revival. With the theoretical knowledge provided by this thesis, I supported my previous conviction about the Islamic reformism of the CUP which had roots in this novel form of Islamicate cultural tradition in modern times.

Although Zübeyir Nişancı's work "The Dialectics of Revivalism in Turkey: The Case of Said Nursi" was valuable for grasping sociological dimension of the things through the intense theoretical material it provided on the secularization phenomenon, it is completely opposite to my approach that deals with the Committee

of the Union and Progress within Islamic modernism. Nişancı, regardless of context or without specifying which figures within the committee describe it as a secularist phenomenon. According to him, there was no difference between the CUP cadres and the first Young Turks, maybe unintentionally referring that they just constituted a phase in the linear secularist flow of history for Turkey that resulted in secularist republic. I propose that this attitude is far from explaining many events and attitudes in the Constitutional period. Even the main focus of his research, Said Nursi's activities, ideas and relationships during the constitutional period are left to be ambiguous through this conceptualization since Nursi first praised the 31 March rebellion, even though he withdrew his support soon, which Nişancı called counter-revolution, but then established a close relationship with Enver Pasha and involved in the Daru'l Hikmeti'l İslamiye, a CUP establishment. Although I did not use this work in my thesis, I found it useful to include it in literature review to draw attention to the complexity of the CUP phenomenon.

First of all, although I have not made much use of it in this thesis, a work greatly influenced my perspective on the history of the Unionists, and naturally contributed to the formation of this thesis. In his book "Jön Türklük ve Kemalizm Kıskacında Ittihadçılık", İsmail Küçükkılınç questions the continuity that is thought to exist between the first Young Turk generation and the Unionists. He insists on that the unification of the Ottoman Freedom Association, founded by Talat Bey, with the Progress and Union Association of Ahmet Rıza in 1907 changed the structure of the opposition completely. While he distances himself from calling the Islamic discourse in the Young Turks as Islamism, he strongly recommends a concept of 'Unionist Islamism'. The book presents many examples of the participation of the Islamist figures in the Unionism, for him, it affected the party ideology as well. Instead of

relying on an ideological classification, I preferred to consider the ideas and ways of thinking that Küçükkılınç defined as Unionist Islamism as a part of Islamic modernism or a modern part in Islamicate cultural tradition. Therefore, although I did not use it much in this thesis and I have my doubts about some points in the book, I could not go into the subject without mentioning this book, which has changed my perspective quite a lot over the CUP phenomenon.

Thanks to the wide variety of historiographical materials presented to the reader, İsmail Kara's "İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri 1" and "İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri 2" were unique sources to penetrate into the modern Islamic conceptualizations and intellectual debates during the Second Constitutional Period. It is not possible to find such an abundant primary source material in any other work about the "Ottoman Islamists". However, Kara judges the Islamists' way of thinking according to his understanding of Islam and tries to show how Islamically inconsistent they were. It seems, for him, Islamic modernism was a just a stage in the secularization process. Besides, it can be noticed that Kara approaches 'Islamists' as a whole and does not take much consideration to analyze different interpretations and attitudes among them.

Serhat Aslaner examined the *Maşrık-ı Irfan* newspaper and Islah-ı Medaris madrasa, which were among central subjects of my thesis, in his MA thesis "İlmiye Sınıfı'nın II. Meşrutiyeti Algılayışı Konya Örneği". Following Kara, Aslaner avoided classification and applied to the concept of the "ulema of Konya" which I did not perceive as a whole entity. He perceived the divisions within the ulema in Konya as purely political one. In this thesis, I tried to show that the political separation stemmed from ideological differences.

Ercüment Asil's MA thesis "The Reception of Liberty in Konya September 1908- April 1909", on the other hand, focuses on a more limited period, but through a more evaluative method in which such differences among the ulema are taken into account. Three different Konya newspapers and three different stances they represented concerning the perception of constitutional regime, which are discussed in a comparative way in this thesis, contributed significantly to my conceptualization of "conservative ulema movement in Konya".

Caner Arabacı's doctoral thesis named "1900-1924 Yılları Arası Konya Medreseleri" has a long section about *Islah-ı Medaris* Madrasa alongside other madrasas, prominent ulema of Konya and the Sheikh family, relying on many primary sources which were available in 1996. This study has been very beneficial in learning the bibliography on the subject and to recognize primary sources about the subject group. However, probably due to the relevance of the subject to political debates in Turkey, the author often moves away from being academic and analytical specifically in the Konya Rebellion section. The author does not hide his sympathy for this group of ulema and specifically for the reformed madrasa project they initiated.

Hakan Aydın's article "II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Konya'da İslamcı Muhalefetin Sesi: Meşrık-ı Irfan" relies on some of the debates in which Maşrık-ı Irfan participated with other Konya newspapers. However, the limited number of issues has been examined and the place of the newspaper and its leading ulema group was not considered in the greater framework of the late Ottoman history. Therefore, it remains as a local history work which limited itself to look at the political ground in the aftermath of the declaration of the Constitution in Konya.

Ahmet Avanas' work titled "Milli Mücadele'de Konya", which deals with the rebellions in the Konya region during the National Struggle based on archival documents, was the most important source for me to compare the data in Abdullah Fevzi's memoirs about the rebellions and to place them within the framework of Turkish War of Independence which I examine in chapter 4. Since the subject range in my thesis covers a vast period, more than a decade, such detailed works made it easier for me to focus only on the conservative ulema movement's facilities in Konya.

1.2 Emergence and qualities of Islamic modernism in the late Ottoman context

Islamic modernism or Modernist Islam is the name of a broad corpus comprising of what modernist Islamic intellectuals in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries produced against the anti-religious challenges imposed by secular modernism. Modernist Islamic strategies had presented social, epistemological and political packets for the novel needs and worries of modern Muslims. Although it is not possible to call all modern Muslim thinkers Islamic modernists, the discourse produced by those considered as Islamic modernists influenced the entire Muslim intellectual life since they were attractive because of the fact that they found a solution to a common problem.

There is a vast literature about the definition and qualities of Islamic Modernism in which various descriptions and attributions about this modern way of thinking competed. It was a subject of discussion whether Islamic modernism is conservative and critical of modernist reformations or a legitimizer of these "non-Islamic" inventions by providing the essential material from the primary sources of

religion.[1] It is proposed in this thesis that, it is not an obligation to reduce the modern Islamic corpus to these seemingly different stances. It is rather like a line segment in which every so called 'attendee' approach in terms of some criterion took a different place on this line of modern Islamicate cultural tradition stretching from the bravest proposals for reform to the most reluctant acceptance of it.

Essentialist perceptions over Islamic modernism tended to define it as either 'legitimization' act of so called secular modernist discourse with an Islamic justification or recasting religious language for fashioning modern reforms according to religious sensibilities. In fact, both were nothing more than a narrow view of the case and implied artificiality embedded in it. According to Monica Ringer, Islamic modernism rejected the thesis that modernity was an anti-religious and completely a western property, so it was not simply a reconciliation of Islam with modernity but included 'genuine theological innovations' which did not have to be thought outside of the tradition as well. These modern innovations were about the rearticulation of Islamicate cultural tradition. In Hudgsonian terms, these efforts were in accordance with the very basis of the tradition which emerged out of an initial creative action and dynamism.[2] Eventhough the tradition had some limits, searching for new solutions to modern needs was essentially traditional for the preservation of the integrity of the tradition.

Islamic modernists aimed to redefine, reconceive and relocate the religion in the modern manners to be able to sustain their belief in the face of novel circumstances and challenges. Even if these religious reformers questioned ulema supervision to interpret tradition and adopted an anti-clerical stance, their cluster was

[1] Kara rather calls the phenomenon as "Islamism". Kara, *İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri,* 21.
[2] Asil, "The Pursuit of the Modern Mind", 44.

not closed to ulama, specifically for those in higher ranks if they were ready to accept such modernist rationalizations and argumentations. For Asil, a new sense of rationality was already started to be embraced by wider sections of the society.[3] Therefore, the content of the education of these modern Islamic thinkers does not matter considering the definitions of Modernist Islam and its place in the boundaries of modern Islamicate culture. The ulema who got educated in the traditional madrasas also participated in the discussions of this platform alongside the modern Islamic intellectuals who mainly received education in secular colleges. Some differences in the proposals of the Islamic modernizers about the way of "salvation" of Muslims were a fact. Yet, this reality should not pave the way for the essentialization of Modern Islamic phenomenon with one of its dimensions which has a high possibility due to its dualistic approach in regard to modernism and tradition.

The essentialists who followed modernization theory do not abstain from describing Islam as a frozen entity. The main argument of them was that the primary sources of Islam unavoidably lead its followers to look for a utopia for Muslims or a dystopia for non-Muslims based on the coercive and certain inevitable interpretations of these sources. Therefore, "Islamism" was existentially destructive and functioned as a means for achieving this "impossible state". According to Lapidus, modern Islamic movements were necessarily fundamentalist and represented a reaction against modernity.[4] In an effort to separate Islam and Islamism for 'saving' the former from negative descriptions, Bassam Tibi said that Islamism was in essence a religionized politics. As a political project, Islamism had nothing to do with Islam

[3] Asil, "The Pursuit of the Modern Mind", 36.
[4] Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity, The Contemporary Movements and Historical Paradigms", 444.

which was religion, and had a single anti-democratic and exclusivist soul.[5] It is clear that these definitions and descriptions are far from explaining the case in the Late Ottoman Empire. For the late Ottoman period, the concept of Islamism should have been understood rather in relation to 'Islamic modernism'. As can be observed in the thought of Mehmed Akif, one of the most famous representatives of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, it arouses to be a more modernist oriented phenomenon. In the Western literature and as it reflected often on news channels, the concept is mostly associated with the twentieth-century, described as fundamentalism and often referred in relation to salafism. In this thesis, Monica Ringer's concepts of Islamic modernism or Charles Kurzman's Modernist Islam are used to explain the modern Islamic discourses and specifically Islamic modernist rationalizations that became very popular in Ottoman intellectual circles rather than the term Islamism, since this deep-rooted perception is difficult to deconstruct in this place.

Hakan Yavuz draws attention to Muslim thinkers' agency over the Muslim belief and the possibility of interpreting ideas and facilities of modern Islamist thinkers as a vernacularization of modernity in which the terms like human rights and democracy tackled with Islamic terminology.[6] This attitude described by Yavuz was a similar phenomenon to the method followed by global Islamic modernist figures (such as Namık Kemal and Cemaleddin Afghani) during the nineteenth-century. Even though Yavuz presents a huge opportunity to surpass the former biased stance, he still seems to have an impression of Islamists (specifically referring to the modern Islamic intellectuals) as those who were necessarily in outside of the tradition and orthodoxy. I think it is a must to differentiate between the intellectually colorful

[5] Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*, 25-363
[6] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity*,5.

tradition and the orthodoxy which do not have an exact beginning and took its shape in historical processes. As long as Islamic modernists quoted traditional sources for their novel ideas for adopting modernity which was one of the main themes of what can be called nineteenth-century Islamism, it surely should not be dissociated from the term tradition. In addition, it must be considered that, by doing so, Islamic modernists did not only contest modernity but rejected some of the traits it brought to modern Muslim life. This dualistic side of the modernist Islam troubled many researchers from accepting the phenomenon as it was, and lead them to question "sincerity" of them in regard to either their Islamic or modernist aims. For instance, one of the early and leading characters of the modern Islamic thought in the Ottoman Empire, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha developed a legal standardization of Islamic law called *Mecelle* which was inspired by the French Code. He searched the basis for his reform in the history of Islam and legalized secular Nizamiye courts in his time taking the example of *Mezalim* courts in medieval Islamic states. For one of the contemporary orthodox Muslim writers Bedri Gencer, the Pasha's application was a consession to secularization.[7] However, secularist author Celal Nuri (İleri) described the very same project as "a pure backwardness", since it preserved the Hanafi fıqh within the Ottoman legal system.[8] In the Turkish context, two rival ideologies, many secularist and conservative authors seem to be united in their conduct to Islamic modernism of the late Ottoman Empire by labelling its followers with certain traits.

For instance, Islamic modernist essentializations of the novel applications like constitution, parliament etc, as necessarily Islamic was seen by Ismail Kara as merely the legitimization act of secularist facilities to gain the appreciations of the

[7] Gencer, *İslam'da Modernleşme*, 545.
[8] Gencer, *İslam'da Modernleşme*, 552.

secular modernists, an attempt which would inevitably end with the dissolution of Sharia and the Caliphate.[9] Such a cynical and accusatory tone against past Muslim intellectuals who made use of Islamic modernism, by some Turkish conservatives seems to stem from experiences in regard to the acquisition of a secularist identity for the state during the early republican period. As a result, for many researchers it became a custom to question the 'appropriateness' of the late Ottoman Modernist Islam from an Islamic point of view and suspect their "sincerity" and reasonability.

The reason for such accusations lies behind the description of modernization as necessarily secularization. For Bedri Gencer, Islam was fixed (just as the orientalists' perception of Islam in a negative way). He insisted that the purest form of the religion could be found in Ashari school of belief which was popularly recognized as having a more submissive outlook. Another conservative author Ali Bulaç seems to share this idea by describing the approaches of what he called as first generation Islamists. For him, the conduct of this generation to religion and modernity with a synthesizing and rationalist approach was inevitably paradoxical as modernity, that they showed great interest in, bear individualism, secularity and nation state which were not compatible with Islam. He added that the modern social sciences could not be a way to comprehend the sacred revelation.[10] Sadık Albayrak seems to agree with Gencer and Bulaç in the dislike for this modern synthesizer approach of the Ottoman Islamic thinkers but roughly sketched out his disapproval by labeling all synthesizing effort as "westernization" and "irreligion" that had its roots in Tanzimat.[11] According to Albayrak, "Islamism" could not be a movement of ideology but "a beginning to return to Islam". Ottoman intellectuals affected by

[9] Kara, *İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri 2,* 50.
[10] Bulaç, "İslam'ın Üç Siyaset Tarzı veya İslamcıların Üç Nesli", 60.
[11] Albayrak, *İslamcılık-Batıcılık Mücadelesi*, 24.

Islamic modernism that Kara described as Islamists even could not a place in Albayrak's defensive and orthodox oriented definition of Islamism. Illustrating his very subjective definition of 'Islamism', he interpreted Kuleli Incident as such "a reaction" against "irreligion" and identified it as where Islamism emerged first. Soon after this identification of him, it is regarded that the reason behind calling this event as first Islamist political action only relies upon the convictions of secularist authors about the Incident. He confessed that it can be called so due to the fact that "the representatives of the westernist world view" identified this incident and participants as reactionary-bigot.[12] As it was touched upon previously, this reductionist approach of some conservatives had no intention to contextualize things regarding modern traits of Islamicate cultural tradition. For instance, in order to show the roots of the secularist "plot" in the early republic, Albayrak touched upon the 1923 writings of Ziya Gökalp which had drastically differed from his previous ideas and indeed closed to be a secularist in the republican terms. However, as it would be touched later, Gökalp as a modern Muslim thinker developed his ideas in the modern platform of Islamicate cultural tradition which reached out up until to the CUP rule and the twentieth-century.

One reason for confusion over understanding the extent and influence of Islamic modernism in the late Ottoman case stems from the problem of classification of Ottoman intellectuals as a representative of a particular ideology, a tendency which many contemporary conservative and secularist authors shared. Even though many of them felt uncomfortable with the strict classifications of so called Turkism, Islamism and Westernism, they still did not abstain from sustaining their utilization. For Niyazi Berkes, "contradictions" in the Young Ottoman thought was far from

[12] Albayrak, *Türkiye'de İslamcılığın Doğuşu*, 34.

understandable. It contained both "progressive" and "reactionary-backward" ideas in a way he reproached for a proper "Young" movement that he thought to be the ideological forefather of the Kemalist revolution. He found "Islamism of Namık Kemal" unpleasant and favored Ibrahim Şinasi as "the leading secular and nationalist" in the history of Turkey.[13] Tarık Zafer Tunaya also could not avoid the limits posed by such classifications. "Rationalist vein within the Islamism" which called his attention could only be artificial or limited referring to the 'Islamic' side of Islamic modernism. Similar to convictions of the orientalists and orthodox Muslims authors, he thought that Islamism had "certain qualifications" which had no place for those what he called "Islamist Westernists".[14] Ilber Ortaylı sustained the idea of the ambiguity of Young Ottoman ideology by relying on such established ideological frameworks and write as "by 1860s Ottoman intellectuals had not yet decided the exact nature of their political ideology" and, for instance, one of their leading figures, Ali Suavi "alternated between Islamism and Laicism".[15]

To regard mere contradictions in the Young Ottoman ideology was due to narrow comprehensions of Islamic modernism. For Şerif Mardin, Islamic discourse and justifications "camouflaged" the Young Ottoman's reformist intentions, which made them to use old concepts for new meanings by which he intended to say Islamic modernism of the Young Ottomans could not be a proper form of neither Islam nor modernism.[16] "Superficiality" in the synthesizing writings of the Young Ottomans led Mardin, as he revealed, to look for a background blended with western ideas.[17] For him, since they did not know how to speculate in western philosophical

[13] Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, 283-284.
[14] Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, 33-34.
[15] Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*, 188. Via Sancak, "The Islamism of Abdulhamid", 30.
[16] Mardin, *The Genesis of the Young Ottoman Thought*, 81.
[17] Mardin, *Jöntürklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 12.

way of thinking, they felt obliged to use Islamic terminology. Ismail Kara agrees with Mardin over somewhat "groundlessness" of the modernist Islamic causations of the Young Ottomans by relying on a "real" Islamic perspective. The Young Ottoman references to Islamic literature could be a tool to gain legitimacy for their political agenda.[18]

Mümtazer Türköne proposes a more refined understanding of Islamic modernism of the Young Ottomans. However, he also did not avoid to judge them according to an Islamic-traditional essence he had in mind. He said Muslim motivation for the afterlife was directed by the Young Ottoman modernism to the worldly affairs which would bring an imminent secularization of Muslim thought.[19] To locate "Muslim motivation" as a whole for afterlife is another way of essentialism. Indeed, he was aware of the enthusiasm of Islamic modernists for theme of "returning to the era of bliss", the times of the Prophet Muhammad and Rashidun caliphs. Türköne in a way affirms my initial suggestion that they still relied on the tradition and the sources of the religion, Quran and Sunnah. Kara disregards this phenomenon even if he presents lots of historiographic materials about it in his books on Islamism and sustained his persuasion over "non-Islamic inventions of Islamists" implying that Islam could not be understood wrong for centuries, which is a misleading approach even if he could have a point about it.[20]

The ideal system of rule foreseen by the first Islamic modernists like Namık Kemal and Cemaleddin Afghani tried to reconcile novel needs and worries with ancient expectations. Since the intellectual productions and inventions of the Young Ottomans developed out of the decline of the Muslim power in the political arena,

[18] Mardin, *Jöntürklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 15.
[19] Türköne, *İslamcılığın Doğuşu*, 30. Via Guida- Çaha, "İslamcılık", 572.
[20] Guida-Çaha, "İslamcılık", 574.

their Islamic project had a political program as well. The term "unity" that they presented as a solution for both internal and external crises first depended on the establishment of the constitutional system in the empire. At the head of this participative-just system of unity, the Caliph-Sultan would go through another phase of unity, *Pan-Islam*. They were far from being revolutionaries and accommodated themselves as revivalists. The Sharia would continue to be dominant in a form adapted to modern necessities.[21] This discourse enabled the ulama and non-ulama, religious or secular, all Muslim opponents to come together under an idea of Islamic constitutionalism. In the days leading up to the Constitutional Monarchy, it is referred that the ulema focused to refashion themselves and tried to prove that they were genuine constitutionalists.[22]

Thus, it is open to say that the Ottoman constitutionalism was not seen as secularization by almost any Ottoman Islamic thinker and regarded as a crucial part of the Muslim revival. Abdulhamit Kırmızı, inspired by Talal Asad, in a recent article of him, challenged the dominant perception over modern Ottoman thought as an ordinary phase in the secularization process, although all emphasis of its modern reformers was on the vitality of religion as he revealed. The assumptions about the modernization as a western and secular phenomena was merely a construction that blurred the reality of "multiple modernities".[23] By relying on proofs provided by Christopher Alan Bayly, he said modern times witnessed a religious revival, on the contrary to the assumptions coming out of modernization theory about the inevitable fate of extinction for religion. The nineteenth-century was a stage of imperial states which consolidated their positions on certain religions and sects. The Ottoman State

[21] Guida- Çaha, "İslamcılık", 577.
[22] Yakoob Ahmad, "The Ottoman Sunni Ulema", 127.
[23] Kırmızı, "19.yy'ı Laiksizleştirmek: Osmanlı-Türk Laikleşme Anlatısının Sorunları", 2.

also kept up the trend and carried out reforms with Islamic causations for "Islamic" aims. Such justifications were not for satisfying ulama who were portrayed existentially as a barrier to modernization. Moreover, it was ulama who designed the curriculum in newly established schools of law, and was an active participant in the modernization project.[24] Even though I agree with Kırmızı over the general framework of these determinations, I am not sure about his opinion about ulama as a whole was willing to participate in the reforms and benefitted from them rather than get harmed. Ulema was not a monolithic block and other than high ranking ulema, their position coordinately damaged with that of madrasas. The emergence of the conservative ulama movement that would be examined in this thesis relied on such a social background that culminated since the Tanzimat period up until the end of the Hamidian reign. Even in 1918 Ahmed Shirani from ulema tied the recent secularizing (not necessarily secularist) CUP reforms in law to *Tanzimat* and described Islamic justifications for it as hypocrisy.[25] In addition, the domination of the bureaucratic authorities over religious establishment was inescapable. In the most cases of the nineteenth-century empires, the opportunities for religious revival could only be possible after a submission to that authority by men of religion. Therefore, understanding the qualities of the official Islamic policy of the Hamidian regime in this context of imperial religion is a must to catch continuities and disruptions among the Young Ottoman Modernists and the Islamic modernism of the second constitutional period.

[24] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom*, 4.
[25] Esra Yakut, *Şeyhülislamlık*, 129.

1.3 Official Islamic agenda of the Hamidian State

Abolishment of the constitution by Abdulhamid II signaled the state disapproval of the modern Islamic analogies of the Young Ottomans. Even though the Sultan was in the same line with them about the external aspect of the term unity (*İttihad)*, its internal implication Constitutionalism (*Meşrutiyet)* was accepted as seditious. Nusret Pasha, one of the bureaucrats of the Sultan, had written that democracy was irreligion and dissolving the power of the Commander of the Believers meant the removal of Sharia.[26] On the other hand, he was also concerned with the limits imposed by ulema on his authority. After discharging Hayrullah Efendi from the post of Sheikhul-Islam, Abdulhamid created a new and loyal Meşihat administration to work with. For instance, Cemaleddin Efendi who was said to be his most favored *'alim* served in the post of Sheikhul-Islam for 17 years. Although the general situation of the ulama was deteriorating, pro-sultan high ranking ulema had state backing.[27] The role of some ulema members and madrasa students in the dethronement of his predecessor Sultan Abdulaziz apparently made him oversensitive about the activities of ulema class and shaped their fate during the long reign of Abdulhamid. In that context, while he aimed to empower the religious orthodoxy in the imperial realm, he was reluctant to do that through strengthening ulema. The development and spread of printing technology which presented appealing opportunities for the propagation of the official Islam was also effective in transferring state resources to this sector. New Ottoman middle classes were more enthusiastic to hold the religious books, specifically Qurans whose ownership was a privilege of a small section of the society in classical ages.[28] By publishing the primary sources of Islamic literature such as

[26] Ali Bulaç, "İslam'ın Üç Siyaset Tarzı", 58.
[27] Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam,* 37-38, via Sancak, "The Islamism of Abdulhamid", 35.
[28] Wilson, *The Translating the Qur'an*, 12

works of Imam Ghazali, the Sultan met the middle class demand and popularized orthodox Islamic knowledge to the masses, something which was monopolized by the ulama until then.[29] It is not a coincidence that it was also a time in which classical Islamic sciences were learnt and interpreted outside of the madrasas by non-ulema intellectuals.[30]

It is possible to say that the Official Islam of the Hamidian state was mostly pragmatic and political, and lacked more sophisticated Islamic modernist rationalizations of the Young Ottomans who turned to be political rivals for the sultan. For instance, the biology lessons in the Imperial School of Medicine where the first Young Turk intellectuals raised was dominated by positivist and materialist discourses coming through books translated from French. To overcome a possible loss of Muslim faith among youth, Islamic subjects in the curriculum were increased. However, they were not designed to address ontological questions from an Islamic philosophical view and not presented a refined understanding of the belief, instead they dealt with the more traditional oriented teaching of the basics of the religion.[31]

The Official Islam or State Islam was utilized as an imperial means to be used in international politics by Pan-Islamism expressing the extraverted side of the ideology but focused on the creation of a Muslim nation in the domestic politics as well. However, an eclective attitude was adopted towards traditional institutions by separating domestic and foreign policies. The Sultan who avoided the empowerment of the ulema in internal politics, relied on ulema and sheikhs outside of the core Ottoman lands. Shadzali, Rıfai and Nakshi sheikhs from northern Africa to India harbored in the capital of the caliphate Istanbul. Syrian Rıfai Sheikh Abul Huda

[29] Ülken, *Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, 136.
[30] Türköne, *İslamcılığın Doğuşu*, 30. Via Guida- Çaha, "İslamcılık", 574.
[31] Esra Yakut, *Şeyhülislamlık*, 154.

Muhammed was one of such agents of the Sultan in the Pan-islamist project and was hosted in the palace while writing many epistles to prove the legitimacy of the Ottoman Caliphate.[32] Traditional religious characters were complimented as they presented practical benefits. As it would be touched later on, madrasas were deprived of governmental support. It is said that the sultan had thought of establishing a theology faculty in 1895 instead of focusing on traditional madrasas, to train well-equipped missionaries who would assist him in global politics.[33]

The way Hamidian regime approached the ulama of lesser ranks led many of them to come in line with the Young Turks against this common source of discomfort. They were questioning the qualities of the pro-Sultan ulama, while Ahmed Rıza complained about Sheikh Abul Huda, claiming him to be a snake charmer and magician who intervened in the state politics.[34] The ulama opposition to the Hamidian regime alongside the Young Turks emerged out of this context in which many ulema started to be familiarized with the synthesized approach of the first Islamic modernists. Islam was then the source of both opposition and governmental discourses, which would continue to be so after the fall of the Sultan with the circulation of new Islamic justifications for new opposition fractions and new governments.

[32] Bozpınar, "Sayyâdî", 217-18.
[33] Sarıkaya, "2. Meşrutiyet ve Medreseler: Geleneksel Bir Kurumun Modernleşme Sürecinde Var Olma Mücadelesi", 67.
[34] Mardin, *JönTürklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 220.

1.4 The rise of Islamic modernism in Ottoman domains and emergence of conservative-reformist tension in the common Islamicate cultural tradition during the Constitutional Period

Modern Islamic thought was generally developed and reproduced by non-ulema Muslim intellectuals who got educated in the secular colleges. This fact creates a popular perception about ulema that is existentially 'fanatic' and 'uncompromising orthodox' referring to the Egyptian case where there was fierce debate between the ulama and Islamic modernist intellectuals.[35] However, this is not enough to explain the Islamic intellectual platform in the late Ottoman period. Throughout the nineteenth-century, the main agenda of the Ottoman elite, with its bureaucrats, thinkers and some high ranking ulema, was to absorb Islamic and modern values without conflicting them. Actually it was a global phenomenon and the Young Ottomans' ideas hugely overlaps with their global non-western counterparts like Chinese and Russian intellectuals of the nineteenth century who also dealt with merging 'indigenous rationalistic and ethical tradition' with the western imported ideas.[36] The concepts of common 'Islamicate culture' and 'Islamic modernism', reflect the Ottoman version of this global spirit in the age of religious modernisms. Although not every modern Muslim thinker can be called Islamic modernist, the rationalist Islamic justifications produced during this period influenced all educated modern Muslims of the Empire and became mainstream.

As stated before, the writers of the history of Modern Islam could often ignore the different experiences in the Late Ottoman Empire and its successor Turkey about the position of Islam in relation to the state. The main reason for

[35] Syed Rızwan Zamir, "Rethinking the Academic Study of the Ulama Tradition", 151.
[36] Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World*, 295.

confusion seems to stem from the ambition to search a secularist root for early republic in the Ottoman Empire. Studies dealing with the tension between Secularism and Islamic Revivalism movements in Turkey generally start the narration of the secularist movement with the emergence of the Young Turks. This logical inference, which at first seems correct, is often extended to include the CUP which was born out of Young Turks.[37] This teleological perception neglects the fact that Islamic Modernist Thought and modern version of the Islamicate cultural tradition initiated and reproduced by the Young Ottomans were maintained and stayed popular amongs average educated and middle class Ottoman muslims until the 1920s, including many members of the CUP.

It was not just Turkish researchers, global Muslim authors were also indifferent in regard to this effort of tying different contexts of early republican and the Ottoman constitutional periods as absolutely connected. The fact that the republic significantly reduced to raise influential world-wide Islamist thinkers for a long time and the Kemalist revolution did not need Islamic justifications anymore, the domination of the modern Islamicate culture over Ottoman Muslim thought was neglected by outside Muslims as well. In that manner, for M. Kasım Zaman who had focused on the South Asian and Arabian cases, the "Islamists" were the ones who do need neither ulema nor tradition to understand the truth of Islam, ignoring the inclusive qualities of the commom platform of discussion.[38] Ali Bulaç, probably affected by the literature produced by global Islamist figures in the twentieth-century, described Ottoman ulama as those who were in the pursuit of their own

[37] For a study that positions the CUP as a secularist, although it is aware of the conflicting elements on this issue, see: Zübeyir Nişancı, "The Dialectics of Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey: The Case of Said Nursi", (PhD Diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2015).
[38] Zaman, *Çağdaş Dünyada Ulema*, 31.

careers and did not have a passion to present Islamic alternatives to modern Muslims unlike to 'Islamists'. In that manner, he gave the 31 March Rebellion as a proof of this stance and a kind of despotism imposed by ulema who did existentially not have a sympathy for social change. For him, the participation of some ulema to 31 March Rebellion to direct society by force illustrated the general ulama traits, as if these participants represent a whole ulama class.[39]

These deductions are far from describing what the situation was in the Ottoman Empire and from comprehending the factions in the late Ottoman ulama whose considerable segment was in the interaction with the non-ulama Islamic modernists and utilized their way of argumentation. As stated previously, the discourses of Islamic modernism became quite popular in the Ottoman Empire. Contrary to Bulaç's claims, even the conservative sections of the ulama, both those who did participate and not participate in the revolt had modern features, although their emphasis on the orthodox understanding of the tradition was very high and they were very enthusiastic about defending it. In the context of this common modern Islamicate culture, I will discuss the ideas of the conservative ulama group in this thesis and evaluate the reasons for upcoming tension between their religious interpretations and that of the CUP after this common methodology started to be questioned. However, for illustrating the modernism of their conservatism, the upcoming pages relied upon some points of views they shared with their opponents among the Islamic modernists and focused on commonalities.

First of all, Monica Ringer distinguishes the concept of Muslim modernist from the concept of Islamic modernist, the former representing a Muslim with

[39] Ali Bulaç, "İslam'ın Üç Siyaset Tarzı", 59.

modernist views who had no intention to design a modern appearance for the religion, and the second representing a Muslim thinker who wants to redesign the tradition according to modern reservations.[40] In this context, the CUP, the rival of the conservatives, contained both types of Muslims. The CUP establishment itself was already a coalition, and the discourses of Islamic modernism served as a common ground that served the unity of this coalition.

Islamic modernist cluster was open to ulema too, especially for those in ilmiyye class' higher ranks. Those who adopted the ways of Islamic modernism from the ulema positioned their methods as the most suitable way for the benefit of traditionally associated terms religion and state (*dîn u devlet)*. This common discourse became a means of opposition to the rule of Sultan Abdulhamid and the oppression. Regarding the inclusiveness of the Committee, then it is essential to reconsider the descriptions of the CUP in the literature as secular hard modernizers.

Unionist reformism was instead advertised as an Islamic revivalism. There was something about it that initially even appealed to conservative ulema. At the beginning of the Constitutional period, there was a considerable participation of ulema and Muslim intellectuals in the Committee, who were of various stances like conservative, reformist etc. As Talal Asad described, if tradition and sharia specifically are described as an Islamic discourse in which various kinds of Muslim thinkers referred and quoted for the bases of their understanding of the past and the projections for future[41], then the Unionists had benefitted from this "tradition" and made use of the reservoir of the Islamicate cultural tradition. Pro-CUP modernists always appealed to religious causation for the justification of the policies of the

[40] Ringer, *Islamic Modernism*, 37.
[41] Asad, *Anthropology of Islam*, 14.

party, just as the case in the Ottoman customs, generally remembered with the Sheikhul-Islam Ebussuud's fatwas. To search for a true Islam and to save it from superstition and imitation, were common modern objectives of both Ottoman ulema that Bein classified as conservative, neutral and reformist, and non-ulama modern Islamic intellectuals. They all admired western technological progress and favoured parliamentary democracy as ideal form of Islamic rule. The most significant difference among ulama and non-ulama Islamic revivalists seems to be professional, as talking about religion was a craft-like characteristic for the ulema coming through a packet of expected ulema manners, but civilian intellectuals were more flexible in general about the scale of modern Islamic argumentations.

There are enough mutual points which enable us to place ulama and non-ulama Muslim revivalists together in this graph of modern Islamicate culture. The first thing to consider is the defensive effort that Islam is not a barrier towards progress. They all used an Islamic rhetoric by which they presented their agendas as the supportive of Islamic ideals, strengthening Muslims in their lives. It is noteworthy that even the Ottoman Socialists were far from being irreligious and absorbing the irreligious qualities of dialectical materialism. They tried to prove that Socialism was in conformity with Islam and Sharia within this common Islamicate culture, even as late as 1920.[42]

The modernity of the conservatism could also be seen in the mutual ideological points they shared with reformist-modernists. The association of the religion and civilization constitutes one of such common Islamic discourses. In line with Cemil Aydın's proposal but in addition to him, it is herein proposed that both

[42] Kırmızı, "After Empire , Before Nation: Competing Ideologies and the Bolshevik Moment of the Anatolian Revolution", 130.

proactive reformist and conservative (still reformist in some respects) Muslim elites strove to design a whole Muslim society, standardizing the command of Islam in a way that they also hoped a worldly benefit embedded in it for them.[43] In that manner, they invented a reified term like Islamic civilization by which they would present the material "products" of their religions which were supposedly the proving reflections of the sacred essence of the religion.[44] This civilizational turn was the reason behind why even the secularist components within the CUP felt comfortable with taking side by religion as it was regarded as something "that has been nice to have" and a functional civilizational element. The main point of motivation for such a unifier designation stemmed from outside challenges directed against all Muslims regardless of their relation to religious modernism. In the western narrative of development of civilization, there was no place for Muslims, as they were classified as an inferior 'race' as a whole. For overcoming such accusations, Muslim intellectuals needed to connect Islamic past to their supposed origins in the Ancient Greece via medieval Muslim scholars. As the transmitters of the ancient Greek knowledge and philosophy, Muslims would have deserved to be listed among civilized part of the world. They would arm themselves with needed self-esteem, with a modern but unique identity against the attacks of the "rival civilizations". Therefore, the shared material development of modernity was welcomed but, social and cultural characteristics distinguished and rejected by conservative or reformist, ulema or non-ulema all Islamic revivalists in late Ottoman period.

Moreover, this civilizational approach had internal and external implications about the unity of the Muslims. The Pan-islamism in the international politics and a

[43] Aydın, *The Idea of the Muslim World*, 10.
[44] Dalacoura, "Islamic Civilization" as an Aspect of Secularization in Turkish Islamic Thought", 127-149.

kind of Muslimism in internal politics would become popular, specifically after the Balkan wars as modern religious discourses. The civilization narrative and defence of Panislamism were not necessarily limited to Islamic thinkers either. For instance, Celal Nuri, first a secular Unionist then a Kemalist, rejected exclusively religious description of the unity of Muslims and proposed a civilizational cause which would aid Muslims in their struggles against the Western aggression.[45] His approach was almost indifferent to that of Islamic intellectuals making separation between technic and authentic civilizations as the former should be adopted while latter avoided. In fact, there was no difference in procedure between Ziya Gökalp, the prominent figure of the CUP's reformist Islamic policies who was known with his theory over the national need for İslamization-*İslamlaşmak*, a term used interchangeably with Islamism, and Mustafa Sabri, who saw Gökalp's ideas utterly as irreligion. Both envisioned a modern socio-Islamic engineering that would enlighten the public relying on differing Islamic discourses. The fact that one adopts a conservative understanding of fiqh and the other adopts a reformist style should not prevent us from comprehensing that fiqh and tradition still maintained their centrality in the modern Ottoman Islamic thought.

As previously stated, the modernity of this conservatism was apparent and helped them to come together with Muslims of other stances since they all had to stand against modern challenges. However, some of their religious anxieties, emerged out of modern context that they did identify with secularization and constituted the points of division as well. In fact, as Taylor demonstrated, that there was no a linear development in historical processes in which secularity or religiosity

[45] Cemil Aydın, *The Idea of Muslim World*, 111.

absolutely triumphed over other in any time. Both were open to ups and downs.[46] However, those conservatives were far from foreseeing such an outcome as a reasonable option for some reasons. Even though they also benefitted from the creative innovations of the Islamic modernism and followed the Young Ottoman discourse of Islamic parliamentary democracy, the 'brave' interpretative possibilities that was paved by the Modern Islam could not have been welcomed as a whole. They tended to see many reform efforts of the CUP within the framework of secularization. That situation constituted the reason behind why the conservative ulema like Mustafa Sabri Efendi and Zeynelabidin Efendi, the leader of the subject group of this thesis, turned to be implacable CUP opponenents.

