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## Political Struggle for the Renewal of the Ottoman Empire

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### Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk melakukan analisis hubungan antara nasionalisme dan kesadaran sejarah. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini menggunakan studi kepustakaan dengan langkah-langkah khusus. Hasil penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa penelitian ini menggambarkan bahwa jatuhnya Kesultanan Utsmaniyah merupakan hasil dari dinamika yang kompleks, melibatkan peran intelektual, kebijakan pemerintah, paradoks reformasi, bahasa politik yang buruk, dan peran gerakan Turki Muda. Dari era Mahmud II hingga runtuhnya keabsolutan Sultan, pergeseran nilai dasar negara dari Islam ke identitas nasionalis mencerminkan tantangan transformasi yang tidak selalu berhasil. Inkompatibilitas antara reformis dan mayoritas umat Muslim, terutama dalam komunikasi politik Sultan, menjadi faktor kunci yang menyulitkan pencapaian konsensus. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan mendalam tentang kompleksitas sejarah Kesultanan Utsmaniyah, menyoroti pentingnya memahami aspek-aspek sosial, budaya, dan politik secara menyeluruh dalam menganalisis keruntuhan suatu kekaisaran. Dengan demikian, pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif terhadap peristiwa ini dapat memberikan pelajaran berharga dalam merinci dan memahami dinamika yang membentuk perubahan sejarah.

**Kata kunci:** jatuhnya khilafah utsmaniyah, kesultanan utsmaniyah, gerakan turki muda.

### Abstract

*The aim of this research is to analyze the relationship between nationalism and historical awareness. The method used in this study employs a literature review with specific steps. The findings of this research indicate that the downfall of the Ottoman Empire is the result of complex dynamics, involving the roles of intellectuals, government policies, the paradox of reforms, poor political language, and the influence of the Young Turks movement. From the era of Mahmud II to the collapse of the absolute rule of the Sultan, the shift in the foundational values of the state from Islam to nationalist identity reflects the challenges of a transformation that was not always successful. The incompatibility between reformists and the majority of the Muslim population, particularly in the political communication of the Sultan, becomes a key factor complicating the achievement of consensus. This research provides profound insights into the complexity of the history of the Ottoman Empire, emphasizing the importance of comprehensively understanding social, cultural, and political aspects in analyzing the decline of an empire. Consequently, a more comprehensive understanding of these events can offer valuable lessons in detailing and comprehending the dynamics that shape historical changes.*

**Keywords:** fall of khilafah ottoman, ottoman empire, the young turk movement.

### INTRODUCTION

The Middle Ages marked the zenith of the Ottoman Empire as it pushed back Western influence in Eastern Europe. From

the conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Mehmed II (al-Fatih) in 1453 to its heyday in the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire emerged as the strongest and largest

political power in the world. It also held an extensive realm, consisting of 32 provinces and several vassal states. In Europe, Ottoman territorial holdings encompassed the Balkan Peninsula south of the Danube and Sava Rivers, as well as the central Hungarian plain to the north. Additionally, the empire subjugated several kingdoms such as Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldova, and Crimea, situated between Hungary and the Black Sea, which acknowledged their submission by paying tribute to the Ottoman government (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

The Ottoman dominance in the West was accompanied by its international policy to suppress the Western economy that was active in the Mediterranean Sea. However, on the other hand, due to the scarcity of resources in Europe, they (the West) had to brainstorm to solve this problem. The most logical approach in the European learning process was to study the knowledge written by Islamic scholars that had spread widely to Europe, especially in the fields of geography, including compass navigation, astronomy, shipbuilding, and weaponry (Rofii, 2019). From here, names like Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Amerigo Vespucci, and Hernán Cortés emerged. They all circumnavigated continents in response to the resource scarcity and to fulfill the desires of Church leaders to spread the gospel (Freely, 2019).

Although there is no such thing as too late for change, the long-term effects of this seem to have been inadequately communicated by the Ottoman government for self-reform. Not only was there a delay in modernizing the military and state administration, but there was also a tardiness in establishing the fundamental foundation of civilization, which is the dissemination of knowledge. For example, the printing press, introduced by a Hungarian convert named Ibrahim Muteferrika, was brought to Istanbul a century after Gutenberg invented the printing press.

