

The Rise and Development of the Liberal Thought in Turkey

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From the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, the traditional structure of the Ottoman Empire underwent a great transformation not only in its institutions but also in its political thought. Some Western originated liberal ideas began to enter into the empire and to influence it in this period. However, while liberalism was living its golden period in the European world, the Ottomans were unaware of this great current shaping the era. On the other hand, after glorious Ottoman armies suffered a series of defeats at the hands of their European adversaries, the rulers of the empire were obliged to change and modernize the equipment and training of their armies. It was in this reform period when the Ottomans became acquainted with liberal thoughts. However, Ottoman encounter with the Western liberal ideas took place in an indirect way. To begin with liberal ideas accessed the empire under the name of “reform” or renovation”, or, with the expression of those days “tanzimat” (regulations), “islahat” (reform). The Ottoman statesmen and intellectuals were inclined to the idea of liberal state indirectly by recognizing these terms. In this respect, the advent of liberal ideas is not a new and rootless development in Turkey as many scholars consider today. *In fact, the advent of liberal ideas in Turkey goes as far back as the first quarter of the eighteenth century and liberal ideas were considered as synonymous with the terms of “reform-modernization” for a long time.*

The reform movements in the Ottoman Empire go back until the eighteenth century, the Tulip Era (Lâle Devri, 1718-1730). From this period onwards, the Ottoman intellectuals began to question the situation of the empire. The eighteenth century-reforms were prompted by the defeats on the Western front. Therefore, western-inspired reforms of the eigh-

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teenth century were largely confined to the military institutions. However, the Ottoman ruling elite, who started their reform attempts with this main goal, accepted the necessity to reform other institutions and political thought of the state.²

In 1789, Selim III (1789-1807) ascended the Ottoman throne, when Europe was shaken by the French Revolution. Following the French Revolution, nationalistic ideas began to penetrate into the Ottoman Empire, and then reform became inevitable for the Ottomans. For this purpose, Selim III began to prepare a reform project. He issued a command to civil, military and religious dignitaries requesting them to set forth their views on the causes of the weakness of the Empire, and their proposals for its reform. They presented their replies in the form of "lâyiha" (memorials - reports). In the end, three different views came to the fore. Some of them sought to recover the military glories of the Ottoman golden age by reverting to its military methods, while some others demanded reconciliation of Frankish training and weapons with the existing military order. Finally, the radicals who believed that the old army was incapable of reform, urged the Sultan to set up a new one, trained, equipped and armed from the start along European lines³.

So, the Sultan promulgated, in 1792 and 1793, a whole series of new instructions which came to be known collectively as the "Nizâm-ı Cedid" (New Order). A new corps of regular infantry (Nizam-ı Cedid Ordusu), trained and equipped on European lines was established. To finance this army, a special new treasury (Îrâd-ı cedid Hazinesi) was set up. In the administration some disciplinary measures were taken. In diplomatic relations the balance of power policy began to be pursued. Regular and permanent Ottoman embassies were established in the major European capitals such as London, Paris, Vienna and Berlin. Bilateral relations were accepted in diplomacy. However, Selim's reign was the period when the old and new institutions lived simultaneously. This caused a great opposition against Selim III. As a result of the Janissary revolt of 1807, he was deposed and the Nizâm-ı Cedid forces

² For reforms and changes in intellectual life at this period see; Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Lâle Devri*, Ank., 1973, Yusuf Akçura, *Osmanlı Devletinin Dağılma Devri*, Ank., 1940. E.Z. Karal, "Tanzimattan Evvel Garphlaşma Hareketleri", *Tanzimat* I, İst., 1940, pp. 13-30. Ercüment Kuran, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Yenileşme Hareketleri," *Türk Dünyası El Kitabı*, Ank., 1976, pp. 1003-1013. Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, İst., 1978, pp. 41-126.

³ About the reform lâyihas presented to Selim III see; Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, c. VI. Dersaadet, 1309, pp. 3-54; E. Ziya Karal, "Nizam-ı Cedide Dair Lâyihalar," *Tarih Vesikaları*, I, pp. 414-425, II, (1942-1943) pp. 111, 342-351, 24-432; For the comments on this subject also see; Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, V, Ank., 1983. Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye*, vol. 1. (trans. M. Harmancı), İst., 1983, Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, Ank., 1978, pp. 87-92. Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, "Batılılaşmanın Temelleri Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler," *Birinci Milli Türkoloji Kongresi, (İstanbul, 6-9 Şubat 1978), Tebliğler*, İst., 1980, pp. 327-335.

were dissolved. On the other hand, the idea of reform still existed among some statesmen, and the Ottoman embassies in Europe founded during Selim's period served as the channels of transmission through which Western ideas went on entering into the empire⁴.