As I observed, Islamic modernism tended to be optimistic about the Muslim future, and this hope made its intellectual production active and political adventure dynamic. The conservative stance that was not against its argumentation initially and shared this optimism about the Constitutional system, however, had reservations about the shape and extent of the change, and included a pessimism that would increase during the post-constitutional period. For clearing such fears of secularization and marginalization of religious institutions and ulema, conservative dissatisfaction turned to be political opponent of the the CUP in time and constituted the reason behind political activism for some conservative ulema. The ideal combative type of ulema envisaged by Sheikh Zeynelabidin Efendi, the leader of the conservative ulema movement in Konya, upon whom the thesis is built, can also be seen as a reflection of such a reactionary idealism formed under the influence of modernity. They increasingly started to focus in time only on the orthodox vein from the very colored tradition and build themselves on that origin. This attitude was open

[46] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 2.

to a limited change in religion and politics without harming their imagination of the tradition.

In fact, traditional Islamic science of fiqh, as a source of Ottoman law and a driving force for imagined modern and Islamic Ottoman civil society, occupied a central position in the minds of many Islamic thinkers and ulema, whether they were reformist or conservative and even pro-CUP or its opponents. However, utilization of two distinct approaches to it was apparent and contributed to incoming political separation. Bedri Gencer refers the fact that for many ulema-theologians sociological inductive reasoning about the religion (similar to that of Ziya Gökalp) was not conceivable as they accustomed to think within the frame of Aristotelian deductive methodology.[47] Although the Islamic jurisprudence, of which the ulema was an expert, was subject to changes according to context and the ulema made use of inductive speculation, it was not as broad 'openness' as modernists ascribed to the concept of *ictihad*.

Many ulema of various scholarly orientations and political stances also valued ictihad in order to avoid fiqh to be exclueded from the law making processes in the new constitutional regime by presenting its practicality and ability to be modern code. Ahmed Shirani from the conservative ulema circles, determined that working on ictihad was an obligation and necessarily Islamic since it stemmed from novel needs that needed to be corresponded for the Muslims' sake.[48] However, its scope and areas of operation in led to divisions over what is *nâs* unchangeable in religious matters.

[47] Gencer, *İslam'da Modernleşme*, 239.
[48] Simge Zobu, "Late Ottoman Modernization in Jurisprudence", 123.

One of the points of discussion within these circles could be differing and conflicting views on the position of ulema in the state structure. Conservative ulema were giving a checking mission for the ulema, by supporting this idea with some religious proofs.[49] Nevertheless, the tradition identified with them was indeed too colorful to keep this idea, as *amir-'alim* tensions in the long Islamic history often ended in favor of politicians. The Islamic institutions in the Ottoman Empire precisely were coordinated by a state-established religious bureaucracy for centuries.[50] In that manner, it could be observed that a considerable section of the conservative ulama revived an ancient tension about a clash on ruling worldly affairs of the Muslims between ulema and statesmen. Such an emerging tension could be seen on understanding of the content of novel political terms. Constitutionalism, for instance, was a common phenomenon that both conservative ulema and Muslim reformists valued and agreed upon its "Islamic" content. It was accepted as 'an already established application in Islam' with the *biat* referring to an ancient idea that the Caliph was always needed to be checked according to a religious understanding of justice. However, for the champion of the traditionalists Mustafa Sabri Efendi, this "naturally" Islamic application was always carried out and guarded by ulema throughout the history of Islam, just as the members of the parliament would also participate now to maintain it. Therefore, for him, it was pretty typical for ulema to take part in every processes within this system of rule. The influence of the concept

[49] Look for some religious sources of such an argumentation: "Scholars are the inheritors of the prophet" (Tirmizi, İlim, 19). *Hadislerle İslam 1- Hadislerin Hadislerle Yorumu*, (İstanbul: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2020), 373. Quran, 3:110 "…*Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong...".* trans. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, (Amana Publications, 2006).

[50] Look for the "obedience verse" used for religious justification of ruling by various Muslim socio-political and religious authorities, "O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and *those charged with authority among you*. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: That is best, and most suitable for final determination." Quran 4:59.

of the Rousseaustic “Social Contract” in his treatment of constitutionalism is not as evident as in the modernist Young Ottomans who introduced it first to the Ottoman thought.

Conservatives seem to contribute to the common Islamicate intellectual resorvoir with a 'conservative' interpretation by adding the participation of the ulama. Mustafa Sabri added that the sultan and all high ranking bureaucrats were not only to rule but to be supervised just like in “an employee and employer relationship”.[51] Conservatives told a story of the past where this ideal was always implemented and specifically carried out by their class, and in a way which differentiated them from the views of other modern Muslim thinkers towards this *biat*-social contract narrative, who did not envision such an expected ulama role in the future.

Mustafa Sabri and Zeynelabidin Efendi during the early Constitutional Period still had an organic ideological connection with the Young Ottomans in terms of understanding and demand for the Sharia, specifically Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi who were rather seen as the ideological forefathers of the Young Turks. As Amit Bein illustrated, the ones who proposed a more relaxed interpretation of Sharia was the Unionists and their ulema allies who moved a step away from the Young Ottomans. This information is important to show that the conservative phenomenon was ‘yet’ an 'internal' and ‘in system’ phenomenon in the late Ottoman and constitutionalism. The reformism of the Unionists which came through “rationalization” or “arranging” attempt of ancient Islamic provisions could be

[51] Mustafa Sabri, “Tokad’ta İrad Olunan Nutuk”, *Beyanu’l Hak*, (7 September 1325-20 September 1909).

observed in conservative Islamic publications as well, even though the latter's materialized within a bounded framework.

However, the radicalization that will emerge with the experience to be lived in the historical process after the declaration of the constitution, which is the main theme of this thesis will cause some conservative ulema who organized around M. Sabri and Zeynelabidin to abandon this attitude to a great extent. Mustafa Sabri would even abandon the Maturidi sect, which he thought gave more opportunities to such 'brave' interpretations, and switch to what he thought to be more submissive, Ashari sect. Mustafa Sabri accused those past Muslim reformists and his political rivals as ones who aided the cause of secularists.[52] After his short-term alliance with the CUP after the declaration of the constitution, Mustafa Sabri and his team had devoted their political and scholarly careers to fighting Islamic reformism that he perceived as a part of secularization and marginalization of religious establishments.

The fact that conservative dissident ulama regarded the CUP as securalizers and positioned itself as the sole defender of tradition should not result in falling into the dichotomy of modern-traditional strife. As I mentioned before, the conservative formation also had modern features and modernity of its traditionalism could be seen in what and how they advocated their proposals. For instance, their search for the uniformity of Islamic doctrine deserve attention. The decisive point of irreversible split among the Unionists and conservative ulema was the Unionist reluctance to develop *Mecelle*, a modernized and standardized version of the Sharia law. The conservative ulama group within the CUP many time proposed a bill about a new project about the extension of Mecelle law of which the content would be shaped by

[52] Mustafa Sabri, *Hilafet ve Kemalizm*, 21.

themselves. However, the CUP was in the pursuit of a more secularized code of law prepared by secular jurists and determined to retard the examination of this bill in the parliament.[53] This project would be the main reason of conservative ulema and the CUP animosity.

The non-existence of a written constitution in Islamic law tradition in a modern sense had donated ulema class with the distinct power of judicial opinion (*ictihad)* by which they would operate their subjective interpretations over the cases. Commentary *(Şerh)* tradition in the Islamic jurisdiction in which old texts continuously quoted and new deductions produced was supplying an essential base for the semi-autonomy of the ulema. However, in the late Ottoman context, the ulema was far from claiming this ancient and traditional custom, and in the name of preserving tradition, they demanded a more recent Islamic application, legal standardization of Ahmed Cevdet Pasha which was created within the framework of "rationalizing traditionalism", a feature of Islamic modernism during the time of the global religious modernisms.[54]

Marshall Hodgson claims that by reifying Islam in modern times, personal aspects of religious experience and historical variegation of its forms were outlined for the sake of a complete pattern of an imagined ideal life.[55] This illustrates the agency of both conservatives and reformists over Muslim belief, and their courage to separate believer from subjective perceptions of the religion, which was, for some, an element leading to an inevitable secularization in varying degrees. In that manner, the reformists and conservatives seem to be unifying in theological and ontological

[53] Bein, *Osmanlı*, 60.
[54] Bayly, *The Birth of Modern World*, 295.
[55] Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 233. via Dalacoura, "Islamic Civilization' as an Aspect of Secularization in Turkish Islamic Thought", 132.

conceptions of the religion. They direct them to a consensus on the very existence of God and need for religion in all historical times, but distinguish in epistemological terms concerning the content of this religion which will cause huge political divisions as well.

1.5 Modern Islamic socio-political vision of the CUP

The Modernization project of the Committee of Union and Progress clearly needed a religious discourse. The communitarian soul of Islam and respected post of ulema in the Ottoman community would empower the revolution and its goals for the adaptation of them by ordinary Muslims. It is said there was a great contradiction between what the Unionists had hoped for the social and civic life of the Ottoman citizens and the existing case immediately after the Hamidian rule.[56] Mardin interprets this phenomenon with the existence of a considerable secular contingent in the CUP ideology. However, many in the ranks of the revolutionists, specifically second ruling generation of the Young Turks after 1906 Unification, tended to adopt and regard innovative modernist reinterpretations of the Islamic canon as religious revival. Then the Young Turks and specifically after it became CUP, this movement could not have been called irreligious as a whole. Even in the early periods of the organization in Europe in which there was a considerable positivist influence in the writings of some notables like Ahmed Rıza, some ulema contributed to the Young Turk cause with a religious causation against the Hamidian regime. This proximity with religion from the beginning possibly laid the ground for future development and complexification of a sort of Islamic modernist policy headed by the CUP, as it was

materialized most clearly in the Journal of Islam (*Islam Mecmuası)* in 1914. However, this program was still not a barrier for many of CUP members and allies to be anti-clerical. In addition, their collaboration with a section of Islamist intellectuals could only be possible with the imposition of a submissive position, especially for the ulama allies, in the undertaking of the Islamic modernist reforms.

Many religious and conservative inclined Ottoman intellectuals were aware of the fact that there were secularist and even atheist participants in this collaboration. However, Said Nursi, an *'alim* political activist in the constitutional period, had still referred that "they (Unionists) are either the warriors of Islam or the homeland" emphasizing the importance of unity (*İttihad)* among religious and irreligious patriots, signalling the context of the collaboration.[57] Similarly, Mustafa Sabri declared in the first number of his *Beyanu'l Hak* magazine that they missed to participate in the missions of the CUP in the past oppressive era, but they would compensate it by obeying the Committee in present.[58]

On the other hand, during a discussion in 1880s over what could be a proper Young Turk program to be followed, Ahmed Rıza who was one of the notable representatives of the secularist contingent called Mizancı Murad's reform packet as 'a voice from the paradise of Muhammed'. This incident refers to the fact that resistance for such a collaboration could be expected from the very beginning.[59] However, neither Ahmed Rıza nor Abdullah Cevdet, who were irreligious and

[57] Said-i Kurdi, *Münazarat* in *Asar-ı Bediye*, 1927, 440, via Kara, *İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri*, 65. In his address to convince Kurdish tribes to the Islamic legality of the Constitutional regime, Said Nursi writes in *Munazarat*: "They (Unionists) are either the warriors of Islam, or of the nation. As crowded as your tribe there are ulema and sheikhs in the ranks of the Young Turks. True! There are also some dissolute and shameless Masons but just ten percent. Ninety percent of them are faithful Muslims just as you. 'Al hukm bıl aksar', think good about them. Suspicion harms both you and them."
[58] Mustafa Sabri, "Beyanu'l Hakk'ın Mesleği", *Beyanu'l Hak*, v.1, n.1, (5 September 1908): 1.
[59] Mardin, *Jöntürklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 106.

secular, could or did prevent the appreciation of Islamic justifications. On the contrary, they decided to search Islamic bases for their causes and they even proposed a "Muslim positivism" which should be regarded within the boundaries of the Islamicate cultural tradition.[60] Therefore, it was not just for the ulema to make 'concessions' for the wellbeing of coalition, but seemingly the Young Turks also urged their secularist components to soften their attitude towards traditional religious institutions and personalities in the name of saving the homeland with a 'united' soul.[61] This uniting stance in the face of common enemy was carried out in a hurry that did not leave a place for analyzing the 'sincerity' or 'pragmatism' of the movement in relation to traditional institutions.

In fact, marginalization of religious establishments in some departments of the state and reduction of their influence in administrative processes was already a phenomenon, stretching back to the re-formations of Mahmud II. Even though the applications of Sultan Mahmut II and Tanzimat bureaucrats could not be interpreted in the frame of an inevitable secularization, it is clear that the religious tone and justifications in their discourses did not prevent many ulema and madrasa students from being marginalized. Especially the ulema in countryside (*taşra)* or in the lower levels of the scholars' *(ilmiyye)* hierarchy would be quick to call that irreligion. These people had occassionally been the source of suspicion hereafter, both in the rules of Abdulhamid and Unionists even though most of the ulema preferred latter over the former.

[60] Şerif Mardin, *Jöntürklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 247.
[61] The long persistence of this collaboration marginalized some of these secularists. Abdullah Cevdet even tried to found his own political party. For a detailed portre of Abdullah Cevdet, Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi,* (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981).

Before moving on to conservative opposition emerging out of ulema against the CUP, it is a must to look at how and why the CUP and Islamist coalition or a CUP with Islamic vision could persist long. As stated previously, Küçükkılınç had referred to the Islamic self description or refashioning of the CUP. He lists some examples like that of the pro-CUP *Tanin* newspaper editor-in-chief Muhittin Birgen who defined Unionism as "Turkism on the one hand and Islamism on the other" in his memoirs. Hasan Kayalı pulls attention to this phenomenon by taking into account the demographic changes in the last decade of the empire and says that what he called 'Young Turk Islamism' had a greater chance of being implemented than the 'Islamism of Abdulhamid'.[62]

It is a fact that Ottoman Islamists, either conservative or more reform oriented Islamic thinkers were against the nationalism as an idea which would divide the nation of Islam (*ummah)*. Said Halim Pasha, Mehmed Akif and Babanzade Ahmed Naim, the prominent Islamic intellectuals of the late Ottoman period are remembered with their rejection of nationalisms. However, it is needed to focus on the qualities of their rejections to make sense of the long coalition of the intellectuals described as Islamists and Turkists under the CUP rule.[63] For instance, Said Halim would approve the idea of nationality as a cultural richness,[64] or Said Nursi made distinctions over nationalisms as positive and negative ones of which the former was shaped by Islamic ideals and used to support Islamic cause while the latter only benefit the enemies of Islam by sedition. I propose that it was their different attitude to nationalism hiding in details, that kept Mehmed Akif and Said Halim collaborating

[62] Kayalı, *Jön Türkler ve Araplar*, 237.
[63] Islamist and Turkists as separate categories were strictly demarcated by Yusuf Akçura in *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset*, this classification affected the literature and prevented the observation of the grey zones among them.
[64] Said Halim, "İslamlaşmak 4", *Sebilürreşad*, v.15, n. 381, (5 December 1918).

but drove Babanzade apart which was probably one of the reasons for H. Z. Ülken to locate Akif to the classification of modernist while adding Babanzade to the 'Conservative Islamists'.[65] It is clearly irrefutable that the closure of *Sebilürreşad* and many secularizing (not necessarily secularist) applications of the party led to a growing loss of support for the CUP among the notables of the Islamic intellectuals. Still, I propose that the emphasis on unity-*Ittihad* in Unionist rhetoric intrinsically brought them near to nationalism and nationalists. This situation was related with the nature of Panislamism which resembles to modern pan nationalist movements such as Pan-African or Pan-Asian nationalisms of which reason of existence is primarily the resistance to the west, something that attract the modern Islamic intellectuals too.[66] They did not have much trouble either for finding religious resources on the religious legitimacy of "loving the nation". According to an explanation of the potential of such an alliance, it is said that 'as Islamism was not born with a clear definition', it was 'like a liquid matter' taking shape of the conditions of the context where it wanted to operate.[67]

On the other hand, the CUP also adopted an inclusive policy to pull them into their ranks. If it was not so, it would surely not be able to benefit from the international Muslim agents in its service such as Egyptian Abdulaziz Chavish, Libyan Ahmad Sharif Sanusi and Tunisian Ali Başhampa of whom the last one even became the president of *Teşkilât-ı Mahsûsa*, the Ottoman Intelligence Agency. In that manner, during the heydays of the WWI, Abdülaziz Chavish could find an environment to curse *asabiye* in *Sebilürreşad* journal, a term that was generally used

[65] Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce*, 43.
[66] Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto Nationalism", 18.
[67] Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi*, 91.

to describe a destructive way of nationalism. [68] The blurring boundary between Turkists and Islamic modernists was specifically clear in the Turkist cluster as they always worked to prove their nationalism was to exalt the religion. They advocated a common modern Muslim narrative about the using the 'technic of the west' which was originally Muslim property.[69] Ziya Gökalp, one of the founding fathers of Turkism in the late Ottoman period acknowledged that "Turkism as simultaneously Islamism". In his idea, a proper Pan-Islamic union (*Ittihad-ı Islam)* must be obtained by a federation of free and self-confident Islamic nations, excluding the projections for a single state.[70] Gökalp's proposal was exactly same of the prominent international Islamic modernists Jamaladdin Afghani and Muhammad Abduh.

It is now clear that the CUP was not the standard bearer of Secularism and developed an Islamic modernist vision but did not refrain from secularizing reformations either. This situation was not contradictory since the reforms were proposed for "the sake of Muslimness", claiming it to be for the benefit of the Muslims. In addition, not for all of them, but for many in the CUP coalition, "a real Islamic application" should have been as Islamic modernist reforms foresaw. If it is to be accepted that any Şeyhülislam of the empire would not hope the bad-fate for religion in his own realm, then it is really incredible to observe that Şeyhülislam Mustafa Hayri Efendi wrote in his letter to the *Qadı* of Egypt in 1914 that the caliphate and sultanate should have been abolished after the declaration of the constitution as they were misused by authoritarian Abdulhamid II and proved to be ineffective in many cases.[71] This bold proposal was made in the name and for the

[68] Abdülaziz Çaviş, "Kavmiyet ve Din", *Sebilürreşad*, Vol.13, n.335. (Kasım 1915). Via (Şenol Gündoğdu, "Nation and Nationalism", 120.
[69] Öğün, "Ağaoğlu Ahmed", 46.
[70] Gökalp, "Türkçülük, İslamcılık, Medeniyetleşme," 294. via Turnaoğlu, *Turkish Republicanism*, 155.
[71] Turnaoğlu, *Turkish Republicanism*, 186.

sake of Islam and it illustrates the vast ground of mutual platform of discussion among ulama and non-ulama reformist-modernist figures and the CUP establishment, even though the abolishment of the caliphate was unthinkable for even the most secular segments of the CUP who hoped political gains from it at least.

Moreover, modern Islamic rationalization and merging efforts increased its dose thanks to the Islamic vision of the CUP. For instance, the customary right of the sultanic power over Sharia provisions was emphasized by the Unionist reformists. It was said that it was up to the Caliph to limit polygamy if he decided it to be an Islamically proper judicial opinion (*ictihad*).[72] Therefore, pro-CUP ulema like Sheikhul-Islam Hayri did not act differently, which, for many contemporaries, "needed to be cursed "on their supposed deviation from the Islamic way and tradition.

Similar to the extroversion of the Islamic policies of the Hamidian regime, the CUP applied to Panislamism in international politics. Imperial resistance and revival in the face of the threat posed by the European Great Powers were grounded over Islam and Turkism.[73] This official policy of Islam almost stayed unchanged from the Hamidian reign to the National Movement in Anatolia. As I stated previously, the convictions of Cemaleddin Afghani, one of the leading Islamic modernists in the global stage, over nationalism and nation-state made possible the cooperation of pro-CUP Islamic intellectuals and Turkists. Afghani who influenced both Ziya Gökalp and Mehmed Akif advocated the nationalist turn among Muslim nations as an essential part of Panislamism. Actually there was a period of tension between

[72] Mansurizade Said, "Taaddüd-i Zevcat İslamiyet'te Men Olunabilir", *İslam Mecmuası*, N.8, (21 May 1914), 237.
[73] Beningson, "Pan Turkism and Panislamism in History and Today", 40. via Çetinsaya, "Rethinking Nationalism and Islam: Some Preliminary Notes on the Roots of Turkish Islamic Synthesis in Modern Turkish Political Thought", 359.

Mehmed Akif and the CUP during the suppression of Albanian revolt, which Akif interpreted as a Turkist challenge to the idea of ummah. However, Gökhan Çetinsaya specifies that there was a consensus over the vitality of the Ottoman State as the last fortress of Islam.[74] The political context shaped aftermath of the Balkan Wars prevented Islamic modernists like Akif and the CUP to focus on internal divisions. Mehmed Akif who resigned from his post in the Darulfunun as a protest against CUP policies now met on common ground of Panislamism with the CUP, especially after the Ottoman entrance to WWI. His address to the Muslim soldiers of the entente powers in European fronts, pro-jihad preaching to the Arab sheikhs and visit to Çanakkale front were among the some of the facilities in that manner carried out by him. Although Akif was not so willing for the Ottoman entrance to the Great War, he felt compelled to support his state.[75]

In fact, some CUP ally Islamic intellectuals were not so naïve about probable secular implications of Islamic modernist rationalizations but still did not withdraw from the coalition. Said Halim Pasha, for instance, rejected the opinion of the reformists about national sovereignty which was qualified already as the rule of Sharia. He said national sovereignty comes behind the sovereignty of Allah and the legislative power in the parliament should belong to ulema who are Islamic jurists.[76] What was the motivation of Said Halim Pasha then despite his "awareness" in the face of secularizing reformations? It is proposed at this place that he still perceived something Islamic in this coalition, which means prioritizing unity over the Sharia as necessarily Islamic. Even Elmalılı Hamdi, a conservative ulama, had such a way of

[74] Çetinsaya, "Rethinking Nationalism and Islam", 358.
[75] Ersoy, *Hatıralar*, 24. via Hasan Ulucutsoy, "Balkan Harbi'nden Milli Mücadeleye Mehmet Akif'in Savaş Edebiyatı ve Propagandası İstikametindeki Faaliyetleri", 215.
[76] Kara, *İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri*, 63.

thinking. In the context of 31 March, He wrote in Beyanu'l Hak some self-revealing proofs about that by saying 'the well-being of Islam depends on the strength of the Ottoman Empire and the persistence of this power also depends on the operability of constitutionalism. He equated constitutionalism with Sharia and applied to the modern Islamic rationalization as an obligation, even though some issues within the system could develop out of the Sharia.[77]

Without questioning "sincerity" of their actions in regard to Islamic purposes, it must be emphasized that the Unionists needed specifically reformist ulema in their modernization policies to provide Islamic legitimacy. The collaborating ulema would have found an opportunity to follow their own agendas in this contract, such as directing reforms from their own perspective of an "Islamically proper" way. As Bein referred, these ulema should have been evaluated within reformist cluster as they refashioned their ideas about the actual matters of discussion and the novelties from a religious perspective. Musa Kazım Efendi, the famous Sheikhulislam of the Party, for instance, saw no difference between natural and divine law and claimed the former emerged out of latter[78] by which he seemingly moved even further away from Namık Kemal's conviction that Islamic law was deduced from natural law. In addition, Musa Kazım had so conservative ideas about the veiling and "fundamental responsibilities" of women, for instance, in a writing dated 1898. Yet, the most considerable progress in the participation of women in public life was encountered during his admiration of religious office *Meşihat*. Musa Kazım as an *'alim* probably may have not changed radically his conservative views on the participation of women in public life, but not tried to prevent governmental initiative for

[77] Küçük Hamdi, "31 Mart Vak'asına Dair", *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol.2, n.34, (19 July 1909): 3.
[78] Tansuğ, "Musa Kazım's Approach", 45.

reformations in civil law either. He performed his mission in accordance with this pact and accepted submission to civil and military bureaucrats of the party.

1.6 Emergence of Islamic opposition to the CUP rule and the clash of Islamic discourses: a revolt that tests a modern Islamic rhetoric

This section was written considering the possibility of going beyond the boundaries of the thesis. However, it was necessary to examine the experiences of the conservative ulema in the first year of the Constitutional Monarchy and the origins of some conservative ulema's oppositional stances of in the coming decade against the CUP and its successors. The process leading to 31 March Rebellion, which began when a group of ulema, organized around the Muhammadan Union, revealed the doubts over Islamic qualities of the existing 'Islamic Constitutionalism' system by some conservatives, and illustrated the undiscussed limits of the modernist rationalizations stemming from Islamic modernism.

The most undesirable would be an ulema opposition for the CUP regarding their reform project in law and religious bureaucracy. However, only two or three months after the revolution it directly came out of the CUP ranks. As stated before, Bein classifies ulema as conservatives, neutrals and reformists among whom the first was described as opponents of the CUP. In fact, the ulema opposition was not monolithic and must be classified into two immediately, as those who chose to struggle by politics and those who dared to take to the streets for demanding Sharia. For the former group, I followed the term conservatives that Bein proposed,[79]

[79] Bein called them in this way, probably because the opposition adopted for itself the term conservative, in a time when European terminologies for political fractions imported to the Ottoman politics.

concerning their emphasis over an orthodox understanding of fiqh tradition. The majority within this group was loyal to the idea of Islamic Constitutional system and chose to work against what they regarded as non-Islamic inventions of the Unionists by politics in the parliament.

The fourth ulema party (a second group among opponent ulema), which I classified and perceived as an immediate part of history writing of Ottoman ulema and participants in the modern Islamicate culture, is hardliner conservatives. They were the most visible but ignored group that could not find a place in classifications either. They were the motivators of the 31 March rebellion, an event which coined the terms *irtica* (reaction or return) and *mürteci* (reactionary) in Turkish historiography. However, it is generally overlooked that their decision to "return" came after being convinced to expectedly Islamic Constitutional regime or *Meşrutiyet-i Meşrua* is not going to be *meşrua* (legal and being in accordance with Sharia) anymore in their eyes, which was the promise of the Unionist Pact during the Oppression period. It is understood soon that Sharia that they agreed upon its holiness and importance as the primary guide was being perceived with different implications and these hardliner conservatives tended to use harsher methods to direct the course of the constitutionalist system.

Ismail Kara said "Islamists" tended to interpret constitution, freedom and democracy as if they were central components of the religion and Sharia,[80] but he ignores the fact that this consideration was not exclusively to belong to "Islamists" that was just an imaginary whole indeed. Over time, it is seen that holding all Islamic modernist rationalizations became unsustainable for many Ottoman Muslims, and

[80] Kara, *İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri*, 158.

some conservatives have begun to question the scale of Islamic rationalizations of the modernist discourse. They took different paths over such interpretations of Sharia or some other ancient terms, which was started to be seen in novel ways by modernists. For instance, even if it generally remained in theory, the caliphate as a transnational entity could not be limited with the firmly determining modern state boundaries in its traditional understanding. Yet, Elmalılı Hamdi, a conservative *'alim* interestingly, in a complete example of the Islamic modernist way of thinking, tried to find an appropriate place for the caliph in a novel fashion without ignoring its importance. Hence, he claimed that the Caliph means the Islamic constitutional regime leader who does not have responsibility or domination over Muslims in foreign countries.[81] Such understandings of the caliphate and the Sharia could not be accepted by some more conservative ulema circles.

Some Conservative politicians like Mustafa Sabri actually advocated a tight control of the monarchy even if he and his close circle preserved their respect for the caliphate. However, for some hardliner conservatives, like Derviş Vahdeti from Muhammedan Union, the modern interpretations like that of Elmalılı seems to lead them to give a more prominent role to the caliphate, and orthodox understanding of Sharia. It indeed had a social basis in the society too, and materialized with the rebellion on 12 April 1909 (*31 March 1325*). This thesis does not agree with those claiming the religious rhetoric of the 31 March Rebellion was just a means of disappointed *Avcı* troops and uneducated rankers to discard the officers who did graduate from secular military colleges.[82] I think it was a reactionary culmination point of differences emerging out of the understanding of constitutionalism and the

[81] Kara, *İslamcıların Siyasi Görüşleri*, 145.
[82] For such an interpretation regarding Islamic discourse of the rebellion merely as a rhetoric: Sina Akşin, *31 Mart Olayı*, (İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi, 2015), 307.

envisaged role of the caliph in this system. Therefore, the rebellion was a movement within the system or relied on the initial contract founded over common modern Islamic discourses. Apart from the general perception of the rebellion and its leader Derviş Vahdeti as a puritan counter-revolutionary, I recognize that those discontented and hardliner conservative circles did not want to discard the CUP as a whole and held some "free mason" members responsible for the "irreligious turn" of the party. If they could be winnowed out, "the sacred" party which brought Legal Constitutionalism (*Meşrutiyet-i Meşrua)* was already "praiseworthy". Just one week before the rebellion, Enver and Niyazi Beys were praised as the "heros of freedom" by Vahdeti in his speech to the crowds in front of Ayasofya Mosque.[83] Therefore, it was located as an Islamic rebellion for Islamic ideals, which the motivators of the rebellion shared with the Unionists, but understood differently.

In a short period, the rebellion seemed triumphant as the CUP dominated government fell and a new government established by feeling obliged to promise "more sensitivity on the commands of Sharia". Vahdeti declared that this "Sharia Revolution" absolutely was not against constitutionalism and held out that "ideas of the West and Islam would be sentenced" [84] by which he referred to the mutual rhetoric of the period and showing the aspects of this movement as an identical product of its context, not as the resurrection of an ancient idea.

The rebellion was, of course, a multidimensional event in which ordinary soldiers, madrasa students or the supporters of the Liberal Ahrar Party participated respectively by taking up arms, by preaching for protest or through doing journalism in favor of it for their own interests and expectations. However, the ideological split

[83] Kıbrıslı Derviş Vahdeti, "Öteberi", *Volkan*, vol.1, n.107., (4 Nisan 1325- 17 April 1909): 3.
[84] Kıbrıslı Derviş Vahdeti, "İttihad-ı Muhammedî Cemiyeti ve Mevlid-i Nebevi-i Hazret-i Mustafavi Resm-i Kuşâd",Volkan, vol.1, n.95, (23 Mart 1325- 5 April 1909): 1.

and differentiation among ulama and modern Islamic intellectuals caused by the rebellion mainly were ignored by the event's historiography. This historiography lacks evaluating the differing stances of the Ottoman Islamic revivalists, which turned to be rival discourses during the rebellion as invitations for suppression or encouragement for joining in it. Although some hardliner conservative ulema indeed made very drastic demands for social change, they did not have a radical ideology than those who did not rebel. It is remarkable that they determined to use harsher measures and violence over what they understood Islamic constitutionalism.

In that manner, Mizancı Murad, who was one of the pioneers in the constitutionalist struggle as an intellectual connecting two generations, the Young Ottomans and Young Turks took side by the rebels and urged ulema to raise their voices against the CUP and accused them of obeying its injustices, "even after witnessing" the murder of the journalist Hasan Fehmi by the Unionist assassins.[85] Mizancı presented the 31 March as having the same essence as the Constitutional Revolution of 1908, as one of the cases where *gayretullah* operated, a term which was described in Islamic theology as "protective jealousy". *Gayretullah* would be materialized with the intervention of Allah to worldly affairs and could be provoked only after crimes that Allah has forbidden, like oppression, increased excessively.[86] Rebels thought that the oppression remained within a different form, this time at the hands of the CUP during the six months of the constitutional era. Therefore, their rationale was that this government also deserved "the wrath of Allah", which was materialized as the "success" of 31 March.

[85] Mehmed Murad, "Hasan Fehmi Bey", *Mizan*, n.119, (26 Mart 1325- 7 April 1909): 2.
[86] Âciz Bir Müslüman (Mehmed Murad), "Ulemânın sükûtu- Eyyuhel ulemâ!", *Mizan*, n.124, (31 Mart 1325- 13 April 1909), 1.

Many historians tended to interpret the 31 March Rebellion as a facility of a group of marginalized ulema and madrasa students.[87] Indeed, the reluctance of many high-ranking ulema to support the rebellion was a fact contrary to many low and middle-ranking ulema who appreciated the initiative. However, if the leading members of the Muhammedan Union are considered, some high ranking ulema or religiously respected personas among them must be noticed.[88] When the secular unionist Hüseyin Cahid criticized and belittled some ulema as *Kör Ali*s for their demand for Sharia,[89] Abdullah Ziyaeddin, a high ranking ulema and author of *Volkan* newspaper of the Muhammedan Union, enraged with the identification of discontented ulama with an ordinary muezzin and pointed out "those who demand Sharia have various titles of scholarship".[90] They regarded themselves as in a high position to check the new political system from an Islamic perspective. Such a self-perception of the ulema was also valid for the conservative ulama gathered around Mustafa Sabri's Cemiyet-i İlmiye, but at this time they did not prefer to propagate it so fiercely.

The rebel soldiers were already enthusiastic and inviting to be guided by ulema as they took the position of military salute even for the neutral ulema who came to calm them down.[91] Hurşid Pasha wrote that many people also praised the rebellion just as they did during the Constitutional Revolution and would do with the

[87] For such an emphasis on the marginality of rebel ulemas: Susan Gunasti, "The Late Ottoman Ulema's Constitutionalism", *Islamic Law and Society*, vol. 23, n. 1/2 (2016): 89-119.
[88] Members of the Founders' Board: Şeyh Muhammed Sadık, Bediüzzaman Molla Said-i Kurdi, Bandırma Naibi Şevket Efendi, Faruki Ömer Şevki Efendi, Ibnu'n-Nafi Ahmed Es'ad Efendi, Hacı Kurrazade Tevfik Efendi. *Volkan*, v.1, n.68, (24 Şubat 1324-9 Mart 1909): 4.
[89] Reminding a popular resentment against theatres, alcohol etc., led by a muezzin called Kör Ali in Fatih district, some months before the rebellion.

[90] "Kör Ali vak'asına benzetilerek selamet-i İslamiye ve menafi'i-i umumiye namına delalette bulunan kimselerin unvan-ı ilimleri kaldırılarak Kör Ali menzilesinde tutuluyor", Abdullah Ziyaeddin, "Aynen Li Külli Mübtilin Muhik", *Volkan*, n.65, (6 March 1909): 4.
[91] Sina Akşin, *31 Mart Olayı*, 55.

entrance of the Hareket Army to Istanbul. So, there was a positive ground and popular support for the rebels to negotiate their terms during the initial success of the rebellion. The Anti-CUP press and the Liberal Ahrars already praised them as freedom fighters and referring to the well-being of non-Muslims in the new situation as they and foreign consulates had worried about looting and attacks on their communities if this movement was fundamentalist. The representative of the rebels, Mudarris Rasim Efendi, who came to the parliament in this atmosphere, presented us valuable materials thanks to his demands which reflect the ideological points of division for the Muhammedan Union's hardliner conservatives. He demanded, among many things, the parliamentarians must have been religious, and those "non-believers" like Hüseyin Cahid had to be excluded from the administration process, and the most important, the penal code must have been in accord with the Sharia.[92]

Despite these serious demands, those rebels must still be evaluated within the modern Islamicate culture fed by Islamic modernist discourses. They always claimed to be progressives rejecting any identification with fanaticism and working for the specialization of Muslims in industry, education and trade while abiding Sharia.[93] They suggested that they were open to cooperating with all Ottomans on the ideals of justice, equality, and freedom to acquire "civilizational progress".[94] It is pretty strange that Vahdeti was even questioning the credibility of a traditional ulema profile who spent his life by "trying to deduct something from the centuries old writings and still waiting to guide contemporary people who attained civilization and progress". To clarify their positive inclination towards progress, he specified that a

[92] Celal Bayar*, Ben de Yazdım*, 281.
[93] *Volkan*, n.63, (20 Şubat 1324-5 March 1909): 3.
[94] *Volkan*, "Beyanname", n.57, (26 February 1909): 1.

journey to Europe and America is a must for ulema to reconsider their judicial opinions.[95]

In that manner, those rebel conservatives aimed to illustrate how can an Islamically proper government be achieved in the Islamic constitutional system which was qualified as the materialization of 'highest religious ideals and progress'. A hardliner *'alim* Abdullah Ziyaeddin declared that "the nation will not tolerate the secretive oppression of the *Şeref* Street and soon will recognize the qualities of an Islamically proper government".[96] For Vahdeti, the term return (*irtica*) had no religious connotations; it just meant a return to the old regime equated with oppression and authoritarianism. Thus, he specified that they were not reactionaries (*murteci*) and underlined their commitment to the constitution.[97] There are signs that some within the Mohammedan Union (*Ittihad-i Muhammedi)* were hesitant as to whether it was necessary to question the 'Islamic qualities of the constitutionalism as well. Enderunlu Lütfi seems to be clarifying their stance vis a vis constitution. He wrote "if we had desired oppressive rule, we would give it to seven centuries old glorious dynasty of the Ottomans, not to Ahmed Rıza, Doctor Nazım or Baha".[98] The accusations of oppression were being directed against the secularist members of the CUP and their secularizing proposals and applications, which rebelling conservatives have interpreted as an "oppression of Sharia and religion", the terms which they tied to a "real" and proper understanding of "liberty".[99]

[95] *Volkan*, "Beyanname", 1.
[96] Abdullah Ziyaeddin, "Aynen Li Külli Mübtilin Muhik", *Volkan*, N.65, 6 March 1909), 4.
[97] Kıbrıslı Derviş Vahdeti, "Kuvve-i Maneviyeyi Kırmak Ne Fenadır", *Volkan*, n. 49, (18 Şubat 1909), 1.
[98] "… who could know that the oppression which the nation did not even grant to the exalted house of Osman would be dared to be stealed by Ahmed Rıza, Nazım Doctor Baha, Rahmi etc.", Enderunlu Lütfi, "Hal-i Hazır Münasebetiyle Celâdet-i Askeriyye", *Volkan*, n.108, (5 Nisan 1325): 3.
[99] Anti-religious but legally legitimate practices, such as the non-enforcement of the prohibition of alcoholic beverages and the operation of brothels, were seen as oppressing the Sharia.