By the end of the 19th century, Ottoman and French data indicated a significant disparity in the spread of knowledge. According to the Ottoman annual statistical book written in 1897, there were 324 public libraries with a total of only 193,000 books (74,000 manuscripts, 49,000 printed books, and the rest not specified) (İnalçık & Pamuk, 2000). Meanwhile, in France, the country with the largest library collections in Europe, there were 7,298,000 books in 505 libraries by 1880 (Kuru, 2021).

This delay traces back to the communication process between the government and the society, giving rise to reformers emerging from the West. Take, for example, the Tanzimat era, characterized by a spirit of renewal. They hastily transformed the sensitive governance of the Sultan into a

constitutional monarchy. After the deposition of the progressive Sultan Murad V (1840-1876), who ruled for only 93 days and was removed due to perceived mental incapacity, the political atmosphere of reform failed due to poor communication among the rulers. Mutual suspicion arose among them, leading Abdul Hamid II to form the Hamidiye Alayları (Hamidian Regiments), while the reformists established the secret organization The Young Ottoman in France (Judah, 2009).

This situation persisted until the birth of students under the secret political organization "The Young Turk," inspired by Giuseppe Mazzini's "Young Italy." They also faced severe communication issues. The effects of the extreme enforcement of The Young Turk Movement created a significant divide between the Turkish people and other ethnic groups within the Ottoman Empire (Salla, 1997).

The most severe imposition of ideas occurred during the Second Constitution era in 1908. The first general elections held during this period were full of lamentable sabotage, with only two nationalist-liberal and socialist-liberal parties present, and no Islamic representation in the elections. Ottoman, in its final years, serves as a fitting case study in the modern era for governments overseeing a majority Muslim population in the pursuit of communication for change (Alizar & Muhammadi, 2019).

## **METHODS**

This research adopts the literature review method with specific steps. The first stage involves formulating the main idea as the initial step. The main objective of this research is to conduct an analysis of the relationship between nationalism and historical awareness (Abdurrahman, 2011). The next step involves searching for information that supports the topic, where the researcher seeks an understanding of historical awareness from various sources and its connection to nationalism (Boty et al., 2023; Bunari et al., 2023). In the following stage, the collected information is organized by the author based on the research focus, namely historical awareness and nationalism, which are grouped into relevant files. This process includes searching for additional information through the internet and books related to issues of historical awareness and nationalism (Ismail & Hartati, 2019). The subsequent action involves restructuring and making research notes by selecting relevant library materials and recording key points from the obtained materials. The results of the previous stages are then reviewed and enrich the library materials with a focus on the research discussions. The final step involves reorganizing the collected reviews and notes before commencing the writing process (Abdurrahman, 2011).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Military Reform

The Ottoman Turkish society, in a social context, was divided into two distinct categories. The first group was divided based on religious communities or, in the Ottoman Turkish structure, referred to as "millet." Meanwhile, the second group was divided based on their relationship with political power. In this second group, the Ottoman Turkish society was further divided into two social classes: the military (askeri) or ruling class and the common people (raeya) (Finkel, 2006).

"Sultan Mahmud II, also known as Peter the Great of Turkey," a title given to him and often depicted (Pranger, 2004), is considered the starting point of serious intentions for change in governance. Sultan Mahmud II assumed power at the age of 24. He learned valuable lessons during his joint rule with Sultan Selim III, realizing the need for change. However, initially, he had to comply with the will of the Janissaries. Mahmud II was patient and waited for the right moment to break free from the influence of the Janissaries (Hanioglu, 2008).

The Janissaries, a well-trained military force responsible for securing the Balkan region, became increasingly counterproductive over time. Many of them enjoyed excessive privileges and a large military budget. In the year 1826, there were 135,000 members who resisted reform. The Sultan focused until the

opportune moment for the dissolution of the Janissaries and the implementation of modern military principles, similar to many Western countries.

