MODERNIZATION AND IDEOLOGICAL DIVERGENCE AMONG THE BUREAUCRACY IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: SUGGESTION FOR A NEW CLASSIFICATION

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Abstract

The ideological diversity within the bureaucracy during the modernization process in the last period of the Ottoman Empire is mostly reduced to three different ideological orientations composed of Westernism, Islamism, and Turkism in the relevant literature. However, claiming that this model, which is formulated regarding the classical works of Gökalp and Akçura, could not adequately explain the actual ideological division between the bureaucrats of the period, this study aims to propose a new theoretical framework based upon an alternative tripartite model. For this, Anthony D. Smith's infamous theoretical explanation about the ideological-strategic differences between the bureaucratic elites of various societies, which rise as a response to the experience of modernization, is re-evaluated and reformulated concerning the intellectual contribution revealed in classical and contemporary studies on the ideological and intellectual orientations within the late Ottoman elites. Accordingly, the first ideological orientation within the elite groups that fundamentally stood against any attempts in the name of modernization and advocated retaining the Islamic tradition could be entitled "traditionalism." The second one, which could be named "Westernism" (Westernist modernism), asserted that the only way to capture Western civilization was following the same modernization path as the West, contrary to the previous orientation. "Conservatism" (conservative modernism), the third and final ideological orientation, made a distinction between the fields of culture and civilization and

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idealized to implement a conservative version of modernization by synthesizing Islamic tradition with the technical developments of the contemporary Western world.

Keywords: Modernization, Ottoman Empire, Ruling Elites, Conservatism, Traditionalism, Westernism

OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU'NUN SON DÖNEMİNDE MODERNLEŞME VE BÜROKRASİDE İDEOLOJİK AYRIŞMA: YENİ BİR SINIFLANDIRMA ÖNERİSİ

Öz

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son dönemine damga vuran modernleşme sürecinde, iktidar mücadelesi veren gruplar arasındaki ideolojik ayrışma, mevcut literatürde yaygın olarak, Batıcılık, İslamcılık ve Türkçülük'ten oluşan üç farklı yönelime indirgenmektedir. Ancak Ziya Gökalp ve Yusuf Akçura'nın artık klasikleşmiş olan fikirlerinden hareketle formüle edilen bu modelin dönemin bürokratları arasındaki fiili ideolojik farklılığı yetkin biçimde açıklayamadığını iddia eden bu çalışma, alternatif bir üçlü modele dayalı yeni bir teorik çerçeve geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bunun için ise, çalışmada, Anthony D. Smith'e ait, çeşitli toplumlarda seçkinlerin modernleşme deneyimi karşısındaki ideolojik-stratejik farklılıklarını açıklamayı amaçlayan ve pek bilinmeyen teorik önerme yeniden değerlendirilerek, geç Osmanlı dönemi iktidar seçkinleri arasındaki ideolojik ve entelektüel ayrışma üzerine yapılmış olan klasik nitelikli ve güncel çeşitli çalışmaların ortaya koyduğu entelektüel birikim bağlamında yeniden formüle edilmektedir. Buna göre, seçkin grupları arasında taraftar bulan, modernleşmeye yönelik her türlü girişime karşı çıkarak İslamî geleneğe geri dönmeyi öneren ilk ideolojik yönelim, "gelenekçilik" olarak adlandırılabilir. İkincisi, ilkinin tam karşıtı olarak tanımlanabilecek, Batı'yı yakalamanın tek yolunun Batı'ya benzemek, yani Batı'yı birebir örnek alan bir modernleşme modeli izlemek olduğunu savunanların "Batıcılık" (Batıcı modernizm) stratejisidir. Üçüncü ve son yönelim ise, kültür ve medeniyet arasında bir ayrıma girişerek, İslamî gelenekle Batı'daki maddî gelişmeleri sentezlemek suretiyle modernleşmenin muhafazakâr bir versiyonunu hayata geçirmeyi idealize eden "muhafazakârlık"tan (muhafazakâr modernizm) oluşmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Modernleşme, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Yönetici Seçkinler, Muhafazakârlık, Gelenekçilik, Batıcılık

Introduction

This study aims to provide an analytical re-assessment of the ideological[2] variations among the bureaucratic circles, which emerged as a response to the Ottoman Empire's

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[2] In this study, from a broader perspective, "ideology" is acknowledged as "a complex cognitive framework […] shared by the members of a group, class, or other social formation" (Van Dijk, 1989: p. 24) rather than following a limited view that conventionally confines it to conceptualizations of a largely coherent socio-political order, such as socialism, or liberalism. This cognitive framework does not only have significance in controlling social cognitions, "such as knowledge, opinions, and attitudes, and social

modernization process between the 18th and 20th centuries. Most of the studies in the field still classify the dominant ideological orientations of the ruling elites of the time as "Westernism," "Islamism," and "Turkism" by referring to the classification in Ziya Gökalp's (2007) book, which was published in 1918.[3] In the same period, another classification, which is also widely acknowledged, was made by Yusuf Akçura (2007) and distinguished the ideologies of the period as "Ottomanism," "Islamism," and "Turkism."[4] Even though these two close classifications could have a capacity to partially explain the historical development of various political trends during the modernization process in the Ottoman Empire, it is highly controversial that those ideological orientations appeared separately in the mentioned period (Safa, 2011: p. 29). Instead, they intermingled and had always been articulated within various political discourses in the search for cultural identity for Ottomans, whereas the importance of each varied (Parla, 2002: pp. 206-208). Hence, it is necessary to develop an alternative classification to understand the intersections and differences of the ruling elites'[5] ideological orientations in the last period of the Empire.