Mahmut II, who ascended the Ottoman throne in 1808, continued the reform programme that was started by Selim III. In the first days of his reign, *Sened-i İttifak* (Document of Agreement) was signed. With this document the Sultan's sovereign power was limited for the first time in the Ottoman history; therefore it was an important document, although it was never practiced⁵. On June 15, 1826 Mahmud II destroyed and dissolved the Janissary corps, thus setting the Ottoman reform on a new course. He embarked on a great programme of reforms; in them he laid down the main lines along which later Tanzimat reformers were to follow. Mahmud set up a new army, known as *Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye* (The Victorious Soldiers of Muhammed). Military instructors were imported from Italy and France for training the new army. In 1834 the Military College, a significant institution which was going to play an important role in the Turkish political life, was established⁶.

Mahmud II gave special emphasis on centralization of all power in his own hands, and the elimination of all intermediate authorities, both in the capital and in provinces. At the end, he suppressed local lords in the provinces, in Rumelia and Anatolia, and succeeded in establishing direct central control over most areas. Only against the Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt was he ultimately unsuccessful. In fact this was one of the factors that forced him to reform the empire⁷.

Mahmud's desire to achieve increased centralization necessitated changes first of all in the structure of central government in İstanbul. There was an inclination towards modern cabinet government in the structure of central government. The title of the Grand Vezir was turned into the Prime Minister and he became a coordinator of the activities of ministers. The office of the lieutenant of the grand vezir (*Sadâret Kethüdası*) was transformed into the Ministry of Interior (called first Ministry of Civil Administration Affairs, or *Umûr-u*

⁴ For this period see also; Stanford Shaw, *Between Old and New, The Ottoman Empire Under Sultan Selim 1789-1807*, Cambridge, 1971.

⁵ For *Sened-i İttifak* see; İnalçık, "Sened-i İttifak and *Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayûnu*", *Bellekten*, XXVII/12 (Ank, 1964) pp. 630-662. Rıfat Önsoy, "Sened-i İttifak ve Türk Demokrasi Tarihindeki Yeri", *"Türkiye'de Demokrasi Hareketleri Konferansı 6-8 Kasım 1985. H.Ü. Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, no. 1 (Ank., 1985)

⁶ For Mahmud's reforms see; Sertoğlu, "Tanzimata Doğru", *Sultan II. Mahmud ve Reformları Semineri 28-30 Haziran 1989, Bildiriler*, İst., 1990, pp. 1-10. Seyitdanlioğlu, "Tanzimatın Ön Hazırlıkları ve Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye'nin Kuruluşu 1838-1840", *Sultan II. Mahmud ve Reformları Semineri 28-30 Haziran 1989, Bildiriler*, İst., 1990, pp. 107-112.

⁷ Ercüment Kuran, "Sultan Mahmud ve Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa'nın Gerçekleştirdikleri Reformların Karşılıklı Tesirleri", *Sultan II. Mahmud ve Reformları Semineri 28-30 Haziran 1989, Bildiriler*, İst., 1990 pp. 107-112.

Mülkiye Nezâreti, in 1836, and then, simply Ministry of Interior, or Nezâret-i Dâhiliye). In addition, in 1836, the office of Reisü'l-küttâb was transformed into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Nezâret-i Hâriciye). In 1836 the Ministry of Judicial Pleas (Nezâret-i Deavi), later called the Ministry of Justice was established. In 1839, the Ministry of Trade (Nezâret-i Ticaret) was set up. The Imperial Treasury (Hazine-i Âmire) was joined with the Imperial Mint (Darphâne-i Âmire), and they were transformed into the Ministry of Finance (Mâliye Nezâreti). Thus, the Council of Ministers (Meclis-i Vükelâ) was created under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. For the first time civil servants were divided into two separate departments as domestic and foreign affairs. A regular salary system was established and this would reduce the officials' opportunity to take bribes, and penal codes was issued for officials. Ranks and titles of officials were reorganized. Finally, the structure of a complex Ottoman bureaucratic hierarchy on modern lines were established in this period. So, the Bâb-ı Âlî, or what the Europeans called the Sublime Porte, was created⁸.