The communication used by the Sultan to support the changes was through his military modernization project. Previously, the Sultan had observed deteriorating relations between France and Russia, almost leading to war between the two. Russia then quickly sought peace with the Ottoman government, and the two countries signed the Bucharest Agreement in 1812 (Hanioglu, 2008). Seeing this as the right moment for reform, Sultan Mahmud II realized that even the professionally trained military forces, the "Sipahi," could be pushed back by the Janissaries. Therefore, the Sultan employed demagoguery among the population, who were already fed up with the excesses of the Janissaries.

Mahmud II then issued the Sacred Banner of Prophet Muhammad from the Sacred Trust, intending for everyone to believe in gathering under his banner and thus increasing opposition to the Janissaries (Finkel, 2006). Those present at the meeting agreed with the Grand Vizier and Mufti's opinion, allowing the suppression of those who resisted (Hanioglu, 2008). Battles ensued, and many were sentenced in the Thessaloniki fortress (now the second-largest city in Greece). Around 100 Janissaries who fled drowned (Black, 2006).

The Sultan's success was eventually rewarded with the formation of the "Asâkir-i Mansre-i Muhammediye" corps (Army of the Victorious Muhammad) after the "Auspicious Incident" in 1826. Although many Janissary sympathizers still erupted in resistance, it was quelled. However, one problem that went unnoticed by the Sultan was the passage of time and the heated politics of the Black Sea. Given that France and Russia were no longer as contentious as they were 14 years ago, the Ottoman Empire found itself standing alone against Russia in Black Sea politics. Pressure from Russia led the Sultan to accept the Akkerman Convention in October 1826 (Jelavich & Barbara, 1977).

In the Auspicious Incident of 1826, we can see that the Sultan was overly focused on appeasing the immediate population, particularly the entrenched Janissary base. Meanwhile, external influences, such as the destabilizing situation, were interpreted by Russia as a golden opportunity to extend its influence in the Balkans and strengthen control over the Black Sea. Furthermore, the Muslim population in the Balkans was jeopardized both in terms of life and property, as their protector had agreed to the Akkerman Convention. Muslims in the Balkans became targets of injustice from the local population, with long-term effects on Ottoman politics in the Black Sea (Black, 2006).

The foundation of Ottoman reforms laid by the Sultan was not solely based on politics and the military. In the 1760s, regulations were issued prohibiting traders and craftsmen from wearing feathered turbans, a privilege reserved for the Sultan and his ministers. In 1792, women's overcoats were also considered too thin and transparent, leading to a ban on their use (Shaw & Shaw, 1977). Earlier, non-Muslim women were prohibited from wearing yellow shoes, a color reserved for Muslim women (Ash-Shallabi, 2011). During Mahmud II's reign, these rules were abolished by standardizing the attire of all sectors, both officials and common people. Everyone was required to wear the fez, eliminating the distinctive identity of turbans and robes, except for religious figures. Women were also exempt from these new laws. Nevertheless, the clothing style of Ottoman women transformed to resemble European fashion (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

### **The Tanzimat Period**

Sultan Suleiman I (1520-1566) laid the foundation for clothing laws, and this conception persisted for quite a long time. For over 150 years, these laws remained unchanged until 1720 (Shaw & Shaw, 1977). During Mahmud II's era, all of these laws were abolished. Mahmud II passed away in 1839, succeeded by Abdul Majid (1823-1861). During Abdul Majid's reign, reforms were intensified, and a clear

inclination towards European reforms became evident. For instance, Sultan Abdul Majid provided refuge to Lajos Kossuth and Hungarian revolutionary refugees seeking to break away from Austria (Jelavich & Barbara, 1977). Most notably, Abdul Majid built the renowned Dolmabahce Palace with European architectural styles and established the first French Theater in Istanbul (Brookes, 2008). All these actions indicated that the Sultan was indeed supportive of reform.

One of the most significant moments felt by the Ottoman society during Abdul Majid's era was the Tanzimat period (Tanzimât Dönemi). The Sultan earned the title "Tanzimatçı" (Reformer) due to his two famous decrees, the "Gülhane Hatt-ı Şerif" (Imperial Edict) that abolished agricultural taxes, eliminated compulsory military service, and guaranteed the rights of all Ottoman citizens, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. The second decree, "Hatt-ı Hümayûn" (Reform Edict), abolished the jizyah (tax on non-Muslims), standardized the education curriculum, and established legal equality (dzimni) (Brookes, 2008).