It was asked to Said Nursi, first the supporter of the rebel soldiers then a sermonizer for calming them down, “why did you withdraw your support to the CUP?”. He replied that “I’m not the one disbanding the coalition, those who went back on are some members of the committee and I am still allied with Niyazi and Enver Beys", referring to the revolution in 1908 brought by "Muslims and Islamic ideals”, not by “non-believers and anarchists”.[100] In the same way, Mehmed Emin Hayretî, who was one of the prominent ulema members of the Muhammedan Union, claimed that the constitution could be achieved by Enver and Niyazi thanks to the Sharia.[101] In his address to rebellious soldiers, Said Nursi initially appreciated them for they provided the operation and continuation of the constitution and called it “second revolution”, which cleared out "infectious corruption" embedded in the first.[102] It is apparent that pro-rebellion conservatives welcomed the soldiers for the sake of “legal constitutionalism”, and some tried to direct them for achieving that purpose.

In fact, no one objected to the demand for Sharia on the CUP side, except a small minority of secularist intellectuals, and rearranging of Mecelle was on the parliamentary agenda. After the parliament started to operate, the first concern of those conservatives in the parliament was the amelioration and extension of Sharia law. For instane, Lazistan MP, Ibrahim Ferid Bey, called for establishing a committee to proceed with such a legal reform.[103] The Muhammedan Union also pressed for legal reform and declared one of its reasons of existence as creating a

[100] Said-i Kurdî, “Lemeat-ı Hakikat ve İzale-i Şubuhât”, *Volkan*, n.97, (7 April 1909): 2.
[101] Mehmed Emin Hayreti, “Feverân”, *Volkan*, n.85, (13 March 1324-26 March 1909): 3.
[102] Said-i Kurdi, “Asker Kardeşlerime”, *Serbesti*, n.151, (4 Nisan 1325-17 April 1909): 2.
[103] *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, n.108, (18 Kanun-ı Sani 1324-31 January 1909), via Susan Gunasti, “The Late Ottoman Ulema’s Constitutionalism”, 11.

criminal code, other than existing Mecelle, and to present it to the parliament, which was hoped to implement it in the secular *Nizamiye* courts all around the empire.[104]

The CUP, on the other hand, maybe recognizing the increasing outrage of the conservative circles, accepted the organization of a Mecelle Committee, which would incorporate a more religious language into the constitution.[105] Opening chapters about this issue was appreciated by every segment of the ulema, those in the parliament set to work on the technic issues and their proposals, while some ulema in the countryside (Kütahya) sent their joy and gratitude through Volkan emphasizing the longtime need for applying *fiqh* in criminal code.[106] This 'positive' atmosphere was continuously disturbed by the wordy warfare with the CUP press over the scope and content of the religious law. Unionist journalist Hüseyin Cahid claimed the existing legal code was already an Islamic one and emphasized that these calls for Sharia were ridiculous as many (pro-CUP) ulema in the parliament would agree with him referring to his conviction "demanding Sharia is not the business of a few zealots".[107] Wearing of a hat by Ahmet Rıza and claims over his propagation of it as an item of modern and reasonable clothing or attributed cursing over chador (*çarşaf*) of Muslim women by Rıza's wife Selma illustrate some social stress lines between secularists and conservatives.[108] This stress was felt most in the Army, between the religious low-ranking rankers (*alaylı*s) and secular trained officers (*mekteblı*s), among whom some were said to be "not worried to be seen dissipated at night

[104] "…memalik-i Osmaniye'de kavânîn-i hukukiyyeyi Mecelle-yi Ahkâm-ı Adliyeyi müştemil bulunduğu gibi kütüb-i fıkhiyyeden bil-istinbat bir de ceza kanunu ve kavânin-i saire-i mukteziyeyi meydana getirerek atide Meclis-i Mebusan'a arz etmek ve tasdikine iktiran etmesine çalışmak…. İstikbalde memalik-i Osmaniye'de mehâkim-i Nizamiyelerde kavanin-i şeriyyenin düsturu'l amel olunmasına gayret etmek…", *Volkan*, "Beyanname", 1.
[105] Susan Gunasti, "The Late Ottoman Ulema's Constitutionalism", 100.
[106] "Kütahya Ulema-yı Kiramı tarafından elli kadar imza ile Meclis-i Mebusan riyasetine takdim olunan istirhamname", *Volkan*, n.63, (4 Mart 1909): 4.
[107] Abdullah Ziyaeddin, "Aynen Li Külli Mübtilin", 2.
[108] Enderunlu Lütfi, "Hal-i Hazır Münasebetiyle", 2.

entertainments" but "strict to prevent any evasion of soldiers from martial missions" due to religious practices like *namaz* and *oruç*.[109]

These discontented conservative circles identified freedom only within the boundaries of the Sharia, which was itself "the source of civilization", as Namık Kemal interpreted a few decades before.[110] Therefore, it was the mission of soldier and ulema to guard Sharia by force.[111] Ulema was not a monolithic block and in Selanik the new initiative was perceived by some ulema as a resurrection against constitutionalism which was an inseparable part of Sharia.[112] The vast segment of ulema preferred to stay neutral and to see how the situation would develop, but some madrasa students in Istanbul were more enthusiastic about supporting the rebellion as in some places, even some muderrises were declared heretic due to their inactivity in the face of developments. Sultan Ahmed square was "as white as snow" due to the turbans of the incoming madrasa students during the early phase of the rebellion.[113]

It is essential to recognize how many ulema and specifically leading conservative ulema confused during the rebellion. The regime they took part in its creation was being threatened in the name of the value, Sharia they had worked for. The first reply was to play the role of intermediary to reconcile the CUP and rebels, so aiming to increase their strength in politics and redirect the course of the constitutional regime according to their aims.[114] Mustafa Sabri Efendi, the president of Cemiyet-i İlmiyye, addressed rebel soldiers and urged them to end the rebellion as

[109] Süleyman Şefik Paşa, *31 Mart Vak'ası*, 184. via Lokman Akbaş, "İttihad-ı Muhammedî Cemiyeti", 170.
[110] Abdullah Ziyaeddin, "Aynen: Zübde", *Mikyâs-ı Şeriat*, n.15, (14 January 1909), 2.
[111] Yusuf Ziyauddin, "Hakikat", *Mikyâs-ı Şeriat*, n.16, (21 January 1909): 4.
[112] Sina Akşin, *31 Mart Olayı*, 63.
[113] Lütfi, "Dünkü Hal", *Volkan*, n.104, (1 Nisan 1325, 14 Nisan 1909): 2.
[114] Amit Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 124.

"the demanding Sharia was not their business but of ulema".[115] Just before the breaking of the rebellion, ulema deputies in the parliament had petitioned the parliament demanding the rehabilitation and reformation in Sharia courts.[116] Solving this issue softly in the parliament may have been influential in their decisions, first illustrated as inactivity and then opposition to rebel actions.

Many ulema worked to prevent bloodshed and advised both parties to avoid sedition (*fitne*). However, the opponent parties were far from reconciliation, and after a series of clashes, the troops of the Army of Action (*Hareket Ordusu)* established themselves in the capital and suppressed the rebellion. After the suppression, the press of conservative ulema in İstanbul and countryside attended to the discourse of reformists. They seemed to appreciate the salvation of the regime enthusiastically and curse the rebels adding Islamic justification for the measures taken and executions done by the Army. Conservative ulema circles were now trying to prove their loyalty to the regime and to prevent losing their ability to direct novel developments, while progressive intellectuals had found an opportunity to strengthen the image of backward ulema who needed to be faded from the scene of politics. Hurşid Paşa was describing the motivators of the rebellion as turbaned ignorant (*sarıklı cehel*e) humiliating whole Islamic scholars (*ilmiye*) actually.[117]

After the suppression of the rebels and failed political activism of the conservative ulema in the parliament in the long term, some conservatives around Mustafa Sabri marginalized and seem to be got close with ways and thoughts of the former rebel figures in the coming years. It is a must to determine that the former

[115] Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i İslamiye, "Asker Evlâdlarımıza Hitabımız," *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol. 2, n. 29, (6 April 1325 -19 April 1909), 672. (667-688)
[116] Beyanu'l Hak, "Cemiyet-i İlmiye-yi İslamiye'nin Hükkamü'l Şer'i kısmî tarafından Mebusan-ı kirâma takdim olunan layihadır", 30 Mart 1325, April 1 1909): 663. (643-666.)
[117] Hurşid Paşa, *31 Mart İhtilali,* 64.

rebels were deprived of any organizational consistency and leadership after the suppression of the Rebellion in April 1909. In that manner, it is understood that Rasim Efendi, who was arrested for his role in the rebellion and known to be in Ankara prison in 1913, read the newspaper of the conservative ulema movement in Konya from the prsion. The only last issue of Maşrık-ı Irfan that survives today and having a note on it as "to the virtous Ahmed Rasim Efendi from Bayezid ulema who is in Ankara prison."[118], can support my conviction about the approximation of the these conservative circles. I think that this seemingly insignificant note may provide an insight into the anti-CUP adventure that the conservative ulama group in Konya will undertake in a decade. They have probably shown an apolegetic approach to the March 31 movement, which they did not support at the time.

The CUP, on the other hand, had already found its allies among ulema and Islamic intellectuals and did not need the conservatives ulema who would impede its projected-brave reforms like secularization of the jurisdiction. After a time spent proving loyalty to the regime, conservatives also recognized that there was no way of cooperation with the CUP as their efforts for the re-organization and strengthening of *Mecelle* was always retarded by the CUP group in the parliament. After the suppression of the rebellion, from May 12 to June 17 1909, the parliament discussed an amended constitution (*Kanun-ı Esasi)* which would specify that fiqh, custom and practice should serve as the basis of legislation. As Susan Gunasti indicated, the ulema attempted for the last time to get an improved procedure of Sharia court system and to equate it with secular Nizamiye courts but failed because the CUP had no more obliged to make 'concessions' over ulema in the post rebellion period.[119]

[118] *Maşrık-ı Irfân*, n.331, (10 November 1912). The only surviving number in the site of IDP (Project for Islamist Journals).
[119] Susan Gunasti, "The Late Ottoman Ulema's Constitutionalism", 110.

Pro-CUP Sheikhul-Islam Hüseyin Hüsnü also stood for his party and qualified the proposal as insufficient.[120] Gunasti specifies that after the appointment of Count Leon Ostrorog, a non-Muslim lawyer, as a judicial advisor to Manyasizade Refik, the minister of justice, discussions among elites over "whether Mecelle was a sufficient and developed code compatible with the contemporary world or not" increased, illustrating the demand for a secular reform which would probably be legitimized by Islamic modernist justifications.

It is not a coincidence that the establishment of the Ahali Party in 1910, which was dominated by some conservative ulema who did not support the rebellion, encounters with the rise of this discussion. Ulema MP Elmalılı Hamdi, who would participate in the new party, worked to reply to doubts over Mecelle and its importance for the Ottoman national identity, relying his arguments on the common modern Islamic sensibilities.[121] The CUP, on the other hand, continued to advertise legal reform as Islamic, and Yusuf Kemal Bey of Sinop praised the qualifications of Count Ostrorog for this task emphasizing that the count had a grasp of both fiqh and western law.[122] The promised amelioration of madrasas and problems in the military conscriptions of madrasa students, which were among the main expectations of ulema from the coalition with the CUP, was not in sight. The rehabilitation of students of religious sciences (*talebe-yi ulum)* who were constantly humiliated as bigot (*softa*) in some of the pro-CUP secularist press proved to be hopeless as they already lost their reputation considerably.[123] There was no way for some

[120] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, 1/2, 97 İctima; 12 Mayıs 1326, 1853-1854. via Susan Gunasti, Ibid., 116.
[121] Gunasti, "The Late Ottoman Constitutionalism", 114.
[122] *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, (14 Ağustos 1325- 31 January 1909): 5-6. Via Gunasti, "The Late Ottoman Ulema's Constitutionalism", 99.
[123] For one of the contemporary instances of this perception, Hemedanizade Ali Naci, *Softalar ve Medreseler* (Istanbul: Necm-i İstikbal Matbaası, 1913).

conservative ulema and madrasa students around Mustafa Sabri's Cemiyet-i İlmiye and Beyanu'l Hak, and Zeynelabidin's Maşrık-ı Irfan and Islah-ı Medaris other than to organize in the political arena to defend their professional interests and ideological stances as the contract and alliance with the CUP dissolved.

1.7 Conclusion

It was stated how the modern Islamic modes of reasoning was adopted by the ulama or non ulama, conservative or reformist Muslim intellectual circles. With the opportunity provided by this common intellectual ground, these circles opposed the Hamidian regime with the common discourse of Islamic constitutionalism. Yet, soon a distinction arose as to the extent and limits of these rationalizations. The first test of this intellectual split was seen clearly in the 31 March Rebellion. Although the CUP wanted to secularize the law, it did not hesitate to explain it with Islamic justifications. The tension between the some conservative ulema and the CUP thus acquired an Islamic intellectual compound. In this chapter, I tried to illustrate how this tension developed and was observed in Istanbul at the times of the rebellion. In the next chapter, it will be examined that how it was seen in Konya right after the Constitutional Monarchy, and affected the organizational efforts of the conservative ulema group in Konya.

CHAPTER 2

"Sometimes during the long period of the oppression (Hamidian reign), wine and raki were prohibited in order to give solace to well-intentioned and just Muslims of the empire. The people would have praised their government for such Islamic undertakings. One day a son asked to his alim father 'oh Efendi Baba! May I give you good news that you will be extremely pleased?' The father replied 'What is up my son!' he said 'The newspapers inform that, by the order of Sâdâret, muskirât is banned, you would be very pleased with this'. Father was quick to reply, 'I didn't like that news, I never did!' The child was confused but insisted to learn the reason, 'What are you saying! More than anyone else, you would be happy and appreciate the government that they banned something haram, said in a daze. Father replied confidently: 'Right. But would the Grand Vizier give this order or Sheikh al Islam?"[124]

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the emergence and organization of the some conservative ulema as a socio-political movement in Konya. How the ulema brothers known as sons of Sheikh (Şeyhzadeler) in Konya and their Naqshi dervish lodge and madrasa acted as a socio-political movement will also be discussed here. The experiences of the conservative ulema, inherited from the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid, and how their strained relations with the CUP led them to organize in the local politics, press and education will be discussed in this section. The intense narration of the political history, which would draw attention throughout the thesis, has been preferred to

[124] "Meclis-i Mebusan'ın Küşâdı", *Mikyâs-ı Şeriat*, n.12, (17 Aralık 1908): 1. via Mahmut Hakkı Aslantürk, "II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Mikyas-ı Şeriat Gazetesi", (MA Thesis, Istanbul University, 2018). The fact that this interesting anecdote about the ulema-statesman conflict was published in the conservative Mikyas-ı Shariat, which was closed on the grounds of its role in the 31 March Rebellion, is remarkable because it reveals the modern qualities (such as anti-clericalism) of the conservative phenomenon during the early phase of the constitutional period.

illustrate what emerged out of Islamic intellectual differences that were handled in the first chapter.

After the post-31 March period, conservative ulema became sure about the need to organize themselves in the political arena to prevent losing their influence forever since the CUP seemed not to take any notice of conservatives who were intentionally implied to break away from the party. Secularists, pro-CUP Islamic intellectuals and even cooperating ulema supported the accusations of clericalism and obscurantism by the CUP press on conservative ulema. The famous 'Islamist' intellectual Mehmet Akif was revealing his dislike of them by saying, "Honestly, as I listen to these guys, I will almost excuse the youth fashion for atheism."[125]

Conservative ulema, on the other hand, regarded reformists as "useful fools" because they were actually working for institutional secularization policy of the CUP.[126] They claimed that ulema have an obligation to notify *amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-n-nahy ʿani-l-munkar*, which means "enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong" about worldly issues from a religious perspective, referring that it is a religious obligation to engage with politics and the very basis of this political stance.[127] In his great dissertation *"The Ulema, Their Institutions and Politics in the Late Ottoman Empire (1876-1924)",* Amit Bein had focused on Mustafa Sabri Efendi as a micro-case to analyze conservative ulema group in Istanbul. By presenting their aims and anxieties, Bein would qualify his work as a proper representation of a combination of different histories, including *intellectual history*. However, this work missed out the social implications of these ideas and the connection of the ulema

[125] Bein, *Osmanlı Uleması* ,44.
[126] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 51.
[127] Mustafa Sabri, "İttihad Terakki Kongresinde Kıraat Olunan Kararın Bir Noktası", *Beyânü'l-hak*, v.6, n.131, (17 October 1909):2360-2362.

with the popular classes, especially those in the countryside. This chapter aims to enlarge the focus on the conservative ulema group and to reveal the social aspects of this way of thinking by focusing on the city of Konya. The press and notables of the city took in the discussions from the capital and reproduced similar or different collective experiences between conflicting groups within the town. The little shreds of evidence that I obtained from the Konya press would be assembled into a story of social interactions waiting to be located in a broader Ottoman framework.

2.2 Conservative ulema in the Ottoman countryside as a socio-political movement

Christian Smith reveals that the secularization theory, which once dominated the field of Sociology, prevented religious movements to be accepted as an integral part of the studies of modern social movements. According to this view, religious organisms was existentially 'irrational' and could not be turned into rationalistic social movements.[128] In time, even religious fundamentalisms started to find a place in these studies but this time excluding Islamic activism as "unintelligible" and by portraying it as "Islamic exceptionalism". Quintan Wiktorowicz refers to the need for a change in trend regarding the application of Social Movement Theory to the Islamist movements as a modern phenomenon.[129] For Wilkinson, social movements were also political and could be defined as any collective struggle aiming at bringing social transformation by every possible means, not excluding violence.[130] Wiktorowicz clarifies that the researchers from different majors tackle these movements and their motivational background by giving more weight to one of their

[128] Smith, *The Force of Faith*, 4.
[129] Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 3-4.
[130] Wilkinson, *Social Movement*, 55.

sociological, psychological or theological aspects, and there was a need for an interdisciplinary approach, even if they present reasonable answers from a particular perspective. The source of disturbance that was needed for the creation of any social movement was a structural crisis in the state that means failed secularization projects for the Islamist cases.[131] For Keddie, the most important reason lied in the destructive effect of imperialism on Muslims, which gave birth to Islamic anti-imperialism and was related to the sociopsychology of the masses.[132] Apparently, under such crises, Islamist movements were characterized by big, change-oriented ideas like other social movements.[133]

Since the modernity of the conservative phenomenon was examined in the previous chapter, it is aimed under this headline to identify specific qualities of the conservative ulema establishment in Konya, making it a modern social movement with roots in the past. Relying on Wıktorowicz's description of the Resource Mobilization Theory, I will try to grasp how a classical Muslim order headed by a certain Sheikh family in Konya gathered individual grievances and mobilized its participants for a socio-political movement.

First of all, as a part of mobilizing a social movement, they had certain spaces. These spaces constituted of the madrasa-dervish lodge, mosque and newspaper. Those were where they propagated their solidarity ties in the face of communally perceived threat. The solidarity ties for the participants were being established with some identical points like respecting or adopting the profession of ulama, being from Nakshi Khalidi order-specifically with an allegiance to the branch of the Sheikh family, and favoring a traditional understanding of fiqh as an essential

[131] Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 6.
[132] Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*., 8.
[133] Johnston, *What is a Social Movement?*, 6.

pillar in the law and bureaucracy. For Hank Johnston, these common aims would be strengthened by establishing SMO alliances and networks.[134] In that manner, Konya conservatives and Maşrık newspaper depended on Beyanu'l Hak magazine and Cemiyet-i İlmiye of the conservative ulema in Istanbul. The modernization of the tariqah as a movement was surely related to a shared understanding of a problem for participants and allies, which was non-confidence in the official Islam. Both Hamidian and CUP visions of State Islam did not foresee a special position for the ulema and focused on the political aspects of their utilization. Even though the latter developed a social project from it, it was still the opposite of the conservatives' vision, increasing some Conservative ulema's determination for the organization.

Like in any other social movement that Wiktorovicz specified, there were grammatical constructs and interpretative lenses used for meaning construction in Konya conservatives. One of them which was seen in most Islamist groups was the animosity for the West and holding it the real responsible for the emergence of what they opposed in the internal politics like the CUP as "the extent of the west", even though hardening and consolidation of the discourse developed in the near future for the ulema movement in Konya.

Konya presents a distinct opportunity to regard such an ulema movement, and the social relations it had developed since it as a city constituted another element in the solidarity ties of the group. The emphasis on Konya in the writings of Abdullah Fevzi and the movement's identification of Konya as Maşrık-ı Irfan (the place where the sun of lore rises) are some of the instances that highlight this tendency that will be touched in detail in the following pages. In Sidney Tarrow's words, political

[134] Johnston, *What is a Social Movement*, 5.

opportunity structures that were an essential pillar of the emergence of a collective action[135] were ripe for conservatives in Konya, at the local level, while that was not so powerful in Istanbul and at the national level, maybe related with the post 31 March situation in there. In Konya, they had essential organizational resources for the movement. The open communication channels served their political legitimacy in public opinion. Charismatic leadership was provided by Sheikh, mudarris and MP Zeynelabidin Efendi. The needed financial resources were provided by shopkeepers and craftsmen in the market for the publication of a newspaper, educational facilities etc. Islamic Indoctrination carried out in educational institution of the tariqah, *Bekir Sami Pasa* (then Islah-ı Medaris) madrasa.

The shopkeepers' close relation to the madrasa-dervish lodge (*tekke*) reminds the merchant-ulama alliance in the Qajar case. Both in Iranian cities and Konya, mosques, madrasas, and shops were in the same space, in the city market. Ahmad Ashraf says the market was a religious and commercial whole in Iran, and the close relation was founded over personal connections and emotion, rather than capitalistic interactions.[136] Therefore, the prestige of being close to the ulema can constitute one of the sources of the movement. In return, ulema would represent them in the political arena. Even if the shopkeepers' support for the movement was a fact, as it reflected on the list of donations for the madrasa published in Maşrık-ı Irfan newspaper, villagers and farmers constituted another vital social base for the movement. It was Zeynelabidin Efendi who defended the rights of, specifically, villagers and farmers in the Ottoman parliament.

[135] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 21.
[136] Ashraf, "Bazaar- Mosque Alliance: The Social Basis of the Revolts and Revolutions", 540.

2.3 Making of the movement: the Hamidian Period

The conservative ulema movement in Konya emerged first out of the problems of the madrasas. Therefore, it is essential to look for the situation of these institutions, the proposals about reform and the position of ulema in regard to these proposals, in both macro Ottoman and micro Konya levels. Contrary to the advocates of the modernization theory and mainly orientalist convictions about the ulema that they opposed any reform in the imperial institutions, including madrasas, there are strong proofs that ulema actively participated in reform projects.[137] Although many non-ulema faces realized the need to rehabilitate the madrasas specifically from the middle of the nineteenth-century onwards, only the demands of the madrasa origins among these advisors will be considered here.

As a madrasa graduate, Ali Suavi complained about the lack of positive sciences in the madrasa curriculums in 1868.[138] According to Menekşelizade, an ʻalim politician, "even religious sciences, let alone positive sciences, could not be taught sufficiently and effectively in these institutions", referring to an urgent need for reform.[139] However, it was not in the scope of interest for the state to rehabilitate madrasas, as governments relied on the new schools to raise future human source for the state bureaucracy. Therefore, there was no mention of madrasas in the General Education Regulation of 1869.[140]. During the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, no reform regarding the madrasa was put on the agenda. The sultan could not present a consistent policy on them either. It is said that he had a personal reservation against

[137] Somel, *Osmanlı'da Eğitimin Modernleşmesi,* 7.
[138] Ali Suavi, "Maarif-i Umumiye," *Ulum,* n.7, (1286-1869]: 414-15, via Hüseyin Çelik, *Ali Suavi ve Dönemi*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1994), 654-55.
[139] Sarıkaya, "2. Meşrutiyet ve Medreseler: Geleneksel Bir Kurumun Modernleşme Sürecinde Var Olma Mücadelesi", 39.
[140] Erbay, "Teaching and Learning In the Madrasas", 67.

the madrasas due to their involvement in the dethronement of Sultan Abdülaziz and doubted their participation in another plot against him, so he wanted to limit their power in the capital. Thousands of madrasa students were taken from their dormitories one night in 1892 and transferred to outside of the city under the humiliation of the officials. It did not take long for the sultan to realize what he did was a mistake which would severely damage his image of Caliph of Islam. Thus, this time he hastily granted them by exempting whole madrasa students from military service, thinking it would make their careers uninterrupted and led them to feel indebted to him.[141] In fact, this was leading to unnecessary extension of madrasa education and its getting overcrowded which was rather undesirable for many 'real students'. A letter written by a group of *suhtes* in 1889 complaining about the unnecessary length of some classes and of madrasa education in general had been ignored by the sultan.[142] It is said that the sultan had thought of establishing a theology faculty in 1895 instead of focusing on traditional madrasas, to train well-equipped missionaries who would assist him in global politics.[143] The Sultan's Panislamism and Official Islam had no so much interest in sustaining traditional institutions or applications as long as they did not present a material value. Ulema, on the other hand, by nature of their ancient profession had felt to be more sensitive on the traditional institutions like madrasas.

The First concrete example of the ulema dissatisfaction with the Sultan came from Hoca Muhiddin Efendi who joined the Young Turk movement at a very early stage. According to him, the sultan banned the ulema from dealing with politics, although it was one of this group's main duties, in a needed system of *Şûrâ-yı*

[141] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 57.
[142] Erbay, "Teaching and Learning in the Madrasas", 47.
[143] Sarıkaya, "2. Meşrutiyet ve Medreseler", 67.

Ümmet a term that was used to describe an imagined Islamic parliament. His abolishment of military service for madrasa students was also destructive and actually condemning the sciences of Sharia to disappear inevitably as many fake students filled the madrasas, disturbed the already reduced facilities of these institutions.[144] Hoca Muhiddin was the first to discuss madrasa rehabilitation in detail in his booklet Reformation of Madrasas in 1897 and popularized the idea of teaching religious and positive sciences together. In a brief he presented to the palace, he urged the sultan to correspond, referring to the needs of "five thousand self-sacrificing students and ulema in Konya". He specified that "the government pays a penny to neither students nor hodjas who spent their 20 years for serving religion".

It should not be a coincidence that on August 12, 1899, a petition was written to Ferid Pasha, the reformist governor of Konya, with wide participation from the ulema, including Zeynelabidin Efendi, regarding the rehabilitation of the madrasas in the city. They demanded mathematics and other technical lessons to be put in the curriculum. The government's support was sought for the employment of disadvantaged madrasa graduates who will be equated with college students by this new curriculum. Most importantly, the establishment of a commission consisting of local ulema was requested to tighten the conditions of entrance to madrasas and supervise the achievement of these objectives.[145] Konya Board of Directors for Madrasa Affairs partially acknowledged these and put demanded classes as supplementary on Friday and Tuesday, which were normally holidays. It is reported that these lessons could not be continued, and the established Committee that

[144] Aslaner, "İlmiye Sınıfının II. Meşrutiyeti Algılayışı, 27.
[145] Sarıçelik, *Konya'da Modern Eğitim,* 236.

Zeynelabidin Efendi was a member of it could not operate other than simple tasks such as solving student fights and eventually dissolved.[146]

Ferid Pasha who was said to be a supporter of improving both state schools and madrasas and backer of the members of the Nakshibandi order in Konya against Mevlevis[147], actually did not mention madrasas in his long momerandum to the Sultan about the issues of local education dated September 25, 1901. In this text, Pasha talks about how to prevent madrasa students from going to Istanbul for higher education but do not mention any kind of madrasa rehabilitation in their place of origin.[148]

Ferid Pasha, in his June 17, 1902 brief to Sultan, said that despite the existence of two thousand suhtes within the city, there were no any eligible teachers to be sent to local elementary schools who would teach according to the needs of the time. He added madrasas were the shelters of military deserters and must be reorganized through a council of reformation which would be established in Istanbul.[149] Kırmızı considers this as a positive step for the madrasa students and cites the suggestion of the pasha that similar higher education institutions like the Faculty of Law (*Mekteb-i Hukuk*), School of Judges (*Mekteb-i Nuvvab*) and Teachers' College (*Daru'l-muallimîn*) in Istanbul should be built in Konya as evidence of it.[150]

There are enough reasons to doubt that this proposal was a positive statement since it did not have a concrete result for the madrasa students and seems to serve

[146] Sarıçelik, *Konya'da Modern Eğitim Kurumları*, 237.
[147] Abdülhamit Kırmızı, "'Usul-i Tedrîs Hâlâ Tarz-ı Kadîm Üzre', Konya Valisi Ferid Paşa'nın eğitimi ıslah çalışmaları", 204.
[148] Kırmızı, "Usul-i Tedris", 210-211.
[149] BOA., Y.PRK. UM., 58/95 (4 Haziran 1318 - 17 June 1902).

[150] Kırmızı, "Usûl-i Tedrîs", 210.

instead keeping madrasa students (*suhte*s) away from the capital, which would be in accordance with the anxieties of the Sultan. Moreover, there was a suggestive event related to the pasha's perception of suhtes. A few years after this correspondence with the sultan, a conflict emerged between two groups for the affairs of a masjid used by Bekirsami Pasha madrasa, the main spatial center of the conservative ulema group, and the students of the Industrial School in Konya. The Pasha got angry at this quarrel and forbade the entrance of the madrasa's students to the masjid,[151] which was, I suppose, in great conjunction with the Sultan who hugely favored Industrial schools during his reign.

This event has pushed some local scholars to a touchy determination about the necessity of reforming madrasa. In this direction, we observe that in 1906, History, Chemistry, Geography and Mathematics lessons were taught by following high school textbooks in this Bekirsami Pasha Madrasa, which would further increase its central role for the conservative ulema movement in Konya in the near future.[152] At that time, this madrasa was one of the most prominent Nakshbandi lodge-madrasas in the city. The old Sheikh and mudarris Muhammed Bahaeddin Efendi was the last representative of a sheikh family, and his chain was traced to Mawlana Khalid-i Baghdadi. He left his posts to his three scholar sons, passed away soon after, and gave permission for the new generation to design a new teaching method at the madrasah. The enthusiasm and success of one of the sons, Ziya Efendi, to enter the newly established Konya School of Law as a teacher shows that these people were after something new.

[151] Arabacı, "Konya Medreseleri", 482.
[152] Selekler, "60 Yıl Önce Konya", *Şehir Postası Gazetesi*, (13 February 1962- 7 March 1962), via Caner Arabacı, "Konya Medreseleri", 513.

In fact, entering modern schools as a teacher was nothing new for many ulama. Since the Tanzimat reforms began, many scholars were employed in the new schools of the state and were instrumental in projects that would ultimately restrict their influence.[153] It is said that many ulema wanted to get rid of the constantly humiliated madrasas and became teachers in a prestigious school.[154] The situation in Konya was not different from that in the capital. Finding the madrasa system inadequate, Ali Kemali Efendi passed to Konya High School.[155] Similarly, Mehmed Vehbi Efendi, a professor at the Mahmudiye madrasa, resigned from his post when he was elected as a Konya Court of Law member in 1901. In 1908, he became a teacher of the newly opened School of Law in Konya.[156] It was surely not a coincidence that these two scholars would be the most important ulema figures of the CUP and the National Movement in Konya in the coming decades. So, what did distinguish Ziya Efendi's teaching in a modern school from the others who did the same? The answer lies in the fact that he never broke off with his father and brothers' madrasa.

The proclamation of the Constitutional Monarchy was a sudden development offering great opportunities for this family and all other local power holders. The Committee of Union and Progress was pursuing an inclusive policy for the sake of the new regime and needed scholars in a place like Konya, where it had no local organization and obliged to rely on the solid ulema class. On the other hand, ulema was at the forefront of all these processes to have a say in the parliament.[157] Different segments of society interpreted constitutionalism according to their needs and

[153] Akiba, "Sharia Judges in the Ottoman Nizamiye Courts 1864-1908", 209-237.
[154] Akşin Somel, *Osmanlı'da Eğitimin Modernleşmesi*, 43.
[155] Önder, *Sivaslı Ali Kemali*, 16.
[156] Altıntaş, "Konyalı Mehmet Vehbi Efendi'nin (1862-1949) Kelami Yönü", 335.
[157] Asil, "Reception of Liberty", 46.

thought that their problems would be solved.[158] The ulema was no different from them. In line with Mustafa Sabri's Cemiyet-i İlmiye, Konya's ulema, including Zeynelabidin, were in great expectations from the new regime on issues such as the military service of the students and the rehabilitation of madrasas that could not be resolved for decades. They were celebrating constitution as a religious development, but Ziya Efendi was congratulating it distinctively as "the reintroduction of a beautiful practice of the prophet" (Sunnah), not as an essential pillar of Sharia (farz), by which he differed from the popular rhetoric of Islamic modernism during and aftermath of the revolution.[159]

Meanwhile, Ziya Efendi's request for decentralization regarding the determination of parliamentary candidates in an article in September 1908 can be regarded as evidence that some groups have already started to be formed within the party's local organisation.[160] Before such problems came to the fore, the first elections were held in Konya and deputies, most of them from the ulema, were sent to Istanbul.[161] Among the elected deputies, Zeynelabidin Efendi was nominated by the notables of the Kadınhanı town and made a difference to his closest rival, Vehbi Efendi. As the grandson and caliph of Muhammed Kudsi Bozkıri, who spread Nakshibandiyya in Konya, it is understood from the election results that Sheikh Zeynelabidin Efendi had an important place among the people, some of whom probably swore a religious allegiance for him. His brother Ahmed Ziya's warning that villagers should not be deceived may be related to his worries about a threat

[158] Asil, "Reception of Liberty", 19.
[159] Şeyhzade Ahmed Ziya, *Anadolu*, (13 Eylül 1324 - 26 September 1908), 2. Via Asil, 56.
[160] Şeyhzade Ahmed Ziya, *Anadolu*, (6 Eylül 1324 - 19 September 1908), 1. Via Asil, s.60-61.
[161] Four of Five seats in the central province and seven of thirteen seats in Konya Vilayet acquired by the ulema. Asil, "Reception of Liberty", 55.

stemming from new context that could damage the long-established assurance of the family's control over the villagers.[162] Therefore, it can be regarded as the first sign of the approaching separation in local politics and the emergence of a new movement in Konya.

Although Serhat Aslaner in his thesis *İlmiye Sınıfının II. Meşrutiyeti Algılayışı (Konya Örneği)* says that the ulema group in Konya was not one type, he expresses them as if they were of one type by using the term ulema of Konya (*Konya Uleması*).[163] He specifies that he avoided the ideological classification of ulema in Konya due to insufficient data, so he did not go beyond the Unionist-Liberal distinction referring to the political polarization of the ulema in Konya in the near future.[164] I would argue that these political divergences were already born out of intellectual differences, although both groups were from ulema and lived in similar ways. In this context, I think it is not a coincidence that Ali Kemali and Vehbi Efendis, who will become permanent allies of the Unionists, were the ones who have passed from the madrasa to the school. This fact reveals somewhat clues about a kind of ideological change and difference between political rivals.

Conservative ulema line emerged as Cemiyet-i İlmiye in Istanbul and were on the verge of emerging in Konya were more assertive about holding on to traditional institutions and institutionalizing specifically. It is understood from an article in *Beyanu'l Hak* that there was hidden envy to religious institutionalism that Armenians and Greeks have with their patriarchate, referring to the effectiveness of the clergy

[162] Şeyhzade Ahmed Ziya, *Anadolu*, (6 Eylül 1324 - 19 September 1908), 1.
[163] For Aslaner, the rivalry among ulema of Konya emerged only during the elections of 1912 and was far from being ideological and stemmed from political divisions. Aslaner, "İlmiye Sınıfının 2. Meşrutiyeti Algılayışı", 5.
[164] Aslaner, "İlmiye Sınıfının 2. Meşrutiyeti Algılayışı", 31.

on 'directing their communities toward progress'.[165] Belief of the scholars about their own importance and their commitment to the classical understanding of Sharia was not sustainable with the style of the CUP, so less than a month after the opening of the Ottoman Assembly, on January 4, 1909, the Cemiyet-i İlmiye declared that it had nothing to do with the CUP. Ömer Fevzi Efendi, an *'alim* member of the parliament from Bursa, who previously announced that the Constitutional Monarchy was Islamic and that the people should not object to it said that "the main reason for the Muslim happiness (stemming from the constitution) was that consultation was Islamic and their belief that this administration would adequately follow the provisions of Sharia. At this current moment, he specified, there was no option left for ulema, who are Sharia officials, not to leave after this indifference of the Committee.[166] Members of the ulema who entered the parliament from the quotas of the Committee did not resign, perhaps hoping that a bargaining opportunity will arise.

Against these expectations of the conservative ulema, the CUP was pursuing a policy of stalling them. The Committee had already found a group of ulema collaborating with itself and had established the Heyet-i İlmiye, an alternative to the Cemiyet-i İlmiye. This group, led by Musa Kazım Efendi, was capable of seeing the limits of the ulema's demands in this collaboration. According to Amit Bein, they were aware of two things, first, not allowing anti-Islamic circles to be too active at

[165] Hayret, "Ya Alîm Ya Halîm", *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol.1, n.1, (22 Eylül 1324- October 1908), 6-7.
[166] "..İslâmların sürûru bir kere müşaverenin usûl-i dinden olması, sonra herkes keyfi gibi iş yapamayıp umûmun muayyen vazifeyi cidden ve bihakkın ifa edeceklerine itikat ve hükümet-i şekliyenin dini, din-i islam olduğunun Kanun-ı Esâasî'de musarrah bulunmasıyla, âhkâm-ı şer'iyye ü diniyyenin mevki-i icraya vaz'ına itimat olunmasına mebni idi. Maalesef ümitler bazı cihetten boşa çıkıyor. Hele ehl-i islâmın umûr-ı şer'iyye ü diniyye hakkındaki intizar ettikleri şeylerden hiçbir şey görülemiyor. Umur-ı diniyyeyi muhafaza ve icraya, tebliğ ve i'lâya memur olan ulemâ-ı dinin ve memurîn-i şer'iyyenin sukutlarına mani kalmamıştır....", Ömer Fevzi, "Nidâ-yı Ehl-i İslam", *Beyanu'l Hak*, (12 Kanun-ı Sani 1324- January 25, 1909), 373.

the Committee and not to be seen too intervening to the internal operation of the party.[167]

2.4 Organization in the Constitutional Period: *Maşrık-ı Irfân* newspaper, print house and association

Since the agency of the sheikh family in the creation of the conservative organization in Konya was so visible and both the disciples and masters in the Bekir Sami Pasha Madrasa were either Nakshibandi dervishes or caliphs, it is important to recognize whether Sufism and specifically its Nakshibandi-Khalidiyya orientation was effective in the making of such an establishment. It is important to recognize modern qualities of the tariqa's political activism and ambitions. Although being involved in politics is not something new to the tariqahs, it seems that some modern methods such as raising money from the community were adopted by this group, referring to a new phenomenon. In addition, this organization in Konya was proving on the contrary of the essentialist perceptions about Sufi 'fatalism', and inviting individuals to join a movement and propagated Islamic activism using modern devices in the name of tradition. I perceive this initiative as a modern Islamic phenomenon and not a 'natural' extension of imagined Sufi orientation. Even though their order Nakshibandiyya was already known with its political ambitions throughout the nineteenth-century, pro-monarchy, pro-CUP or anti of both could have been found among Nakshibandis in the Constitutional Period, leaving no room for specific importance of the order in the making of the conservative ulema organization in

[167] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 121.