In addition to all these reforms, the Sultan established a series of advisory councils. In 1836, in order to execute military reforms the Deliberative Council of the Army (Dâr-ı Şûrâ-yı Askerî) was set up. In 1838 the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances (Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı adliye) was established. *Even if not with the method of election of its members and the decision making process regarding its regulations and its execution, this council can be regarded as the precursor of the parliament in Turkey. It performed major tasks and has been maintained up to now with different titles as "the Supreme Court of Appeal" and "the State Council". It developed in the line of separation of executive, legislative and judicial powers, and took its place in the Ottoman administration as a high consultative organ.* In addition to this council, several councils of ministries and city councils were established. At the end of the Tanzimat period, liberal institutions, which will be pioneers of the representative system and parliamentarism in Turkey in the future, were founded, in the Ottoman administration, even if they were limited in number⁹.

Another institution that was one of the sources of intellectual life of Tanzimat period was the Tercüme Odası (Translation Office). Following the Greek Revolt in 1821, it was established to handle duties of translation and to train young Ottomans to replace the Greeks who had traditionally performed this function. It became major source not only of diplomats and educated bureaucrats but also of the new intelligentsia whose members were going to be creators of Tanzimat such as Sâdık Rifat Pasha, Mustafa Reşid Pasha, Âlî Pasha and Fuad Pasha. They were advocates of liberal thought and brought up in this office. When Mah-

⁸ Sertoğlu, pp. 1-10. Seyitdanhoğlu, pp. 147-156.

⁹ Seyitdanhoğlu, M., *Tanzimat Döneminde Meclis-i Vâlâ*, Ank., 1994, pp. 19-24.

mud II died in 1839, the famous Tanzimat Decree, which prepared the ground for intellectual reforms in the empire, was about to be proclaimed¹⁰. Promulgated on November 3, 1839 the principles of the Tanzimat Decree that paved the way to a consitutional state in Turkey for the first time. It was declared as a “hatt-ı hümayûn”, or imperial ordinance and can be considered as a semi-constitutional document. It embraces three important aspects: taking the right of life, possession and honor of the Ottoman citizens under guarantee; collecting taxes according to income; recruitment of soldiers on a regular basis. All of these items were going to be applied to all Ottoman citizens whether Muslims or Non-Muslims. As a matter of fact all these principles show that liberalism that rose and developed in Europe began to enter the Ottoman Empire. Similar to the first liberal document of Europe, Magna Carta (1215), the Tanzimat Decree bears a liberal character since it is the first step towards constitutionalism in Turkey. The decree emphasizes the rights and duties of the citizens by guaranteeing their rights of life, honor and possession. With the right of property the Ottoman Empire legalized the practice of private proprietorship and, at the same time confiscation and escheating were abolished. All of these rennovations were a significant turning point for the sake of liberal developments within the empire. With the proclamation of the Reform Decree of 1856 (Islahat Fermanı) these rights were repeated and revised and secured a more exact expression. Moreover, with the Land Code (Arâzi Kanunnâmesi) of 1858, the right of private possession became apparent. On the other hand, central and provincial advisory councils of the Tanzimat period, mainly the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinance (Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye), served to spread liberalism in the empire¹¹.

It is a fact that Tanzimat statesmen did not follow the patterns of England and France in their reform efforts, while they were aiming to found a more liberal state structure. When the multinational structure of the empire is taken into consideration, it is more likely that they look to the models of Austria and Prussia which had authoritarian and heterogeneous state structure. While the individuals were protected against the state, the Ottoman statesmen were seeking the remedies for keeping all elements of the empire together. Therefore, in their liberal attempts they pursued the patterns of Austria and Prussia which had the same

¹⁰ İsmail Soysal, “Umur-ı Hariciye Nezareti'nin Kurulması 1836 “*Sultan II. Mahmud ve Reformları Semineri 28-30 Haziran 1989, Bildiriler*, İst. 1990 pp. 71-80. Carter Findley, “The Foundation of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry: Beginnings of Bureaucratic Reform under Selim and Mahmud II, “*International Journal of Middle East Studies*, III/4 (1972), pp. 388-416.