The extreme nature of the reform projections, as they involved the abolition of certain Sharia provisions in the Sultan's decrees, led to less harmonious communication between the Sultan and rural scholars. In the era of Ahmed III (1673-1736), when the government issued the first printed book, "Osmani," the scholars rejected the idea and opposed

the translation of the Quran into local languages (Kuru, 2021). This event resulted in two clear consequences: first, the difficulty for the public to have a concise understanding of the Quran, and second, the closure of the possibility of dialectics between scholars and the general public. There was also a brief boycott of printing presses in Istanbul during that period due to the economic threat it posed (Bloom, 2001). Although Abdul Majid ensured the implementation of Tanzimat across the Ottoman territories, communication with local scholars and the general public remained challenging and persisted until Abdul Majid's death.

Abdul Majid's openness to Europe motivated Queen Mother Mahmud II, Pertevniyal, to present her son Abdul Aziz to support the sultanate. When the announcement came from the Topkapı Palace to appoint Sultan Abdul Aziz, Pertevniyal went to the palace to confirm the news of her son's appointment (Holbrook, 2023). This approach is comparable to the method used by Empress Dowager Cixi of the Qing Dynasty, who presented her son Tongzhi.

However, significant changes were not yet accompanied by economic stability. The Sultans were busy constructing large mosques, such as the Pertevniyal Mosque, and building the Dolmabahce Palace, the construction cost of which was equivalent to 35 tons of gold

(Ash-Shallabi, 2011). Revenues from Egypt and Sudan often served as collateral for loans from British-French banks (İnalçık & Pamuk, 2000). Abdul Aziz believed that Ottoman stability had to be built by establishing ties with Western European nobles to help if Russia were to attack.

In the decree dated October 6, 1875, it was stated that the budget deficit exceeded 5 million liras, and further borrowing was deemed impossible as it would increase the budget deficit and erode public trust (İnalçık & Pamuk, 2000). England saw this situation as a golden opportunity to launch colonialism in Egypt and Sudan, using the pretext of establishing a base in Cyprus to suppress the "Urabi Revolt". Geopolitical events continued to evolve as Prussia defeated France and the Herzegovina rebellion sparked by Christian rebels against the Ottoman Empire. Abdul Aziz, who was overwhelmed and failed to manage the economy, was eventually overthrown on May 30, 1876 (Whitehorn, 2015).

Midhat Pasha, a pro-Western reformist, supported Murad V's ascension to the throne. The secret movement "The Young Ottoman" seized this opportunity to push for a constitutional state. Murad V's closeness to the Young Ottoman Movement was fostered through frequent discussions with Namik Kamal and Ziya Pasha, who presented concepts of constitutionalism, democracy, and freedom. Through Ziya Pasha and his personal doctor Kapoleon

Efendi, he (Murad V) was also actively engaged with Midhat Pasha, a prominent politician during the Tanzimat era and a leading opposition figure to Sultan Abdul Aziz (Whitehorn, 2015). They were dissatisfied with Tanzimat, which was seen as spinning in circles without real change. Although Murad V's reign was short, only 93 days, it effectively gave the green light for the Young Turk Movement to implement constitutional monarchy in the era of Abdul Hamid II.

Murad V fell after being declared mentally disturbed, often interpreted as a reaction to seeing his uncle Abdul Aziz die a few days after the coup. The demands from officials (The Young Ottoman) for him to become the ruler were seen as the cause of his uncle's murder (Brookes, 2008).

### **Maneuvers of Sultan Abdul Hamid II**

It was a crisis period for the Ottoman Empire, both politically and economically. The elites who initially saw Abdul Hamid II as suitable for reforms admired his openness. Abdul Hamid II was also seen accompanying his uncle Abdul Aziz on his political visits to Western Europe. On the other hand, Abdul Hamid II leaned towards the conservative ulama, which was considered by the Young Ottoman Movement as a more conservative faction.

