

THE EMERGENCE OF TANZİMAT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Prof. Dr. Seçil AKGÜN*

Mustafa Reşit Paşa¹, known as the author of the Gülhane Hatt (The Edict of the Rose Chamber) bid farewell to his entire household on the morning of November 3, 1839, before he left for the imperial gardens referred to as Gülhane Parkı, where he was to ceremoniously announce the famous reform edict. The Paşa, as an experienced statesman, was still well aware of the challenge he was confronting in pronouncing this document bearing the reflections of the French Revolution. These were principles such as humanism, liberalism and nationalism, all products of western mentality. Reşit Paşa was to recite them to the Ottoman society, completely isolated from the west for many centuries. Not only the commoners of İstanbul would be there to hear him. All Ottoman notables, statesmen, dignitaries as well as representatives of foreign states, ambassadors, the Greek and Armenian Patriarchs, the Chief Rabbi of the Jews were invited to the ceremony. All had taken their places to listen to Mustafa Reşit Paşa's announcement. The Paşa was quite uncertain how the audience would respond to the edict he was to recite. He started to read the text upon the arrival of Abdülmecit, the youthful Sultan only 16 years of age then, as the enormous crowd listened breathlessly. Following the recitation, all Ottoman statesmen joined the Sultan in taking an oath of allegiance to the Ferman by pressing their hands on the Holy Kuran².

The Ferman was mainly composed of commitments and pledges of the Sultan guaranteeing security of life, property and honor as well as promises for better administration of all Ottoman subjects regardless of their religion or creed. For the first time in Ottoman history, an Otto-

* Professor of Middle East Technical University (Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Öğretim Üyesi)

¹ Mustafa Reşit Paşa was the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs during the mentioned time.

² Karal, Enver Ziya: Gülhane Hatt-ı Humayununda Batının Etkisi, Belleten V: XXVIII, No. 112, Ank. 1964 p. 581—82.

man monarch upon his free will was making commitments to his subjects. This initial approach towards equality started a new era in Ottoman history called The Tanzimat, meaning "putting in order."

The Tanzimat era extending from 1839 to 1876 brought many renovations and a completely different mentality to the Ottoman beurocracy and institutions. As a matter of fact, Tanzimat renovations became the genesis of Ottoman constitutionalism which emerged in approximately 50 years after the proclamation of the Script.

The obvious penetration of western mentality into the Ottoman Empire in form of the Tanzimat Edict naturally was not composed overnight. Nor was it prepared only with Mustafa Reşit Paşa's initiative. It was a product of number of beginings which could be traced back a century or two. It is possible to find the initial inspirations of Tanzimat in the XVII th century, when the Ottoman decline had already become obvious. Military defeats of the Ottoman armies enforced the monarchs to realize western superiority and admit the need for renovations. However, the early renovators attempted to restore the might of the empire strictly with disciplinary measures. A good example to early attempts is "Koçi Bey Risalesi"³ prepared by Koçi Bey and presented to Sultan Mahmut I. in the beginning of the XVII th century. The mentioned document contained the causes of military and administrative disorder the State confronted. It also included some restorative suggestions, mainly military, to overcome the corruption thus started. This, throughout the century, was followed by even darker images drawn by various people of important administrative positions.

In the XVIII th century, some notable statemen of the Tulip Era for the first time considered facing the west in order to stop the Ottoman decline. Special envoys were sent to European capitals to learn about western concepts and lifestyle, totally ignored until then. It was during the Tulip Era that the first glimmers of westernization, a new life concept inspired by art and changes of mentality appeared in the Ottoman Empire. Europe and the Ottoman Empire, two hostile counterparts, attempted to learn about each other during this era. A travel document (seyyahatname) prepared by 28 Çelebi Mehmet, who was appointed plenipotentiary to Paris, can be considered one of the first documents to reflect the west to the Ottoman Empire. Another unforgettable outcome of Mehmet's mentioned appointment was the intro-

³ Aksüt, Ali Kemal: Koçi Bey Risalesi, İst. 1939.