¹¹ For the text of the Tanzimat Decree see; Gözübüyük, Ş.- Kili, Suna *Türk Anayasa Metinleri 1839-1990*, Ank., 1982. pp. 1-4. There are several works on Tanzimat period. Some of them are: Karal, E.Z. *Osmanlı Tarihi*, c. V, Ank., 1983. Kaynar, Reşat *Mustafa Reşid Paşa ve Tanzimat*, Ank., 1985. Maarif Vekaleti, *Tanzimat*, İ., İst., 1940. *Mustafa Reşid Paşa ve Dönemi Semineri, Bildiriler*. Ankara. 13-14 Mart 1985, Ank., 1987. *Tarih ve Toplum*, cilt 12 sayı 70 (Tanzimat özel sayısı) (Kasım 1989). *Tanzimatın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu (Bildiriler)*, Ank., 1991, 150. *Yılında Tanzimat*, (Yay. H. Dursun Yıldız), Ank., 1992. *Tanzimatın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu, Ankara 31 Ekim-3 Kasım 1989*, Ank. 1989.

state structure with the Ottoman Empire. The establishment of the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinance (Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Âhkâm-ı Adliye) was a typical example for this matter. It was a synthesis of the Prussian “Staatsrat” (State Council) and the Ottoman administrative tradition. As a matter of fact Prussia and Austria adopted these councils from England and France. *In brief, Tanzimat statesmen were influenced by the liberal developments in Europe through Austria and Prussia, and indirectly through England and France. This fact also shows that the statesmen of Tanzimat did not imitate the European ideas in a passive way but reached a synthesis by mixing them with their own views.*¹²

Along with the developments in administrative understanding, there were some statesmen who advocated liberal ideas among the Ottomans. One of them was Sâdık Rıfat Pasha the father of the idea of the Tanzimat Decree, revealing its theoretical aspects in his writings. The Pasha introduced western liberal views to the empire through his famous booklet called “Müntehâbât-ı Âsâr”. He also recorded his observations during his embassy to Vienna in a booklet titled “Avrupa’nın Ahvâline Dâir Risâle” (A Booklet on Conditions of Europe). In his writings, Sadık Rıfat analyzed the reasons for the European development. According to Sâdık Rıfat for a civilized state, individuals’ security of life, possession and honor should be provided and law and justice should be the main principles of administration. He also noted that there was freedom of press in Europe. He was the first Ottoman statesman who put forward a liberal understanding of state administration, very different from an oriental state conception. According to him “governments are for the public, but public is not for the state”. He was also the first man in the empire to mention the natural rights of men, and he considered portage was something contrary to the human nature¹³.

Mustafa Reşid Pasha, Âlî Pasha and Fuad Pasha, famous leaders of the Tanzimat Era were advocaters of liberalism in the empire. During the Tanzimat period there was a general inclination towards liberalism in state administration and state economy. Fuad and Âlî Pashas demanded freedom for the right of private property. According to them Ottoman economic progress could only be provided by private possession right. As a matter of fact they took necessary steps for this purpose. With the proclamation of Tanzimat Decree they abolished Confiscation and Escheat systems that prevented capital accumulation within the

¹² Seyitdanlıoğlu, M. *Tanzimat Devrinde Meclis-i Vala 1838-1868*, Ank., 1994, pp. 19-34.

¹³ Sâdık Rıfat Pasa, *Müntehâbât-ı Âsâr*, İst., no date. He gathered his various writings during his state services. There is a different edition of this work, whose probable date of publication is 1290-93 (H). In those years parts of the booklet were published separately. “Avrupa’nın Ahvâline Dair Risâle” (A Booklet on Conditions of Europe) is one of them. Further see; Tanpınar, Ahmet. *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, İst., 1989, pp. 119-124. Kuran, Ercüment. “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda İnsan Hakları ve Sadık Rıfat Paşa”, *VIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Ankara, 11-15 Ekim 1976. Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, pp. 1449-1453. For detailed information see my article called “Sadık Rıfat Paşa ve Avrupanın Ahvâline Dâir Risâlesi” (*Liberal Düşünce*, no 3).

empire. With the Land Code of 1858 most of the state owned lands (mîrî arâzî) were transformed into private lands. For Tanzimat men, trade had to be liberalized and free trade had to be practiced in the empire. In order to support trade a banking system was established. In industrial field, they tried state-controlled industrialization and established factories similar to today's organized industrial zones. However, the attempts from 1840's to 1860's failed to attain the desired casults. Meanwhile they encouraged native tradesmen to join their forces and established jointstock companies. On the other hand, they wanted the advent of foreign investment into the empire, and no state control in economic activities. Nevertheless, all these measures remained insufficient and unsuccessful. Lack of economic knowledge and technical inefficiencies in view of Europe and concurrence with the foreign traders in the empire made it impossible to flourish trade and industry of the empire. As a result, all economic attempts for Ottoman progress remained incomplete¹⁴.