After his enthronement, Sultan Abdul Hamid II promptly appointed Midhat Pasha as Grand Vizier due to his significant

influence. Namik Kemal and Midhat Pasha, leaders of the Young Ottoman Movement, emerged as the most influential figures in the formation of the 1876 Constitution. On December 23, 1876, Sultan Abdul Hamid II promulgated the first Constitution and enacted laws that guaranteed civil liberties, establishing a parliamentary system of governance. The law stipulated that the parliament would consist of two chambers: the Chamber of Deputies/Representatives and the Chamber of Notables (senators). The first Ottoman Turkish parliament convened for the first time on March 29, 1877. However, this assembly lasted only 10 months and 20 days, as Sultan Abdul Hamid II dissolved the parliament on February 13, 1878 (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

Midhat Pasha was exiled by Sultan Abdul Hamid II after five years in power by forming a special investigation team for the case of Sultan Abdul Aziz's murder, known as the "Yildiz Court." This court operated from June 27, 1881, to July 28 of the same year (Rofii, 2019). As a result, the Yildiz Court sentenced those involved in the case, including the death penalty for Muhammad Jalaluddin Pasha, Nauri Pasha, Bakbasyi Najib Bek (the guard of Sultan Abdul Aziz), and Midhat Pasha. When presented to the Sultan for confirmation of the convicted murderers of Abdul Aziz, the Sultan requested an appeal, changing the death sentence for the four perpetrators to life imprisonment

(Rofii, 2019). Midhat Pasha was eventually exiled to the Thafif prison. However, later on, Sultan Abdul Hamid II was accused of being the mastermind behind Midhat Pasha's murder in Thafif after being choked by prison guards. In his diary, the Sultan wrote, "If it is true, then I am not involved, and I do not approve."

The exile of prominent reformists created the perception that Sultan Abdul Hamid II was against reforms. However, the Sultan stated, "...It is not true that I reject everything that comes from Europe. But, the hasty attitude comes from the devil, and conversely, from that attitude is acceptance through study and research" (Freely, 2012). Also, during his visits, Ottoman delegations met with Napoleon III of France, Queen Victoria of England, Leopold II of Belgium, Galium I of Germany, and Franz Joseph I of Austria. He concluded that the West, as reflected in his later administration, has different morals than the East (Islam) and does not touch the substance of life (Hanioglu, 2008).

During Sultan Abdul Hamid II's rule, there was a rapid increase in reforms in the field of medrese education. Benjamin C. Fortna commented on the period of Sultan Abdul Hamid II with the phrase, "Period of tremendous expansion in the number of state schools in the empire." (Finkel, 2006). Even though the financial condition was difficult due to the misguided policies of Sultan Abdul Aziz,

this step was taken, as during Sultan Mahmud II's time, parents were less enthusiastic about sending their children to medrese. They were more interested in sending their children to learn practical skills in handcraft industries (Brookes, 2008).

As we know, Sultan Abdul Hamid II proposed Pan-Islamism to appeal to distant populations. A political figure from Afghanistan, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, emerged when his writings in the French magazine "Urwāt al-Wutsqa" gained attention. In 1892, invited by Sultan Abdul Hamid II, he moved to Istanbul. Sultan Abdul Hamid collaborated on al-Afghani's democratic ideas in governance. However, this collaboration could not be fully realized because the Sultan saw that imminent reforms were not feasible due to economic difficulties and the turmoil of rebellions. Due to al-Afghani's significant influence, Sultan Abdul Hamid II became fearful. Eventually, al-Afghani's freedom was restricted, and he could not leave Istanbul until his death in 1897 (Rofii, 2019).

With an empty treasury, the 1875 rebellion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, wars with Serbia and Montenegro, the outcome of the Russo-Turkish War, and the European sentiment against Abdul Hamid II's government for suppressing the Bulgarian uprising all contributed to his fear of implementing significant changes (Whitehorn, 2015). Meanwhile, other

political facts, such as socialist, nationalist, and liberal movements, demanded major European empires to reshape their states. The Ottoman Empire's vast territory became an unavoidable issue, and Sultan Abdul Hamid II foresaw that England would choke the Arabian Peninsula, France in North Africa, and Russia in the Balkans. The most demanding came from Armenian reformers. The formation of Hamidiye Alayları (Hamidian Regiments) was driven by radical Armenian reformers, armed directly by the government (Whitehorn, 2015). They functioned as Sultan's secret agents to suppress any rumors of reform or rebellion.