Beginning from the reign of Selim III (r. 1789-1807), it was a comprehensive reform process that determined the transformation of the society as a whole while leading to the questioning of established norms and ideas about social integration, political organization, collective identities, relations between individuals and the state, and the meaning of life as well. Therefore, any attempt to clarify the ideological variations among the ruling elite during the last period of the Ottoman Empire should treat them as specific and distinctive responses to this modernization process, as is in the Western world, thus classifying them in terms of those elites' strategic positions and particular agendas against the problem of modernization.

In this context, it could be appropriate to re-assess the theory proposed (and revised in his later studies) by Anthony D. Smith in the 1970s. The author links the emergence of modern ideologies with three mainstream strategies adopted by the ruling elites of various societies to overcome legitimacy crises as one of the consequences of the modernization process. He names

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representations, including social prejudices" about the group itself, others, and the world we live in but also determines social practices (Van Dijk, 1989: p. 24).

[3] The articles in Gökalp's book were originally published in *Turk Yurdu* journal between 1912 and 1913.

[4] The original edition of Akçura's book was first published in 1904.

[5] "The elite" is the hegemonic group within a society who have the capacity to (re)produce and control dominant/official ideologies and discourses, the verbal expressions of ideologies (Van Dijk, 1989: p. 22). Although it is commonly acknowledged that elites consist of four main parts including socio-cultural, economic, political, and military power groups (Van Dijk, 1989: p. 22), this study only focuses on state officials, namely "the ruling elite", who mostly occupies the top positions of the bureaucracy (Scott, 2008).

those strategic variations as "traditionalism/neo-traditionalism," "reformism," and "assimilationism" in his books (see Smith, 1983 [1971]; Smith 1981; Smith 1991). However, it could be better to reformulate the theory of Smith and his classification in this study when applying it to the Ottoman Empire and propose to re-name those strategies as "traditionalism," "conservatism" (conservative modernism), and "Westernism" (Westernist modernism) by discussing the ideological orientations of the late Ottoman bureaucracy. For this aim, in this paper, firstly, Smith's theory is analyzed in detail. Then, a comprehensive evaluation of this three-partite classification's potentiality for clarifying the ideological variations among the ruling elites of the last period of the Ottoman Empire is carried out.

1. Modernization and Ideological-Strategic Positions of the Ruling Elites from the Perspective of Anthony D. Smith

"Modernization" can be defined as a long-term and multi-dimensional process that initially appeared in the Western world around the end of the eighteenth century and then circulated to the rest of the world. This process brought the transition from feudalism to capitalism, which included the structural changes that occurred in the division of labor, the development of nation-states and rational bureaucracies, and the spread of a secular and (relatively) homogeneous culture in conjunction with the rise of mass education (Smith, 1988: pp. 130-134, 141).

Smith (1981; 1983) states that the emergence of the "modern/scientific state" that brought scientific and technical revolutions unavoidably turned out to be a threat against the traditional elites' hegemonic positions and the religious bases of long-standing ideological-cultural categories. The first change, according to him, appeared as a result of the reorganization of bureaucratic apparatuses—including the military, administrative and judicial systems—in line with scientific thoughts and techniques. The participation of the professionals, who graduated from newly emerging modern-secular educational institutions and were employed in bureaucratic positions, spurred the gradual loss of the ruling positions held by the traditional elites (Smith, 1981: p. 95).

The second change was that traditional religions' main principles started to be questioned during this specific period when Cartesian philosophy and Newtonian science became popular (Smith, 1981: pp. 93-95). Hence younger generations began to discuss problems about life mainly in terms of material and socio-historical contexts rather than referring to metaphysics and spiritual settings (Smith, 1981: p. 96). Smith (1981: pp. 96-97) determines that questioning

religion caused a "dual crisis of authority and legitimacy" since it was the basis of collective identity and meaning of life and the conventional way of social organization for centuries. For him, the elites, at this very point, had to make a difficult choice between their legitimacy, which was based either on the state and social organization, nourished by scientific developments and governed by rational/this-worldly measures, or based on religious and traditional principles, which were believed to be originated from the divine reality.

The overall response among the traditional elite group, whose authority and legitimacy came from religion, was a strict resistance against any means of change (Smith, 1981: pp. 93-94). It would not be wrong to say that this was a highly "traditionalist" position embracing tradition, specifically, religion. This traditionalism perceived the (positivist) science/rationalism and modernization as "malign" and "idle" as they lacked ethereal legitimacy (Smith, 1983: p. 241). Therefore, those who advocated this idea believed that any reconciliation or synthesis between religion and (positivist) science was impossible (Smith, 1983: pp. 241-242).[6]

As a worldwide pattern, the attack of modernization against religion caused a more significant dilemma in the sight of the new elite generation, who was brought up in this period and achieved new positions as they seemed to get stuck in between the established norms and the secular educational system (Smith, 1983: pp. 237-238). Smith determines that three different strategic responses, assimilationism, neo-traditionalism, and reformism, appeared in this context.