Inspite of all these failures a new and dynamic young generation rose during the Tanzimat period. This new generation, who criticized Tanzimat reforms and statesmen bitterly, had different outlook and ideological approach. Familier with Europe very well, İbrahim Şinasi (1824-1871) was one of them, and supported liberal ideas on reason, law and duties of the state in his newspaper called "Tasvîr-i Efkâr", issued first in 1862. According to him the state should protect the interest of society. In his economic views he was for free enterprise. If there were laws influencing the nature, then there should be also laws affecting economy. He also emphasized capital and private possession¹⁵. After 1865, Society of Young Ottomans (Yeni Osmanlılar Cemiyeti) was founded under the leadership of Namık Kemal and Ziya Pasha as an opposition movement. The Young Ottomans were exponents of constitutional monarchy. They preferred a limited state with respect to its duties. While they were supporting constitutional monarchy, parallel to that idea they were demanding liberalism in economy in a more explicit manner. Namık Kemal, who was against protectionism, supported free trade and opposed state monopolies (yedd-i vahit) frequently in his writings. According to him, the reason for economic backwardness of the Ottomans was the lack of private enterprises and private companies in the empire¹⁶.

¹⁴ For the views of leaders of Tanzimat, Mustafa Reşid Pasha, Âli Pasha and Fuad Pasha see footnote 10 Further see; Ortaylı, İlber, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*, Ank., 1987. pp. 157-206. Çavdar, Tevfik, *Türkiye'de Liberalizm 1860-1990*. Ank., 1992. pp. 19-42. For economy policy of Tanzimat see; Pamuk, Şevket. *Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914*. İst., 1988, pp. 194-212. Önsoy, Rıfat *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Sanayi ve Sanayileşme Politikası*, Ank., 1988.

¹⁵ Tanpınar, op. cit., pp. 183-215. Seçmen, Hüseyin *Şinasi*, Ank., 1972.

¹⁶ Namık Kemal expressed his views on Ottoman economy and administration in varous newspapers and in "Usûl-ı, Meşveret Hakkında Mektuplar," *Makalât-ı Siyasiyye ve Edebiyye*, İst., 1911, pp. 1-7 Further see; Mardin, Şerif. *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, Princeton, 1962. and *Türkiye'de Toplum ve Siyaset*, Makaleler 1, İst. 1990. Berkes, Niyazi *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, İst. , 1978. pp. 277-297. Ülken, Hilmi Ziya *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, İst., 1979. pp. 93-107.

After the second half of the nineteenth century economic thought began to improve within the empire and many Ottoman intellectuals believed that liberal economy was the only solution for the economic improvement of the state. Sakızlı Ohannes Pasha, who gave lectures on economics at the Mekteb-i Mülkiye, (School for Civil Servants) wrote many works supporting classical liberal economies in Turkey. He adopted Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" in his book titled "Mebâdî-i İlm-i Servet-i Milel" and introduced Adam Smith's views to Turkey. In this work, he examined production, circulation, distribution and consumption of goods. He saw free competition necessary for the progress of the empire; on the other hand, he was against protectionism, state control and monopolies. In addition he criticized socialism, claiming that it contradicted human nature¹⁷.

Another important review supporting liberalism was "Mecmua-i Fünûn" (Review of Sciences), issued first in 1863 by Münif Pasha, Minister of Education at that time. It was a press organ of the Society of Ottoman Science (Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye), founded by Münif Pasha. The main aim of the review was to inform the Ottoman world and Ottoman university about the branches of sciences. Several articles on economic problems appeared in this review by Ohannes Pasha and Cavid bey, Minister of Finance of the Committee of Union and Progress (-İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti) government. Mecmua-i Fünûn circles, with a mission similar to the French encyclopedists, tried to spread European scientific innovations among the Ottoman intellectuals¹⁸.