The most radical faction of the "Armenian Revolutionary Federation" (ARF) attacked Abdul Hamid II. On July 21, 1905, an assassination attempt was made on the Sultan while he was about to perform Friday prayers at the Yildiz Mosque, which he usually attended. The bomb had been strategically placed, but the timing was off because the Sultan was engaged in conversation with the Sheikh al-Islam (Grand Mufti), and the bomb was directed towards the Sultan's entourage, sparing Abdul Hamid II's life. The attack killed 26 people, injured 58 (four of whom died during hospital treatment), and destroyed 17 carriages. This continued aggression, along with Armenia's desire for reform, led Western powers to take a more direct approach with Turkey (Whitehorn, 2015).

In July 1896, Theodore Herzl traveled to Istanbul to meet the Sultan. Herzl requested communication access to the palace through Neolanski, the editor-in-chief of the "East Post," whom Herzl knew had closeness to the Sultan. Herzl's arrival sought a piece of land to establish a Jewish homeland, with an offer of 150 million gold Lira. However, the Sultan rejected it (Jelavich & Barbara, 1977). Concerned about the potential dangers in Syria and the Arabian Peninsula, the Sultan initiated a major project called the "Hejaz Railway." Financed directly by the Sultan, with 50,000 gold coins and 100,000 gold coins from the State Treasury. This project aimed to expedite the pilgrimage from Damascus to Medina. Politically, the Sultan wanted to strengthen the sovereignty of the Arab nations to eliminate foreign aid.

### **The Second Constitution of 1908**

While the process of Pan-Islamism by Sultan Abdul Hamid was unfolding, there was an opposition that would later overthrow the Sultan. The Young Turk Movement emerged as the most powerful opposition to the Sultan. This movement was rooted in its predecessors Namik Kemal, Ziya Pasha, and Ali Suavi, who formed the secret organization The Young Ottoman in 1865. The leaders of The Young Ottoman fled when they were discovered by Ottoman intelligence. The Young Ottoman movement was influential

and militant, but its most fatal failure was the lack of an educated middle class and the absence of economic power. Their high ideals about the constitution made it challenging for the Ottoman society to comprehend at the time (Ash-Shallabi, 2011). Over time, prominent figures of The Young Ottoman were exiled and many went into diaspora in Europe. This vacuum gave rise to a new and more aggressive movement. It began with four military medical college students in Istanbul who established the İttihad-ı Osmani Cemiyeti (Ottoman Union Society) with the goal of agitating for the restoration of a parliamentary regime. One of them was Ibrahim Temo, inspired by the "Young Italy" movement led by Giuseppe Mazzini, which had the motto *Unione, Forza, e Libertà* (Unity, Strength, and Freedom) (Eyal, 2007). The Young Turk Movement adopted a similar slogan: *Hürriyet Müsavat Adalet* (Freedom, Equality, and Justice).

As opposition against the Sultan increased, movements outside the empire also formed an underground network. They attempted a coup in 1896, which failed, leading to the capture of many, and most prominent figures were exiled to Tripolitania. Afterward, the opposition movement within the empire stagnated for a considerable time. They could only revive when those in exile joined The Young Turk, centered in Paris under Ahmed Riza's leadership. The arrival of new personnel posed a challenge for

Ahmed Riza as the leader of The Young Turk in Paris (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

Ahmed Riza was considered a positivist who vehemently rejected religion and was uncompromising, making other members of The Young Turk unsympathetic towards him. Simultaneously, when Ahmed Riza faced a crisis of distrust from The Young Turk members, a former Mulkiye lecturer and newspaper editor, Murad Bey, came to Paris in 1896 (Rofii, 2019). His thoughts, ideas, and political steps were deemed more acceptable by the majority of The Young Turk, and Murad Bey was chosen as the leader of the Committee of Union and Progress. In 1897, Murad Bey moved the headquarters of the Committee of Union and Progress to Geneva (Ash-Shallabi, 2011). Their membership was quite extreme, and the punishment for not obeying the Central Committee's orders or attempting to leave the Committee of Union and Progress was the death penalty (Whitehorn, 2015).