Konya, other than providing some characterictics like orthodox outlook and strict adherence to Sharia.[168]

Towards the end of January, under the leadership of the conservative movement, some ulema and merchants of Konya initiated first the establishment of Maşrık-ı Irfan printing house and then within a month newspaper with the same name started to operate.[169] Immediately after its formation, the movement began to quarrel with the CUP's local agents, paying attention not to counter its policies directly . According to a letter published in the newspaper *Anadolu* and written by the merchant Mehmed Hilmi who will be the responsible manager of the newspaper Maşrık, Mehmed Tevfik Efendi, the concessionaire of the unionist *Hakem* newspaper was involved in corruption during his office in the school administration.[170]

This rapid entry illustrated the political enthusiasm and seriousness of the movement with the launch of their own combative newspaper. Its first issue was literally a declaration of the conservative line. An unknown author said that it was not Islam that prevented progress, on the contrary, only following it could bring progress. He insisted that failure to realize this potential was related to the backwardness in education, but there was no time to wait for schools to be established. "Our ulama masters" he said "would inform the people about Islam", which was "the foundation of civilization", and specifically of "its natural contingent, constitution". The article made implicit accusations against reformist

[168] Takizade, Esad Erbili, Gümüşhaneli Ahmed Ziyaüddin, Sheikhu'l Islam Musa Kazım, Sheikh Zeynelabidin all were Nakshibandi-Khalidis who took different political positions.
[169]. . "… Konya'da bil-iftihâr hizmet içün Şerafeddin Camii-i enveri civarında Eski Mahkeme demekle maruf hanede Konya ulema ve tüccardan mürekkep otuz dört zât, altmış sehimi havi bir şirketle Maşrık-ı İrfan namıyla bir matbaa küşat eylediğimizden…", *in* "İlan", *Maşrık- ı Irfan*, n.1, (19 Şubat 1324 - 4 Mart 1909): 1.
[170] Tenekecizade Mehmet, *Anadolu*, (15 Kanun-i sani 1324- 28 January 1909), *via* Arabacı, Ayhan, Demirsoy, Aydın, *Konya Basın Tarihi*, 59.

circles as a direct reflection of the debate in Istanbul. "Deviance" from the Sharia was described as murder, demonism and betrayal and could only be the suggestions of "those who pursue their personal interest, who want to benefit someone". He ended specifying that the fighting those "who try to make the ugly look beautiful" was one of the duties of this newspaper.[171] It can be seen that this 'alim from Konya was envisioning an active ulema profile in the constitutional system and agreed in a way with Derviş Vahdeti who referred the Iranian constitution as an ideal which gave a greater role for ulema.[172]

On the other hand, the Unionists in their approach to the ulama kept in mind the Iranian experience that led to the bad end of the constitutionalism, and refrained from giving the ulama the authority to control parliamentary affairs.[173] In that context, the organizational efforts and aggressive statements of the traditionalists were met by the Hakem newspaper, which represented the CUP in Konya. It complained of some hodjas who "just wore turban and pontificate about religion, but were unaware of the essence of religion, how a religious policy would be, based on existing social realities". Such ulema were accused to be opponents of science who were claimed to preach against sending children to modern schools.[174] For Hakem, this was essentially nothing more than ignorance of religion. Adopting science and religion together was being presented by the CUP media to gain a more based legitimacy. It also found the constitutionalism of this kind of ulema insincere and declared that they accepted it because they just had to. Similar to Maşrık-ı Irfan, Hakem emphasized that Islam does not prevent progress and by following path of its

[171] "Terakkiye Mani Nedir?", *Maşrık- ı Irfan*, n.1, (19 Şubat 1324 - 4 Mart 1909): 1.
[172] Derviş Vahdetî, "İran Müctehidlerine", Volkan, vol.1, n.57, (26 February 1909): 2.
[173] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 121.
[174] "… bir takım kıyafet-i ilmiyeyi taklid ile diyanetperverlik iddiasında bulunuyor. Kendileri hakayık-ı diniyeden, siyaset-i şeriyyeden, ahval-i hazıra-yı beşeriyeden, tarih-i İslam'dan katiyyen bî-haberdirler…", Hoca Kazım, *Hakem*, (26 Şubat 1324 - 11 March 1909), 2.

opponent sought support from the ulema for legitimizing the differing content of what they understood of progress and how to achieve it.

The support sought came from Hoca Kazım Efendi of Ereğli, the son of a former mufti. He was proposing a bold and progressive conception of *ictihad* that blurred the lines between Sharia and secular law. The fact that the Sharia debate, which started in Istanbul, was handled according to the expectations of the CUP by a scholar, who had once nominated for parliament but lost it, was the first concrete indicator of the emergence of a new ground of struggle in local politics. In a way that would not be expected from a provincial scholar, Kazım was claiming that all legal regulations were already based universally on moral norms and legal sciences, of which the sources had been essentially from Sharia.[175] He advocated a dynamic Sharia that would alleviate the strict rules of religious criminal law by attributing "this crime" to the inability of madrasas which failed to produce capable staff to implement Sharia, in order not to damage directly the tradition. He also asked conservative circles, whose constitutionalism he found insincere, how long the Sharia emphasis could be maintained in a country where half of it was non-Muslim.[176] Just like in Istanbul, probable implications of Meşrutiyet seemingly has not been much considered until that day in Konya, it was a term that most of people agreed upon its legitimacy and importance but with different attributions. The Orthodox religious expectations from it led conservative ulema to suddenly find themselves associated with reactionism (*irtica*) and essentially the monarchist regime against which they also opposed.

[175] Hoca Kazım, *Hakem*, (26 Şubat 1324 - 11 March 1909), 2.
[176] Hoca Kazım, *Hakem*, (11 March 1909), 3.

Hakem did not want to give the impression that it was basically excluding the traditionalist ulama who have not yet broken with the CUP in the parliament and whose demands were positively approached by the party with the emphasis on Sharia in the constitutional regulations. A place was reserved for Musa Kazım Efendi, a conservative scholar, to answer Müftüzade Hoca Kazım Efendi. He summarily said that secular laws had a constantly changing feature that people never liked and lacking a legitimate base, while the historical examples show, the Quran was sufficient for Muslims for worldly and ethereal progress, accusing implicitly Tanzimat that he associated with "leaving Quran aside". According to him, there could not be any persecution and inequality stemming from Sharia against non-Muslims, it was also unthinkable to change the Islamic law that has a divine origin and treat everyone equally.[177] Mehmed Burhaneddin was opposing to claims of victimization of non-Muslims due to religious domination, as it was Zenbilli Ali Efendi, a member of the ulema who prevented the forced conversion of Christians by Selim I and provided their identification as "citizens".[178]

In Maşrık-ı Irfan, on the other hand, the "inappropriateness" of Hoca Kazım's discourse was addressed using classical fiqh methods and answered by Beşkazalı Rıza, who was a student in the madrasa of the movement.[179] By encouraging students to participate in activism through writing, it was told that Hoca Kazım lacked student-level ordinary knowledge of fiqh and.[180] In the same number, Bozkırlı Nazif from Karahüyüklü Madrasa warned Hoca Kazım that "no laxity can be shown regarding the thieves, adulterers and murderers and that the current laws cannot be

[177] *Hakem*, (5 Mart 1325-18 March 1909), 4.
[178] Mehmed Burhaneddin, "Meşrutiyet ve Milliyet", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.34, (15 July 1909), 1.
[179] Beşkazalı Rıza, "Maşrık-ı Irfan Matbaası Müdüriyetine", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.3, (17 March 1909), 2.
[180] "Müftüzâdeye cevap yazan şu iki talebe efendilerin makaleleri gerçekten mucib-i iftihardır…Bu gibi âsâr ile gazetemizi tezyin etmelerini tüm talebeden bekleriz.", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.3, (17 March 1909), 3.

claimed to be in accordance with Sharia". He urged Hoca Kazım to stop trying to seem well-intentioned due to the fact that Kazım found previously the condition to seek witnesses in Sharia as insufficient to identify the criminal was an insult to the morality of the whole nation.[181]

Hoca Kazım Efendi's response to him was quick and accused "those demanding Sharia" with obeying the 'cruel' sultan during the period of despotism without remembering the laws of Allah, and not appreciating the sacred Committee which brought the sacred constitution. He claimed the perception of Sharia in the parliament was not actually different from what those opponents understood of him. The only difference was in the religious criminal law, which had not yet begun to be prepared and was unnecessary to worry about. As the law to be taken from the West was essentially what Europeans bought from Muslims, their importation of it was legitimate. For Hoca Kazım, both law and fiqh were Islamic and Shari', since they serve the people's happiness.[182] Being associated with the agents of Abdulhamid's regime may have been the most provoking thing that angered traditionalist scholars. According to the Imam of Alaaddin Mosque in Konya, just as there was no Sharia now, it did not exist then. It could already not exist, since "the murderers, adulterers, and thieves" were themselves, accusing the officials of the Hamidian period. He was demanding Sharia in the name of "liberty" that would free it from inactivity.[183] In this context of "liberty of seeking", the 4th issue of Maşrık-ı Irfan was announcing to its readers, with a poem written and sent by an Istanbulite 'alim, the deep discomfort

[181] Bozkırlı Nazif, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.3, (17 March 1909), 3.
[182] Hoca Kazım, *Hakem*, (12 Mart 1325-25 March 1909), 1.
[183] "… evâmir-i ilâhiyeyi nasıl mahv ve ne gûnâ tağyir ederiz hulyâ-yı melânetkarâneleriyle türlü türlü tevilâta sapışarak hudud-ı şer'iyyeye ve daha nice nice mesâil-i fıkhıyeyi icrâdan tatil eylemişler idi, nasıl etmesinlerdi o devr-i menhusta katil, zâni, sârık bütün kendileri idi. Bi lütful kerim o vartalardan tahlis ettik, hüriyete nail olduk. Fikrimiz de nimet-i hürriyetten behre-mend olarak icradan muattal olan ahkâm-ı Şeriyyenin bitamamiha icra olunması kaziyyedir." *in* Imam-ı Alaaddin Osman Nuri, "Ereğlili Kazım Efendi'ye", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*. N.7, (26 Mart 1325- 8 Nisan 1909), 1.

about such a discussion of Sharia coming back "even in a place like Konya". The poet implied *qufr*-heresy for the discourse of their opponents. While this poem reveals the traditionalism of the movement prioritizing an orthodox understanding of Sharia, it is, more importantly, referring to local characteristics and its emphasis on Konya. A line here clearly stated that the name of the newspaper, Maşrık-ı Irfan (the place where the sun of lore rises), actually means Konya.[184] Hosting a massive ulema and madrasa student population, Konya seems to attract the attention of conservative ulema in Istanbul.

Meanwhile, Maşrık seems to have also adopted the tactic of attacking its opponents by associating it with the Hamidian period. Saatçi Rıfat, a leading merchant and a member of the organization, reminded "those like Hoca Kazım" that collaborators of the ancient regime also sold their religions to umera (statesmen) and lost at the end their salvation in the other world. Rıfat describes such an act as originating from "theft, envy and arrogance". After their courage "to tell the truth", he implied that some information was being collected and reported about their facilities after he mentioned how always despicable the spies (*Hafiye*s) were.[185] Abdullah Fevzi, the nephew of Zeynelabidin Efendi, whose name will be mentioned frequently in the following parts of the thesis, explained that not being like savages is only about having a religion and sharia. He specified that although worldly interests and otherworldly interests mostly coincided, when they did differ, of course, the choice would be religion.[186]

[184] "Vah vah ey Koca Konya sende de mi zuhura geldi nâle-yi feryâd, Aşikârdır din aleyhinde avave ve levleve-yi kelb edenler hep nâmerd, Durma dinle tenvir-i âlem eyle zira sen Maşrık-ı Irfânsın, Öyle bedmâye olan hükm-i Hakem'le olmaz bu dîn berbâd." in Dersaadet İlmiye erbabından bir zât, "Açık Mektub", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.4, (13 Mart 1325-26 March 1909), 1.
[185] Nuriefendizade Saatçi Rıfat, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.4, (26 March 1909), 1.
[186] Yusufefendizade Abdullah, "Maşrık-ı Irfan Müdüriyetine", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.7, (26 Mart 1325-8 April 1909), 3.

Maşrık continued to oppose this broad expression of Sharia, which he believed to be wrong with all its existence, in continuing numbers too. Beşkazalı Rıza could not make sense of why Müftüzade was "so sorry" for the criminals by quoting a hadith of the prophet about theft.[187] Rıza was implying that "this rule bending efforts" would not be left with the criminal code, and the turn will come for namaz, zakat and pilgrimage. He certainly did not believe that Kazım was sincere in his ideas and saying that it is not understandable why a muftizade, for a few "drunkards", said "let's leave Sharia", similar to "Qizilbash cries". However, he was comforting himself with the establishment of a parliamentary commission and maintained his belief that this would be resolved in the parliament.

Maşrık's tone on the Sharia issue was getting heavier and even threatening "to cut off the tongue of those who prolonged Sharia".[188] There are strong indications that the atmosphere in the capital city was effective in the increased emotional intensity and self-confidence of the Maşrık, proving that Volkan has found a readership for itself in Konya as it was written by a certain Hazret-i Vecdi to Derviş Vahdeti that "Ulema of Konya and Ankara advertise the need for Sharia all over their vilayets".[189] Prior to the 31 March Incident, when the Grand Vizier Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha sent a telegram to Konya, as he sent it to many provincial governorships, and informed the people that the Committee was intervening in the affairs of the National

[187] "…Ümem-i mâziyenin bâdi-yi helâkı eşrâf ve âyandan birinin sirkati hengâmında hududu icrâ etmeyüb, zuefâdan biri sirkat etse ona icrâ ederlerdi. Nefsim yed-i kudretinde olan Allah'a yemîn ederim ki semere-yi fuâdım, kerime-yi muhteremem Fatıma olsa yine elini keserim…" *in* Beşkazalı Rıza, "Cevabım", *Maşrık- ı Irfan*,, n.5, (19 Mart 1325- 1 April 1909), 2.

[188] "…Şer-i şerife dil uzatanların dillerini keseriz. Kusurunu suratına çarparız. Şeriat serhaddimizdir, serhaddimizde kal'a hak-i bedendir…", Saatçi Rıfat, "Şeriat-ı Ahmediye", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.6, 5 April 1909, 1.

[189] Aslaner, "İlmiye Sınıfı'nın İkinci Meşrutiyeti Algılayışı", 65.

Assembly, Hakem and Anadolu ignored the message, Maşrık delivered it to the people of Konya.[190]

There are no Maşrık issues from the exact time of the uprising, but it is clear from the numbers just before the uprising that conservative ulema group in Konya agreed with the rebels on many problems. Just like Müderris Rasim Efendi, who had gone to the parliament and made a number of demands, Maşrık was making publications against similar things it regarded as contrary to religion. The nephew of Zeynelabidin Efendi and one of the students and then scholars in their madrasa Abdullah Fevzi was explaining how objectionable that painting and sculpture was, based on religion, trying to rationalize it. He was quoting a news about the students of the School of Fine Arts in Istanbul drawing a gypsy girl naked. As he quoted, the school principal prevented them, and the students complained the school principal to the ministry and to the grand vizier, describing this as an obstacle to freedom and progress. Abdullah Fevzi claimed that it was not only haram to paint obscene pictures, imitating God's act of creation, apart from being immoral, contained a greater threat related with faith.[191] Two days after the riot broke out in Istanbul on 31 March 1325/12 April 1909, Hakem felt the need to act tactical and while ending Hoca Kazım's writings, it published the sharia defense in which Musa Kazım attacked Hoca Kazım.[192]

Although there is a shortage of the issues of the Maşrıks, it is understood from surviving numbers that the rebellion was welcomed. In the poem written by an

[190] " İnkılabın nigehbânı Cemiyet meclisin açılmasıyla işleri buraya tevdi etmesi gerekirken müdahaleden hâli kalmıyor. Ahaliye 'cemiyettenim' diyen türediler müdahale ediyor, hükümet-i mahalliyenin işlerine karışıyorlar…", "Sadaretten Vilayete Yazılan Tamim", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.6, (5 April 1909), 4.
[191] Yusuf Efendizade Abdullah, "Maşrık-ı Irfan Matbaası Müdüriyetine", 3.
[192] *Hakem*, (2 Nisan 1325 -15 April 1909), 2. via Ercüment Asil, "Reception of Liberty", 104.

anonymous writer, it was said that “God's help came to the people who could not taste the true meaning of freedom yet”, and “that the irreligious should pay attention to themselves now”.[193] Akşehirli Harputizade Mustafa Efendi, one of the scholars who will be executed for his role in the Konya rebellion in the future, said that “the soldier was doing this job because of the ridicule of the religious feelings of him by officers”. He added, “those who got angry with them had to look after those who angered them first”, also the soldiers were now returning to their barracks; "there was nothing to worry about".[194] Maşrık reported that the people of Istanbul engage with their businesses, public order is stable, and there is nothing to worry about. The *Cemiyet-i İlmiye*, on the other hand, declared that it supported the constitutional order, which is not doubtful in accordance with the Sharia, although it was satisfied with the resignation of a few members such as Hüseyin Cahid, who resigned to escape from the rebels, and advised the rebel soldiers to calm down by specifying that demanding Sharia is business of ulema.[195]

It seemed that the powerful conservative ulema establishment in Konya prevented the rebellious mobilization in Konya, similar to that of Muhammedan Union in Istanbul. Although there were congratulatory telegrams sent to Volkan from Konya, unlike to many provincial cities, Ittihad-ı Muhammedî did/could not be organized there. Maşrık was in favor of “not going further”, which was in line with the Istanbul organization and hoped that the constitutional system should continue on its way with the new government. To defuse the tension, warnings of the pro-CUP Sheikhu’l Islam Mehmed Ziyaeddin to the rebel soldiers was issued in the

[193] “Ümmetin ahvâline vâkıfsın ey merd-i hüdâ, Tatmadı hürriyetin zevkini ahali neylesin, Eyler istimdad senden mutlaka biçaregân, Geldi Tevfik-i hüdâ dinsizler ağzın bilesin.”, Ayn Gayn., “Siham-ı Sa’d”, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.10, (7 Nisan 1325-20 April 1909): 1.
[194] Ahmed Lütfi, “İnsana Herşeyden Evvel Ne Lazımdır?”, *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.10, (R. 7 Nisan 1325-20 April 1909): 2.
[195] Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i İslamiye, “Asker Evlâdlarımıza Hitabımız,”, 673.

newspaper.[196] Thanks to this attitude, Maşrık was left untouched while the *Mikyas-ı Şeriat* and similar newspapers, which Maşrık encouraged his readers to subscribe to[197], were closed by the Hareket Army suppressing the rebellion.

Surviving issues of the Maşrık aftermath of the rebellion show that Maşrık attended the new mainstream discourse cursing the Volkan and Derviş Vahdeti, by specifically separating "demanding Sharia" which the CUP could not oppose either, as still valid. Both the rebellion and its suppression was being carried out by sides of the conflict by paying attention to sacred position of Sharia. Saatçi Rıfat talked about how dangerous those who rebelled by using religion for their own purposes and those who rebelled against religion were, implying that the stances of two fractions in these events were equally destructive.[198] Mehmed Hilmi from Isparta said that "since we are sure that our army is protecting the constitutionalism and that our parliament works in accordance with the sharia, these fights should end now and we should be brothers"[199]. For Mustafa Sabri, it was very easy to make "ulema of Muslims" happy, it was enough to care religious feelings for reconciliation.[200] According to Maşrık, Derviş was a bandit and confused the minds of soldiers for his personal ambitions.[201] In Istanbul, the Cemiyet-i İlmiye was declaring that "from the very beginning" they doubted the İttihad-ı Muhammedî and that it was impudent to put forward in the name of protecting the Sharia as this mission belonged first to Allah, then to the army and the ulama. It described the rebel movement as the work of the

[196] "Şeyhülislam Mehmed Ziyaeddin Efendi tarafından tamim olunan telgrafname suretidir", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n10 (20 April 1909): 4.
[197] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.10, (7 Nisan 1325- 20 April 1909), 4.
[198] Saatçi Rıfat, "Yâ Erhamürrâhimîn", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.11, (13 Nisan 1325 - 27 Nisan 1909), 1.
[199] Rıfat, "Ya Erhamürrahimin", 2.
[200] Mustafa Sabri, "Hüseyin Cahid", *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol.2, n.31(28 June 1909): 716-719.
[201] "Derviş Vahdetî nam şâki âmâl-i mefsedetkârânesini kisve-yi şeriata bürünerek fena bir arzuya mahkumen heyecan-âmiz neşriyatta bulunduğu… Sed hezar lanet bunun gibi arzuya mahkum olanlara…", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.12, (13 Nisan 1325 - 27 Nisan 1909), 4.

mob and emphasized the importance of fatwas published by the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye* in calming the masses.[202] The role of Elmalılı Hamdi from the Society in writing the fatwa regarding the abdication of the Sultan should be evaluated in this context. In Konya, Maşrık also seems to have joined the fury after the rebellion that put the responsibility of the uprising on the Sultan Abdulhamid, even though there was no enough evidences for the Sultan's role. Relynig on some reports quoted from the Istanbul press, Maşrık stated that the Sultan sought help from the German emperor and according to some others, he was going to go to Crimea by ferry, and the Tsar was going to build a palace for him.[203] In addition, a series of articles about his wealth and habits during his long reign was started to be published.[204]

Maşrık seems to have begun to pursue a policy that includes other ulama circles. Refik Reşid, a scholar from Antalya, demanded that the person who wrote poems under the code name ع غ[Ayn Gayn] and who had previously supported the rebellion should not be hosted in this newspaper. "If there were no such *softa*" he said, "the ulama of Antalya would surely want to read this valuable newspaper of Konya where was famous for its scholars after Egypt and Istanbul".[205]The execution of the rebels in Istanbul was praised and supported by Maşrık as the implementation of the provisions of the Sharia. It was hoped that this attention for the sake of Sharia would be shown in some other matters such as wine and raki.[206] It was always

[202] *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.12, (13 Nisan 1325 - 27 Nisan 1909), 4.
[203] "Sultan Almanya İmparatorundan İstimdad Ediyor", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.12, (13 Nisan 1325 - 27 Nisan 1909), 4.
[204] "Abdülhamid Nasıl Eğlenirdi?", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.27, (21 June 1909), 4.
[205] Refik Raşid, *Maşrık-ı Irfân*, n.15 (24 Nisan 1325 - 7 May 1909), 1.
[206] "Ahkâm-ı Şeriyyeden kısasın icrâsını Cenab-ı hakka bin kere şükürler olsun dîde-yi meserret ve mefharetle gördük. Ala melâin-nâs rakı, şarab içenlerle menâhi-yi sâireyi irtikab edenler hakkındaki hudûd-ı şeriyyenin icrâsını da kemâl-i iştiyâkla intizâr eyleriz.", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.15, (24 Nisan 1325-7 May 1909), 4.

emphasized that the Hareket Army was not the same as the Union and Progress, and so was trying to consolidate its position as a separate party.[207]

Hakem, on the other hand, did not forget the attitude before the uprising and was looking for an opportunity to attack the conservative ulema movement, and succeeded in that by transferring Maşrık's lead author, Yusuf Mazhar. He held on to the discourse of "ittihad" that the Union and Progress would use against any Islamic opposition against it, and said that Mazhar took this step because he thought the country needed unity rather than a "discord".[208]

There was probably a vein in the Conservative ulema movement in Konya that wanted to lighten the tone a little and did not want to allow for further discussions about how to approach Sharia issue. In that context, Maşrık had changed his slogan in its first page as "It talks about everything, it is an 'objective' Ottoman newspaper" as a declaration of this attitude.[209] At this point, it is noteworthy to state that the newspaper informed its readers about a theater play in the Industrial School for the benefit of the school budget and invited the people of Konya for aiding the school.[210] This news was probably correlated with the new softening policy of the newspaper by Abdullah Fevzi, one of the hardliner participants in the movement and the nephew of Zeynelabidin Efendi. We understand that in the 31st issue which did not survive, Abdullah Fevzi criticized the play from his own Islamic perspective, taking the support of Zincirli and Süleymaniye mudarrises in Konya as well.[211] Youngsters' Committee of Theater replied to this criticism from Hakem with the

[207] "İlan", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.15, (7 May 1909), 4.
[208] *Hakem*, (27 Haziran 1325 - 10 haziran 1909). *via* Hakan Aydın, "II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Konya'da İslamcı Muhalefetin Sesi: Meşrık-ı Irfan", 38.
[209] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 29, (28 June 1909), 1.
[210] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 30. (7 kanun-ı sani1325- 1 July 1909), 2.
[211] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.34, (15 June 1909), 2.

heading “Still Provoking?” accusing Maşrık and Abdullah Fevzi as troublemaker and disruptor of unity-ittihad.[212] Abdullah Fevzi, on the other hand, said that what he did was only to say the orders of Sharia and that the explanation he expected should be based on religious primary sources, insisting that he could not be accused of being a backward and a seditious because he defended religion. It seems he subtly wanted to save himself and overwhelm the other side by involving the mufti, who had good relations with the government. Therefore, he urged them to ask Mufti the judgment of playing a theater and playing an instrument in a scholarly institution located between mosques and masjids.[213] According to the newspaper administration, the play, in which prayers were imitated, was not only offensive in religion, but also against the law and could require punishment.[214] Hakem chose to protest and tried to isolate Maşrık by gathering the signatures of more than a hundred people from the military, ulema and bureaucracy in Konya.[215]

As Vahdeti previously emphasized in Volkan, the conservative ulema group around Maşrık in Konya was careful about positioning itself as progressive. Probably as a part of this endevaours, the religious-puritan interest in economic progress seems to be evident in Maşrık articles as well. Conservative ulema group in Konya declared that they were pro-free market economy. They opposed the state printing house in Konya which they claimed to have poor quality services but holding the market at its hands. For them, this was due to the pro-CUP circles within the city who imposed sanction on the publishing house of Maşrık. This situation was identified as an obstacle for the principle of competition in an ideal market economy. Maşrık claimed

[212] Gençler Tiyatro Heyeti, “Hala mı İğfal”, *Hakem*, n.29, (27 Haziran 1325-11 June 1909), 3.
[213] Paşadairesi’nden Abdullah, “Tiyatro Heyetinden İstifar”, *Maşrık-ı Irfan,* n.34, (15 June 1909), 3.
[214] Abdullah, “Tiyatro Heyetinden İstifar”, 4.
[215] *Hakem*, n.32, (10 Temmuz 1325- 25 July 1909), 2.

that they were deliberately boycotted despite the fact that they were a reasonable alternative thanks to the cheaper cost and higher quality papers they offered.

In this context, some religious authorities who said that trade should not be done on Fridays and be spent with worship were opposed and the importance of trade was emphasized, referring the economical aims of the conservative ulema in addition to political ones.[216] In accordance with the self-description as being progressives a certain author described his dream of Konya as follows: a city whose streets are free from dust, and whose wide streets are decorated with large trees and are illuminated. Mines were unearthed there, forests were grown, factories were established and farms were built, descriptions illustrating the religious interest in material progress.[217] Such kind of 'progresses' in the religious and economic spheres that were expected from the constitutional era were still not at sight in their eyes. Some authors started to write about the fact that they did never benefit from the constitution yet.[218] They quoted some ordinary citizens who started to question what progress the state and society have shown since the revolution. According to Maşrık, those among citizens who said that "if the oppression continued, roads and trams would be built much more than today, a new budget would be found for, for instance, the School of Industry and the School of Law", increased.[219] Maşrık could now find reasons for opposition on various related or unrelated issues.

In addition to the failure to achieve economic progress, they were annoyed by the news that the parliament would be suspended without the legal arrangements they

[216] Meğreli Rıza," Maşrık-ı Irfan Gazetesinde Görülmüştür", *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol.3, n.77, 13 September 1910): 1492. (1481-1496)
[217] M.B, "Hâtıra-yı Mevkufiyetim", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.38, (29 July 1909), 2.
[218] Seydişehirli Zeki, "Biz Meşrutiyetten Bir Şey Anlamadık", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.29, 28 June 1909), 1.
[219] "Ümit Bir Noktada Kaldı", *Anadolu*, n.38, (1 Kanun-ı Sani 1324- 24 January 1909), 59.

waited for and led them to protest.[220] This disturbance reflected on parliament, Zeynelabidin Efendi gave an interpellation in the parliament about the amount of the wealth of Abdülhamid II captured in Yıldız and raised his voice in the parliament illustrating his distrust to the investigation committee for plunder in Yıldız.[221]

What the Unionist government, which constantly postponed the Mecelle bill, was trying to do became clear when Count Ostrorog was appointed as an advisor to the Ministry of Justice. The committee wanted to secularize the code, such as family law, and there was a high presumption that it desired to gather Sharia courts under the secular Nizamiye courts.When the rearranging of Mecelle bill came to the parliament, the Unionists left the parliament due to their undeclared policy, and the issue was dropped from the agenda of the parliament as a sufficient number of deputies was not collected.[222] It was not a coincidence that the Maşrık numbers tended to return the tough opposition stance again. Maşrık opposed accusations of being Volkanists and reactionaries, also proudly emphasized that the movement was of ulema and jurists "who were heirs to the prophet and that knew the secrets of the Sharia".[223] According to the Maşrık, the ink shed by the ulema was as important as the blood shed by the martyrs in defending Islam.[224]

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[220], "Mebuslarımıza", *Maşrık-ı İrfân*, n.38, (16 Temmuz 1325 29 June 1909), 3.
[221] Zeynelabidin Efendi, "Yıldız Sarayında Bulunan Evrak ve Nukûd ve Zîkıymet Eşyalar Hakkında İstizah Takriri", *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi 1st Term Journal*, (16 Haziran 1325- 19 Haziran 1909)
[222]Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 128.
[223] "Bir köpek gavgale çatmak istiyor, irticayı kullanıyor, Aceb göğsünde zerrece iman olan merd, razı olmaz mı etmeye bu melaneti red, … ,İfsâd ise bu melâneti yapmağa derler, Volkancılık elbet külah kapmağa derler, Herkes bilir elbet kim yapıyor burada külahı, Kimler çıkarır dîde-yi mazlumdan âhı, …, Zil zurna gezer bilmeli o Volkancı olanlar, Hırsızlara müsavi bulunur böyle yılanlar, Bilmez ne imiş secde-yi rahmâni bu zümre, …, Ey la 'ab-ı mîrâc-ı hüda, zümre-yi eşrâr, Ey düşmen-i ilmiye Hakem! Mefsedet-i âsâr, Volkancıların hasmı biziz cümlece malum, … Kurân ile Volkan'ı ayıramaz mısın sen, …, Biz hâmil-i mişkât-ı nübüvvet ulemayız, Biz sâlik-i menhâc-ı hüda merd-i garibiz, Biz mutemed-i avn-i huda ferd u acîbiz, biz kâmi-yi efkâr-ı sefahet üdebayız, biz vâkıf-ı esrâr-ı Şeriat fukahayız…", *in* Mehmed Burhaneddin, "Âsâ-yı Musa", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 45, (23 August 1909), 1.
[224] Hafız Hüseyin, "Ulema-yı İslam'ın Mevki-i Siyasisi", *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol.7, n.159, (20 May 1912), 2812.

For the famous Egyptian Islamist Rashid Rida, who was in Istanbul at that time and observed the divisions within the religious establishment, the strategy of the CUP was simple: to bring the Unionist scholars to critical positions in the Meşihat, and to attract more scholars and students to the side of the community through this move.[225] The CUP was aware of the importance of men of religion in shaping the perceptions and decisions of the countryside people, so the students and preachers related to the Cemiyet-i İlmiye were prevented from preaching in mosques, and they were not allowed to depart for *cerr* which meant preaching and leading prayers during the three holy months of Islam in which madrasa students took part and generated some income in the Muslim towns and villages in the countryside.

With an announcement published simultaneously in the Beyanul Hak and Maşrık-ı İrfan, Cemiyet-i İlmiye announced that the students were asked for credentials, that such a demand of document was never practiced until now, and that this treatment was a "hateful" thing that was not seen even in the ancien regime.[226] It is really striking to regard that the Society used in the declaration this time the term Cemiyet-i İlmiye-yi "*Siyasiye*"-yi İslamiye implying political challenge posed by their ideologies in a time existing political means proved to be useless for their expectations.

The struggle of the societies in Istanbul also continued in Konya. Maşrık's previous corruption allegations against Mehmed Tevfik Efendi, a CUP official in Konya were countered by Hakem. The Unionists waged a campaign with similar accusations towards Mehmed Burhaneddin Efendi, Maşrık's editor, which resulted with firing of Burhaneddin from his office in local government by the pro-CUP

[225] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions, and Politics", 130.
[226] "Cemiyet-i Siyasiyye-yi İlmiyye-yi İslamiye Beyannamesi", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.47, (30 August 1909), 2.

governor of Konya. Maşrık declared that the family of Burhaneddin was left hungry and miserable "just because he was a good investigative reporter", and that the Governor Pasha was doing unfairness by firing Burhaneddin from his public service, while acquitting Mehmed Tevfik and specifying that threats from non-official but local agents of the CUP were allowed to come against them.[227] Maşrık had been forced to publish a denial about Kazım and Mehmed Tevfik Efendis, the writers of Unionist Konya and Hakem newspapers, for which it had previously published allegations, but after these obliged declarations, Maşrık still did not refrain from repeating its claims either. According to these allegations, Kazım intervened illegally in the elections of the provincial council and, with the support he obtained there, cleared out himself from the charges that he had received an illegal salary for eighteen years and earned an income from the fourth office.[228] Maşrık said that even if Burhaneddin was guilty, it had nothing to do with this civil institution, whereas "those they accused" referring to Tevfik were "still in offices and remained related to the Committee". In fact, they were right about the double standard shown by local government as the governor of Konya felt hatred for the conservative ulema movement challenging his authority.

The governor of Konya wrote a report to Talat Pasha, the minister of internal affairs, in which he demanded judging some members of the Maşrık in the Court of War in Istanbul by claiming that they provoked people with demanding application of the Sharia. This report was almost a confession, it was told that Tevfik Efendi changed the members of the investigation commission and cleared out any trace of the abuses. As the governor emphasized, the blacksmith Mehmed Efendi, one of the

[227] "Bir Emr-i Hayra Teşebbüs", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.56 (17 Eylül 1325-30 September 1909), 1.
[228] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.77, (20 December 1909), 3-4.

prominent members of this "opposition party", came directly to the governor and said that the "nation" did not want to see Tevfik in an official duty and implied menacingly that they knew that there were also “irregularities” during the repair project in the government building. The governor was writing that they invited people to revolt with the notices they put up on the walls in the market to inform the public. The Pasha looked worried about these activities and specified that what needed to be done was to seem not to care much about “their seditious activities” but to prevent the development of this “overly ambitious and daring opposition party”. He told Talat Pasha that “these opposing trouble makers” will not be limited to Konya but will also spread to wider areas. He specified that exposure of violence within the framework of law in the face of this threat should have been considered a reasonable option. The Pasha may have been right in his suggestion on the movement’s expansionist policy; just at that time, Maşrık announced that it was looking for reporters in the surrounding provinces and districts.[229] Nevertheless, the fact that the movement had its own safe box and collected aid for the facilities also aroused the Governor's concern, illustrating the devotion of the participants in the movement.[230] The voice in the advertisement posted on the walls in the bazaar had invited the people to take action against “those who committed corruption” and “that invaded the Municipality”, committing “sins” that did not comply with the Sharia and Constitutionalism.[231]

[229] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.68, (16 November, 1909), 4.
[230] BOA. DH. MUİ. 43-51-04,(15 Zilkade 1327, 18 November 1909).
[231] BOA. DH. MUİ. 43-51-05 and 06,(15 Zilkade 1327, 18 November 1909).

2.5 Organization in the field of education: *Islâh-ı Medâris-i İslâmiye*

It is said to be that the province of Konya (including Antalya, Isparta, etc.) was the region with the highest number of madrasas (576) in the empire and had twice as many madrasas than its closest rival, Istanbul (278).[232] Even though this probably exaggerated account belongs to an *'alim* from the region who could be expected to use it as a source of pride (without specifying what kind of madrasas these were), it still acknowledges why the first civil reform movement of the madrasas emerged from Konya, even before the expected governmental project initiated.

In September 30, 1909, the founding members of the Maşrık declared that they would gather for opening a reformed madrasa on the former place of Bekirsami Paşa Nakshibandi lodge-madrasa which was administrated by Zeynelabidin, Ziya and Rıfat brothers.[233] After reiterating the importance of madrasas in the training of Sharia scholars, Ziya talked about philosophers, doctors and mathematicians trained in madrasahs in the past centuries, implying that the reform activity they started aimed more than training religious scholars, at least in theory. For this purpose, three scholars brought together their own libraries and had a library built in the newly reformed madrasa, having books in various topics, not limited to religion.[234] The old building of the madrasa was also demolished and rebuilt, and instead of the old cell system, large classrooms like those in schools were preferred. In the Regulations of the Madrasa Association, it was stated explicitly that absentee records were vital, emphasizing that discipline would have been kept at a very high level, whereas students were provided with salary and accommodation. Students would only be

[232] Ermenekli Mustafa Safvet, "Medreselerimiz III", *Beyânü'l Hak*, v.4, n.92 (9 January 1911), 1731-733. (1725-1740)
[233] "Bir Emr-i Hayra Teşebbüs", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, 1.
[234] Arabacı, *Konya Medreseleri*, 495.

taken by exam, and quotas would be very limited.[235] Unlike classical madrasas and similar to those in schools, a new agent, a principal, entered the relationship between student and teacher in Islah-ı Medaris, shaping a new way of 'alim-suhte relationship.