The Tanzimat period was followed by the First Constitutional (I. Meşrutiyet) period (1876-1878). Thanks to opposition of the Young Ottomans and struggle of Midhat Pasha, in 1876 the first Ottoman Constitution (Kanûn-i Esasî) was promulgated. New ideas coming with the Tanzimat brough about the establishment of parliamentarian structure in the state administration. Nevertheless at the end of the crisis resulting from the 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian War, Sultan Abdülhamid II abolished the Parliament (Meclis-i Mebûsan) and a new absolutist regime was initiated in the empire. Consequently, the Young Türk opposition, grouping around the Comitte of Union and Progress (İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti) (CUP), against the government appeared. Written and verbal opposition of the Young Turks within the empire and abroad was ended with the declaration of the Second Ottoman Constitution (II. Meşrutiyet) in 1908.¹⁹

¹⁷ Çavdar, op. cit., pp. 54-83. OhannesPasha published this work in 1881. See *Mebâdî-i İlim-i Servet*, İst., 1881.

¹⁸ For information on Mecmua-i Fünûn and views of Münif Pasha see; Ülken, op. cit., pp. 64-67.

¹⁹ A lot of works on CUP, which had a determininig role in our political and intellectual life, have been done. Some of them are as follows: Akşin, Sina. *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, İst., 1987. Feroz Ahmed, *İttihat ve Terakki 1980-1914*, İst., 1986 Hanioglu, Şükrü. *Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jön Türkler 1889-1902*, İst., 1985.

In the Second Constitutional Period the state was under the control of the Committee of Union and Progress government. During the reign of Abdülhamid II, the Committee of Union and Progress, developed through the activities of the Young Turks, gathering the around Ahmed Rıza and Prince Sebahaddin, and of the students from the War Academy and the Medical School in İstanbul and Rumelia. As a matter of fact, there was no ideal unity among the members of the Committee of Union and Progress . It had a variety of ideas from Ottomanism to Liberalism and Islamism, from Turkism to Westernism. The economic views of Committee of Union and Progress were in line with the liberal economic views between the years of 1908 and 1914. The architect of this economic approach was Mehmed Cavid Bey (1875-1926), who was considered as the spirit of the Committee of Union and Progress 's financial policy²⁰. He was one of the ardent exponents of classical liberal school and revealed his views in various articles. Cavid Bey wrote firstin Mecmua-i Fünûn and was the first person who informed the Ottomans about the developments in the science of statistics and about the economy of Europe. His most important work was İlm-i İktisat (Science of Economy) in four volumes²¹. Moreover, he had a book on statistics titled "İhsaiyyat" that can be considered as the first Ottoman work on statistics. Cavid Bey, together with Rıza Tevfik and Ahmed Şuayib, famous philosophers at that time, published a review called "Review of Social and Economic Sciences" (Ulûm-ı İktisadiyye ve İctimaiyye Mecmuası), the most important publication for liberal and pozitivist thought in Turkey between 1908 and 1910. Another important contribution of Cavid Bey was that he was the founder of İtibâr-ı Millî Bankası, a nationalbank, (1917) with the aim of supporting private enterprise in the empire. All through the period of the Committee of Union and Progress government, in which he undertook the post of Ministry of Finance for over six years, Cavid Bey supported the necessity of abolishment of capitulations and tried to secure the English and French acceptance on this issue in return for the Ottoman neutrality during the World War I. He was criticized bitterly, and he was one of the followers of Mancheshter School, to which many of famous liberal economists of the period were belonged. In his writings, he stated that the Ottoman progress could be possible only through Ottoman integration with the world economy, and that for this purpose foreign investment should enter into the empire. He was against the protectionalism and believed in development of private enterprise in the empire. He supported the idea that the empire should be a capitalist state. He emphasized the free trade by saying that "practice of exchange of commercial goods, free from all kinds of obstacles of international trade is the essence of economy,even the law of economy."²²

²⁰ About the life and views of Cavid Bey see; Mücellidoğlu Ali Çankaya, *Mülkiye Tarihi ve Mülkiyeliler*, vol. III, Ank., 1968-69, pp. 678-717. Kandemir, *İzmir Sülkastinin İçyüzü*, Ank., 1955. Pakalın, M. Zeki *Maliye Teşkilâtı Tarihi 1442-1930*, IV, Ank., 1978, pp. 237-266. İlkin, Selim. "Mehmed Cavid Bey," *D.İ.A.*, vol. 7, pp. 175-176.