After the Ottoman Empire's victory over Greece in 1897, Sultan Abdul Hamid used the prestige gained from the victory to force the exiled Young Turk network to return. Cevdet, Sükutî, and Mizancı Murat were accepted, leaving Ahmed Riza in Paris as the leader of the exiled Committee of Union and Progress network (Shaw & Shaw, 1977). Those who succumbed lost their credibility, and Ahmed Riza returned to lead.

In 1899, an Ottoman prince, Jalaluddin Pasha, who was still Sultan Abdul Hamid II's brother, came to Paris with his two sons, Sabahuddin and Luthfullah. His arrival provided impetus for the Young Turk Movement in Paris (Rofii, 2019).

On February 4, 1902, the first congress of the Sultan's opposition was held at the home of Antoin Lefevre-Pontalis, a member of the Institute de France. Forty-seven delegates attended as the beginning of discussions for The Young Turk Movement, consolidated under the name Committee of Union and Progress. In the congress, they split into two factions because Sabahuddin supported the use of violence and foreign intervention to overthrow Sultan Abdul Hamid II, while Riza Ahmed, a theoretician, opposed it. However, the decision in the congress leaned towards the more aggressive path to overthrow Sultan Abdul Hamid II (Rofii, 2019).

The second congress was held on September 27, 1907, in Paris. The leaders Ahmed Riza, Sabahaddin Bey, and Khachatur Malumian from ARF merged for the common goal of restoring the constitutional reforms of 1876. The Committee of Union and Progress instructed its military members to disperse, avoiding summons and investigations by the palace, and ordered military units to form political groups moving directly to the mountains. Sultan

Abdul Hamid II asked the Committee of Union and Progress not to take extreme actions. On July 3, 1908, the opposition group headed for the mountains. Over the next twenty days, a series of murders occurred in various cities, causing fear within the palace (Hanioglu, 2008).

All efforts made by Sultan Abdul Hamid II to anticipate a revolution proved futile. Finally, as a last resort, the central headquarters of the Committee of Union and Progress instructed to maximize the revolutionary forces on July 21, 1908. Ultimately, in a powerless condition, on July 23, 1908, Sultan Abdul Hamid II decided to revive the 1876 Constitution and invited the parliament to convene in Istanbul (Hanioglu, 2008).

After reverting to the 1876 Constitution, communication between Sultan and Parliament was not harmonious. Conflict between Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the Committee of Union and Progress resurfaced when the Sultan appointed the Ministers of War and Navy based on his own choice without considering Prime Minister Said Pasha's preferences. When Said Pasha agreed to Sultan Abdul Hamid II's decision, the Committee of Union and Progress demanded Said Pasha's dismissal. In August 1908, the Prime Minister was replaced by Kamil Pasha, a liberal who was pro-British (Rofii, 2019).

Subsequent general elections were held, but only two parties participated:

the Committee of Union and Progress (Committee of Union and Progress) and the Liberal Ottoman (Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası). The Committee of Union and Progress won the election due to its broader mass base. However, they were not significantly influential because they only restricted Sultan Abdul Hamid II's political maneuvering and couldn't overthrow him (Ash-Shallabi, 2011). This led to a massive campaign by the opposition Committee of Union and Progress in the media. As a result, on April 6, 1909, Hasan Fahmi, the editor of a newspaper that openly criticized the Committee, was killed. This event ignited mass demonstrations against the Committee of Union and Progress (Rofii, 2019).