The first strategy, which Smith (1981; 1983) refers to as "assimilationism," was adopted by a part of the new elites based on deified human reasoning, science, and what was considered modern. From this point of view, science gained a decisive victory over tradition and religion due to its competence and capacity to find social and practical (i.e., earthly) solutions to the very old problems of "contingency, scarcity, and impotence" (Smith, 1983: p. 242), which until then had been considered by the traditional elites as "supramundane, divinely ordained elements of the cosmos" (Smith, 1981: pp. 99-100). According to the assimilationist, the scientific state took the place of gods in the new order that "[the] man, stripped his traditional dependency on the divine and his embeddedness in his particularist settings, could lift himself up to procure his own salvation by rational planning and a pooling of all his resources [for the use of common good]" (Smith, 1983: p. 242).

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[6] For a detailed account and representations of traditionalism as a systematic anti-modernist philosophical-intellectual movement that appeared in the beginning of the twentieth century, see Guénon (2001) and Sedgwick (2004).

Smith (1981: p. 99) argues that there was only one civilization (and modernism[7]) in the eyes of the elites who internalized this idea—the Western civilization (and Western modernism) along with its rationalist discourse and scientific expertise. Thus, it is likely to suggest that this group's main objective was to assimilate their societies with Western civilization's norms and lifestyles through a sound educational system. Therefore, he argues that assimilationism and Westernization were principally the same (Smith, 1983: p. 242). Although Smith calls this strategy assimilationism, here the concept of "Westernist modernism," or more commonly "Westernism,"[8] is preferred since the strategy itself is based on a paradigm that is widely defined in the literature as a Western-centric modernization discourse (see Touraine, 1995; van der Veer and Lehmann, 1999). Still, in practice, the assimilationists "must always assimilate to a particular cultural variant (English, French, German, American, Russian) of 'modern' scientific civilization" (Smith, 1981: p. 99).

The second response of the modern elites to modernization revealed another orientation, called "neo-traditionalism," which was more skeptical about modernization concerning the first strategy. The common thread between this strategy's supporters and the traditionalists was that they acknowledged divine inspiration as the principal source of legitimacy. Only religion and tradition could be trusted as it was rooted in this legitimacy source; human reason and science products should be ignored if they had no links with the divine principles (Smith, 1981: pp. 98-99). Smith (1981: p. 97) adds that, however, when it was appreciated that modernization was inevitable, the neo-traditionalists could not refrain from embracing the technical success and particular methods of Western science and rationalism to realize their own traditionalist goals pragmatically. Nevertheless, they rejected its underlying philosophy and values.

The third strategy the elites adopted to overcome the identity crisis, called "reformism," considered tradition and modernity as "two apparently opposed, but secretly complementary worlds" (Smith, 1983: p. 245). Those who followed this path desired to reconcile these two distinct worlds by creating a "workable and theoretically viable 'higher synthesis'" with an approach based on "[a] selectively convenient adaptation and eclectic re-interpretation" (Smith, 1983: p. 137). Smith (1981: p. 99; 1983: p. 251) believes that both reformists and assimilationists

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[7] In this paper the term "modernism" is used in order to indicate the (various) ways of modernization (i.e., being modernized) while "modernist" inclines to be the supporter of one of those ways.

[8] Since Westernism, as an ideological/intellectual orientation, implies to be the supporter of the Western way of modernization, thus already comprising of to be modernist, it is more proper to use this term instead of "Westernist modernism."

adopted science and rationalism with some of their underlying principles, such as critical thinking, systematic observation, and open-mindedness. The reformists still had something in common with neo-traditionalists that they conditionally accepted modernization to some degree but also rejected the turn away from some of the traditions. However, the reformist strategy aimed to smooth "the old-fashioned customs and superstitions of the religion" and purify it from the components that were added in time and spoiled its "purity," thus revealing "the true religion/piety" (Smith, 1983: pp. 137, 251-252).

Although Smith discusses the last two strategies (neo-traditionalism and reformism) as two distinct orientations, it is possible to bring forward the claim that, at least in the context of the political and intellectual currents in the Ottoman Empire, the line that differentiates the two is blurry. As evidence of this is outlined in the following sections, supporters of both strategies adopted discourses close to each other in which traditional emphasis was more or less mingled with modernist impacts. Thus, the difference between these two groups seems only to be a matter of variation on what should be prioritized, whether traditional or modern elements, in their eclectic discourses. From this perspective, both strategies could be merged under the title of "conservative modernism" or, as a more common term, "conservatism." At this stage, it should be explained that how this study approaches the concept of conservatism in general terms.

As a way of "thinking" (Bora, 1997: p. 6), or "disposition" (Alexander, 2013: 597), conservatism which is one of the outcomes of the modernization process "[…] depends on the reaction for the conservation of the political, social, and cultural structures, more precisely, the meanings and values attached to these structures that were attacked by this process" (Bora, 1997: p. 6). In this sense, this study considers conservatism as a political-philosophical position and a strategy "which is consciously desiring to protect *certain* things [of the past]" by distinguishing it from traditionalism "which is trying to protect […] everything" (Çiğdem, 1997: pp. 33-34). In that case, the strategy of conservatism is based on "the re-functionalization of tradition" under current conditions by establishing a rational (and modern) relationship with the experiences of the past (Çiğdem, 1997: p. 35; also see Bora, 1997: pp. 6-7). This search, forming especially a religious, cultural, psychological and/or moral-normative basis for the revolutionary transformations through the traditions, appears to have emerged as a result of the practical objectives such as "providing the legitimacy of the [modern] state and the activation of the [capitalist] market" (Çiğdem, 1997: pp. 35, 38-44). In this respect, conservatism "[as] the permanent companion [of modernization,] […] played an important role in the adaptation of modernization by/to the concrete and specific social materials—even helping remove its deadlocks" (Bora, 1997: p. 7). Therefore, it would be more appropriate to define conservatism,

not as an antithesis of modernization, but as an antithesis of a specific kind of modernism (or a specific way of modernization), namely Westernism, which supported revolutionary transformation (identical to the radicalism of the Enlightenment) (Bora, 1997: pp. 7-8; Çiğdem, 1997: p. 38; Alexander, 2013: p. 599).