The movement looked for an origin from past and developed some tactics to encourage the public and students for the legality of this formation. The world globe presented by Ali Kuşçu to Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror was acquired by the madrasa administration, and ancient Islamic manuscripts such as Sullemu'ul Eflâk about astronomy which was said to be brought from India were exhibited in the madrasa. Using his connections as a member of parliament, Zeynelabidin Efendi was able to reserve for his own madrasa some of the educational equipment brought by the Ministry of Education from Europe for the Teacher Schools.[236]

Despite the excitement and revolutionary rhetoric, the aim of the madrasa seems to be limited to respond to those who attacked the religion by using "the language of the age". Thus, traditionalist reformers thought they were just armed with "the enemy's weapon" to show that religion was not an obstacle to progress "just as old scholars benefitted from philosophy to reply philosophical attacks."[237] These are probably the elements that show the nature of the conservative reformism , which was limited in its scale of reformation and aimed just to raise capable men of religion against modernist attacks. As Ziya Efendi gave a clue for it, conservative reformism was fueled by the fear that reform would not be made sensibly, and thanks

[235] Arabacı, Ibid., 509.
[236] BOA. MF. İBT. 291-37., (H.21-11-1328- 24 November 1910).
[237] "Konya Islah-ı Medaris Talebesinin Nutku", *Beyanu'l Hak*, vol.4 , n.102 , (7 Mart 1327-19 March 1911), 1901. via Arabacı, *Konya Medreseleri*, 499.

to this fear, they took the lead in reforming madrasa in the empire, even before the CUP's madrasa reform projects.[238]

To prove that the madrasa was in line with popular reform demand, it had to include some applications of which one that the movement fell upon and almost fetishized was the success in language teaching, which was the most criticized issue by the opponents of the madrasas. Instead of teaching Arabic with traditional ways in amsila and bina, the Berlitz method was adopted with modern sources, forcing students to speak only Arabic in the madrasa under the supervision of a qualified Arabic teacher, Ömer Lütfi Efendi, a graduate of Al-Azhar in Egypt, that was the heart of Sunni global ulama.

On the other hand, French lessons were added to the curriculum, given by an Armenian lecturer. The inclusion of the French in the madrasa program was probably not welcomed by some stricter conservative circles in Konya. Therefore, the newspaper of the madrasa followed an interesting method to address these concerns, and the importance of having a foreign language lesson in a madrasa was written down by Arabzade Costas, a Greek lawyer from Konya. According to Costas, the most critical capital one must have was knowledge. He says even if the Spaniards once had the largest gold mines in the world, the development of the British in education showed what was more important, as in these days little England directing a China of 300 million, while Spain suffer misery. He urged the disturbed people that teaching a foreign language would bring this needed knowledge that would aid this nation in the global arena.[239]

[238] Kurucu, *Hatıralar*, 171.
[239] Arabzade Kosti, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.64, (2 November 1909), 2.

Attention given to language education was not limited to Arabic and French. Using his personal contacts, Zeynelabidin Efendi transferred Ahmed Kemal Efendi, an Islamist journalist and Turkish literature teacher who was active in Izmir and Manisa, to Konya as a teacher at the madrasa and the new lead author of Maşrık-ı İrfan.[240] This transfer would probably be encouraging for the madrasah students who were expected to write for the newspaper.

With the coming of Ahmed Kemal, Zeynelabidin was probably trying to acquire the movement a more global and broader perspective. Ahmed Kemal had a more refined idea of progress and trying to clarify what to do for the future without remaining in the rhetoric eventually. He shared the idea that the Japanese experience of modernization was an ideal guide for Ottoman progress, a popular point of admiration among Muslim Ottoman intellectuals in the early twentieth-century. However, he also reminded the public of the dire fate of imperial China, illustrating that his expectations for change were fed by fear rather than hope. So, Kemal recalled the motto of "rules change with the change of time" in the Mecelle as an unavoidable need, targeting strictly conservative circles in Konya.[241] According to Ahmed Kemal, the good morality that would keep billions of different peoples living side by side was also a part of the Sharia. From this globalist point of view, he made an inference similar to nationalism, a term which conservative ulema circles in Konya did not value much and were not so familiar with, too. He acknowledged that “national manners” necessitate why every nation should experience its own religious upbringing and should not be like another, which was the foremost need to provide

[240] Ahmed Kemal, “Islah-ı Medaris Hakkında Birkaç Söz”, *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.65, (4 November 1909), 1.
[241] Ahmed Kemal, “Makale-yi Mahsusa”, *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.66, (8 November 1909), 3.

peace and harmony in the world, proving its strength with attendance of "each respected identities".[242]

According to news in Maşrık, such bold discourses caused some rumors among some muderrises in Konya about the new madrasa due to "inconveniences" that emerged from the History lessons. Ahmed Kemal said that he could not make sense of some criticisms that amounted to takfir (declaring someone heretic) due to History lessons in which students learnt the reasons for the fall of past civilizations. "If they were afraid of reading it from 'enemies', actually that was also needed to learn, there were ours' too". He specified that "History shows do's and don'ts on the road to progress" and was necessarily Islamic as "Hadith tradition operated centuries ago similar to modern discipline of History".[243]

Regarding available materials, Islah-ı Medaris in Konya made a name for itself both in Istanbul and Konya since it was the first realized rehabilitation project of madrasas that had been thought for decades. Making donations to the madrasa once or every month in the form of dues suddenly became a matter of prestige in Konya. It turned into a race in which prominent merchants, scholars and bureaucrats attended. As the project owners, the male members of the Sheikh family in the line of their ages, Kudsi, Zeynelabidin, Ziya and Rıfat efendis, were first to donate. They were written down on the top of the list, published and renewed in every number of Maşrık, illustrating new donators to honor them. Donators were not just from the city center; notables, scholars and merchants from the districts of Konya and surrounding provinces were also so visible. Sheikh of Mevlana Lodge, Çelebi Efendi and other Mevlevi, Kadiri and Nakşi elders were among the donors, even though there was a

[242] Ahmed Kemal, "Mebahis-i İctimaiye", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.67, (11 November 1909), 2.
[243] Ahmed Kemal, "Bend-i Mahsus, Tarihin Ehemmiyeti", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.73, (6 December 1909), 3.

decades-long tension among Mevlevis and Nakshibandis in the city, which not surprisingly would deteriorate in the near future.

Serious donations were received from Istanbul, and some ulema members of the parliament such as Mustafa Sabri Efendi of Tokat, Asım Efendi from Istanbul and Hayri Efendi from Niğde contributed.[244] Among these names, it could be supposed that Mustafa Sabri's share was quite normal due to his close relationship with Zeynelabidin Efendi. It is known that he even sent his son to Konya to study at that madrasa, despite the astonishments over why a son of an ulama went to the countryside from the capital of the caliphate for receiving Islamic education.[245] However, the support of Asım, who took a neutral attitude towards the Unionists, and the support of Hayri Efendi, who would become Şeyhülislam in cooperation with the CUP, shows that the formation received support from ulema of various stances. Despite the fights between Konya CUP and Maşrık in the local media, Talat and Cavid Beys visited Konya and did not reflect the tension. They made donations (1080 kurus each) to the madrasa, whose amount was measured probably according to their high bureaucratic positions and were exactly twice that of Zeynelabidin Efendi (540).

Despite this temporal positive mood, it is needed to focus on the aims and experiences of Ahmed Kemal during his participation in the movement to understand the political direction of the initiative in near future. First of all, his place of origin and his previous facilities must be considered. Kemal had already an experience of Islamist activism as he published *Islam and Ulum* in Manisa. He preached Islamic constitutionalism and searched cures for the problems of the Ottoman Empire and

[244] "İaneler", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.80, (6 January 1910), 3-4.
[245] İsmail Bilgili, "Osmanlı Son Dönemi Nitelikli Din Adamı Yetiştirme Projesinin Bir Örneği Olarak 'Konya Islah-ı Medâris-i İslâmiye' Medresesi, 68.

tried to familiarize people of Izmir and Manisa about the greater Islamic world which the West already invaded, presented lessons to be learnt by Ottomans. One of these "lessons" was Islamic activism, which manifested itself in educational volunteering. He encouraged madrasa students in the countryside of Manisa, who had never encountered any press activity before, to write in the newspaper and tried to announce the problems of the madrasas deprived of any governmental support for decades. Kemal played an important role in the establishment and activities of the *Şems-i Hakikat* Madrasah Students Association in Manisa.[246] The fact that a madrasa newspaper was established in an Anatolian city, even before Maşrık-ı İrfan was started to operate, probably caught Zeynelabidin Efendi's attention. Ahmed Kemal had no strong backing, and after financial inabilities led to the closure of *İslam ve Ulum*, he accepted the personal invitation of Zeynelabidin and moved to Konya.

As stated before, Ahmed Kemal would empower the movement for crossing the borders of Konya and acquire a vision for the madrasa students in the countryside. As a resident and journalist in Izmir, a port city with global connections, he already had the needed experience and background for familiarizing madrasa circles with international developments. Just as he did in Islam and Ulum, he made translations from Egyptian Islamist thinkers Ferid Vecdi and Muhammed Abduh. He tried to present them to the ulema in Konya, many of whom would probably have not pleased with these people's 'broader' and braver reformism.[247]

Various news from Muslim community associations in America, England and France started to find a place in Maşrık thanks to Ahmed Kemal. He investigated multiple theories about evolution, not religiously afraid of spreading them to the

[246] "Manisa Talebe-i Ulum Şems-i Hakikat Cemiyeti", *İslam ve Ulum*, n.9, (19 Kanun-ı Sani 1324- 1 February 1909), 71-72. (65-73)
[247] Ahmed Kemal, "İfade-i Mahsusa", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.62, (25 October 1909), 1.

masses, and expressed his opinions on what an Islamic perspective should have been in these issues. He sought rational answers to modernist objections that accuse the Biblical stories and the Qur'an of being unscientific.[248] To him, knowing God and introducing him in a reasonable way came first of all. Only by solving misconceptions in perceiving god which dictated to Muslims to empower themselves in the Islamic "science" of recognizing Allah (*marifetullah*), "the artificial walls built between modern schools and madrasas", which fashioned the former as the representative of the rationale and the latter as of the religion would be demolished. In that manner, he admired the works of the famous 'alim Hussain al Jisri on this subject and said that such works should be taught in schools by multiplying to gain the new educated generations who were on the brink of losing faith in Islam.[249]

Probably by targeting those who were not pleased with the first-year curriculum of the Islah-ı Medaris, which was exclusively non-theological, Kemal mentioned the necessity and potential of the madrasa to train versatile Muslim missionaries which would operate in Japan, Australia and Africa due to the fact that traditional ulema profile deprived of "preaching outside of the country".[250] İbrahim Hakkı Konyalı, a student of the reformed madrasa at that time, narrates the enthusiasm for sending students to England where they would receive further language education and would become Muslim missionaries.[251] According to Kemal, the way the Spartans raised their children should be exemplified, so gymnastics, sports and food were necessary for raising resilient people.[252] Ahmed Kemal's

[248] Ahmed Kemal, "Bend-i Mahsus", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 74 (9 December 1909), 1.
[249] Ahmed Kemal, "Mektebliler- Medreseliler", n.79, (3 January 1910), 1.
[250] Ahmed Kemal, "Hocalarımız Harice Tebliğ-i Ahkam Edemiyor!", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 84, (20 January 1910), 1.
[251] İbrahim Hakkı Konyalı, "Konya'da İslam Üniversitesi Islah-ı Medaris-i İslamiye", *Yeni Asya*, (8 April 1973)
[252] Ahmed Kemal, "Çocuklarımızı Merârât-ı Hayata Alıştırmalıyız", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.90, (10 February 1910), 1.

enthusiasm for Islamic missionary was manifested at home in the form of fighting foreign missionaries. He had written an anti-missionary booklet in Manisa, resulted in Greek grievances to the state. He rejected Christian identifications of Jesus by using Islamic acknowledgements derived from Rahmetullah Al-Hindi's discussions with Christian priests, circulating among global Islamist intelligentsia at the turn of the century.[253]

Even though internationalist identification with Islamic ummah was evident in Ahmed Kemal, he had a national consciousness too, which illustrated itself as preserving the Turkish language in the face of centuries-old influences of Arabic and Persian. According to him, Turkish would welcome their vocabulary only if they fit into Turkish accent and acquire Turkish characteristics, just as French did to words of other language origins.[254] In an environment, Arabic was accepted as sacred and men of the religion were glad to have Arabic influences in Turkish, this approach was somewhat extraordinary, which reveals greater ideological split of conflicting Islamic discourses at that time. Therefore, as expected, writing about the importance of Arabic in Turkish "due the fact that Arabic consisted the half of it" was soon observed in Maşrık.[255] Ahmed Kemal then wrote an article on the importance of Arabic for the communication of the 300 million ummah, confirming those possibly disturbed.[256] Shortly after Ahmed Kemal departs from the movement, Zeynelabidin Efendi would once again reaffirm the conservative ulema conception of nationalism by emphasizing that Islam is above nationalism.[257] Although it was announced in *Maşrık* that Ahmed Kemal returned to Manisa due to the death of his brother, the

[253] Yenişehirli Ahmed Kemal, *Beyanul Hak*, (İzmir: Agopyan Matbaası, 10 March 1910).
[254] Ahmet Kemal, "Mebâhis-i İctimâiye), *Maşrık-ı Irfan,* n.67, (11 November 1909), 2.
[255] Mustafa Şükrü, "Mektebler ve Programlar Hakkında Merciinden Temenniyâtım", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, 6 January 1910), 3.
[256]Ahmed Kemal, "Mekteb-i Umumiyemizde Arapça Tahsili", Maşrık-ı Irfan, n.95, (February 1910).
[257] Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.152, (3 October 1910), 1-2.

discomfort felt at this departure by the newspaper administration and the congratulations written by the Unionist Hakem to Ahmed Kemal may indicate that Ahmed Kemal probably had an ideological dispute with the conservative ulema group in Konya as above-mentioned ideological points of divisions in their Islamic understandings indicated too.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the organizational efforts of the conservative ulema group in Konya and its intellectual origins were examined. The conservative ulema took a more defensive-inclined stance in the definition of some concepts like liberty, constitution and Sharia, although they also embraced common modern Islamic discourses and engaged with modern Islamic rationalizations within the boundaries of the modern Islamicate culture. Conservative ulema concerns about the future of the madrasa, their fears over that Sharia would not be formally defined in a tradition-oriented way, and many novel practices that they defined as secularization, led them to organize in politics, press and education as a social movement. The suitable environment provided by Konya for the development of this movement and the specific agency provided by the Sheikh family for the formation of such a movement are important in terms of showing the conservative way of reform. It can be said that Islah-ı Medaris, which appears as the first reformed madrasa in the Ottoman lands in modern times, emerged from the conservative group, exemplifying the traditionalist creativity in Hudgsonian terms shown for the sake of preserving the tradition.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the political agenda of the Conservative ulema movement in Konya and their opposition to the CUP. Considering that the ulama could only take a submissive position in the CUP establishment, they decided to found their own party. So, The Conservative ulema around Ahali Party could propagate an ideal ulema politician profile who would check the governments in the name of religion, acting with a sense of religious duty. The experiences of the representatives of the Conservative ulema in Konya, from the establishment of the Ahali Party, to the conservative participation in the Liberal Entente and the years of WWI, were tried to be revealed by tracing them in micro-historical examples. This chapter is noteworthy because it tries to reflect the marginalization of some members of the movement due to failed parliamentary politics and warfront experiences. Therefore, it constitutes a preparatory phase for the understanding of next chapter and the next years of the movement in chronological order.

3.2 The political organization of the movement: the establishment of Ahali Party and the conservative ulema politics

The first months of 1910 witnessed the ulema's party formation efforts, who had no hope of being active in the CUP for a long time. The establishment of the Ahali Party with the intense participation of the ulama and its guidance by this group seems to have caused the secularist historiography to misinterpret this party, which was

prejudiced against the existence of ulama in politics by labelling Ahali as necessarily conservative and "monarchist plotters".[258] Establishing a connection for Ahali with the Liberal Ahrars was a misunderstanding probably stemming from their later participation within the Liberal Entente coalition. However, it was a fact that the party did not host any minority members and was founded by CUP-origin MPs instead of those of Ahrar origin.

Contrary to the claims of Aykut Kansu, the Constitutionalism of the People's Party (Ahali) was indisputable, and even their opposition to the CUP was built on the claim that the latter acted against the constitution. Actually, those accusations of being anti-constitutionalists were directed against them at the time of their first organization too, linking them to rebels of the 31 March incident and the Muhammedan Union. Maybe related to that, Ahali tried to prove its commitment even more than the CUP by parliamentary work. For instance, Mustafa Sabri, who could be counted as the co-president of the party, proposed that the Senate must be abolished as the parliament existed as the representative of "those who chose", not of "those who appointed".[259] In another opportunity, Ahali demanded the taxation of the palaces and kiosks of the Sultan like any other citizen.[260] It positioned itself as the voice of villagers. For instance, it proposed that the budget should be used for more necessary tasks, such as distributing the water from Lake Beyşehir to the agricultural lands of the surrounding villages around channels headed to Konya.[261]

[258] For one example of such perceptions see Aykut Kansu, *İttihadcıların Rejim ve İktidar Mücadelesi,* 218.
[259] Mustafa Akdağ, "Ahali Fırkası", 118.
[260] Akdağ, "Ahali Fırkası", 116.
[261] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, 1/2, 97 İctima; 12 Mayıs 1326, 1853-1854. (19 Mayıs 1326- 1 June 1910).

The party program had many items that showed them as “true” representatives of the ulema and dissociating them from liberals concerning political priorities, contrary to Kansu's association of them under one classification as "monarchists".[262] They accepted the free-market economy in theory but with a strong emphasis on the workers and villagers, prioritizing a certain kind of Islamic egalitarianism. The Konya branch of the party, as MP Hacı Mustafa Efendi specified, positioned itself as the voice of the villagers who were crushed by heavy taxes.[263] Reform of the madrasas was another distinguishing part of their agendas that would eventually pull the attention of the CUP, leading it to initiate its own reform project. In connection with the rehabilitation of madrasas, they also demanded autonomy in the administration of foundations which would be found absolutely unacceptable by the CUP. Considering the country's demographic structure, the rights of ethno-religious communities to have education in their own language were respected. It was stated that Turkish would be strengthened, but it was also noted that Arabic would be given particular importance, an agenda on the contrary to other political circles.[264]

Some ulema’s support for the CUP was one of the most disturbing things to the conservative ulema opposition to the government. It infuriated them that their proposals, which they put forward in the parliamentary debate as a proper perspective of Islam and Sharia, were answered with Islamic arguments by pro-CUP ulema MPs in the parliament. Mustafa Sabri accused Sayyid Bey, known for his reformist fiqh understanding, of not being a proper scholar by stating that he could not become an ulama by wearing only an ilmiye dress.

[262] Akdağ, “Ahali Fırkası”, 132.
[263] Hacı Mustafa Efendi, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.144, (25 August 1910), 2.
[264] Ahali Fırkasının Programıdır”, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.106, (7 April 1910), 2-3.

The establishment of the Ahali Party seemingly has created more political confusion in the local politics of Konya than in the capital. Protest telegrams were sent to the Hakem newspaper by the Union and Progress clubs in the center and districts of Konya against the Ahali Party. These protest telegrams claimed that those who left the CUP betrayed the idea of constitutionalism by "breaking unity" that the country needed in "those hard times". Signature of the document by the mayor of the city Ali Rıza, Mawlavi Sheikh Adil and Mufti Ahmed, "who were supposed to be neutral for party politics," enraged Maşrık-ı Irfan the most. The claim of the Mufti that thousands of people signed this petition was found unbased. For Maşrık, Mufti, "without being embarrassed from his age over eighty", was striving to obtain MP candidacy from the CUP, which he applied before but failed. The newspaper implied even the rise of Mufti to this post was political, and his Islamically wrong fatwas he addressed recently was proving its incapability and subservience to the party, whereas he should have been "a servant of Sharia" due to this post.[265] In fact, these recent fatwas did not have political content and had an unusual interpretation of inheritance law regarding the rights of the nephews of the deceased. This document was suddenly carried to the political plane by Maşrık for illustrating the incapability of the Mufti, and Hakem immediately declared that the Mufti did not prepare such a fatwa and that a conspiracy was organized.[266]

The new form of protest against Maşrık by the CUP Konya was to buy newspapers and just return them after a time to distributers to prevent them from reaching the public.[267] The CUP was using the local bureaucracy against the Ahali Party and Maşrık that gladly declared itself the voice of this party. Post office

[265] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 98, (10 March 1910), 2.
[266] "Tebyîn-i Hakikat", *Hakem*, via *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.98, (10 March 1910), 3.
[267] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.104, (31 March 1910).

officials were causing difficulties in delivering Maşrıks to its subscribers, specifically those in the towns of Konya.[268]

Finally, Zeynelabidin Efendi started writing articles in response to the oppressions on the movement and the propaganda against him. He first replied to the article in Hakem, which previously addressed the masses who followed Zeynelabidin Efendi. Hakem claimed that the Ahali party program did not contain any differences from the CUP program and that their separation was all about political ambitions. Against these, the Sheikh emphasized that organizing associations was a legal right, and it was impossible to oppose it in the name of "civilization" and "democracy".[269] In addition, the similarity of their programs in other matters was not because they imitated CUP, but because CUP was no longer aiming those values, which was the reason for this divergence.[270]

The famous hadith "there is peace-mercy in the disputes among my ummah", which was generally used to legitimize oppositions with Islamic argumentation, was used by Zeynelabidin too. He claimed that they advocated genuine liberty against oppression. The difference was not limited to this; he stated that his views on protecting the rights of the provinces and education are some of these differences.[271] The People's Party, unlike the CUP, did not have a strong centralized administration, providing the conservatives with a convenient opportunity to emphasize their locality to attract the Konya people. Zeynelabidin always stressed that he was from Konya and that Ali Kemali Efendi, one of the leading ulama rivals from the CUP, was from Sivas, implying an inevitable lack of care embedded in Kemali for the defense of the

[268] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.111, (25 April 1910).
[269] Konya Mebusu Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.141, 11 August 1910), 1.
[270] Konya Mebusu Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-Irfan*, n. 143, (22 Ağustos 1910), 3.
[271] Konya Mebusu Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.141, 11 August 1910), 2.

interests of the city.[272] Zeynelabidin Efendi seemingly predicted the near future, justifying Mustafa Sabri's praise for his "farsightedness". He wrote in 1910 that "such a massive attack on a small party would never frighten him", but "it raised his concerns about possible corruptions in the upcoming elections as these power holders would never want to lose it", and "they allied with the public servicemen to hold it forever". He admitted that he had not really trusted them from the very beginning. Now he could declare that he expected everything from them, including "dungeons" and "executions", but did not hesitate to stand for his cause.[273] He was complaining that while it was considered unlawful for him, who was MP, to exercise a right that stems from the constitution, it must be asked whether it is lawful for Mevlevi elders and some muderrises to act against him by uniting with civil servants.[274] Maşrık was also said that "it was no problem for his ulema to do politics when they were CUP member; 'for some reason', now it became a problem".[275]

According to the politician Sheikh, some of his opponents claimed that even in France, "the cradle of democracy", a multiparty system could only be formed 100 years after the revolution, referring that the existence of many parties was "luxurious" for the Ottoman Empire. He was pretty confident about his influence in Konya and replied that they did not want to remain as a small and "problematic" party and that they would come to power in the near future by Allah's will, saying that they would not be one who broke "the unity" in that case.[276]

[272] Konya Mebusu Zeynelabidin, "Hakem Gazetesi'nin 107 Numerolu Nüshasına Cevaptır", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.150 (22 Eylül 1910), 3.
[273] Konya Mebusu Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.152, (3 October 1910), 3.
[274] Konya Mebusu Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.143, (22 August 1910),
[275] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 236, (23 October 1911), 1.
[276] "Hakem Gazetesi'nin 107 Numaralı Nüshasına Cevaptır", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n. 150, (22 September 1910), 2.

These discussions continued for weeks, and Zeynelabidin Efendi himself continued to write answers to the objections against him. However, as the Maşrık numbers are mostly missing, we lack an essential resource for understanding the political experiences of the movement. The last issue available from this discussion, in which Zeynelabidin's answer was published, responded to the "contemptuous allusions" about the possibility and sustainability of his positions as Sheikh, mudarris and an ambitious politician. For Hakem, an *alim* knew religion, but to be a proper politician having knowledge of the political and social sciences was must. Thus it set a place for ulema outside of the politics, repeating the argument which was indeed the core reason for the break of the conservatives.[277]

Zeynelabidin Efendi was vigilantly carrying the Hakem's accusations to an Islamic ground that could not be objected too much in the context of that era. "As those who oppose his political engagements did not know the content and extend of the Islamic sciences" he claimed, they were supposing that he would be inadequate, but he claimed he had the essence of all sciences as a scholar of Islam. As it would be examined further in the political activism of Zeynelabidin in the Liberal Entente, the most considerable element of his political understanding was intervening to and checking government. He felt as "a guardian of the religion" whose mission was to check those who want to "overcome" the religion. For him, religion was not just about preaching, struggle against, for instance, "those who lavishly benefit from all taxes without paying any taxes", was one of the multiple faces of such an opposition.

[277] Zeynelabidin, *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.152, (3 October 1910), 4.

3.3 Agenda of the conservative ulema of Konya in the Ottoman parliament

The exemption of madrasa students from military service after the incident in 1892 had increased the population of the madrasa unusually. This situation reduced the madrasahs' quality and fed the hostile perception in the military developed against the madrasa and the ulema. Konya was one of the places that felt most the effects of this debate with its massive population of madrasa students. According to a report written by the local military commander in the town of Sille in Konya, all 160 people who had their turn for military service in the town were registered as madrasah students, as they were absent in the classes and working in the market or on farms.[278] Another commander from Ereğli county of Konya claimed that 500 out of 700 madrasa students registered in his area of responsibility were illiterate.[279] Immediately after the declaration of the Constitution, Unionists, established bureaucracy, and ulema had agreed that madrasa students should be tested to benefit from military service exemption. According to some articles published in Maşrık, those who were actual students in Konya reported that they were ready for these exams.[280] However, disputes soon arose over the content and timing of this test. The madrasa students soon started to establish student associations and defend their interests against the government's preparation of the exam under the supervision of the military and the courses that were not included in the traditional madrasa curriculum to be asked in the exam. In the meantime, we see Zeynelabidin Efendi as a supporter of madrasa students who suspect the government's good intention. Both the ulama and the military questioned each other's good intentions; the former

[278] BOA, BEO 3263/244677 (4 safer 1326-8 Mart 1908).
[279] Cem Güldüren, "The Conscription of Religious Students", 71
[280] Niğdeli Hafız Ali, "Askerlik", Maşrık-ı Irfan, n.10, (20 April 1909), 3.

claimed that the madrasas were victimized, while the other insisted that they were favored further, even more than the Hamidian era.

After the severe madrasah student participation in the 31 March rebellion, CUP had the opportunity to implement its own examination system without further negotiating with the students. Especially after the foundation of the Ahali Party, Zeynelabidin Efendi tried to revive the conscription issue in the parliament and narrated the student grievances to fellow MPs. As he claimed, in the exemption examinations, French was being asked to students who did never take courses about it, resulting eventually in the failure in the exam and the interruption of their education.[281] Noticeably, when some of the deputies of the CUP accused Zeynelabidin Efendi of lying, even the Unionist Konya deputy Mehmet Vehbi Efendi took a stand with Zeynelabidin and showed a common ulama stance against a common problem. Zeynalabidin argued that there should be more ulama than soldiers in the delegation that would test the madrasas, saying that the current practice was evacuating madrasas and that it was even worse than the period of Abdulhamid.[282] However, these objections seem to be doomed to fail.

Low salaries of *muderris*es and financing of madrasas were other issues that Zeynelabidin Efendi brought to the parliament's agenda. According to him, the government separated the ulema in rural areas; salaries in Istanbul amounted to 2,500 kurus while rural ones were not paid more than 250. He insisted that high-paying Istanbul ulema were disconnected from the people. If the people had paid their salary, not the state, they would have served better the people from whom they earned their living. The salaries of the ulema in the provinces should at least be equal

[281] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi. vol.2, İnikad, 24, (17 Teşrin-i Evvel 1327).
[282] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi. (10 Kanun-ı Evel 1327- 23 Aralık 1911).

to teachers' salary, emphasizing that he did not want them for himself as he was making "an honest earning". The last emphasis was quick to pull the attention of the CUP members to attack Zeynelabidin for sitting at a dervish lodge and making “an honest earning”. There seemed to be no compromise even in the fact that one ulema member wanted lowered salaries for highly-paid ulama. It was emphasized that these salaries were necessary for the honor of the scholars.[283]

Another issue related to the improvement of the economic resources of the ulema was related to the Islamic foundations and their income. For many ulema, the success of the rehabilitation of madrasas and their self-functioning were also associated with this issue. However, since the Tanzimat period, governments have claimed that they have collected and allocated foundation revenues themselves and spent as written in the foundation certificate. For Zeynelabidin Efendi, this was not an Islamically rightful share as, for instance, foundations in Karaman generated an income of 51.100, which was sent to the Ministry of Foundations while a teacher in the town work for just 80 kurus monthly specifying that if the government wanted to reform madrasahs, it had to leave their traditional sources of income to them. The government ignored the madrasahs, which could not finance teachers for chemistry, cosmography, and mathematics lessons.[284] Like other inconclusive attempts, this bold proposal about the administration of foundations failed too, and the opponents were accused of betraying the Islamic world for attacking "a society that struggles to raise al-Razis again”. Mehmed Kamil insulted Zeynelabidin for having an infertile education in Konya and being overconfident for intervening in the ways of a committee consisting of members that got educated abroad.[285]

[283] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, “İlmiye Bütçesi”, vol.5, İctima,3. (30 Mart 1327), 232-269.
[284] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, vol.3 i: 36, (24 Kanun-ı Sani 1326).
[285] Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, vol.1, i:36, (2 Kanun-ı Sani 1327).

3.4 The conservative ulema participation in the Freedom and Accord Party: violent break

The last months of 1911 witnessed the establishment of the Freedom and Accord Party, in which a large group of dissatisfied people gathered under one roof against the Union and Progress. The Ahali Party, the Ottoman Democratic Party and the Mutedil Hürriyetperveran parties joined the new party acquiring it the appearance of a union of Arab, Albanian nationalists, some conservative ulema and former Unionists whose common motto was decentralization for maintaining a united Ottoman Empire. In fact, the party could be described as neither Islamist nor Turkist but contained people following these ideologies. It is seen that even the liberal progressive Rıza Tevfik, who previously attacked the ulama with accusations of the clergy, emphasized the rights of non-muslims and decentralization in a common Islamic discourse with the conservative ulema. He claimed the program for the protection of the Christian rights of the party was very Ottoman and Muslim, so they were on the way of Sheikhulislam Zenbilli Ali Efendi, who was known for his justice in state conduct towards the Ottoman Christians.[286] The presentation of a famous Ottoman ‘alim as a model and inspirer of the party's intellectual notables probably pleased the party's ulama participants. It also shows how much the group of secular intellectuals, who are the intellectual producers of the opposition party in the press, actually surrender to Islamic discourse or are willing to take advantage of it.

Therefore, immediately after the party was founded, Mustafa Sabri Efendi became the second chairman of the party, and Zeynelabidin Efendi became a member of the board of directors.[287] Although the Istanbul organization of the party seemed very cosmopolitan, the FAP politician profile in Anatolia was generally

[286] Ali Birinci, *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*,70.
[287] *Tanin*, (11 Teşrin-i Sani 1327), via Ali Birinci, Ibid., 74.

comprised of the ulema. For example, the administrative staff of the Karaman branch consisted of müderrises[288] ,while a local Rıfai sheikh carried out the opening ceremony of the Sivas branch.[289]The Konya branch of the party started its activities with an opening reflecting the opposition method of the party; a prayer ceremony was being held for the martyrs in Tripoli, by which they accused the Unionists with negligence and betrayal due to their defeats there.[290] It was said that the FAP branches in the countryside where muderrises, dervishes gathered and criticized the government from an Islamic perspective had almost turned into a mixture of club, tekke and madrasa.[291] The most significant split within the opposition party should have been over religion, but it seems that conservatives won this struggle as the ulema party members in the provinces were saying that they would not vote for anyone other than those who wear turbans.[292] That is why, in the first general election after the party was established, all five candidates for Konya were chosen from the ulema.

There are very few Maşrıks from the years of Liberal Entente that have survived to the present day, but even in these, it is clear how fierce the conflict was and turned into a struggle in which rival Islamic discourses clashed. The CUP showed anxious and aggressive behavior because the party's fate could be endangered in Albania, Arab provinces and Anatolia. The election of the Entente candidate, Tahir Hayreddin, in the by-election held in Istanbul for the place of a deputy who passed away increased this even more. They had to use their own allied preachers against the opposition ulema's preaching of the masses against the CUP.

[288] "Karaman Kazasında Küşad Edilen Hürriyet ve İtilaf Şubesi", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n., 275, (25 Mart 1912), 3-4.
[289] Birinci, *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*, 77.
[290] Birinci, Ibid., 78.
[291] Ziya Şakir, "Hürriyet", *Tan*, n.965, (5 January 1938), 9. Via Birinci, Ibid., 79.
[292] Birinci, *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*., 105.

Konya was one of the first and most important stops visited by one of these traveling unionist preachers, Ubeydullah Efendi. Sitting in the preaching chair in the Kapu Mosque, addressed to the congregation with harsh rhetoric, claiming that a person cannot become a Muslim simply by uttering Islamic confession of faith, and that word required unity as Allah ordered that "hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided" in Surah Ali Imran. According to Ubeydullah, ulema was supposed to explain the Qur'an to the believers correctly, but on the contrary, "those turbaned here", who were sinful disrupters, were the main reason for the defeat of the Empire in Tripoli as they broke the unity. With the anger of the dissident ulama who came to the mosque and heard these interpretations, the mosque suddenly got mixed up and became a place of political conflict. The opposition scholar Ali Efendi countered him, saying that that verse was about the integrity of belief and that the multi-party system was just legitimate and necessarily Islamic in a constitutional system because "there was mercy-peace in the disputes within the ummah", referring to the famous hadith of the prophet.[293] While the dissident ulema developed Islamic responses to the Islamic rhetoric of the CUP, the secular wing of the Liberal Entente was approaching these activities of the CUP from their own perspective and claimed that the CUP missionaries were dealing with superstitions and spellbinding the people and dissidents in Anatolia.[294]

After the disintegration of the first Ottoman Parliament on January 18, 1912, the first multi-party election competition started, and so the contentious dose of the rival rhetorics increased. Mustafa Sabri Efendi, one of the sharp figures of the opposition, came from Istanbul to Konya by train and was welcomed at the station by

[293] Hakan Özalp, *Ubeydullah Efendi*, 192. via Serhat Aslaner, "İlmiye Sınıfı", 62.
[294] Refik Halid, *Kirpinin Dedikleri*, 40.

a crowded group of madrasah students, then went to Alaaddin Mosque and gave a political sermon there. It is pretty strange that by relying on tradition and through innovative interpretation, Mustafa Sabri Efendi tried to 'legalize' his participation in FAP, which was the most assisting instrument for the CUP against conservative ulema due to the fact that the party had secular and non-Muslims components. From an Islamic perspective, he said a free non-Muslim must have been more preferable to a slave Muslim. Regardless of his faith, freedom would make one more trustworthy and eligible to govern by referring to an anecdote of *Imam-ı Azam*, which made him to decide to be in the FAP rather than the CUP.[295] The meeting was interrupted and raided by pro-CUP Konya Governor Muammer Bey, leading to strife between parties inside the mosque. The division and tension had spread to the madrasa classes, and the Unionist students issued a declaration condemning those students who welcomed Mustafa Sabri. On the other hand, the other party condemned the students who stood beside "those who violated the dignity of the *ilmiye*" at every opportunity; mutual condemnations turned into humiliating each other's scientific levels.[296]

According to the conservatives, it was hypocritical for the Unionists to seek help from mosques while the dervish lodges, which were foundation properties, were in ruins and were being sold and turned into shops. It was also the case that the government, which previously supported theater at every opportunity, which was an anti-Islamic act in the eyes of the conservatives, now prohibits it to be seen as favorable for Muslims. They claimed people who opposed female theatre actors' performance in Çorum in the month of Ramadan were previously taken to the martial court, and the Mufti was dismissed in Ilgın because of this. Therefore, implementing

[295] "Les Elections: Un incident dans une mosquee a Konia", *The Levant Herald and Eastern Express*, 22 March 1912, via Birinci, 135.
[296] "İnansak da Yazık İnanmasak da", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.278, (5 Mayıs 1912), 4.

such a ban did not sound sincere for the conservatives; moreover, it would have been applied only in towns, not cities.[297]

As stated earlier, the Union and Progress used the ally ulama against the conservative ulama, yet not by positioning this relationship as purely about mutual interest, but presenting it as "progressive" religion advocacy. At a conference in Konya Union and Progress Club, a Unionist scholar said that introducing constitutionalism meant bringing sharia and that the holy society fulfilled the duty of the prophet's companions today. According to him, Islam was progressive and not conservative. Therefore, some changes appropriate for the century should be welcomed.[298] Since this situation and such interpretations were indistinguishable from a secular attack on the essence of religion in the conservative ulema thought, they too felt that they found a "reasonable basis" for agreement with liberals who, at least, did not present themselves as representatives of the essence of religion.[299] On the contrary to the Unionist ulema, they happily accepted to be referred to as conservatives who evoked them to be the guardians of Islam.[300] In that regard, Politics and fiqh discussions were intertwined in Konya when the tension in the election process was at its highest. According to Fahreddin Efendi, the Unionist regiment mufti, some prayers such as pilgrimage and sacrificial ritual performed with traditional methods could now be practiced differently.[301] Maşrık's reply, as expected, was very harsh, labelling Fahreddin as contemporary "Abu Jahil",[302] but

[297] M. Safvet, "İttihad ve Terakki Hükümeti Akıllanıyor", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.275, (25 Mart 1912),
[298] "Pazar Gecesi Konferans Münasebetiyle", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.271, (9 March 1912), 1.
[299] During his years of exile in Egypt, Mustafa Sabri Efendi wrote that they knew the Islamic inappropriateness of their liberal allies. However, they could still be influential in the decision making processes while their fellow ulemas in the CUP could not do so. For Mustafa Sabri, this difference was to prove their rightfulness in their cause from an Islamic perspective.
[300] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.271, (9 March 1912).
[301] Fahreddin, *Babalık*, n.89 via *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.248, (14 Aralık 1911).
[302] "Yine Fahreddin Efendi'ye cevap", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.248, (14 Aralık 1911).

what was really interesting in that discussion was the use of declaring heretic (*takfir*) by opposing parties against each other. It is a popular remark by many men of religion that in the traditional Sunni understanding, who was wrong in its declaration of heresy would become an infidel himself. Therefore, the reckless use of takfir shows the high level of radicalization among opposing parties in Konya.