Those opposed to the Committee of Union and Progress were the scholars within the government. Before the April 6 events, they formed an organization called the Muhammadiyah Association (Ittihad-i Mohammedi). They dispersed widely to counteract the secularism promoted by the Committee of Union and Progress (Ash-Shallabi, 2011). This resulted in the emergence of a movement in the name of the restoration of Islamic law on April 12, 1909 (Rofii, 2019). The government took no action, only listening to demands for changes in the cabinet, the dismissal of the Prime Minister, amnesty for groups considered rebellious, and the restoration of Islamic law (Rofii,

2019). This event claimed 20 lives, mostly officers, and two deputies of the Committee of Union and Progress (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

The parliamentary government perceived this as a weakening of the constitution and worried about a return to the status quo. In the early hours of April 24, 1909, a group of military regulars led by Saukat Pasha and Niyazi Bey, who rallied sympathizers, seized Istanbul. Members of the Muhammadiyah Association were suppressed, tried, and executed through military courts. This included Vahdeti, a darwish and follower of the Naqshbandi Sufi order who was also the editor of the newspaper "Volkan." Several members of the Liberal Ottoman party were arrested, but they were released under British pressure (Rofii, 2019).

On April 27, 1909, revolutionary pressure reached its peak. The pressure was directed at the Islamic mufti, Muhammad Dhiyauddin. A total of 240 members of the Senate (appointed community leaders) held a meeting and decided to depose Sultan Abdul Hamid II. When the fatwa was read in the assembly, members of the Committee of Union and Progress shouted, "we want him (the Sultan) deposed!" The situation had changed as there were no more offers for Sultan Abdul Hamid II to choose between resigning or being removed from power. Finally, the assembly decided to remove

Sultan from power (Hanioglu, 2008). Sultan was then replaced by Muhammad Rashad (Muhammad V), who essentially became a puppet of the Committee of Union and Progress.

Due to the dictatorial and massive secularization imposed by the Committee of Union and Progress, it was considered by the Arab people as the Turkification of the government. As a result, many Arabs formed secret organizations like Qahthaniyah, led by Abdul Karim al-Khalil, and military officer Ali al-Mashri. There was also the New Arab movement formed in Paris in 1909 (Ash-Shallabi, 2011). Two years after the formation of the New Arab movement, the "Ishtilahiyyah" Organization was established in 1911 in Beirut. Through its collaboration with the Lebanese Revival movement, the Ishtilahiyyah movement sent a letter to the French government in 1911, requesting them to occupy Syria and Lebanon. Meanwhile, some educated Iraqis preferred seeking assistance from the British (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

Seeing the serious phenomenon among the Arab population, the Committee of Union and Progress held a congress with France in 1912. The contents appealed to Arabs to participate in central government, make Arabic the official language throughout the Arab regions, implement local military conscription, and support Armenia. The congress also emphasized that this was not

a religious affair. The leader of the congress was Abdul Hamid az-Zahrawi (Ash-Shallabi, 2011).

## CONCLUSION

One fundamental aspect of building political communication is aligning terms and leveling the understanding of knowledge to create shared consensus. The interpretation of phenomena that consistently portrays a leader also weakens the ability to find objectivity in progress. We observe the inconsistency of the idea of the "Ottoman nation" proposed by Midhat Pasha, which transformed into the narrative of the "Turkish nation." However, from an anthropological perspective that binds them, the common value is Islam, evident in several major ethnic groups such as Arabs, Turks, Kurds, Circassians, Serbs, Armenians, Greeks, Berbers, and other descendants bound by Islam.

The process of change in the Ottoman Empire was only centered on the basic value of the state, which was initially Islamic but later sought to change into a nationalist identity by embracing Ottoman as the basis for nationhood. Meanwhile, the prolonged transition from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy made subsequent reformers reluctant to embrace Ottoman identity. Meanwhile, cultural changes and political reasoning were minimally socialized, and the reformers seemed unwilling to engage

with local scholars deemed conservative, despite the fact that the majority of them were a significant force for initiating change and facing World War I.

Change is an inevitable cycle. In the context of change, the transition from traditional to modern can be understood in terms of ascription (birth) to merit (achievement), low social mobility to high social mobility; estate society (lordship system) to class society; *gemeinschaft* (community) to *gesellschaft* (impersonal); and particularism to universalism. As outlined above, the core of this problem lies in the political communication of the Sultan, where a meeting point between reformers and the majority of Muslims was never found. Meanwhile, the world continues to change, and political behavior is still far from the word "change."

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