Considering the justifications listed so far, Smith's neo-traditionalism and reformism can be acknowledged as the sub-variants of "conservatism,"[9] instead of being evaluated as independent categories, by referring to their shared approach to reconcile tradition and modernity in their own ways. Herein, it is time to discuss the impact of this classification on the elites of the late Ottoman Empire.

2. Modernization and the Rise of a New Generation of Ruling Elites in the Late Ottoman Empire

Even though the Ottoman Empire's reforms began much before, with the growth of external threats and internal turmoil, they became much more comprehensive and systematic beginning from the 18th century. Those external challenges that Ottomans faced from Western European empires were due to advanced technology, an economic system that increasingly became industry-oriented, new administrative methodologies, and the trends focusing on military power (Karpat, 2002: p. 30). The internal disorders resulted from "the struggle of some provinces for autonomy and the conflicting demands related to regulatory actions in terms of order and security, which were mainly expressed through moral and religious terminology" (Karpat, 2002: p. 30).

Initially, there were two main objectives behind the reform policies implemented to overcome the current problems mentioned above: "protecting the political unity and reinforcing the central role of the patrimonial state" (Aktar, 1993: p. 26). Thus, the first efforts were limited to specific reforms targeting instant economic measures and strengthening the military. Nevertheless, when it became clear that what had been done was insufficient, these were followed by a search for an extensive reform program that would re-structure the official ideology and the state's institutional structure. Although the pioneering reforms were taken during the early eighteenth century, the literature mainly highlighted the nineteenth century, when

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[9] Similar to the way Westernism is used in this study, "conservatism" is considered to be one of the forms/ways of being modernized. Therefore, it seems reasonable to use this term in this way instead of "conservative modernism."

the process first gained momentum by transforming into a modernization project and became complicated and institutionalized. Considering the focus of this study, instead of listing every step of the modernization of the Empire, it would be sufficient to mention that all the steps had been accompanied by a comprehensive transformation process embracing every inch of social life from military system to civil bureaucracy, political life to economy and law to education and culture for 200 years (see Karpat, 2002; Quataert, 2005; Berkes, 1998; Lewis, 1969; Hanioğlu, 2008; Davison, 1963; Findley, 2010).

The developments, especially in the field of education, as well as bureaucracy and print media within this period, played a critical role in the popularization of new ideas, ideologies, and social identities and permitted the emergence of the new bureaucratic elites defining themselves through these themes. Sending a group of young people to Europe for education and establishing new military and civil schools with a modern curriculum in the Empire were the main actions supporting this development. This generation of elites (and the one to follow) who were brought up with secular Western education in these schools was closely interested in the developments in Europe at that time. They excitedly followed up the writings and thoughts of various Western politicians, intellectuals, and scholars thanks to the print media developments and publication of books (see Somel, 2001; Fortna, 2002; Sakaoğlu, 1991; Alkan, 2008).

While evaluating the qualifications of the new generation, who played a pioneering role in the remodeling of social and political notions and modernization of the society, it is necessary to underline that they were the products of a process when the relations of capitalist production based primarily on agricultural products appeared within the Empire. Indeed, the majority of the new ruling elites were the children of the newly emerging middle-class families. The key developments, in this respect, were the decomposition of the traditional class structure of the Empire through the development of capitalism, in a peripheral form within the capitalist world economy, and the appearance of the modern middle classes, as part of the bourgeoisie, which was the rising class of the new era (see Kasaba, 1988).

A historical struggle identified the political-ideological and social developments in the modernization process not only for the political power between the elites of traditional order and the different parts of the bourgeoisie but also for the control and management of the economic wealth and socio-cultural capital (Göçek, 1996: pp. 80-86; Karpat, 2001: pp. 90-91; Tiftikçi, 2003: pp. 146-147). Most of those newly emerging middle-class families became rich in a period when the capitalist production (which was essentially agriculture-based), trade relations, and private land ownership had been developed, and the composition of the population had differentiated

due to land loss and massive migrations since the nineteenth century (Karpat, 2001: pp. 89-106; also see Yerasimos, 1975: pp. 829-837; Göçek, 1996; Tiftikçi, 2003; Zürcher, 2010: pp. 95-109). The new class members, who had "individualism, interest orientation, and dynamic awareness of its socio-cultural roots," took the bureaucracy's senior positions with the help of reforms in this field (Karpat, 2001: p. 10). Thus, the new group of elites also began to play a vital role in the policymaking mechanism, which was determined to protect the existence and unity of the Empire (Karpat, 2001: pp. 104-106).

Regarding these developments, the various intellectual-philosophical traditions that originated in the West had an increasing impact on the ideas and pursuits of the (new) ruling elites within a very long period lasting from the Tanzimat to the Early Republican Era. The widespread opinion in the relevant literature is that those traditions were French, German, and, to some extent, Anglo-Saxon and even Russian oriented. Many educated young people of this period became acquainted with various trends in Western thought, thanks to the writings of the intellectuals of the Enlightenment. Thus, as in Europe of the time (Hayes, 1963), at least one of the ideas of positivism, scientism, rationalism, progressivism, evolutionism, naturalism, materialism, secularism, atheism, and deism, along with constitutionalism, patriotism, nationalism, liberalism, or parliamentarism, became popular among the new generation of elites (see Özdalga, 2005; Korlaelçi, 1986; Akgün, 1988; Ergur, 2009; Aydın, 2009; Ülken, 2014).