There was also a large mass of ulama who were disturbed by this radicalization. Even Ahmed al Shirani, known for having a traditionalist and anti-CUP stance, said that he was angry not only at the scholars in Istanbul but also at the rural ones for using mosques in politics by which they damaged not only themselves but also violated the rights of Sharia and the people. [303] However, there was an atmosphere in which the ulema, who was in a politically neutral position, could not be effective, as in the case of Mustafa Asım, who was shown as one of the most influential figures of the turbaned during the declaration of the constitution but was marginalized due to his preference of neutrality.

The pressures of the CUP and its anti-democratic practices against the opposition did not leave a reasonable political ground either. According to the Unionist press in Konya, the opponents (local scholars in FAP in this context) were striving to ally with non-Muslims such as Boso and Kozmidi Efendis to provide them with a ministry and to seize the office of Sheikh al-Islam for themselves.[304] This was directed to legalize the introduction of many oppressive practices in line with the idea of protecting the integrity of the country. Beating the opponents by law enforcement officers, imprisoning them, and closing opposition newspapers for no reason had become commonplace events. It is seen that Maşrık brought up the

[303] Ahmet Şirani "Ulema-yı Kiram ve Fırkalar", *Beyanu'l Hak*, (26 February 1912), 2621.
[304] "Maşrık-ı Irfan", *Konya Osmanlı*, (1 April 1912).

irregularities and corruption in all of its issues during the long election process and tried to keep his mass active. Party members who sent letters from the Uşak prison emphasized that the struggle against those who betrayed constitutionalism was an Islamic duty.[305] As a result of a legal case opened by the prosecutor of Konya province Halil Efendi against the director of Maşrık-ı Irfan, Mehmed Hilmi was punished with compensation and imprisonment.[306] 'The scholar head of the local FAP branch in Akşehir was arrested while preaching in the mosque and while the Unionist hodjas were allowed to wander around the villages.[307] It was reported that in Karaman, mudarrises, who were the founders of the party in the town, were detained by the police while giving a lecture in madrasah and taken to a warehouse. Maşrık dramatically narrates that the robe and turban of Mehmet Efendi, one of those detained, were forcibly removed, and the "sad" students in front of the district governorship made a request for their teacher to be released. When the major who questioned Mehmed Efendi asked him, do you know who the owners of this party are? The reply was, "it belongs to Mustafa Sabri and Zeynelabidin Efendis" which made him angry and led him to ask why he did not mention Boso and Kozmidi referring to non-muslim members of the FAP. The officer blames the opposition ulema for supporting the 31 March Rebellion and calls them "Volkanists". The case continues as the imprisoned teacher's elderly father was called and pressured to tell his son to resign from the party, and the teacher was finally forced to resign. According to Maşrık, against the government that seems not to hesitate to use weapons, the constituents (*müntehib-i sanis*) and ballot boxes should have definitely

[305] Kösezade Ahmet Hamdi, "Hakikat Ne Zaman Anlaşılacak?", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.271, (9 Mart 1912), 3.
[306] Kösezade Hamdi, "Hakikat Ne Zaman Anlaşılacak?", 4.
[307] "Akşehir'de Vaiz Hapsi", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.275, (25 March 1912), 3.

been protected by the party members because the election day would be either a feast or a mourning day.[308]

The Freedom and Accord Party's alliance with a wide section of Greeks was portrayed as a betrayal by the CUP, while the FAP responded by pointing to the CUP's alliance with Armenians, Serbs and Jews. However, among the CUP's allies, the most special emphasis was on its partnership with the Jews, which the opposition viewed utterly as a Zionist plot. Maşrık approached the Arab elements in the parliament based on an Islamic brotherhood and fully supported their anti-Zionism and anti-CUP opposition. The opposition Arab MPs were questioning the Arabness of the pro-government Arabs, just as the opposition ulama questioned the sincerity of the pro-CUP ulama. According to Şükrü al Asali, the deputy of Damascus, the Committee of Union and Progress was putting discord between Christian and Muslim Arabs. He insisted they wanted to destroy Arabic language and tried to liquidate Arabs in the bureaucracy committing the crime of tagging by marking an "ayn" letter to distinguish Arabs in the lists of public servicemen. In fact, the accusation of seeding discord between Muslim and Christian Arabs meant the confession of the CUP's political Islamist policy unwittingly. They had to fight against the CUP's positioning itself as the patron of Islam and Muslims. So, the deputy of Damascus claimed the Tripoli War, which was presented as a jihad by the CUP, actually happened to the Ottomans due to the government's wrong policies. Moreover, he claimed the necessary importance was not given there; Arab resisters were being discriminated while Turkish officers were paid high salaries.[309] Another article, which was published in the Hedef Newspaper of the opposition, claimed that

[308] "İntihab ve Müntehib-i Saniler veya Mühim Bir Vazife", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.278, (5 May 1912), 1.
[309] Şükrü el-Aseli, "İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Araplar", *Maşrık-ı İrfan*, n.248, (14 December 1911),

the Zionists made serious economic aid to the CUP, and in return, they had facilitated land purchases in Palestine and even accepted the nomination of a Zionist deputy from Jerusalem.[310] Some notable members of the CUP's close involvement with Freemasonry, the support of the Jewish minority for the party, and the influence of global anti-semitic publications seem to feed the accusations of subservience to Zionism.

On the other hand, Union and Progress responded with an Islamic propaganda emphasizing the importance of the caliphate, relying on the support of the Sultan/Caliph for the CUP. One of the publications that the Maşrık claimed to be printed by the CUP using citizens' taxes in their "dirty" campaigns were the treatises of Ubeydullah Efendi published in Konya that unconventionally legitimized the anti-democratic practices. According to this work, which aimed to influence votes should be casted for whom, the FAP option could only divide the country with a decentralization policy, and it is a novel form of the oppression. He said its opponents claimed a strong constitution need a developed parliamentarianism, but they instead desired a "system of oppression of MPs". Ubeydullah attacked here to the opposition since they rejected the Sultan's authority to dissolve the parliament by changing the 35th article of the constitution, which the opponents described as the return of despotism. According to him, since the sultan was the caliph, he should have the right of dissolving parliament as a religious mission if it is a necessity; in fact, it was pretty clear that the party itself would exercise this authority with a caliph under his control. For Maşrık, three years ago, the CUP, which received the power to dissolve the parliament from the sultan, presented it as a requirement of Islamic

[310] "Siyonist Mebusu", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.275, (25 March 1912), 4.

constitutionalism and now suggested the exact opposite as Islamic ironically.[311] The Unionist Konya Ottoman newspaper explained the "groundlessness" of such claims of Maşrık, questioning their sincerity regarding the religion, with a very concrete example: "While the only motivation of the soldier in war is religion, attacking him would not be foolishness for us?. Today, the hope of the Ottoman Empire is in the East. What is this nonsense claim when only our religion and our caliph will unite us against the European imperialist flood?".[312]

3.5 Idealized ulema-politician type

Against the flexible political strategies and arguments of the CUP, Zeynelabidin Efendi wrote a treatise that discusses how to make “an Islamically appropriate politics” and by which he proposed an ideal ulema-politician type presented to the public as the agenda of the conservative ulema opposition. According to him, the people should be taught that constitutionalism was necessarily Islamic, and so there should be no room for the accusations of reactionism. “If they could learn that the Constitutional Monarchy was a contract between the Sultan and his subjects built on a set of ideals” he claimed, the people could have checked the government. He insisted that “contrary to the CUP's expectation of obedience”, the nation had the right to ‘interfere in the country's affairs. People should have been ready to correct the rulers as the Caliph Umar said, "He who sees me wrong with me, must fix me with a sword". Therefore, dealing with politics was an Islamic duty; the lawlessness and bad deeds that will occur due to not fulfilling this duty would cause people to be

[311] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.275, (25 March 1912), 4.
[312] *Konya Osmanlı*, (1 April 1912) via *Konya Basın Tarihi*, 31.

religiously responsible.[313] Right after that, Zeynelabidin Efendi ties the issue to one of the unique goals of the movement, advertising the ulama-politician type as a good deputy profile. According to him, to prevent the Assembly from being a slave to the power holders, the deputies had to be fearless, pious, and honorable. It was also necessary for the deputy to be economically independent to not submit to the orders of the civil servant state established by the government.[314] He said that whoever supports this "cruel" party would be a sinner, and "Allah would trouble those who helped the wrongdoers with the same cruel".[315] The politicization of bureaucracy and the domination of civil servants was one of the areas that Zeynelabidin deemed most problematic. Quoting the hadith that "the scourge on this religion is bad civil servants", he says that the taxes paid by the nation should be taken into account against this mass, and he mentioned the importance of founding associations to check the government and to reform the people. These views also bring to mind the possibility that the Islah-ı Medaris Madrasa might be a means to raise the ideal bureaucrat and politician type that Zeynelabidin dreamed of. According to him, the ulema was the proper guide of this nation. The economically independent ulama (implying just like himself) could defend the rights of this nation against those in power 'whose only goal was to increase the power of the government more'.

Zeynelabidin's words were essentially based on an understanding that had roots in Ottoman Islamic history but did not embrace it as a whole. These ideas are reminiscent of the words of Imam Birgivi, who willed "you will not knock on the bureaucrat door of your own accord" to avoid fellow ulema for making religion subservient to the state. Recent studies have tended to read Imam Birgivi and his

[313] Zeynelabidin Efendi, *İslam ve Meşrutiyet*, 32.
[314] Zeynelabidin Efendi, *İslam ve Meşrutiyet*, 42.
[315] Zeynelabidin Efendi, *İslam ve Meşrutiyet*, 53.

successor Kadızadeli movement as a new puritan religious phenomenon introduced by the context of the early modern era.[316] Perhaps the conservative ulema movement in Konya resorted to producing an interventionist type of ulema with a similar reaction produced by modern times.

As the elections approached, the Freedom and Accord Party performed a show of strength in Karaman. It was said that ulama deputy candidates Zeynelabidin and Akşehirli Hacı Mustafa, who came to Karaman for the election work, were welcomed at the station by a crowd "that had not even gathered before to meet the governor of vilayet".[317] After visiting the Hatuniye Madrasa and praying for Friday prayer in the Dikbasan mosque, a sheep was sacrificed in front of the party building to be sent to the city prison, which could be justified with the endeavor of the party for gaining the image of the patron of the poor. It can be assumed that due to the opposition in Konya was directed by *ilmiye*, the facilities of them affected some people of *ilmiye* origin in the branches of Union and Progress. Although the propaganda motives were evident, the names of the ulama under the headlines of the "resignations from the CUP" news published in Maşrık were remarkable. In Şarki Karaağaç, many religious figures resigned from the CUP, and the villagers reportedly insisted on voting for the FAP despite the pressure.[318]

Although the FAP tried to show how resilient it was, what it could do against the CUP, which had both the economic and armed power of the state behind it, was limited. The CUP overwhelmingly came back to power in the shadow of corruption allegations from all over the country. The opponents were able to get just six

[316] Marinos Sarıyannis, "The Kadızadeli Movement as a Social and Political Phenomenon: The Rise of a 'Merchantile Ethic'?", pp. 263-289.
[317] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.275, (25 March 1912), 2.
[318] "Ulemadan Battalzade Osman, Imam Ahmedzade Mehmed, Imam şehirlizade İbrahim Selami .", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.278, (5 May 1912), 2.

deputies, one of whom was Zeynelabidin Efendi from Konya. However, the local branch of the CUP was trying to cancel the election results in Karaman and not to recognize Zeynelabidin's reelection. As he wrote in Maşrık, when the voting process was almost finished in Karaman, the election board had stopped the voting and then cancelled it as it claimed by the Unionist that the men of Zeynelabidin threatened the people. Dozens of party members in Karaman who objected to this situation were detained; according to Maşrık, the people in the city did not open their shops, and the possibility of the events escalating was mentioned.[319] According to Maşrık, this claim was just nonsense because those who had relied on the power of guns were on the other side. In Bozkır, which was the hometown of Zeynelâbidin and whose victory by FAP was considered certain, the vote count was carried out without allowing the FAP members to watch counting. This time it was FAP members who objected to the result, and they were saying that the votes inside had been changed and their own votes were lost. If it was necessary, they would gather in Konya and then protest by going to the parliament building in Istanbul.[320] After all, although it delayed Zeynelabidin's victory, the government finally approved Zeynelabidin's parliamentary mandate, probably because of the irrelevance of him regarding absolute victory across the country.

Zeynelabidin's breakaway from the CUP and becoming its leading enemy in Konya allowed those who had problems with him or his family members to benefit from the new political ground and approached the CUP. In a complaint telegram sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs by a mudarris named Abdullah Efendi, he claimed that Zeynelabidin's cousin Kudsiefendizade Ali Efendi forcibly took away the

[319] Karaman Hürriyet ve İtilaf Şube Reis Vekili Mehmet Sabri, "Karaman'dan Telgraf", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.238, (20 April 1912), 3.
[320] "Kuvvet-i Hükümet, Meclis-i Milli-i Hükümet", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.283, (20 April 1912).

teaching post of Yeğenoğlu Madrasa from him. Abdullah informed the ministry that the authorities did not protect his rights because they were afraid of Zeynelabidin, so he had to seek help from the British consulate. The ministry seems to want to know the origin of such a complaint and maybe searched it for making use of it. When the Ministry asked for the details of the matter from the Konya Governorship, the governor informed Istanbul that the issue would be addressed and the legal process would begin.[321]

Being aware of the new context, the notables of Meyre village of the Bozkır town were also bringing up their old land disputes with the Gündoğan villagers backed by the Mufti Zühdü Efendi, who was one of the nephews of Zeynelabidin Efendi. In fact, according to a news published in Maşrık four years ago, it was officially registered that this land was not a pasture as villagers of Meyre claimed, through the official investigations made by topographical engineers.[322] Nevertheless, it seems that an officially resolved issue was being brought up again in the new political context by the villagers knowing how to use the appropriate language. They complained to the ministry of interior that they could not do anything against Zühdü Efendi, who was using Gündoğan's lands in the way he wanted and dominated the district *(Müftü kaza-yı mezkûru daire-yi tahakkümüne almış).*[323]

Another person who wanted to benefit from the new political environment and perhaps to benefit his allies in the election process was Ali Rıza Efendi, the Muderris of the Kutuphane Madrasa. Zeynelabidin Efendi wrote in Maşrık that this

[321] BOA. MF. MKT. 291-37, (21 Zilkade 1328- 26 December 1912).
[322] "Heyet-i Keşfiye", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.25, (13 June 1909),4.
[323] BOA. DH.H.. 47-68, (28 Ramazan 1331 31 August 1913).

person claimed to lend money to Zeynelabidin and that he could not collect them back, but according to the Sheikh, it was not a matter of debt but a political move.[324]

Although the Committee of Union and Progress had the majority in the parliament, it directly supported the formation of governments by old-style bureaucratic politicians instead of its members being the cabinet. The pro-CUP Said Pasha government of this politician type saw the anti-CUP officer formations developing within the army (Halaskâr Zâbitân) and resigned to lead the way for the establishment of a more neutral government for establishing permanent peace. Although it seemed difficult to grasp the anti-CUP officer profile fully, it was understood that a group based on Albanian, Bosnian ethnicity and an emphasis on the Melami order was active in this conflict. The conservative ulema group in Konya was far from this turbulent environment of the capital. Due to the lack of available numbers of Maşrık from the post-election period, it is not possible to fully understand how the coup to the CUP was met precisely. However, it can be guessed that as FAP media in Istanbul supported the new developments, and a scholar named Sheikhul-Islamzade Ahmed Muhtar Kevakibi called the anti-CUP officers as homeland defenders, the conservatives in Konya was probably eager to salute this initiative.

In fact, the governments of Ahmet Muhtar Pasha and Kamil Pasha, which were established after the fall of the CUP, did not support the FAP either. Freedom and Accord, meanwhile, was the scene of internal strife, and various groups of allies were leaving party one by one. Musir Fuat Pasha, who was among those who resigned and one of the former chairmen of the party, accused those who remained in

[324] Abidin, "Ali Rıza Efendi'ye", *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.278, (5 May 1912) .

the party of being ambitious in a negative way. Although it is said that the rest of the FAP administration, including Mustafa Sabri, made plans to overthrow the government of Kamil Pasha, which excluded them, there is no concrete evidence to prove this.[325] While these were happening among the opposition members, the CUP, which already disturbed by the government policies in the Balkan warfront, specifically concerning the fate of Edirne, raided Bab-ı Ali, overthrew the government, and pro-CUP Mahmud Şevket Pasha government was established.

The CUP's reinstatement in power had also mobilized the Union and Progress circles in Konya. After the fall of CUP from power in the summer of 1912, the new government had appointed a governor from the opposition. So many notables, including unionist muderrises and the Sheikh of Mevlana dervish lodge, demanded from the new CUP government that Ali Rıza Efendi, appointed in the meantime, should not stay at the governorship any longer and that Samih Rifat be selected instead.[326] In these days, what the movement in Konya could do politically became more and more limited. Moreover, the dramatic results of the Balkan War affected them as well. Madrasahs in Konya opened their doors to immigrants; aid campaign started in Maşrık, and the religious and national obligation of helping others was emphasized.[327] In the last available issue, which has survived to the present, the central theme was the feeling of mourning in the face of Edirne's surrender to Bulgarians.[328]

[325] Ahmet Hilmi, *Muhalefetin İflası*, 59-60, via Birinci*, Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*, 208-209.
[326]. "Ali Rıza Efendi'nin umur-ı vilâyeti ihmâl edüp … muavenet ve faaliyet-i milliyeyi büsbütün akîm bırakdı… Vatanı ve milleti seven bir kimse gerektiği… eser-i bî-tarafane gösteremediği ve hükümet-i hazıramıza şiddet-i adaveti olduğu… Konyamızın miskinane bir idâreden kurtulması gerektiği…", BOA. HSDHADB. 1-53, (Rumi 4 Mart 1329 – 17 March 1913).
[327] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.331, (10 November 1912).
[328] *Maşrık-ı Irfan*, n.344, (4 April 1913).

Even though the CUP made the coup of 1913 on the claim of Kamil Pasha government's acceptance of the surrender of Edirne, the pro-CUP government of Mahmud Şevket Pasha could not defend the city either, which led to a loss of prestige for his government. Maşrık, as a newspaper of opposition, was lucky enough to not shut down after the coup. However, the assassination and murder of Mahmud Şevket Pasha, which unionists blamed so-called FAP cells in Istanbul, led to the closure of the last holdings of the opposition by the CUP. Despite there is no document to determine the exact date, Maşrık-ı Irfan should have been shut down in this process in the year 1913.

With the murder of Mahmud Şevket Pasha, the former Freedom and Accord Party circles both in the capital and countryside became suspicious of the plot. The series of arrests initiated by the government on searching for criminals turned into a witch hunt. The newspapers were writing Mustafa Sabri Efendi as one of the planners of the event, but he had already managed to escape to Romania.[329] In that manner, Zeynelabidin Efendi was arrested while he was in a Konya mosque for the morning prayer and sent to Istanbul to be tried in Martial Court. After one week of no briefing about the situation of the Sheikh, Ziya Efendi was very worried about the fate of his elder brother. In the letter that would cause his arrest, too, he asked directly Talat Pasha whether they had killed his brother, calling them "barbarians".[330] Afterwards, the turn came for Islah-ı Medaris. In the report written by the Governor of Ankara, it was stated that it was illegal for Islah-ı Medaris to apply its own regulation while the state had an official madrasah regulation. Moreover, this regulation prepared by "a person like Zeynelabidin" offered a heavy education fed by

[329] İsmail Hakkı, "Kirli Bir Tabaka", Tanin, n.1632 (2 Haziran 1329), 4. via Birinci, *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*, 226.
[330] BOA. DH. SYS. 119-1. (H.07.10.1331).

religious fanaticism. The response from the Ministry of Internal Affairs was that only the regulation prepared by the Meşihat would be used. Thefore, Konya Islah-ı Medaris was not closed, but its special status was abolished, and it was included in the state's official web and madrasa program.[331]

3.6 Marginalization phase of the movement and the World War I

There was no waste of time for the government between the official acquittal of Zeynelabidin Efendi from the allegations over the assassination of Mahmud Şevket Pasha and his immediate exile to Gemlik because of the conviction that he was "a person capable of influencing the people".[332] The government was closely monitoring the political exiles, demanding the collection of visual data from local authorities. In that context, it is understood that the photographs of Zeynelabidin were taken in Gemlik and sent to Istanbul as well.[333] Although he was also in Mudanya and Bilecik for a while,[334] he primarily served his sentence in Gemlik. Despite Ziya's unsuccessful attempt with the government, the family still did not refrain from seeking amnesty from Talat Pasha, who would refuse it again.[335] It can be thought that the primary aim of the Ministry of Internal Affairs during the Empire's inclusion in World War I was to increase the central authority within the country and not to give opportunities to possible opposition centers, specifically religious ones. Meanwhile, a micro case involving the government-appointed Konya mufti shows how serious the government was in maintaining its official Islamic discourse to remain unchallenged. Musa Kazım Efendi, the mudarris of Demirciler

[331] BOA, DH.İD.., 132-14. (H.13.11.1331).
[332] BOA., DH.EUM. 1.ŞB., 14/41 (3 Nisan 1334) and BOA., DH. EUM. 1. ŞB., 10/25 (2 Mart 1334).
[333] BOA., DH. EUM. 1. ŞB., 10/8 (25 Şubat 1334).
[334] BOA., DH. EUM. 1, ŞB., 2/4 (16 Teşrin-i Sani 1330).
[335] BOA., DH. EUM. 1. ŞB., 10/25 (23 Teşrin-i Sani 1331).

Madrasa in Adana, sent a letter to the muftis of Kayseri and Konya. He wrote that the students would not be exempted from military service in madrasas where the government's official reform regulation was not implemented and that this would end their institutions, so it was necessary to resist strongly. It seems the Mufti of Kayseri immediately informed Talat Pasha about the incident. Talat Pasha wondered why the Konya mufti did not let him know about the incident and asked the governor of Konya to investigate the intentions of the Mufti.[336] The governor guaranteed Talat Pasha that "even the most fanatical mudarrises in Konya" could not oppose the official reform project and that the Mufti burned the letter because he was afraid and covered the incident.[337]

It was strategically understandable why the government did not allow a staunch opponent like Zeynelabidin to return among his followers when it even suspects his own Mufti. Under such pressure, Zeynelabidin Efendi wrote letters to the government and then parliament, emphasizing that he could never get used to Gemlik. He said its climate was unlike the climate of his hometown; he was not allowed to contact the local people and so could not make a living there. The petition was full of complaints like that he was imprisoned twice in Gemlik, and one of them coincided with the Ramadan feast. He added that it became an obligation to seek help from the parliament as the government did not respond to him and said he heard that his farm in Konya was looted and requested that it be prevented.[338] The governmental reply to the parliament over these claims was just that these allegations were fabricated.[339]

[336] BOA., DH. ŞFR. 47-121 (4 Kanun-ı Sani 1333).
[337] BOA., DH. ŞFR. 450-13. (R.10.09.1330).
[338] BOA., DH. ŞFR., (8 Ağustos 1333).
[339] BOA., DH. EUM. 1. ŞB., (25 Mart 1334)

It could be observed, on the other hand, that Zeynelabidin Efendi sent instructions from Gemlik to Konya through his men and encouraged anti-war propaganda. Talat Pasha demanded from the Konya governor that the details of this intelligence received must have been investigated.[340] The political ally of Zeynelabidin, Mustafa Sabri, who was exiled to Bilecik after arrested by the Allied Armies in Bucharest, seems to have found a social and more unrestricted environment than what Zeynelabidin Efendi found in Gemlik. Talat Pasha investigated why dissidents in Bilecik were allowed to gather at Mustafa Sabri's house in exile and hold meetings at nights against the government.[341]

3.7 Panislamist program of the CUP during the war,

Before moving on to the situation of the conservative ulema movement in Konya, which is absolutely the antithesis of CUP's Islamic program, it is necessary to look at the Islamic policy of the Union and Progress during the war years, since the differences among them became much more crystallized than before. Islamic Policy of the Unionism was grounded over global activism intertwined with the idea of a Pan-Turk nation, a flexible fiqh perception and a politically combative Pan-Islamism ideal. However, the most crucial point of division among these in regard to conservative ulema circles was related to the understanding of fiqh and the position of the ulema in it.

The famous Turkish sociologist Ziya Gökalp was one of the leading ideologists of such a Unionist sharia understanding that he termed as "sociological

[340] BOA., DH. ŞFR., (8 Ağustos 1333).
[341] BOA., DH. ŞFR., (11 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333).

method for fıqh" (*ictimai usul-i fikh)*. He divided the sources of fiqh into divine and social ones since it was a natural obligation for each community to be subjected to different laws in their contexts. Emphasizing that it does not harm the fundamental elements of the religion (*nusus*), he specified that considering social reality or custom is a sharia obligation to establish justice, "since a nomad and a city dweller cannot be subject to the same law".[342] Unionist Islamic revivalism was very careful to seem to be respectful of tradition. The "religious revolution" that was said to be needed by M. Şemseddin was positioned against a "dull" part of the tradition. It was noted that what was meant to be done was to reach the primary source of the tradition, the prophet Muhammad and his golden age.[343]

The desired innovations were thought to be fundamentally Islamic. It can be seen that the theses claiming that this attitude was superficial and eventually paving the way for future Kemalist reforms always made it challenging to understand Islamic contingent in the Unionist program. Ziya Gökalp indeed advocated reforms that would restrict the role of religious institutions in the bureaucracy and justice system, a reminiscent of republican secularism for many, but presented it as "making the state in the service of religion". "The holy and pure religion" must have to be separated from the justice system that was dealing with the "dirty" and "sinful" work required by the affairs of the world, for instance, as Sharia did not approve interest, but justice system had to dealt with it. It could be observed that this view was brought to the agenda at the 1916 Congress of the CUP, and as a result, Sheikh al-Islam's rights over Sharia courts and foundations were taken away by limiting his mission to practical and 'beneficial' facilities like correcting popular beliefs, raising

[342] Ziya Gökalp, "Fıkıh ve İçtimaiyat", *İslam Mecmuası*, n.2, (26 February 1914), 40-44.
[343] M. Şemseddin "Müslümanlık Aleminde İntibah Emareleri 1", *İslam Mecmuası*, n.1, (12 February 1914), 25-25.

capable men of religion and strengthening the adherence of *nation of Islam* to the caliphate.[344] The Unionist Ulema accepted during the congress that what was important from an Islamic point of view was the implementation of divine judgments and that they could be accomplished through the Ministry of Justice, a secular institution, as well.[345]

It was Enver Pasha, the military leader of the CUP, who would have disputed with Şeyhülislam Hayri Efendi, when it came to the transfer of the Sharia courts to the Ministry of Justice and who intervened to Gökalp when he said that Sheikhulislam should be taken out of the cabinet.[346] This approach of Enver Pasha meant taking the middle ground between caring for religion and getting rid of the restrictions of its customary interpretation.

Another point where the Unionist reformism differed from the conservative ulema group was nationalism which was often misperceived as an implicit secular part of the Unionist thought. For Gökalp, the idea of Turkishness was one of the most important contingent in a goal of the Islamic Union, and Turkism was needed for all Muslims in the world.[347] As the more the climate of the war increased more the dose of propaganda intensified. It was written in the Unionist Journal of Islam, in which global Islamist authors wrote and reproduced modernist Islamic discourses, that "the faithful Turks who would have passed from an agricultural society to an industrial society, would save the Islamic world".[348]

[344] Sarıkaya, *Medreseler ve Modernleşme*, 160.
[345] Gürer, "Gelenekle Modernite Arasında", 44.
[346] Gürer, "Gelenekle Modernite Arasında", 42.
[347] Ziya Gökalp, "Kızılelma Kitabına Dair", *İslam Mecmuası*, vol.2, n.17, (16 December 1914), 27.
[348] Tekin Alp, "Milli İktisat", *İslam Mecmuası*, vol.1, n.22, (25 February 1915), 560-62.

The non-recognition of CUP's Islamic policies as a unique and distinct phenomenon by many secularists and conservative writers in the republican period seems to have caused some of the party's policies to be interpreted in two completely opposite ways. For instance, while CUP reformation and reorganization of the madrasas in Istanbul and Anatolia were seen as an attempt to convert madrasas to secular schools and eventually described as secularization. Such reorganizations of the Party in the Arab regions were perceived in the framework of Panislamism which would be instrumentalized to convince local Arabs to the rule of the Ottoman caliphate. In fact, there is no enough reason not to regard all these madrasa projects under the titles of Modernist Islamic reformism of the CUP. The Pan-Islamist madrasa was first tried in Medina under the title of the Islamic University of Madina and then implemented in Jerusalem as the Islamic University of Salahaddin Ayyubid (*Madrasat al Salahiyya*) by *Cemiyet-i Hayriye-i İslamiye*, which the Unionists supported. It included Turkish, Arab and Hindi intellectuals and headed by Said Halim Pasha but did not provide a different education than other official institutions at the point of belief. The madrasas in Anatolia and Istanbul, included in the *Darul-Hilafe* madrasa reform network, were not far from a Panislamist vision either, as the common name suggests.

The more sensitive the Unionists were about the madrasas associated with their own reform projects, the more they became indifferent to the madrasas outside of this project or against those that followed a different reform program. For instance, Konya Islah-ı Medaris Madrasa was first banned from implementing its own regulations and then subjected to mistreatment such as demolition of the

mudarris room by the municipality.[349] and in 1917, it was closed entirely since the Konya branch of the Daru'l Hilafe madrasas was founded and claimed to end the need for such a private reformed madrasa.[350] Although they do not have a political attitude like Konya Islah-ı Medaris, it is seen that many madrasas, which were not subject to the state's Daru'l Hilafe network, also faced neglect and indifference during the war years. Ziyaiye and Fethiye madrasas in Konya were demolished despite the objections of Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi, and their lands were allocated for road and park construction.[351] Besides, the buildings of three traditional Konya madrasas, Özdemirli, Feyziye and Zaferiye, were allocated for the newly reformed Daru'l Hilafe madrasa.[352]

Despite some activities seen against such traditional religious institutions, Unionist sentiments over religious issues was felt in Konya in many occasions. For instance, although it was a Pro-CUP newspaper, Babalık, which Bektashi Yusuf Mazhar Bey owned, was closed for publishing against the Mevlevi order since the mainstream Sunni understanding in the late Ottoman period could not tolerate a Bektashi attack over Mevlevi order.[353] Three years later, it is seen that Mazhar was pardoned and allowed to publish his newspaper under the name *Türk Sözü*. The newspaper supported Islam Mecmuası in Istanbul and entered into a discussion on the social role of women with the Sebilürreşad Magazine. On women's rights and position in society, a conservative stance such as prioritizing women's maternity was advocated against Feminism but foreseeing some innovations needed in the current law. For Seydişehrî Zeki, who was a former writer of Maşrık-ı Irfan, Islamic law

[349] Abdullah Fevzi, "Minzaratü'l Feylâk fi Keşfi'l Hatai ve'l Ahlak", *in* Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde Bir Müderris: Abdullah Fevzi Efendi*, 330.
[350] Arabacı, *Konya Medreseleri*, 515.
[351] BOA. DH. İ. UM. EK 38-10 (12.11.1335)
[352] Sarıçelik, *Konya'da Modern Eğitim Kurumları*, 248.
[353] Arabacı, *Konya Basın Tarihi*, 92.

could now be interpreted differently on matters such as marriage, divorce and polygamy.[354] Mansurizade Said Bey, explaining the legal grounds for the decision right to terminate polygamy, mentioned that it would belong to the head of state, the Caliph.[355]

The Unionist reform packet could be criticized by some segments of the nationalist Islamist coalition behind the government, and it was hard to talk about a uniform Islamic modernization program. Mehmed Akif, known for his modernist views and his support to the CUP, stated that it was necessary to abandon the very popular issue of madrasah reformation and focus on schools that caused the state's main cost in education budget could not yield a considerable benefit.[356] Muallim Cevdet Bey also thought similarly and opposed assimilating madrasahs to the schools that were not good anyway. In fact, this proposal did not suggest an intervening political activism for ulama and madrasa, similar to that of the conservative ulama, so it was not so far from the Unionist stance in essence. The madrasa should not become elite like a school; it should never break its ties from the people, it should be versatile and resourceful, and imams should have resembled the priests of Balkan nations.[357] Sought activism for Imams in the political sphere could only be extroverted, not as an intervening force in internal politics, something that the CUP would agree with.

The fact that there were such differences of opinion among the Islamist intellectuals who were close to the CUP drew the attention of the dissident conservatives. They suggested to Mehmed Akif not to enter *Darul Hikmeti'l*

[354] *Babalık*, n.60, (21 August 1918), via Arabacı, *Konya Basın Tarihi*, 103.
[355] Mansurizade Said, "Taaddüd-i Zevcat İslamiyet'te Men Olunabilir", *İslam Mecmuası*, N.8, (21 May 1914), 237.
[356] Gürer, "Gelenekle Modernite Arasındaki", 4.
[357] Sarıkaya, *Medreseler ve Modernleşme*, 126.

Islamiye, one of the leading Islamic projects of the government, founded by Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi, one of the leading Unionists.[358] Contrary to these calls, Mehmet Akif accepted the proposal and entered the delegation, probably because he still saw an Islamic character in his coalition with the CUP.

As could be seen in the coming section, in the examination of the memoirs of the mudarris Abdullah Fevzi Efendi, who followed the conservative ulema movement in Konya, the conservatives differed radically from the government ideology. Seeing that the government and its intellectuals were making the Maturidi sect a basis for their "deviant" reform projects, Mustafa Sabri Efendi even declared that he had switched to the more submissive Ashari sect.[359] According to him, the Qur'an did not need "scientific" explanations of these people[360] and adopted a more "uncompromising" attitude than in previous years.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, it was tried to be illustrated that how the tension in the multi-party political experience in the early 1910s and the competing Islamic discourses in this system became more visible in Konya, including madrasas and mosques as sites of political activisms. During this period, a considerable and politically organized section of the conservative ulema have largely abandoned Islamic modernist rationalizations, although they still invoked them when they regarded necessary, just like Mustafa Sabri did in his 'justification' for his alliance with the Christian politicians. Although the CUP only allowed the ulama to take political action against

[358] Gürer, "Gelenekle Modernite Arasındaki", 70.
[359] Gürer, "Gelenekle Modernite Arasındaki", 185.
[360] Gürer, "Gelenekle Modernite Arasındaki", 214.

'foreign powers', conservative ulema group in Konya did not give up their enthusiasm for playing a role in domestic politics and did not give credit to the Pan-Islamist policy of the CUP during the WWI years.

CHAPTER 4

MEMOIRS

4.1. The representative voice of the movement: Abdullah Fevzi Efendi and his WWI memoirs

Abdullah Fevzi Efendi was the son of Zeynelabidin Efendi's sister, whom we know with his uncompromising and orthodox writings in the years Maşrık-ı Irfan published. In 1914, when he joined the army, he was a single madrasah teacher at the age of 32 and was a person who did not go far outside of his community in Konya. His memory and experiences of the war years cannot be considered independent of this long madrasah past and family roots. The most noticeable feature of the memoirs that is extreme opposition and hatred towards the CUP and military officials, which almost covers every page, cannot be dissociated from his past living and experiences in which he relatively suffered from governmental authoritarianism.

The most obvious identity of the owner of the memoir, being from madrasa, makes itself felt even in the formation of the work, as it is written in grandiloquent Arabic taught probably in the Islah-ı Medaris. Since this work was in Arabic, it had to be quoted from the irregular translation available at hand, which prepared by an author who sought roots within it for his views on contemporary Turkish politics and often manipulated what Abdullah Fevzi said in that direction.[361] This material in this thesis was used according to the original intervention-free text, excluding comments

[361] Therefore, I should note that this memoir must be used by taking into account the agency of the translator, who frequently intervened with conscious interpretations, but also justifiably had problems in putting together complex notebook pieces. Ali Osman Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde Bir Müderris: Abdullah Fevzi Efendi*, 330.

made by the translator. There is no information about the date and place on which the memoirs had been written. However, it can be guessed that it was written after the Ottoman Empire's surrender to the Entente Powers and the collapse of the Unionist government since it is said that "now the evil people have dissolved your cruel union."[362]

Therefore, it must be noted that it is neither immediate writing of the experience on the battlefront, a qualification seen in war diaries, nor an autobiography in its classical form in which "a mature persona" would advertise himself to an audience who generally had certain expectations from the autobiography author.[363] The fact that the work was written in Arabic may indicate that it did not aim to influence an audience in an environment where people having knowledge of Arabic was so limited. There is no indication for it to be published or sent to the Arabic reading populace either. In fact, as the name indicates, the book had a purpose of being written and intended to be "binoculars" to reveal the "strategical mistakes and moral situation of the army".[364] Although the target audience remains uncertain, it is also possible that this memoir can be seen as a justification for the more radical anti-CUP moves that the author would attempt in the future, which will be the next section's subject. By giving the impression of an unmistakable mujahid on his cause, perhaps he needed a reminder that he would make the right political decisions with inner peace according to these unforgettable past experiences, which means more than to prove his cause to someone else. This option did not exclude the possible designation of it as the materialization of an effort to unburden himself after four traumatic, gruelling and violent years of the

[362] Koçkuzu, "Çanakkale Cephesinde", 291.
[363] Ewing, "The Illusion of Wholeness: The Culture, Self and the Experience of Inconsistency", 256.
[364] "Minzaratü'l Feylak fi Keşfi'l- Hatai ve'l Ahlak"

war, since not being able to narrate your trauma could be deadly for the formation of proper selfhood.[365] This desired self-hood must have been influential in the shape of memoirs whose emphasized experience said to be culturally constructed.[366]

Frankly, we do not know precisely what the author intended by writing this memoir in Arabic with lots of propaganda but that not many people could read. It is open to speculation; perhaps there was indeed an Arabic-speaking audience that he hoped for them to read his work in the future or had an intention to publish it in Arabic-speaking countries and expose the CUP's "mischiefs" to wider audiences. What is certain is that the work regarded the CUP and its policies as existentially evil and non-Islamic, and so presented its capability to represent a particular collectivity.