²¹ Mehmed Cavid, *İlm-i iktisad*, 4 vols., İst., 1899-1901.

²² For the introduction of Ulum-ı İktisadiyye ve İctimaiyye Mecmuası, written by Cavid Bey see; *Liberal Düşünce*, no. 1, (Kış 96), pp. 120-123.

Another liberalist in the Empire was Prince Sebahaddin. He was influenced largely by the structure of the Anglo-Saxon society and was a supporter of La Play School, founder of Science Social, and Edmond Demolins, a leading representative of this school. According to him, societies were divided into two categories as communitarist and particularist. In the former community, individuals were depending on their social groups and waiting everything from the state and society. In the latter individuals were trusting only their own power and will in the first place. Therefore, in these communities individuals were more independent, enterprising and productive. According to the Prince, Ottoman society should follow the second pattern. He defended individualism and decentralization for the Ottoman progress. He expressed his views in his works titled "Open Letters to the CUP" and "How Turkey to be saved?", and translated Edmond Demolins' "A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons" into Turkish.²³

Prince Sebahaddin entered into competition of leadership with Ahmed Rıza Bey in the Committee of Union and Progress and, in 1902 at the Committee of Union and Progress congress in Paris he left the Committee of Union and Progress, and founded the Ottoman Liberal Society as an opposition group against the Committee of Union and Progress. In 1906 he established Society of Individual Enterprise and Decentralization. After the promulgation of the Second Constitution in 1908 he and his followers constituted "Ahrar fırkası- Independents' Party". Although they constituted a strong opposition against the Committee of Union and Progress government, their activities remained ineffective.

Another party founded during the first Constitutional constitutional period was Hürriyet ve İtilâf Fırkası -Freedom and Agreement Party. Ostensibly, it had a liberal tendency, and supported decentralization and individualism of Prince Sebahaddin, but in reality, it was away from defending liberal ideas. It was constituted by the individuals who were alienated from Committee of Union and Progress and had the inclination of minority nationalism. Therefore, in this respect, it is not a historical fact to accept this party as one of the exponents of liberal thought in the Ottoman Empire.²⁴

During the years of 1914 and 1918 of the second Constitutional period, national policy began to be pursued in economy and attempts were made to be create a national bourgeoisie. During the World War I when over one third of the territories of the empire were lost, the Committee of Union and Progress pursued a national policy in economy through use of force.²⁵

²³ Ülken, op. cit., pp. 326-335.

²⁴ A noteworthy monography on this party see; Birinci Ali, *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası, II. Meşrutiyet Devrinde İttihat ve Terakkiye karşı Çıkanlar*, İst., 1990, Tunaya T.Z. *Türkiye' de Siyasal Partiler*, vol. 1, İst., 1984, pp. 263-273.

²⁵ Şener, Abdüllatif, "İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyetinin İktisadi ve Mali Politikası (1908-1918)", *H.Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 8/1, (1990), pp. 203-232.

Consequently, the nineteenth century was the period when the liberal thought began to penetrate into the empire, However, this was mainly a liberalism understood by the terms of reform and renovation. *It was considered as Ottomanism, put forward for the salvation of the Ottoman Empire through the XIXth century. It was a continuation of a thought which appeared from the Tanzimat period onwards.* As a matter of fact the first liberal Ottomans were at the same time the exponents of Ottomanism, among whom were Sadık Rifat Pasha, Mustafa Reşid Pasha, Âlî Pasha and Fuad Pasha. Thus from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, the word of liberalism began to be cited; at the end of the XIXth century, liberalism was defended by its advocaters such as Münif Pasha, Sakızlı Ohannes Pasha, Cavit Bey, and Prince Sebahaddin, and was partly practiced. Nevertheless, all through the XIXth century the Ottoman Empire was under the political, economic and financial pressure of the Western powers and lost its independence to a great extent. It became an open market and source of raw materials for the European capital. Moreover, aggravation of foreign debts and capitulations caused financial dependency on Europe and the foundation of Duyûn- Umumiye (Foreign Debts Administration). Under these circumstances liberalism could never be realized in the administration or economic activities of the empire. Ottoman liberalists of those day have been criticized unfairly even today.