However, it should also be noted that the new bureaucratic elite group emerging during the modernization process in the Ottoman Empire did not exhibit a homogeneous structure, especially at the cultural and ideological levels. Although this group of individuals consumed the same intellectual sources, their interpretations of the literature varied due to differences in their socio-cultural backgrounds. Variations could be observed in their approach to modernization, as well as from their attitudes towards political issues such as nationalism, religion, gender, parliamentarism, or workers' rights (see Özdalga, 2005; Korlaelçi, 1986; Akgün, 1988; Ergur, 2009; Aydın, 2009; Ülken, 2014). Thus, while the modernization process, as Neumann (1999: p. 69) detected, made the traditional classes of the Empire, namely "the ruler" and "the ruled," come closer to each other to some extent, the differences within the ruling class were deepened which led to the polarized worldviews among the elites.

3. The Three Genres of Politics Against the Modernization in the Late Ottoman Empire: Traditionalism, Westernism, and Conservatism

To understand the ideological variation among the Ottoman bureaucratic elites beginning from the late 18th century, the accurate way seems, as Smith points out, to analyze their approach to modernization, the process that also produced them. The aforementioned radical transformation process of Europe indeed had profound effects on the Ottoman Empire's ruling elites that had a long-term neighborhood with it. The newly emerging "modern society," which was the output of the radical transformation process in Europe (known today as "modernization"), began to be discussed as a socio-political model for the Ottoman bureaucracy who felt responsible for saving the Empire at a time when internal and external problems threaten the integrity of the Empire. The main characteristic of this process is that "the Ottoman ruling elites started to think about the West, which was a potential threat against their unity and values, and the way of thinking of the Westerners" (Aktar, 1993: p. 22). In this respect, they developed various opinions and projects as an answer to such questions as follows:

> how to find a basis for the legitimacy of the government, how to re-shape the borders of the religious or the divine, how to define individual freedom, how to secure the private space of the individuals, what type of institutionalization methods needed to provide for the economic and political reproduction of the individuals, and how to interpret new developments and improvements […] (Tekeli, 2013: p. 56)

Within the framework of Anthony D. Smith's re-assessed theoretical contribution, it is possible to claim the emergence of three strategies and ideological orientations among the modern Ottoman bureaucracy regarding their responses to those questions above in particular and the problem of modernization in general. Hence, it consists of three groups based on the different attitudes of the ruling elites, who engaged in a clash of power and interest over the imperial administration regarding modernization beginning from the 18th century to the end of the Empire: (1) "traditionalists," who wholly rejected modernization as it is the equivalent of Westernization; in other words, who accepted that there could be no other model of modernization but only the Western; (2) "Westernists," who considered modernization as a holistic transformation project and identified this process with Westernization, similar to the traditionalists, but accept that this model must totally be pursued as it is; and finally (3) "conservatives," who recognized modernization as a process that could be an eclectic mix of international (Western) and local (Eastern) cultural elements, by making a distinction between material and spiritual elements of culture. Thus, conservatives were the group who believed that there might also be alternative, non-Western ways of modernization, although they could not systematically express this fact at that time.

Although changing from time to time, the hegemony of each group over the imperial state apparatus provided a decisive influence on the official discourse and policies surrounding the

various aspects of social life. In this section, the characteristics of those ideological orientations are analyzed concerning their advocates' discourses beginning from Selim III's accession to the end of the Empire (1789-1922).

Considering the period from Selim III's accession (1789-1807) nearly to the end of the 19th century, it is possible to distinguish two fundamental political-ideological and intellectual camps within the power domain. The first one is traditionalism, which is clarified as "a fundamentalist opposition to the modernization" by one of the prominent historians and critics of Turkish thought and philosophy, Hilmi Ziya Ülken (2014: p. 5). The other is conservatism, also as "an imitative reformism" (Ülken, 2014: p. 5).

A widely acknowledged cliché in the literature about the traditionalist wing consisted of the entire traditional religious bureaucracy, *ilmiyye*, or *ulema* of the Empire (see Tunaya, 2010; Ülken, 2014; Berkes, 1998). Nevertheless, the religious bureaucracy, extending from the provincial capital to the far terrains of the Empire, was so heterogeneous in terms of its members' social and cultural backgrounds, and thus worldviews, that there were apparent differences, and even contrasts of opinion and attitudes about modernization in the Empire among them (see Peters, 1986; Heyd, 1993; Bein, 2011; Levy, 1971). In this context, even though some traditionalists were from the religious corps' leadership, the "fanatical" reactionaries to the reforms were mainly in the lower ranks of the religious corps (Heyd, 1993: p. 34; Levy, 1971: pp. 35-36).