The writer begins the memoirs by stating that although he was exempt from this military adventure as a mudarris, he voluntarily participated and wanted to know the Unionists closely. Therefore, he tried to emphasize his sincerity and sacrifice by leaving his “beloved job” for such a purpose. Acknowledging such a reason to be a volunteer could be used to support his deduction that “this war was not a jihad”. Abdullah Fevzi was literally approaching the concept of jihad in its traditional meaning. For him, an Islamic struggle could be done to glorify the religion of God, not the *vatan* by which he referred to the pre-modern Arabic meaning of the word, hometown or village, not the homeland of the nation. Such usage was not due to a lack of understanding for the meaning of its modern usage, rather a preference as he still found inappropriate the term *vatan*, which had non-religious connotations for him. The imposition of this kind of homeland was one of the strategic mistakes of the officers according to Fevzi, claiming that the soldier would only risk his life for

[365] Bruner, “Self-making Narratives”, 210.
[366] Harari, “Military Memoirs: A Historical Overview of the Genre from the Middle Ages to the Late Modern Era”, 289–309.

religion, and only their families would come to mind when the homeland was emphasized.[367]

We find Abdullah Fevzi, who claims that the soldiers will fight only through the concept of martyrdom in religion, complaining about the soldiers' ignorance and sins against religion which was one of the main themes and grievances in the memoirs. He questioned the qualities of "this so-called jihad" by explaining that its soldiers never worshipped, made sexual jokes to each other, and emphasizing that theft and gambling were widespread.[368] Despite these, it could be regarded that Abdullah Fevzi was watching for the soldiers against the officers he hated and loathed more because the soldiers had a reverence mixed with fear, which seemed to please Abdullah Fevzi, towards the religion that they did not know and practice. As he claimed, among the officers, those who would directly reject Islam but, hiding their real beliefs were considerable. Abdullah Fevzi's opposition to the officers was so high that he even rejected the interpretations of some of them supporting Islamic practices with scientific explanations and saw them as a different form of heresy, like the comments defining *namaz* as a form of sport. The common Muslim discourses of Islamic modernism seem to be abandoned by conservative ulema group in Konya. If it is remembered that we regarded such explanations quite often in Maşrık-ı Irfan, the level of radicalization will become more noticeable.

There are many elements, specifically contradictions, in Fevzi's memoirs that illustrate that human memory is constantly evolving. It is always open to conscious or unconscious forgetting and remembering, which were natural elements of the

[367] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 146.
[368] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 158.

operation of memory in memoir.[369] Abdullah Fevzi, who always complained about the "ignorance" of the army for religion or "sinful" discourses and its applications, studiously separated his imagined nation's morality from that of the soldiers. According to him, all these immoralities belonged to Europe through which officers learnt to pretend to respect religion but hidden their honest opinions for the benefit of such an image.[370]

Examples are showing that Abdullah Fevzi's extraordinary reaction to the officers was not only about his experiences in the war but showing it as a result of his views he had before. According to him, the reason behind why officers did not pray namaz could not be because of laziness. While they were not doing it themselves, they did not abstain from ordering soldiers to worship, who were under far more burdens than they were. He describes an incident that he experienced to prove the "irreligion" of such officers. According to this, Abdullah Fevzi reads the Quran in the morning in his tent, and an officer in the neighbouring tent wakes up in this way. Complaint of Abdullah Fevzi by this officer to the battalion commander was seen as clear evidence of irreligion by the author.[371] While there is no religious obligation to read the Koran aloud, his reading to awaken him suggests that Abdullah Fevzi created opportunities for testing officers.

It is seen that he hated "modernity" and "civilization" while describing his experiences on the front in the Battle of Çanakkale, where new technological combat vehicles were used for mass killings extensively. The modern understanding of military service was also unacceptable and non-Islamic to him. He attributed the

[369] Winter, *Remembering War*, 65 via Beşikçi, "Tarihyazımında hatırat ve günlükler nasıl kullanılmalı?", 262.
[370] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 166.
[371] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 167.

losses and defeats to “materialist soldiers” who trusted gymnastics, sports and military training rather than Allah and the prophet. Therefore, when he described a massive defeat at Arıburnu, in which the officers killed the retreating soldiers, he said that the victory was not deserved anyway.

Although he was not happy with the defeat, it seems to have made him satisfied in a way that the officers' "expertise" was proved to “be groundless”.[372] This 'alim's enthusiasm about their disgrace can be seen as a part of the school-madrasa rivalry that has been going on for years. The effort to prove himself against the officers who graduated from schools and the hidden inferiority complex he felt against them show up in some parts of the memory.

When their battalion imam was killed in Arıburnu front, the battalion commander wanted to appoint Fevzi as the new Imam. He accepted the order but still told the commander that he was “the fruit of two trees of science", referring to combined school and madrasa qualities of his madrasa in Konya and that he could also do Mathematics, fine writing and work to serve as a clerk at headquarter. When he was appointed as the Imam, he seems to be quite pleased that he was given a daily reporting mission on enemy ships for a short time. He clearly did not like the commanders at all, but he liked being cared for by them.[373] There are many such cases where his defiant and confident identity manifests itself. While they retreated in one of the battles, he rebuked a religious soldier who wanted to calm him and who said, "read this certain prayer". Fevzi was replying that he already knew the prayer

[372] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 202.
[373] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 299.

and no need to remind him, wrathfully explaining that “grief in my face was not out of fear of the enemy, but because of the bad state of this army”.[374]

The fact that he got rid of the fear he was trying to hide and started to work as an imam behind the front seems to have relieved him. He said the commanders finally understood that “he was doing everything” but "his job should have been the imamate".[375] This appointment was what he deserved as "ever since he started to crawl on all fours", he was engaged in scholarship and his whole life dedicated to madrasa.[376] Nevertheless, when he became the Imam, he was no less complaining about the condition of the army and commanders than he used to be. He was fulminating against the commander, who said, “use verses and hadiths in the subjects of encouraging sermons, or made up if you could not find the relevant hadith”.[377] When he asked the military administration for more time to be given for his sermons to soldiers, they were first approached with caution, but then allowed but removed “maliciously” when "it seemed crowded".[378]

As far as we understand from memory, the religious activity efforts of Abdullah Fevzi in Çanakkale ended as a result of one of such efforts. He said that he had written a report to the commander about general neglect regarding prayers among the troops and demanded the implementation of Sharia's provisions on this issue, which prescribed punishments such as beatings. For him, applying penalties was essential as “only 12 of the 1200-man battalion” attended the communal worships he led. This report angered the commander who himself did not pray

[374] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 249.
[375] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 260.
[376] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 303.
[377] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 309.
[378] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 310.

regularly and caused Abdullah Fevzi to abandon his efforts bringing "bad consequences rather than good".[379]

The ruined mosques and madrasahs he encountered when he moved away from the chaos of war and crossed into the Anatolian side of Çanakkale strait saddened him. This dramatic scene reminded him that these were the eschatological end times, and a linear flow of history in a negative way was unavoidable. Inspired by this scene, in the memoirs, he tries to use his literary skills to depict what he called "Congress of Thought", in which minbar, mihrab, minaret and sermon seat of the ruined mosque across his resting place attended. This section's allegorical and artistic expression is specifically crucial since it reflects the emotional intensity he lives in and shows the last thoughts that his "cause" left him in its purest form.

Allegory starts with the emphasis that they are at "the end of the world". While the sermon seat was reading the hadith, "This religion was poor, it will go poor", the minbar and mihrab were crying.[380] Addressing them, the seat was arguing the reasons why Muslims did leave their “immaculate Sharia” and cling to “such worthless things”. It concluded that the "anti-religious pest" among the Muslims was eating the essence of Islam and influencing the whole tree. For Muslim, what they preach as "progress" was not the whose natural form could only be achieved by adhering to Sharia. It said that they introduced all kinds of evil and disgrace to our country under the name of science and art, insisting that although these are the “worms” of this place, their roots are in “materialist Europe”.[381]

[379] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 313.
[380] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 282.
[381] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 287.

The solution he found against these “worms” is vital in demonstrating the radicalization achieved by him and possibly the movement he was subjected to. According to him, to protect healthy organs, unhealthy cells in the body had to be destroyed, so the long-neglected Sharia provisions against apostates should have been applied. If the criminal law "on which spiders weave their webs" was not applied, these "irreligious" people would continue to "look good and spoil new generations".[382] They could only be the incompetents sent to Europe to learn industry and science but did nothing but carry its scum to here. The anger of the seat was not limited to those who were "obviously what they were" and sustained that no less guilty were the ulema who were supposed to make “enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong” as per the command of the Qur'an. Their "worldly ambitions" and their eagerness to seek help from the "oppressors" removed the “majesty of knowledge” that Allah bestowed on them.[383]

After seeing the destructiveness of war, his anti-modernity and anti-high technology opinion were combined with his opposition to the CUP, which he saw as representative of these terms. High tech warships and planes that took lives by firing from seas and skies like “Sakar Hell” could not be determiners of the level of civilization. Considering the good morality and piety that are “the elements of a true civilization”, he said, "you are behind your ancestors that you say ‘we surpassed them’ ".[384]

According to Abdullah Fevzi, the cause of “all this civilization delusion” and the savagery it produces was Europe. He states that they could not tolerate a Qur'an that commanded jihad, recalling the Islamophobia of the British Prime Minister W.E.

[382] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 287.
[383] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 290.
[384] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 293.

Gladstone, which was a common narrative among the Islamists of that time. But he still did not see his own officers fighting against them as mujahideen because "jihad was done to raise the word of God, not to destroy humanity."[385]

In line with the feeling this last statement aroused, it can be said that Abdullah Fevzi found many practices of the Ottoman Army "cruel". According to him, even the British, “which our officers constantly told about the evil that they would do to the homeland, would declare peace in the places they occupied, not persecute but invest there”.[386] The Ottoman Army, on the other hand, was far from political intrigue, he said. The actions of the Ottoman Army were “like locusts entering the wheat field”. He claimed that the gardens in Hamedan had been destroyed during the Iran expedition, in which he was also involved, and found such actions as “a brutality that even the Russians did not do to the places they occupied."[387].

We see Abdullah Fevzi more concerned when local elements were Muslims that affected by such events. He felt a distinguished embarrassment towards the Arabs that he made them spoke as “does such an army belong to Muslim Ottomans or Germans?”.[388] Giving importance to the Arabs in Abdullah Fevzi, which probably has a religious foundation, is evident in some other examples. An Egyptian doctor who joined the Ottoman Army for jihad and carried "cleanliness, generosity and good morals special to the Arab race" was asking A. Fevzi as "When you take Egypt, will you behave like that to the people?"[389] referring to degrading treatment of the

[385] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde,* 296.
[386] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde,* 149.
[387] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde,* 150.
[388] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde,* 179.
[389] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde,* 368.

officers towards soldiers, which ended many times with their being hospitalized or fainting, as he narrated by A. Fevzi.[390]

There are some shreds of evidence that he was selective in this matter and that there was a specific interest in the Arab suffers. For instance, although the abandoned Armenian houses in the Armenian settlement Hasanbeyli, which he saw and found so beautiful, saddened him while passing from Adana to Syria,[391] he did not feel similar to the previous one. He regrets that he heard that many Armenians were killed a couple of years ago during the exile in the mountainous region they passed through on foot, but right after this, he starts to talk about Aleppo,[392] the first stop, they would arrive on the way to the Iranian front, without dwelling on the causes and perpetrators of the killings and immediately mentions about the "novel trashes-innovations" that introduced to the city through railway.

One of the most striking themes in the memoir is his longing for Konya, his madrasa, and his friends. While the war was raging with all its violence, he dreamed about Konya that was "the home of honorable and good people" and "center of good morality and scholarship", and still remembered his madrasa that was somewhat "an institute for research" in a nostalgic way when he was exhausted from malaria in the trenches. He said that he felt in this place like the Prophet once was in hijrah in Madina with a longing of homeland. When he was appointed to the Iraqi Front from Çanakkale, he found an opportunity to fulfil this hijrah longing for a short time since the commander allowed him to negotiate with his relatives once the train arrived at Konya and stayed four hours there.[393]

[390] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 171.
[391] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 347.
[392] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 359.
[393] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 320.

The train journey, which he was waiting impatiently to arrive Konya, and the time he spent in Konya were described in detail. Using the themes of love and longing of classical Ottoman poetry, he described the "taste of reunion" with *saqr* or intoxication.[394] As he approached Konya by train, he first looked for the Alaaddin Mosque from afar. Then he saw the Islah-ı Medaris, and his enthusiasm increased. He imagined that it was ‘‘as if there were pillars of light from the madrasa towards the sky and spreading the blessings to the city from here”.[395]

As soon as he got off the train, he ran to the madrasa, climbed upstairs and went to Ahmed Ziya Efendi, whom he called his guide or *murshid*. Abdullah Fevzi seems to have claimed all kinds of claims or terminologies of religion for himself; he and his entourage in Konya have a natural right to speak over them. While describing his murshid sitting on the sofa with a "bold" definition in a religious sense, he said, "There were all kinds of good qualities on this sofa except prophethood”.[396] The parcelling of the religious area also manifests itself in his address to the youngest class of madrasah students who were not enlisted in the army and could stay in the madrasa. He was hailing them, saying, "O army units on duty with guidance to the ummah!". Addressing students with militarist concepts is essential in terms of reflecting the radical context he was in. According to him, these troops had "wisdom swords" and ruled hearts with them. He called them "heirs of the prophets” by referring to the frequently used hadith, which was often used to prominence the ulama. He said, "this army should have come to the rescue of the ummah and should have arisen from the ‘Maşrık’ of this madrasa”. He prayed for them that their hearts

[394] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 323.
[395] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 320.
[396] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 324.

would be filled with the spirit of Zeynelabidin Efendi, their murshid and sheikh, who was in exile.[397]

Abdullah Fevzi also met with his family elders during his short time here. He met with Hasan Kudsi Efendi, the uncle of Zeynelabidin Efendi and his son Ali Rıza Kudsi, who fought and wounded in Çanakkale like himself, and many of his other relatives. Here, the parts of his memories on the Iraqi and Iranian fronts begin, but since some of the notebooks that include the sections of the memoirs are missing, we cannot reach his interesting and self-revealing deductions anymore.

If a general evaluation of this memoir needs to be made, it should be noted that this text is far from being evaluated in opposing concepts such as "reality" or "fabrication". Here, we can learn how his memory and experience produced himself in various contexts he was in and what he wanted to show with this narrative within his desired identity frame. At this point, he positions himself as an indomitable man of cause, an uncompromising teacher, protector of religion, having a natural authority over its affairs. The narrative in the memoir talks about "appropriate" events that are carefully selected to serve the image presented. The only exception to this is what he experienced in the village of Hüseyinabad in Hamedan, in which "moral decay" in the army increased more. In addition to “bad deeds such as drinking and gambling”, some soldiers started to have “mutaa marriage” with local Persian women, which is a form of sexual intercourse that was seen as adultery and forbidden in Sunni Islam. Abdullah Fevzi, who has now risen to the position of the military Mufti, had the authority to intervene in the incident. He said that he fined a commander named Mümtaz Efendi, who had sexual intercourse in this way and

[397] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 331.

threatened to dismiss him from military service if he repeated. After presenting himself as an uncompromising ‘alim who struggles with this, the following interesting statements come: "The owner of an 'action' that was secretly done with having sobriety, on the condition that it is rare, could be excused.”.

It is pretty interesting that he narrated this event which was against the image he had drawn throughout the entire memory. He feels obliged to confess his regret and explain why he made this decision. Although it was not his intention, "once the door was opened, everyone entered from there," and this fatwa had an encouraging effect on soldiers.[398] The fact that he bravely reflects the effect of his fatwa here may also be regarded as that Abdullah Fevzi did his best to approach the identity and image he wanted to be. In this context, where he sees violence as a precaution against the circles he regards as secularizers, his questioning himself is pretty compatible with the "deeply sentient" situation he is in. Still, it should be noted that this image preservation concern is also seen in his other memoirs and should be considered while evaluating Fevzi. This attitude will enable the next section to be viewed from an angle not noticed much until today and will serve as a unique resource in showing the movement's attitude during the Turkish War of Independence, which reveals rival Islamic discourses during the war.

4.2 On-road to civil war: violent clash of Islamic discourses

After being defeated in the Great War, the Unionist government led by Talat Pasha resigned on October 8, 1918. The establishment of a new government by Ahmed Izzet Pasha on October 30 1918, signalled that the opposition political figures who

[398] Koçkuzu, *Çanakkale Cephesinde*, 183.

were either in exile or prisons during the war would return to Istanbul for taking the initiative in the new political ground. Mustafa Sabri and Zeynelabidin Efendis were among these returnees who would be agents of "settling old accounts" with the Unionists in the new period. During the Unionist purge by the Ferid Pasha government backed by the Allied Powers, the old pro-CUP Sheikhul Islams Musa Kazım and Hayri Efendis were also arrested. Meanwhile, Mustafa Sabri was appointed to Suleymaniye Mosque and then to the post of the Sheikhul Islam in the cabinet of Ferid Pasha in April 1919.[399] Ferid Pasha was reorganizing the former Freedom and Accord Party in which Mustafa Sabri and Zeynelabidin preserved their leading places in the central office of their old party.[400]

Furthermore, Zeynelabidin Efendi could meet with Sultan Vahdettin for the first time, thanks to the help of a chamberlain of the sultan from Konya, and to share his ideas over "an Islamic democracy" and an ideal political future for the country.[401] After this meeting, the close relations he built was probably effective in his appointment as a senator to the Senators' Assembly (*Meclis-i Ayan*) by the sultan. As it could be felt in his enthusiasm to speak about the country's future, Zeynelabidin was hopeful. He had already started to reorganize his men in Konya. At the place of the Maşrık-ı Irfan, his cousin Ali Rıza Efendi started to publish *Intibah*, a new pro-FAP newspaper.[402] Moreover, a modern school project called *Daru'l Irfan* was founded by Zeynelabidin and received permission from the state.[403] He also ensured

[399] Bein, *Osmanlı Uleması ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*, 135.
[400] Arabacı, "Konya Medreseleri", 521.
[401] Arabacı, "Konya Medreseleri", 521.
[402] Arabacı, "Konya Medreseleri", 491.
[403] BOA, ŞD. 1267/3, (h. 26.04. 1338), İ.DUİT.. 123/6, (H.06.07.1338)., MV. 254-59, (04.07. 1338).

that the taxes accumulated for six years from the 15 thousand decares of land he controlled were deleted, as he could not cultivate them.[404]

Meanwhile, for the former CUP allies, the reasons for the alliance increased even further. Even though the CUP dissolved after November 1918, its agents in politics (other than the former top administration) continued to be effective all over the vilayets. After the Allied occupation of the parts of Anatolia, local resistance movements started to be formed with the participation and assistance of the CUP officers. The Invasion of Izmir by the Kingdom of Greece accelerated these efforts for armed resistance, and Mustafa Kemal Pasha emerged as the new leader of the old CUP coalition, which had to claim to be distinct from the former as the new context obliged. The former Islamist allies of the CUP also participated in the national resistance movement and gathered in Ankara. Çetinsaya says that many Islamists like Mehmed Akif and Said Halim, who witnessed the inefficiency of Panislamist policies in WWI and exposed the national humiliation under the occupation, changed their attitude towards nationalism.[405] As he did in WWI, Mehmed Akif had begun the preaching journeys for propagating his pro-resistance stance, which he qualified as a jihad against infidels. Hasan Ulucutsoy refers to the fact that Mehmed Akif, who abstained from emphasizing the nation in his past poems, started to use it, as it is most clearly seen in the Independence March (*İstiklal Marşı*).[406] The declared-official aims and anxieties of the national movement express themselves in a sermon Akif gave in Nasrullah Mosque in Kastamonu. As he acknowledged, the *kufr* and the West he described as one nation when it comes to Muslims, do not demand new vilayets anymore from the Turks. Now they were directly looking for the Muslim

[404] BOA, ML.EEM. 1334/19, (R. 03.05.1336)
[405] Çetinsaya, "Rethinking Nationalism and Islam", 360.
[406] Ulucutsoy, "Balkan Harbi'nden Milli Mücadeleye", 231.

lives, their caliphate and sultanate, their belief and religion. This Turco-Islamic narrative of the National Movement separated from the Islamic discourse of Istanbul and specifically of Mustafa Sabri and his team with its special reference to nationalism. However, the Panislamism ideals and its emphasis over the caliphate were being tackled and represented by Ankara, rather than the caliphate's capital, as Indian Muslims resurrected Panislamist discourse against the British and started to send aids and messages to the resistance that they did avoid to the CUP during the WWI.[407] In addition, some global Muslim characters like Libyan Senusi Sheikh Ahmed al Sharif came to Anatolia for supporting the resistance, reminding the situation under the CUP rule in the beginning of WWI.

The stance of the National Movement, which I called an "advocacy of caliphate despite the reigning caliph", was maintained even after the war was won at the front. İsmet Pasha in an interview to the Muslim Standard newspaper, two months after the liberation of Izmir, stated that they would protect the caliphate 'until the last drop of their blood' and stated that the caliphate was the right and duty of the Turkish nation.[408]

In fact, in the beginning of the invasions, the Ottoman ulema was far from united, and many adopted a neutral stance like most people. To attract the neutrals, Mustafa Sabri had developed a counter Islamic discourse to that of Ankara. Association of Islamic Scholars (*Cemiyet-i Müderrisîn*), which would later become *Teali-i Islam Cemiyeti*, was founded and headed by Sabri. He ensured that his supporters were appointed to the posts in Meşihat. He had the law reform made by the CUP cancelled and had the Sharia courts reconnected to the Sheikh al-Islam.[409]

[407] Aydın, *The Idea of Muslims World*, 159.
[408] Küçükkılınç, *Jöntürklük ve Kemalizm*, 305.
[409] Bein, *Osmanlı Uleması ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*, 139.

He directed the Islamic research center called *Darü'l Hikmetü'l İslamiye*, which was in fact founded by the CUP, to support his anti-resistance discourse by Islamic causation. Mehmet Akif, a member of Daru'l Hikmet who disagreed with the new policy, was fired. According to Mustafa Sabri, the Ankara movement was an irreligious movement, like its predecessor, the CUP. He said that Ankara adopted both nationalism that Islam had forbidden and advocated the animosity for wealth like their allies, the Bolsheviks, which was again anti-Islamic.[410]

Mustafa Sabri was right that the old CUP cadres and the Anatolian resistance were interested in allying with Bolshevik Russia and applying to socialist discourses against the western imperialism. What he did not point out was the Islamic content in the new discourse. Anatolian resistance was quite capable of translating Bolshevism into Islam. Mustafa Kemal said that Bolshevism encompassed the laws and principles of Islam and saw a connection between the spirit of Pan-Islamism and Socialist internationalism, in the context of the year 1920 that was one of the most challenging times for the resistance.[411]

As expected, Mustafa Sabri neither took this Islamic discourse into account seriously nor believed that this alliance would be beneficial. He claimed it would not be possible for the Unionists to win against the occupation with Bolshevik support as they were defeated with much greater backing of the Germans.[412] Mustafa Sabri's uncompromising hostility caused discomfort even in his closest circle. After the famous fatwa of Durrizade issued by Istanbul against Ankara, some people such as Tahirül Mevlevi resigned from Teali-i Islam.[413]

[410] Albayrak, *İrtica'nın Tarihçesi II*, 155.
[411] Kırmızı, "After Empire , Before Nation", 131.
[412] Albayrak, *İrticanın Tarihçesi II*, 156.
[413] Bein, *Osmanlı Uleması*, 139.

For both the Istanbul government and the resistance, it was necessary to attract ulema, specifically local imams and hodjas, since they were in close contact with the public. After the establishment of the Turkish Grand Assembly by Mustafa Kemal and the National Forces in Ankara, the budget to be allocated for *ilmiye* was said to be crucial as the ulama deserve a satisfactory amount of financial source as they were "ones who keep religion and nationality alive". On the other hand, Mustafa Sabri envisioned a central role for madrasas in his opposition to the national movement.[414] To prevent this, while the war with the Greek army continues in the West, Ankara was interested in preparing a madrasah reform project to win the ulema and madrasa students to its side.[415] This undertaking also meant that the National Movement inherited the CUP's vision for reform. Abdullah Fevzi Efendi, the nephew of Zeynelabidin, wrote in his memoirs that the National Forces (*Kuvva-yı Milliye*) , offered an *alim* friend of him to establishe a madrasa with nationalist assistance and sought support from it in return.[416]

Konya was at the center of these divisions and discussions among the ulema. In a short time, the local branches of pro-Istanbul Teali-i Islam, the FAP and the English Friendship Association were established, alongside pro-Ankara, the Konya Association for Defence of National Rights. It seems that both sides worked to influence people of opposite political stances by establishing fake associations. As Abdullah Fevzi claimed, "The Association of People Loyal to Sultan" was actually founded by people who the National Forces directed and aimed to mislead pro-Istanbul people.[417]

[414] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions and Politics", 218.
[415] Bein, "The Ulema, Their Institutions and Politics", 221.
[416] Abdullah Fevzi, *Devlet-i Osmaniye'nin Niza'ı Âhiri- Safahât-ı Ibtila*, (1922), vrk 7. Koçkuzu, *Bir Müderrisin Sürgün Yılları*.
[417] Abdullah Fevzi, "Konya'da bir Cemiyet", *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri*, vrk. 29.

Like the former CUP administration of Konya, the Konya branch of the AFDNR was headed by ulema such as Mudarris Ali Kemali and Ömer Vehbi Efendis, who were former CUP MPs in the Ottoman Parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*). The Ottoman military administration in the city constituted of pro-resistance officers who had in direct relation with the National Forces, while the governorate and other public offices were at the hand of pro-Istanbul bureaucrats. Fahrettin (Altay) Pasha wrote in his memoirs that Zeynelabidin had an influence over the public servicemen.[418] The conflict between the two cliques was inevitable. Governor Cemal Bey, backed by the Ferid Pasha government, was trying to drive the nationalist army out of the city. In the local press, specifically in Zeynelabidin's İntibah newspaper, it was written that the militias of the National Forces collected tribute from the people, and they conscripted some young males by force. An intelligence report to Ankara indicates that Ziya Efendi, the brother of Zeynelabidin, had called soldiers in the local military to desert their battalions.[419]

However, the supporters of Istanbul did not have the chance of armed intervention, and as a result, the governor Cemal Bey had to flee the city in September 1919.[420] This easy defeat caused the pro-Istanbul side to make their first serious confrontation with the National Forces. In October 1919, the people of Bozkır, the hometown of Zeynelabidin Efendi, rebelled and captured the governorate. The success in this town affected people of some neighboring towns and villages, and the rebellion spread over all Taşeli Plato. In his memoirs, The Phases of the Calamity (*Safahât-ı Ibtilâ*) Abdullah Fevzi narrates the reason for the uprising and his participation in it from his perspective. According to Fevzi, the

[418] Altay, *10 Yıl Savaş*, 213.
[419] Avanas, *Milli Mücadelede Konya*, 78.
[420] Avanas, *Milli Mücadelede Konya*, 85.

National Forces were precisely the same people as the Unionists. The main components of their ideology were “youthfulness and progress”, and they emulated the French Revolution. In their thought, Islam was a barrier towards progress; the madrasa was a natural enemy. He believed they had destroyed the hodjas and madrasa students in the WWI on purpose. While other ministries had protected their employees, Meşihat did not protect them at the entrance to the Great War. “Fortunately”, he said, in the end, the "sign of irreligion" had been demolished referring to the fall of the CUP regime in 1918, and added that “the madrasa could now progress and become stronger”. He regrets that they emerged this time with the "excuse" of resisting the occupation of Izmir and started to dominate them again. He specified that he could not answer “their (National Resistance which he described as the CUP) bombs and weapons” with his “words and pens”.[421] Regarding his participation in the rebellions around Bozkır and Konya, he acknowledges them as “I did what my profession required" and “it had nothing to do with partisanship”.[422]

The rebels in Bozkır looted pro-NF houses, seized weapons and arrested some soldiers in the local garrison.[423] The Istanbul government immediately sent a counsel to this place to prevent the escalation of the conflict. However, a battalion of National Forces led by Arif Bey constituted of Karakeçili Yoruks was already sent to the region to suppress the rebellion. Mustafa Kemal Pasha publicly declared Zeynelabidin and Ziya brothers as the instigators of the incident.[424] A report was specifying that the cousins of Zeynelabidin were behind the rebellion.[425] Fevzi writes that in the raid of the National Forces to his village, Uçpınar, Karakeçili Arif Bey

[421] A. Fevzi, *Devlet-i Osmaniye’nin Niza’ı Âhiri- Safahât-ı Ibtila*, vrk 7.
[422] A. Fevzi, *Devlet-i Osmaniye’nin Niza’ı Âhiri- Safahât-ı Ibtila,* vrk 12.
[423] Avanas, *Milli Mücadelede Konya*, 90.
[424] Avanas, *Milli Mücadelede Konya,* 95.
[425] Avanas, *Milli Mücadelede Konya,* 102.

threatened villagers with killing all relatives of Zeynelabidin if they aid the runaways.[426] Meanwhile, the rebels also did not accept the peace if the National Forces would not go outside of Bozkır and an amnesty general granted for them. Towards the end of the same month, the clashes (referred to as the Second Bozkır Uprising in some sources) accelerated. The revolt was finally suppressed with a general amnesty decision for all rebels. Asaf Talat Bey, the head of the investigative committee, was behind the decision of the amnesty, as he acknowledged in his report that the reason behind the rebellion was "the conduct of Kuva-yı Milliye".[427] It is ambiguous how an inspector of the Istanbul government was able to establish peace between the two sides, but it was probably made possible for him by leaving the region under the administration of the National Forces again.

The inspector provided the peace but did not seem to have liked either by the rebels or the National Forces. Abdullah Fevzi says that although he was said to be forgiven, he did not come down from the mountain and wrote to the Istanbul press and foreign embassies about the "savagery and cruelty" he had observed.[428] A. Fevzi actually hints that this rebellion was not suppressed very heavily, as he revealed that Arif Bey did not kill anyone after the rebellion ended. However, Fevzi wrote that "all townsmen were levied tribute on the National Forces", while some rebel houses, including that of Fevzi, were razed to the ground. One of the rebel leaders, Delibaş Mehmed, had also been forgiven and, together with his men, incorporated into the ranks of the National Forces. Actually, the National Forces comprised such local notables (*efe*s and *agha*s) like Delibaş who were far from governmental supervision.

[426] A. Fevzi, *Devlet-i Osmaniye'nin Niza'ı Âhiri- Safahât-ı Ibtila*, vrk 17.
[427] Aydın-Yağcı, "Sarıkeçililerin Eşkıyalığı ve Konya Delibaş İsyanı Üzerine Değinmeler, 77.
[428] A. Fevzi, *Osmanlı Devletinin Nizaı Ahiri*, vrk 27.

The military report from Konya to Ankara listed and complained about the misconducts of the irregular troops.[429]

In April 1920, The Sultan charged Damad Ferid Pasha for his new and most prolonged government. It meant the disappearance of the limited negotiation channels betweeb the government in Istanbul and the resistance movement. On April 11 1920, the controversial Ottoman Sheikhu'l-Islam Dürrizade Abdullah Efendi declared a fatwa against the nationalist resistance in Anatolia by quoting a Quranic verse, Hujurat 9 "…then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah".[430] This fatwa triggered the FAP circles and pro-Istanbul ulema in Konya. They said that the occupation of Istanbul by the allied powers was a result of the disobedience of the National Forces to the sultan.[431] Abdullah Fevzi said it was obligatory to fight those who rebelled against the Caliph of the Muslims and became rebel (*bagy*) in Sharia terminology. Using a similar Islamic discourse and method, Ankara published another fatwa. Accordingly, those who fought for the rights of the Caliph could only be *mujahid*s, not bagy. Meanwhile, it was reflected in the intelligence reports that Zeynelabidin's close men started to hold secret meetings after the Dürrizade fatwa. Fahrettin Pasha took the initiative and raided one of these meetings and detained prominent figures of the group, such as Zeynelabidin's brother Rıfat, former owner of the Maşrık-ı Irfan Mazlumzade Osman and Zeynelabidin's close auxiliary Taşbaşlı Hacı Hüseyin as hostages to be killed if an attempt for the rebellion occurred.[432]

[429] Avanas, *Milli Mücadele'de Konya*, 65.
[430] (49:9) And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.
[431] Avanas, *Milli Mücadele'de Konya*, 106.
[432] Altay, *10 Yıl Savaş*, 242.

Ankara had focused its attention on Konya, and some prominent Islamist deputies like Mehmed Akif and Ali Şükrü Bey were sent to advise the people. Soon, Mustafa Kemal visited the city and received information about the situation. The threat was thought to have passed, and those detained in the previous raid were released as the administrative offices and governorate were already at the hand of the pro-resistance, Haydar Bey. [433] Some sources write that the pardon of the detainees was provided by a colleague of them, Hoca Ali Kemali Efendi, the president of AFDNR.

However, the opposition to Ankara in Konya did not stop, and a new rebellion in the near future was in sight. I think one of the reasons for this lied in the top social strata of the city. The *Hacıağa*s and *Efendi*s, which Fahrettin Pasha mentioned, were devout merchants and landowners who had high authority over the peasants and had close relations with the ulema. Zeynelabidin Efendi, who was in Istanbul at that time, probably had a say on them. Although the sources were in disagreement about who was the primary agent of the new rebellion, the moral support of this group and the opposition ulema was evident over the incoming rebellion. Still, it was Delibaş Mehmed Ağa, a leader in the National Forces and a former rebel, who carried out the opposition to an armed conflict with Ankara. Delibaş attacked Konya with a few hundred cavalries, while Governor Haydar Bey was waiting to send him off to the Western Front. According to one view, Delibaş saw that his career as an irregular militia leader would not continue so much in the side of Ankara and decided to move on to the opposite side. For another view, he attempted to do so when he realized that he would be directed to fight not the Greek

[433] Avanas, *Milli Mücadele'de Konya*, 117-120.

Army but the Caliph Army.[434] Abdullah Fevzi stated in his memoirs that although they supported Delibaş, he had decided on this action on his own.[435] M. Sıfır, who wrote a semi-fictional story of the rebellion in 1940, notes that the Delibaş Rebellion was entirely the result of the work of Zeynelabidin.[436] Probably, Abdullah Fevzi's claim that "we did not direct Delibaş" is closer to the truth, although it does not exclude Zeynelabidin's support for the rebellion and participation of his men in the uprising.Because as soon as the clashes started in the suburbs of Konya and at the train station, the Governor Haydar Bey could take Rıfat Efendi and Taşbaşlı Hüseyin as hostages who had not made any preparations for the rebellion. National Forces together with hostages retreated to Alaaddin hill with a group of troops to resist rebels. The rebels embraced the discourse of caliphate and Sharia, calling the people of the city to their ranks from the minarets of mosques. While governmental buildings fell to the rebels one by one, they started a purge to detain all prominent The National Forces' supporters in the city. Hoca Ali Kemali Efendi, as a famous orator and a threat for the counter-religious discourse against that of the rebels, was caught and killed under torture.[437]

The rebels believed that the Army of the Caliphate would come to their aid, so they did not prepare for a counterattack.[438] Libyan Sheikh Ahmed Senusi, who was residing in Konya at the time and a figure respected by both sides, was accepted as the mediator between the resisters on the Alaaddin Hill and the rebels surrounding them to avoid further bloodshed. After long negotiations, Governor Haydar and his men were allowed to leave the city on the condition that the hostages were handed

[434] Aydın, "Sarıkeçililerin Eşkıyalığı", 81.
[435] A. Fevzi, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri*, vrk.49.
[436] M. Sıfır, "Konya İsyanı'nın İçyüzü", *Yeni Sabah*, Tefrika 12, (1 Şubat 1940): 2.
[437] Avanas, *Mili Mücadele'de Konya*, 131.
[438] Avanas, *Mili Mücadele'de Konya*, 138.

over. Meanwhile, the rebellion had spread to the districts of Konya. Karaman, Bozkır, Seydişehir, and Beyşehir had fallen one by one. The national forces under the command of Derviş Bey and Refet (Bele) Bey, who set out from the main army headquarters in Afyon and Ankara, came in front of Konya and took over the city after violent clashes. At the same time, Delibaş retreated to the south, towards the mountainous regions.