Heyd (1993: p. 33) could find only a few names from the higher bureaucracy as "Şeyh'ül-İslâm Mehmed Ataullah, his teacher Mehmed Münib, the *kadi* of Istanbul Murat-zade Mehmed Murad," who helped and guided rebellious Janissaries, and "condemn[ed] the reforms of the New Order (*Nizam-ı Cedit*)" during the reigns of Selim III and Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839). However, for Heyd (1993: pp. 34-35) and Levy (1971: pp. 48-49), anti-modernism (or traditionalism as it is argued in this paper) was primarily associated with the lower ranks of ulema, especially with the students of madrasas (*softa*s). Besides harshly criticizing the corruption in the ulema leadership, "the *softa*s objected violently to European reforms; in all probability, they considered them a danger not only to their religious beliefs but also to their economic prospects" (Heyd, 1993: pp. 35-36). In other words, the reasons behind their reactions against modernization had ideological and material bases, like their European counterparts' reactions, as mentioned by Smith, since most reforms contradicted their traditional understanding of religion while also threatening their position in society to the extent they eliminated traditional order and institutions.

The reformist wing, the second group within the ruling elites during the first period, however, consisted of the upper ranks of the bureaucracy, both civil and religious, even including

sultans of the period such as Selim III, Mahmud II, Abdülmecid (r. 1839-1861), their top viziers and chief officials (Ülken, 2014: pp. 5-8). The crucial point is that most modernizing reforms in this period were implemented with the "active cooperation" of the ulema leadership (Heyd, 1993: p. 33). Thus, even though (more or less) a conservative one in character, the highest ulema mostly adopted a modernist approach, similar to the civil bureaucracy, in this period. Indeed,

> Sultan Selim III, who initiated systematic reforms in the Empire, was strongly supported by several seyhu'l-islams and the kadi-askers, Veli-zade Mehmed Emin Tatarcik 'Abdu'llah. The seyhu'I-islams, Mehmed Tahir (1825-28), 'Abdü'l-Vehhab (1821-22, 1828-33) and Mustafa 'Asim (1818-19, 1823-25, 1833-36), the mollas, Mehmed Es'ad, Mustafa Behcet, and many others, loyally cooperated with his successor, Sultan Mahmud II, in destroying the Janissaries, abolishing the Bektashi order and modernizing the army and State. (Heyd, 1993: p. 30)

Furthermore, some religious bureaucrats like Tatarcik Abd'ullah or Molla Keçeci-zade Mehmed İzzet provided religious approval for reforms and led the "reforms on European lines" (Heyd, 1993: p. 30). For instance, "in a project (*layiha*) of reforms he submitted to Sultan Selim, [Tatarcik Abd'ullah] ardently demanded the adoption of Western military science and drill, the systematic translation of European technical works into Turkish and the employment of foreign instructors and experts" (Heyd, 1993: p. 30). Mehmed İzzet also wrote about the necessity of regulating the imperial economy and administration in modern ways in his memorandum, which was written after the abolishment of the Janissaries in 1826. According to Heyd (1993: p. 37), "[t]he high ulema who in their writings or their speeches in the Councils of State expressed approval of the reforms defended their attitude by arguments either taken from religious law and early Islamic history or based on reason and common sense."

Ülken (2014: pp. 7-9) argued that the conflict between two groups (i.e., traditionalists and conservatives) over modernization was closely related to the opposite ideas on the concept pair of "culture-civilization."[10] The traditionalist wing of the debate had a fundamentalist position against modernization, accepting it as a holistic transformation project and thus rejecting it in every aspect—as it originated from the Christian West (Ülken, 2014: pp. 5-9). As they identified the tradition with Islam, they advocated maintaining a traditional society and civilization (based on the sharia) instead of adopting any of the West's technical and cultural elements (Tunaya, 2010: pp. 11-15). This group was so rigorous about this subject that "a fanatical dervish, named as Şeyh Saçlı, […] in 1837 stopped Sultan Mahmud on the new Galata bridge, called him 'infidel

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[10] Nevertheless, considering the fact that the concept of "*medeniyyet*" (Eng. *civilization*) was first used by the Ottoman elites in 1830s, it should be mentioned that such a debate possibly emerged during Tanzimat Era at the earliest, not before. See Baykara (2007).

Sultan' and accused him of destroying the religion of Islam" by his ongoing reforms (Heyd, 1993: p. 36).

However, the reformist wing consisted of those who differentiated culture and civilization (or, more accurately, the material and moral aspects of culture) and thought that the problem could be solved by accepting the technical superiority of the West (Ülken, 2014: pp. 5-9). Considering that the power of the West was made up of its technical and economic (i.e., material) superiority, according to this group, it seemed possible for two different worlds (namely the new and the old) to exist together (Ülken, 2014: pp. 5-9; see also Tunaya, 2010: pp. 25-34). Their solution was "to stay as 'the Easterner' in moral and legal [(i.e., religious)] terms yet taking advantage of the technique and science of the West" (Ülken, 2014: pp. 9, 24-26). In this context, this group identified themselves both as an Easterner and a Westerner without considering a radical contradiction between the indigenous characteristics of the two different worlds (Ülken, 2014: p. 278).

Although there are various concept suggestions in Turkish literature to identify this group's mentality, in this paper, they are acknowledged as "conservatives" (as an abbreviation for conservative modernists) since they adopted an intermediary position between the traditionalists and the Westernists as it is discussed in the previous section.[11] The first group, the traditionalists, advocated a radical anti-modernist approach. Nevertheless, like their counterparts in the rest of the world, the conservatives favored reconciling modernization and tradition (in their own ways). The latter was the pioneering group of this position in the Ottoman Empire who supported alternative ways of carrying out the modernization project apart from the Western way. It should also be noted that this position was intellectualized and evolved into a systematic discourse in the later stages as the discussions were deepened. Indeed, as addressed by Ülken (2014: pp. 5-8), they were far from making a realist questioning of modern culture and understanding its core meaning for a very long time. Thus, the author refers to this group as just "a passive imitator," who consequently tried to solve problems by cosmetic measures (Ülken, 2014: pp. 5-8).

The change of balances in the struggle among the Ottoman bureaucracy occurred during the Tanzimat era (1839-1876) when the weight of power began to pass to the civil wing instead of the religious wing in the state apparatus. One of the most critical developments behind that was the appearance of a new group of intellectuals and bureaucrats who were graduated from the newly established secular military schools during the reign of Mahmud II. Indeed, the

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[11] İrem's (1999; 2002) articles can be referred to as an example of the authentic usage of the concept in the literature. Additionally, Güngörmez (2014), quite closely, used the term of "modern conservative."

modernization movements had begun to penetrate different layers of the society, rather than only being limited to the palace, with the efforts of those who studied in modern schools of the time, closely followed political and intellectual developments in the West (Ülken, 2014: pp. 34-35). Nevertheless, most of the new generation of ruling elites still consisted of conservatives that Tanzimat brought an order "[in which] the palace, mansions and houses were Westernized, [and] Western way of clothing, communication and lifestyle merged with […] [society's] old customs" (Ülken, 2014: p. 37).

The third group within the bureaucracy, which is today known as "Westernist" (or *Garbçı* in Ottoman Turkish) in literature, emerged nearly towards the end of the 19th century (see Berkes, 1998; Hanioğlu, 1981; Hanioğlu, 1997; Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, 2007; Mardin, 1974).[12] What differentiated this new group from the previous ones was that they considered modernization a holistic project and defined it as Westernization. In other words, they supported the idea that "Westernization should not be restricted by legal formalism but rather penetrate the mind and the essence" (Ülken, 2014: p. 35). According to them, Westernization referred to a radical transformation, including the modernization of all social institutions, much more than a bare technical advancement.

Another point that needs to be emphasized is that some of the new generation bureaucrats adopted the conservative mentality from the previous period, whereas the traditionalists were defeated after a while (Ülken, 2014: p. 25). In this way, beginning with at least the second half of the 19th century to the end of the Empire (1876-1922), the political and intellectual arenas remained apparently in the internal struggle of the modernists, which are distinguished as the Westernists and conservatives in this study (see Ülken, 2014: pp. 162-163, 172, 176-178, 278-280). This point, quite significantly, shows that the debate's central question was no longer modernization itself but its form/way and status among the Ottoman Empire's ruling elites. Referring to Karpat's statement, "except for a small minority, all these groups accepted the notion of change [(thus, modernization)] in the social and political institutions—in varying degrees according to their understanding of civilization and of Europe and of identity and value attached to their own culture and history" (Karpat, 2001: p. 115).

The conservative discourse and policy implementations were dominant in the imperial administration, starting from the second half of the nineteenth century until the Party of Union and Progress (1908-1918). Together with "the Young Ottomans" (*Yeni/Genç Osmanlılar*), who

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[12] This ideological strategy/position that is called as "Westernism" or "Westernist modernism" is also identified by Güngörmez (2014) as "Jacobin modernism," "elitist modernism," and "radical modernism."

graduated from modern schools and occupied various vacancies of the bureaucracy, Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909) and many of the ruling elites of the period could also be considered as conservatives due to their discourses. According to Mardin (2000: p. 4), the Young Ottomans who were influential between the years of 1867-1878 and led by Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal, Mustafa Fazıl Paşa, İbrahim Şinasi, and Ali Suavi, were "at one and the same time the first men to make the ideas of the Enlightenment part of the intellectual equipment of the Turkish reading public and the first thinkers to try to work out a synthesis between these ideas and Islam." Tunaya (2010: p. 59) argues, similarly, this group could not go beyond the "dualist" and "intermediator" mentality—which is here referred to as conservative—leaving its mark on that period:

> They also regarded the West as superior to the Ottoman society. However, they were traditionalists who were mainly influenced by the Europeans, more precisely by those from the German Romantic Movement. The West was superior, and Westernization was a must. On the other hand, the Ottoman history's glorious victories and well-rooted morals of the Ottoman society must not have been forgotten, more precisely not be abandoned. Many things should be inherited from the West while, at the very same time, many things should not be adopted. The West should not be totally inherited. This would pose a threat. Instead, an Ottoman-Western blend should be prepared. (Tunaya, 2010: p. 59)

Considering their antagonism with Abdülhamid II, the confounding point about the Young Ottomans was their decisive political-intellectual influence on him and his policies. As stated by Akçura (2007: p. 22), one of the prominent intellectuals of the time, "although Abdülhamid II mercilessly opposed to the Young Ottomans, he was the student of their politics to some extent […] His politics showed considerable similarities with the ideas of the Young Ottomans." In this regard, it can be acknowledged that modernization in the period of Abdülhamid II was mainly shaped by a conservative discourse, which only consisted in adopting "the aspects of administrative-technical innovations and technology transfer to provide the supervision over society and economy" (İrem, 2011: p. 30). This agenda, however, excluded "the cultural aspects considered as a way of penetration of different values" along with "the liberating aspects based on political liberalization and parliamentarian democratic principles" (İrem, 2011: p. 30). Thus, the distinction between the elites of the period was not based on a radical ideological differentiation but instead resulted from varying attitudes towards determining the format of the relationship between the old and the new to construct a "unique" (i.e., Ottoman/Turkish) kind of modernization. In this context, Hanioğlu (1985: p. 29) underlines that the discussion's focal point was the question about the extent to which Islam's social content would be taken into consideration.