Equipped with cannons and machine guns, the National Forces had no trouble in defeating the rebels with simple rifles. While the cities and towns under the rebellion were falling one by one, court-martials were established immediately. First of all, some prominent figures like Rıfat Efendi and Taşbaşlı Hüseyin as suspected motivators were hanged.[439] According to the report of Konya Independence Court, Court-Martials executed 800 of 2000 criminals.[440]

The Court Martial's reaction to suppress the rebellion became a subject of discussion in the Grand Assembly in Ankara. Vehbi Efendi, the deputy of the Karesi, objected to the threats made by the army against people. He quoted an official source that ordered the families of those who do not surrender their weapons would be exiled; their houses would be destroyed.[441] İsmail Şükrü Efendi, the deputy of Karahisar-ı Sahib, opposed him by saying that all people were guilty and quoted Osman Bey, the commander of the regiment, saying that it is even needed not to leave stones on the stone.[442] The Minister of Internal Affairs informed that intimidation practices such as exile and burning houses were legitimate under the law on treason (*Hıyanet-ı Vataniye*). Many MPs said that previous amnesties were a

[439] Avanas, *Mili Mücadele'de Konya*, 177.
[440] Osman Akandere, "3 Numaralı Konya İstiklal Mahkemesi'nin Konya İsyanı ile İlgili Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Başkanlığına Sunduğu Raporu", 82.
[441] TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, Devre 1, Cilt 1, İctima 1, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1336 (1920), 203.
[442] TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, Devre 1, Cilt 1, İctima 1, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1336 (1920), 200.

mistake and that current harsh practices were necessary. Vehbi Efendi, Ankara government's Sharia minister and Konya deputy, accepted that "there is no mercy in politics" and pointed out that “the Bozkır Rebellion was indeed treated softly”. But he added that the ulema class and the people of Konya as a whole must not have been blamed for the last rebellion. He reported that he had received a notice that some gendarmes attacked women in some villages. He said that “we should be good so that the people return from the way they were deceived”.[443]

Another issue on the agenda was Mevlevi Sheikh Abdülhalim Çelebi, appointed by the FAP to replace the previous pro-CUP sheikh. Considering him as a supporter of the rebels due to his partisan role in ceasefire negotiations, the Court Martial deported the sheikh to Erzurum with the Konya deputy Kazım Hüsnü who was said to be an instrument of the rebels. The Court Martial's exile decision was not found sufficient by some of the MPs, and he was asked to be executed for treason. Diyarbakır deputy Hacı Şükrü Bey even claimed that the sheikh wanted to unite with the Italians and establish a Seljuk state in Konya.[444] After the noisy parliamentary debates, it was decided by the Assembly to establish the Konya Independence Court and send it to the region in order to investigate the accuracy of the Court Martial's decisions. According to the report of the Independence Court, all of Konya, except a few districts and villages, had participated in the revolt and all rebels in fact, deserved to be executed. “However”, it says “the repression troops already burned houses in many villages, and although the committee came intending to act violently at first, it gave up on this situation”.[445]

[443] TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, Devre 1, Cilt 1, İctima 1, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1336 (1920), 203.
[444] TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, Devre 1, Cilt 1, İctima 1, 24 Teşrin-i Evvel 1336 (1920), 213.
[445] Osman Akandere, “3 Numaralı Konya İstiklal Mahkemesi”, 82.

Abdullah Fevzi's memoirs are vital as they are the only sources written by one of the rebels. Moreover, it can be observed that he reflected his feelings very sharply, as he wrote the work in the summer of 1922 when things were still very fresh and when he was a runaway in caves and barns. The most apparent emotions in the memoirs were anger stemmed from being deceived and peace of mind thanks to doing something "right". He portrays the rebellion as a wholesale religious movement, which mobilized against "irreligion" with the official fatwas of Istanbul. Even though the rebellion had a religious discourse and considerable ulema participation, its participants have a wide range of intentions and reservations. It was said in the assembly debates that one of the most critical problems of the rebelling crowds was conscription. The "sincere religious movement" narrative, which Abdullah Fevzi tried to portray, gains a very emotional tone when he talked about Istanbul's attitude towards them. According to him, the caliphate authority, “for which they threw themselves on fire” in his words, left them alone. He writes that the sultan was trying to favor the nationalists, but this effort was in vain; he claimed that they would eliminate him too.[446] The death of many of his acquaintances after the rebellion and the fact that he lived in the mountains for years added a mystical enthusiasm to Abdullah Fevzi's texts, which includes themes of religious resignation and alienation from the world. Even though the future was surely pessimistic in his eyes, he seems to get melancholy from this challenging situation.

Despite many things he witnessed in a negative sense, Abdullah Fevzi insists that this rebellion was an “honorable Islamic act”. Although many of his acquaintances disappointed him with their selfish and “non-Islamic” attitudes in his plans to flee to Istanbul via Mersin or Aydın, they do not prevent him from

[446] A. Fevzi, *Osmanlı Devleti’nin Nizaı Ahiri*, İkinci Sene İkinci Safha, vrk.7.

describing the rebellion as Islamic. In addition, there is no self-criticism in the text regarding the Islamic suitability of the crimes committed by the rebels. It seems that he perceives the rebellion very personally and writes it in terms of his emotional world. The whole text is dominated by a romance about the madrasa and its world. For instance, he writes with pleasure about Imam Ghazali's *Ihya u Ulumiddin*, which he read in his days in the barn. Tekke and the shrine of his great-grandfather Muhammed Kudsi Bozkıri also arouses a similar sensitivity in Abdullah Fevzi's world.[447] "The good old days", when such tekkes and madrasas were crowded, never went out of his mind. In the countryside of Karaman, what he felt when he saw an old, abandoned madrasa is very convenient in terms of reflecting the psychology of Abdullah Fevzi. He writes as "I looked at the madrasa, an ancient center of knowledge. I visited its rooms one by one. It was all empty. There was no one left from the people of this place. Lamentation was felt from all sides. The walls, the ceiling and the floor were in dust. Spiders had set up their benches and has been performing their arts. I thought these spiders were also *Ittihadists* (Unionists) and *Kuvve-yi Milliyecis* (National Forces) because they were also weaving a web on Islamic sciences".[448]

This ideological emotional burden formed the background that allowed him to evaluate the rebellion. Apparently, he seriously absorbed and preached the propaganda of the Istanbul government. He led prayers in front of the governorates in the captured towns for the sake of rebellion. However, some lines still bear the traces of a conscientious account regarding his involvement in the uprising. He writes to his mother: "Mother! Did I kill a person? Did I cut off the road? Did I steal?

[447] A. Fevzi, "Tekiyye-yi Cedd-i Emcedimde", *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri- Safahat-ı Ibtila*, vrk.5.
[448] A. Fevz, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri- Safahat-ı Ibtila* ., vrk.87.

Do I have any other crimes? Turban on my head, faith in my heart, pen in my hand, word in my mouth, to speak the truth, to protect religion, to oppose the 'atheists', against 'real' rebels, I tried not to give in".[449] Describing the national movement as completely irreligious, although there were many ulema and sheikhs in its ranks, shows the level of radicalization that he and his close circle have reached. He even said that "if they conquered the whole world, not only Izmir, the nation of Islam would not want an irreligious independence", referring that the occupation was more preferable for him than the rule of the National Movement.[450] As stated previously, It is known that there is a popular religious belief that declaring heretic was tied to some high criteria and that an unjustly declared takfir will be returned to the party which made the takfir. Such use of takfir points to the psychological and ideological marginalization experienced by this group and specifically by Abdullah Fevzi after experiencing years of political competition, living in warfronts and exile in mountains after the rebellions.

In fact, reaching such a rigid opinion over the National Movement was not the inevitable result for the conservative ulema line either. According to many accounts of the rebellion (A. Fevzi and pro-National Resistance histories of the events written within two decades after the uprising), even Rıfat Efendi, the hanged brother of Zeynelabidin, would go through the motions and was against the violent methods of his brother. He used to recite "For you is your religion and for me is my religion", a verse from Sura Kafirun in the Quran, by which he preached not to fight the National Movement.[451] However, the social anger accumulated at the local scale, the already existing religious discourse at their service, and the influence of Istanbul

[449] A. Fevzi, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri*, vrk.78.
[450] A. Fevzi, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri*, vrk.7.
[451] A. Fevzi, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nizaı Ahiri*, vrk. 54.

on the region through Zeynelabidin Efendi brought marginalization and made a series of rebellion possible in Konya during the National Struggle.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Conservative ulema phenomenon in Konya and their facilities should be considered as a certain way and option stemming from the crisis of Muslims in modern times. For them, like many modern Muslim thinkers, secular modernism and western supremacy were challenges that needed to be resisted and against which Islamic alternatives should have been developed. However, their understanding of reform for this purpose had clear boundaries and focused more to preserve what they perceived of the tradition, rather than deriving a more unique synthesis with modernist narratives. Such an understanding of reform by the Conservative ulama in Konya is best seen in their madrasa, Islah-ı Medaris. Despite being the first private madrasa modernization project in the modern Ottoman history, this madrasa was only aimed at educating madrasa students by making them a little more familiar with positive sciences and warning against secularist challenges. Although the courses were diversified in the first year of the school, there was no evidence that it much differed from the traditional madrasa curriculums in the upper classes. Beside resisting what they perceived as secularization, the Conservative ulema movement in Konya had a professional motivational side too. The poor financial situation of the madrasas and of the madrasa teachers were another factors in their enthusiasm for organization. Still I find the main motivational factor for this organization in the intellectual differences in regard to understanding Islam and the attributed position of ulema in it.

The fact that they, as men of religion, set out with a religious discourse and draw up a certain roadmap towards "a reasonable Muslim" profile should not give the impression that theirs' was the only possible Islamic way of thinking in modern times. Since "the re-articulation of the tradition according to modern needs" became increasingly possible and widespread among Muslims during this period, the scale of such a re-articulation became flexible as well. Initially this flexibility seemed to be acceptable for them against the oppression and Sultan Abdulhamid II. Although the conservative ulema group was aware of the secular Young Turk figures, the reason for their alliance against the Hamidian state lied behind the modern Islamic culture that provided common Islamic discourse of opposition against the oppression.

Although the topic of the thesis is the conservative phenomenon in Konya, the reason I focused on 31 March Rebellion in the first chapter was to show the debates on the internal handicaps and limits of this common modern Islamic thought. Both the rebels and the CUP circles claimed to support Islamic Constitutionalism. Therefore, it shows that there was a serious division about what was Islamic. Indeed, opposition or ruling Ottoman political agents were always keen to develop Islamic justifications for their purposes. The statesmen sought and could find allies for themselves among the men of religion in that manner. However, this time, differentiation in Islamic discourses seems to be stemming from a more fundamental reason which was related with the perception of and conduct over the tradition. I propose that Conservative ulema phenomenon should be taken into account by focusing on intellectual side of the things rather than relying on the narrative of simple power relations. Specifically, Conservative ulema organization in Konya seems to prove this as they were behind many ulema in terms of alliance with power holders since it seems that they had idealistic motivational forces and were more

enthusiastic about checking the Islamic discourses of these agents from an orthodox religious perspective. Abdullah Fevzi's memoirs reflect such an emotional intensity and even melancholy stemming from this enthusiasm.

As stated previously, the ideological inclusiveness that emerged from the modern Islamicate culture caused many Islamic reformists to emerge in the name of Islamic revival and propagate their own proper Islamic methods. This outcome was not what conservative ulema hoped from the Islamic constitutionalism platform. It was clear that they expected a performance from the Constitutional system that would empower the ulema's position together with enforcement of the Sharia, including criminal law. It soon became clear that even liberty, one of the common discourses of the constitutional period, did not have a common understanding about it. Many of the Conservative ulema considered it as a religious terminology, read it as getting rid of slavery to the tyrant, but did not regard or adopt its socially irreligious aspects.

Although it was not an immediate result after the declaration of the constition, it is a fact that Conservative ulama have become more wary of the scale of modern Islamic rationalizations. It is actually said that Zeynelabidin still advised an "Islamic Democracy" in his meeting with Sultan Vahdettin even as late as 1919, illustrating his adherence to some elements of this methodology. However, Mustafa Sabri had already abandoned such discourses and concentrated on studying and reproducing classical Islamic theology against modernist discourses. It is said Mustafa Sabri also abandoned his constitutionalist ideas then in his place of exile, Egypt. I propose that the failed political adventure they experienced within a decade after the Constitutional Revolution had an effect on this end, since, they had witnessed the

utilization of Islamic modernist justifications by their political opponents in the meantime.

The modern Islamic inventions like nation and homeland (*vatan*) which were created by the Young Ottomans tended to be perceived in a more traditionally oriented way. For Abdullah Fevzi they had irreligious connotations. Liberalization of Islamic knowledge market in the modern Islamicate culture was found unpleasant and not a "proper" way of understanding Islam. They put emphasis on the customary methods for knowledge deductions in the traditional madrasa system and ulema supervision in this process, in a time when non-ulema intellectuals applied to modern social sciences. According to Fevzi, Islam did not need to be supported by scientific explanations. As seen in the previous chapter, his anger at some of the Islamic modernist discourses used by the CUP cadres turned to a wholesale rejection of modernism and anti-high technology.

In fact, as I said before, the new modern Islamic concepts were not initially rejected by this group. Mustafa Sabri adopted the modern Islamic *Biat*-Social Contract narrative, but he talks about the distinctive role of the ulema in this system which was not expected by other Muslim intellectuals who agreed with Islamicity of the constitution. The search for the ulema to be a powerful and effective figure without being dependent on the statesman seems to have affected the religious discourses of Mustafa Sabri and his conservative ulema circle. This is best seen in his political life at the Liberal Entente. Some criticisms were being directed against him as how could it be acceptable to struggle against the secular CUP by founding a political alliance with some other Muslim seculars and non-Muslim figures in the Freedom and Accord Party. Sabri's reply to the criticisms were quite suggestive

about the ulema emphasis in his mindset as he said that the strings were in our hands in the FAP but our colleagues in the CUP were just submissive to their party.

However, it should not be forgotten that this emphasis over the ulema's position was still for a religious purpose in their own opinion, as it would be revealed in their self-description as the guardians of the religion. The Islamic modernist rationalizations that they began to oppose could be occasionally acceptable in this context. Mustafa Sabri supported his alliance with the Christians with a story he quoted from Abu Hanifa and drew attention to the importance of the concept of freedom (*Hürriyet*).

In this context, I find it important that Ziya, one of the three ulema brothers, defined constitutionalism as a beautiful practice of the prophet, (*Sunnah*) as early as 1908, after the Constitutional Revolution. In a context in which Sharia is equated with the constitution and adopted by Islamic intellectual circles where constitutionalist cause was presumed to be Islamic obligatory (*farz*), it should be a very remarkable difference to define it as sunnah rather than farz in Islamic terminology. When there was a greater 'threat' to the farz, a pillar of the religion, like understanding Sharia in more orthodox oriented way, I think it could have become a justification for them for the abandonment of Sunnah, like constitutionalism, as it was the case with Mustafa Sabri.

The story and experiences of Ahmed Kemal is specifically important to observe how such intellectual differences emerged out of the common Islamic discourses of the constitutional period. Ahmed Kemal, an Islamic activist, journalist and teacher came to Konya from Izmir to take part in the movement by teaching in Islah-ı Medaris and writing in Maşrık-ı Irfan. However, it soon becomes clear that

Kemal did not find the qualities he expected from an institution which would be famed as first reformed madrasa. Although they had common points such as a strong adherence to religion that was at the center of life, in Kemal's mind, “progress” that they all valued was subject to “change”, which was also no doubt Islamic for him. The Conservative ulema group, on the other hand, was loyal to another famous Islamic discourse of that period, which searches the reason "being behind the west” in “the weakening of their bond with the religion and Sharia". This view, which was agreed by most of the modern Ottoman Muslim intellectuals, found the most emphasis and tradition oriented perception of it among the conservative ulema.

The fact that conservative ulema group in Konya come together to reform the madrasa, strengthen the position of the ulama and fight religious innovation according to their own understanding should not mean that some of these issues were not shared by their opponents, like the CUP. As shown through the examples in chapter II and chapter IV, the CUP was also enthusiastic about implementing its own Islamic program. It established the reformed Daru’l Hilafe madrasah network across the country. Allied ulema of the CUP could have state backing and took charge in bureaucratic positions. The platform of thought between this group and the CUP seemed very broad. Pro-CUP Shaykh al-Islam Hayri Efendi even considered the abolition of the sultanate and caliphate, something which even the CUP leaders could not accept.

Such a strong adoption of Islamic modernism by the political opponents of the conservative ulama may also have accelerated their departure from Islamic modernist attitudes. As seen in the memoirs of Abdullah Fevzi, who can be described as one of the most hardline members of the conservative movement in Konya, these ideas were perceived as a betrayal of the true religion. They did not believe in the

“sincerity” of the pro CUP ulama in regard to their Islamic aims and interpreted this cooperation just as ‘seeking worldly interests’.

It is difficult to say that the Pro-CUP ulema as a whole were reformists, and it is a fact that many ulema with conservative ideas could have supported the committee. However, it can be presumed that they at least agreed to obey the party leadership on such matters. It is known that Iskilipli Atıf Hoca, one of the conservative ulema's figures, also worked in the Daru'l Hilafe madrasa network initiated by the CUP. In other words, it cannot be said that there was a policy of boycott and prohibition of conservative ulema completely as a party policy. The Conservative ulema movement in Konya differs from the others at this point. The enthusiasm that they showed in taking action against the dominant religious discourse of the CUP and its successor National Movement, by putting their identity and solidarity into action, seems to be unique. This enthusiasm made them to take lead in the madrasa reform projections, to publish an ulema newspaper in the countryside which probably there was no an equivalent of it. Over the years, this enthusiasm can be seen to evolve into marginalization, as it appeared on their discourses. The reckless use of takfir by Abdullah Fevzi against his Muslim opponents among the CUP, illustrates the unique side of the phenomenon.

There was no probably any other religious group in this decade that had a quarrel with a governor in a threatening way, which was careful for not being seen afraid of Talat Pasha, openly opposed governments, and took up arms when it regarded ‘necessary’. This consistent opposition of the group may be related to the Sheikh Zeynelabidin and his authority in Konya, which he inherited from his family. Since there were no memoirs written by Zeynelabidin himself, it remains ambiguous what kind of projection for future he had in mind; even though his effort to establish

a school in a chaotic and challenging period like 1920 may indicate that he was hopeful. Such a hope was probably instrumental in turning competition into an armed conflict. In conclusion, theo-political understanding he envisioned was defeated and Zeynelabidin ended in exile.

APPENDIX

PHOTOGRAPHES



Photo 1: Sheikh Zeynelabidin Efendi, senator and MP.



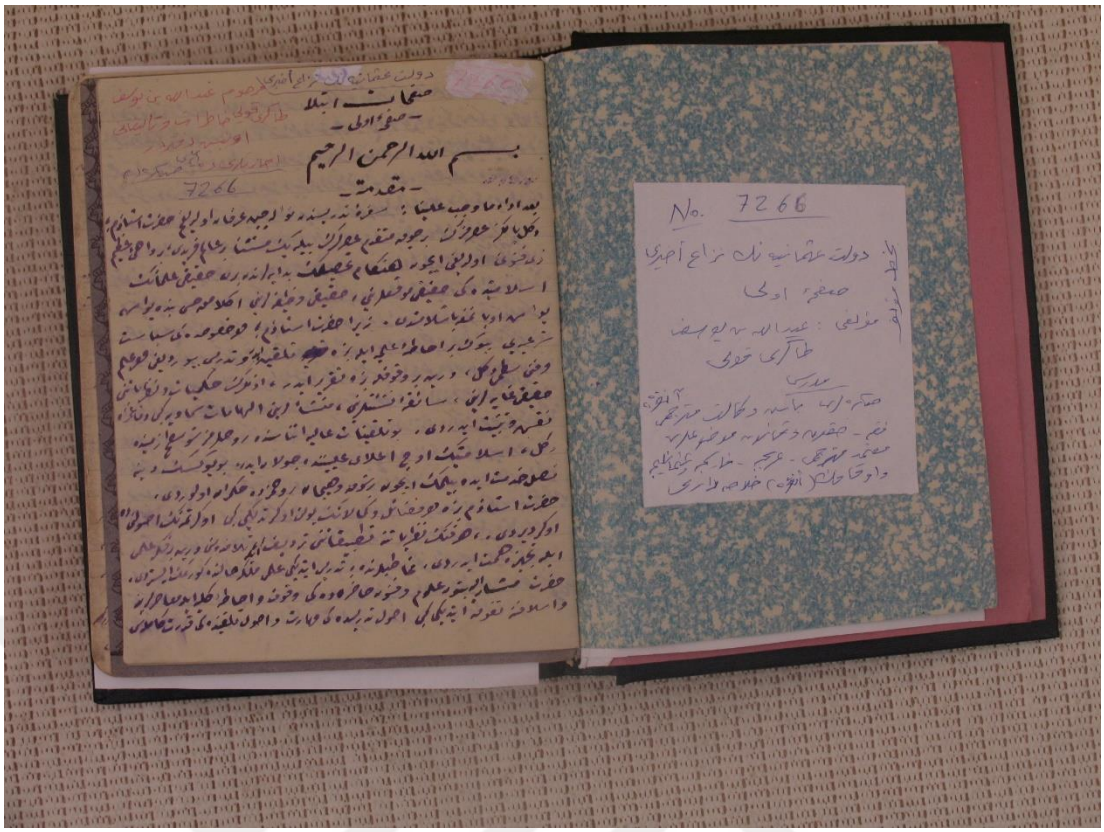
Photo 2: Mudarris Ziya Efendi, top administrator of *Islah-ı Medaris* Madrasa



Photo 3: Teachers at Konya School of Law and Ali Kemali Efendi, sitting at right.



Photo 4: An *'alim* serving at a secular college in Konya



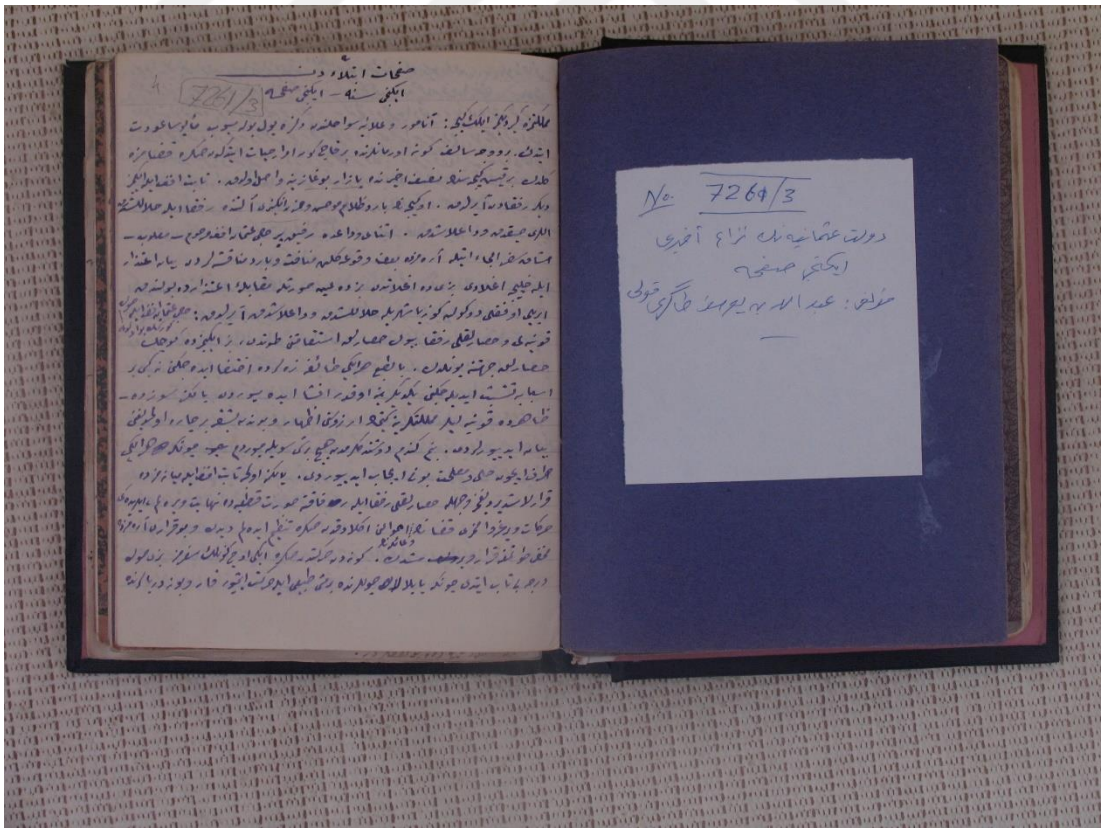
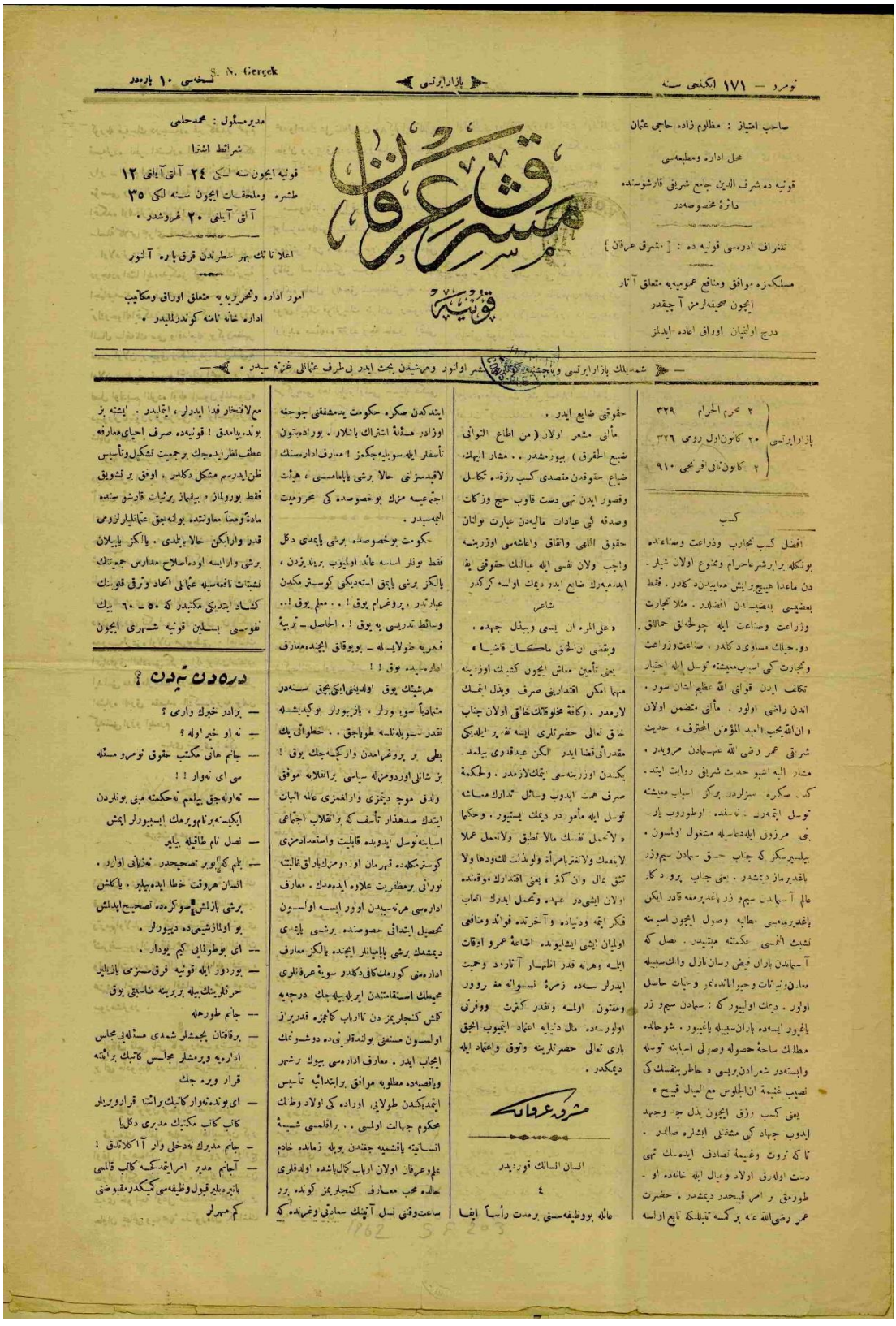


Photo 5-6: Introductory pages of the memoirs of A. Fevzi, in Koyunoğlu Library



نومرو — ۱۷۱ اکنجی سنه — بازار ایرتسی — قسطمونی ۱۰ پارەدر

صاحب امتیاز : مظلوم زاده حاجی عثمان

محل اداره ومطبعه‌سی

قوتیه ده شرف الدین جامع شریفی قارشوسنده

دائرهٔ مخصوصه‌در

تلغراف ادره‌سی قوتیه ده : [مشرق عرفان]

مسلکمزه موافق ومنافع عمومیه‌یه متعلق آثار

ایچون صحیفه‌لرمز آچیقدر

درج اولنیان اوراق اعاده ایدلمز

مشرق عرفان

قوتیه

مدیر مسئول : محمد حلمی

شرائط اشترا

قوتیه ایچون سنه لکی ۲۴ آلتی آیلغی ۱۲

طشره وملحقات ایچون سنه لکی ۳۵

آلتی آیلغی ۲۰ غروشدر .

اعلانات هر سطرندن فرق پاره آلنور

امور اداره وتحریریه متعلق اوراق ومکاتیب

اداره خانه نامنه گوندرلمليدر .

شمدیلك بازار ایرتسی وپازارتسی نشر اولنور ومرشیدن بحث ایدر بر طرف عثمانلی غزته سیدر .

۲ محرم الحرام ۳۲۹
بازار ایرتسی ۲۰ کانون اول رومی ۳۲۶
۲ کانون ثانی افرنجی ۹۱۰

کسب

افضل کسب تجارت وذراعت وصناعتدر بونکله برابر شرعاً حرام ومنوع اولان شیلر - دن ماعدا هیچ بر ایش معاییدن خالی دکلدر . فقط بعضیسی بعضیسندن افضلدر . مثلا تجارت وذراعت وصناعت ایله چولغانی حمالق . دوه جیلك مساوی دکلدر . صناعت وزراعت وتجارت کبی اسباب معیشته توسل ایله اختیار تکلف ایدن قولی الله عظیم لسان سور . اندن راضی اولور . مألی متضمن اولان « ان الله یحب العبد المؤمن المحترف » حدیث شریفی عمر رضی الله عنه یمان مرویدر . مشار الیه شبو حدیث شریفی روایت ایتدکدن صکره سزلردن بوکر اسباب معیشته توسل ایتمه‌یه - نسنده اوطوروب یاد - نی مرزوق ایلیه‌جکسه مشغول اولسون . بیلیورسکز که جناب حق سعادتلو سیم وزر یاغدیرماز دیمشدر . یعنی جناب پروردکار عالم آسمانلی سیم وزر یاغدیرمغه قادر ایکن یاغدیرمامسی بطایه وصول ایچون امر ونهی تشبث الهی حکمتنه مبتنیدر . فصل که آسمانلی باران فیض رسان نازل والك سبیله معادن ونباتات وحیوانات ده‌کر وحیات حاصل اولور . دیمك اولیور که : سعادتلو سیم وزر یاغدیرمسه‌ده باران سبیله یاغیور . شوحالده مطلك ساحهٔ حصوله وصولی اسبابه توسله وابسته‌در شمدی بریسی « خاطر بنفسك کی نصیب غنیمة ان الجلوس مع العیال قبیح » یعنی کسب رزق ایچون بذل جد وجهد ایدوب جهاد کی مشقتلی ایشلره صالدر . تا که ثروت وغیمه تصادف ایده‌سك تهی دست اولدرق اولاد وعیال ایله خانه‌ده او - طورمق بر امر قبیحدر دیمشدر . حضرت عمر رضی الله عنه بر کسه تبلیکه تابع اولسه حقوقی ضایع ایدر .

مألی مشعر اولان (من اطاع التوانی ضیع الحقوق) بیوردمشدر . . مثار الیهك ضیاع حقوقدن مقصدی کسب رزقده تکاسل وقصور ایدن تهی دست قالوب حج وزکات وصدقه کبی عبادات مالیه‌دن عبارت اولان حقوق الهی واتفاق واعاشه‌سی اوزرینه واجب اولان نفسی ایله عیالك حقوقی یفا ایده‌میه‌رك ضایع ایدر دیمك اولسه کرکدر

شاعر

« علی المرء ان یسعی ویبذل جهده ،
وعلی الحق ان ماکان قاضیا »

یعنی تأمین معاش ایچون کسبك اوزرینه مهما امکن اقتداریکی صرف وبذل اتمك لازمدر . وکافهٔ مخلوقات خالق اولان جناب خالق تعالی حضرتلری ایسه تقریر ایلدیکی مقدراتی قضا ایدر الکن عبد قدری بیلمه - یکندن اوزرینه سعی ایتمك لازمدر . وحکمة صرف همت ایدوب وسائل تدارك معاشه توسل ایله مأمور در دیمك ایستیور . وحکما « لاتحمل نفسك مالا تطیق ولاتعمل عملا لاینفعك ولاتفتر بامرأة ولو لذات لك ودها ولا تثق بمال وان کثر » یعنی اقتدارك موقتدر اولان ایشی در عهده وتحمل ایدرك اتعاب فکر ایتمه ودنیاده وآخرتده فوائد ومنافعی اولدیران ایشی ایشلیوبده اضاعهٔ عمرو اوقات ایتمه وهرنه قدر اظهار آثار ده وحمیت ایدرلر سعده زمرهٔ نسوانه منه رووروز ومفتون اولمه وتقدیر کثرت ووفرتی اولورسعده مال دنیایه اعتماد ایتمیوب الحقیقی باری تعالی حضرتلرینه وثوق واعتماد ایله دیمکدر .

مشرق عرفان

انسان انسانك قورديدر

٤

عائله بووظیفه‌سنی برمدت رأساً ایفا ایتدکدن صکره حکومت یدمشفقی چوجغه اوزادر مسئلهٔ اشتراك باشلار . بورادهیتون تأسفلر ایله سویلیه‌جکمز ! معارف ادارمسنك لاقیدسزلغی حالا برشی یاپامامسی ، هیئت اجتماعیه مزك بوخصوصده کی محرومیت الیمه‌سیدر .

حکومت بوخصوصده برشی یاپمدی دکل فقط بونلر اساسه عائد اولیوب بریلدیرمدن ، یالکز برشی یاپمق استه‌دیکی کوسترمکدن عبارتدر . بروغرام یوق ! . . معلم یوق ! . . وسائط تدریسی یه یوق ! . الحاصل — تربیهٔ فعلیه ضولایسله — یوبوقاق امجده‌معارف اداره‌سیده یوق ! !

هرشیك یوق اولدیغی ایچون سنه‌در متهادیاً سویلرلر ، یازیورلر بوکیدیشسله قدر سویله‌نلسه طویاجق . خطوانی یك یطی بر پروغرامدن وارکیمه‌جك یوق ! بز شائلی اوردومزك سیاسی براقلایه موفق ولدق موج دیجزی وارلغمزی عالمه اثبات ایتدك صدهزار تأسف که براقلاب اجتماعی اسبابنه توسل ایدوبده قابلیت واستعدادمزی کوسترمکده قهرمان او . دومزك یاقی غالبت نورانی برمظفریت علاوه ایده‌مدك . معارف اداره‌سی هرنه‌سیدن اولور ایسه اولسون تحصیل ابتدائی خصوصنده برشی یاپمی دیمشدك برشی یاپامیانلر ایچنده یالکز معارف اداره‌سی کورمك کافی دکلدر سویهٔ عرفانلری محیطك استفامتندن ایرلیه‌یله‌جك درجه‌یه کلش کنجلریمز دن ارباب کاملزه قدر برتاق اولسون مستغنی بولندقلرینی ده دوشونمك ایجاب ایدر . معارف اداره‌سی بیوك برشهر واقصیده مطلوبه موافق برابتدائیه تأسیس ایتمدیکندن طولایی اورادهکی اولاد وطنك محکوم جهالت اولمسی . . براقلمسی شبههٔ انسانیته یاقشمیه جغندن بویله زمانده خادم علم وعرفان اولان ارباب کاله‌باشده اولدقلری حالده محب معارف کنجلریمز کوندهبر ساعت وقتی نسل آتیمك سعادتی وغیمه‌سی که مع الافتخار فدا ایدرلر ، ایتمیدر . ایشته بز بوندن یاندمق ! قوتیه‌ده صرف احیای معارفه عطف نظر ایده‌جك برجمعیت تشکیل وتأسیس ظن ایدرسم مشکل دکلدر . اوفق برتشویق فقط بورولماز ، بیقماز برثبات قارشو سنده مادة ومعناً معاونتده بولنه‌جق عثمانلیلرلزومی قدر وار ایکن حالا یاپلمدی . یاکز یاپیلان برشی وار ایسه اودهاصلاح مدارس جمعیتك تشبثات نافعه‌سیله عثمانلی اتحاد ونرق قلوبنك کشاد ابتدیکی مکتبدر که ۵۰ - ۶۰ یتك نفوسی بسلین قوتیه شهری ایچون

دره‌دن تپه‌دن ؟

— برادر خیرك وارمی ؟
— نه او خیر اوله ؟
— جانم هانی مکتب حقوق نومرو مسئله سی ای نه‌وار ! !
— نه‌اوله‌جق بیلمم نه‌حکمته مبنی بونلردن ایکیسنه‌برنام‌ویرمك ایسته‌یورلر ایمش
— نصل نام طاقیله یاپار
— بلم که‌ایور تصحیحدر . نه‌زیانی اولور . انسان هروقت خطا ایده‌بیلیر . یاکلش برشی یازلمش سوکره‌ده تصحیح ایدلمش بو اولازشیمی‌ده دیه‌یورلر .
— ای بوطوتلایی کیم بودار .
— یوردوز ایله قوتیه فرق‌سزمی یازیلیر حرفلرینك بیله برینه مناسبتی یوق
— جانم طورهله
— برقاچان بجمشلر شمدی مسئله‌یی مجلس اداره‌یه ورمشلر مجلس کاتبك برائته قرار ویره جك
— ای بوندنه‌وار کاتبك براتنا قرار ویریلیر کاتب کاتب مکتبك مدیری دکلیا
— جانم مدیرك ندخلی وار آکلاتدق !
— آجانم مدیر اصراتمسکه کاتب قالمی باتیره‌یلیر قبول وظیفه‌سی کیکدر مقبوضی کم مهرلر

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