The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP, and later Party of Union and Progress), the political wing of "The Young Turks" (*Jön Türkler*) movement, became the leading political actor following the downfall of Abdülhamid II. Contrary to the previous era, the Westernist wing, who attached a superiority to Western civilization and suggested that the Western lifestyle should have covered all areas of social life, held most of the party organization's high positions (see Hanioğlu, 1995: pp. 7-32). Consisting of individuals who graduated from civil or military schools with a modern-secular curriculum from the newly established Ottoman Medical, Military, and Engineer Schools, they defined the world with "a mindset outside the religious tradition" in the light of materialism and positivist influences (Hanioğlu, 1995). Their thoughts were disseminated through various channels, especially *İçtihat* (Struggle) journal, which was owned by Abdullah Cevdet, written by Rıza Tevfik, Celal Nuri (İleri), Kılıçzade Hakkı, and Ali Kamil (Akyüz), and known for being one of the prominent publications of the time (Gündüz, 2007: pp. 63-209).

Nevertheless, considering the ambiguity among the period's discourses and politics, there was also a conservative wing in the CUP organization (Bein, 2007: p. 615). For instance, it is determined in one of the exceptional studies conducted by İrem (2002: p. 89) that the conservative movements such as Bergsonism, romanticism, and spiritualism had a decisive influence on certain elites of the time. According to this study, a wing within the CUP, which could specifically be recognized as "Bergsonist-conservatives," quite vibrantly supported the nationalist struggle that was on the rise at the end of the 1910s. However, they persistently stood against the unionists' positivist and elitist projects and Western wing policies (İrem, 2002: p. 89). İrem (2002: p. 93) refers to some of the prominent embedded intellectuals to CUP, such as İsmayıl Hakkı (Baltacıoğlu) and Mustafa Şekip (Tunç) as Bergsonist-conservatives.

Under conservatism, it is also possible to count another group within CUP who consisted of "Islamic modernists" who combined the ideas of Western anti-materialist intellectuals with various Islamic scholars. This group's distinctive characteristic was adopting "a form of Islamic modernism that combined Sufi piety with modernist inclinations and identity" (Bein, 2007: p. 607). Bein (2007) refers to one of the late Ottoman bureaucrats and intellectuals, namely Ahmad Hilmi of Plovdiv, who intensely criticized Westernists' anti-religious propaganda, even though he received a Western education and engaged with modern sciences and European ideals. İsmail Hakkı (İzmirli), İsmail Fenni (Ertuğrul), Mehmet Ali (Aynî) and M. Şemseddin (Günaltay) could also be listed as the elites of the same period, who supported the idea of Islamic modernism and mainly wrote for one of the famous conservative newspapers of the time, *Sebil-ür Reşat* (Gündüz, 2007: pp. 213-348). Common characteristics included that they followed Hilmi and adopted an (intermediary) position between traditionalism and Westernism, which is called conservatism in

this study, and could be interpreted as a devotion "to reconcile Islamic tradition with modern ideas and perceptions" (Bein, 2007: p. 609-613).

Conclusion

This study is the product of a quest to overcome the mainstream approach, which has been widely used to explain the political-intellectual diversity between the modern Ottoman bureaucratic elites for more than a century by reducing them to the tripartite ideological typologies of Ziya Gökalp and Yusuf Akçura. For this aim, the author claims to re-evaluate the infamous theory of Anthony D. Smith on the ideological-strategic differences between the bureaucratic elites of various societies as a response to the experience of modernization. As an assertion for explaining the actual ideological division among the elites during the modernization of the Ottoman Empire, Smith's theory can be reformulated into another tripartite division consisting of traditionalism, conservatism (conservative modernism), and Westernism (Westernist modernism).

The first ideological reaction, traditionalism, was associated with the attachment of the traditional elites of the Empire to the tradition and religion with a deepened resistance against modernization. This strategy, based on the refusal of any kind of modernization policy, left only in the monopoly of a minority group, mainly consisting of the religious bureaucracy, and lost its most strength within the ruling elites during the reign of Abdulhamid II, when modernization policies began to set the agenda as a dominant paradigm.

On the other hand, most of the new elite generation, who graduated from modern secular schools and consisted of newly emerging middle classes due to the integration into the capitalist system, supported modernization. However, within this group, there emerged a division regarding their opinions about the ideal format of this process. One of the ideological positions among the elites that appeared even at the very beginning of the modernization period consisted of conservatism. Being systematically advocated by the Young Ottomans and their counterparts among the Young Turks such as Bergsonist conservatives and Islamic modernists, conservatives differentiated the concepts of culture and civilization and united tradition and modernization (the old and the new; or the East and the West) in their own ways. They had a relative dominance

within the power bloc during most of the modernization period, at least until the Committee/Party of Union and Progress (CUP) government.

The last policy was Westernism which was embraced by the remaining elites of the period, such as Abdullah Cevdet, Rıza Tevfik, Celal Nuri (İleri), Kılıçzade Hakkı, and Ali Kamil (Akyüz), and became dominant during the power of CUP. The advocates of this position considered civilization and culture as an inseparable whole and believed in experiencing a complete modernization (Westernization) process for the sake of the state. In this way, the emergence of various ideologies and the sustainability of some of the traditions within modern social life in the late Ottoman Empire were made possible by these positions adopted to overcome the dilemma of modern and traditional.

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