duction of the printing press to Ottoman Muslims. This was made possible through the joint efforts of Sait Çelebi, Mehmet's son who accompanied him on his mission, and İbrahim Müteferrika, a Hungarian convert. The printing press, avoided by the Ottomans for over two centuries became the first technical device adopted from the west. One other noteworthy initiative during the Tulip Era was the attempt to expand available Ottoman sources by translations from western sources: It was again during the same period that ornamental devices that foreign ambassadors displayed at their residences, along with instruments such as clocks, tables, chairs, etc., started to attract the attentions of their Ottoman viewers as symbols of better life. To enviously seek a better life was also an alien concept to earlier Ottomans. It must be borne in mind that the heavy religious influence over the Ottoman administration and society continuously imposed to Muslim majority that this world was temporary, was a place of burden for the souls. They were constantly inspired towards expecting eternal life, which was to come after death in the "other" world... This outlook on life left the people with nothing to strive for, nothing to look forward to but death in order to reach eternal comfort.

It is unfortunate that medreses, mosques and tekkes were the only places that the people and the so called intellectuals could discuss the developments in society, and the preachers in such places were far from advocating any of the new western influences. Hence, the Tulip Era soon closed due to a reactionary uprising. The prolonged continuation of this era undoubtedly would have facilitated the acceptance of westernization in the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, although in minimum measures, the penetration of western concepts into the empire continued.

The next phase towards Tanzimat was the period between 1730 to 1789; from the end of the Tulip Era to the accession of Selim III to throne. This period consisted of mainly military westernization attempts such as adopting new war techniques, instruments, and naturally, inviting instructors to put all in application. These foreign instructors appealed from European countries, namely France, bore western mentalities. They undoubtedly contributed towards enlightenment of the Ottoman sultons as well the statesmen. Selim III owed his rightly acquired fame as the first enlightened Ottoman sultan to being brought up during these developments.

In 1789, the year of the French Revolution, Selim III succeeded to the Ottoman throne. Raised by Mustafa III, a reformative father, Se-

lim was totally aware of the rapid decline of the Empire when he seized power. While the hier apparent, he contacted some European monarchs and corresponded with Louis XVI of France⁴, sought inspirations, and attempted to learn means and ways of stopping the Ottoman decline. He was not pessimistic like his predecessors and believed that "there could be a remedy for everything but death"⁵. The contacts he made with western ambassadors, again prior to his succession to throne, guided him to regard westernization an unavoidable must to stop the decline. His immediate measures were diverted toward learning more about the west, which he immediately put into action. His dynamic approaches resulted in the recognition of his reign as "Nizam-ı Cedid Devri" (The Era of New Order); Nizam-ı Cedid being a name given to the new, modern army he founded⁶.

Selim was able to evaluate the role of a ruler upon the faith of a state. Noting that absolutism was not the answer to strengthening the state authority, he consulted prominent statesmen and secured their participation in the reforms he planned. Selim by this attempts, anticipated to liberate the reforms from being considered individualistic. He was also hoping to hence provide an extensive beurocratic support from the leading cadre. His method was to activate the top statesmen by means of a questionnaire similar to the "Cahiers" of France, called "Islahat Layhaları" meaning Reform Decrees. In the decrees he sought opinions of the notables as to what reforms should be performed and how. Although the military was once again the general concentration point in Nizam-ı Cedid reforms, Selim, adopted serving the people as his initial principle. He was fully aware that social, educational and economic reforms were also required. Noting the priority of economic developments, he initiated a new treasury system called "İrad-ı Cedid" (New Funds). This system, designed to support "Nizam-ı Cedid" financially, included new revenue sources for the state. His new economic measures encouraged consumption of domestic products and restricted imports, slowly taking over the state economy. Nevertheless, the economic attempts remained very feeble during Nizam-ı Cedid Era.

4 Unat, Faik Reşit: Tarih Vesikaları Dergisi, V. I., Ank. 1946 (ref. for a photocopy of a letter by Louis XVI, addressed to Selim)

5 Karal, Enver Ziya: Osmanlı Tarihi, V. V, Ank, 1983 p. 61

6 Ref. to the above text for Selim III and his reforms as well as Roderic Davidson and e.g. Uriel Heyd "The Ottoman Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmut II, Stanford J. Shaw and Eezel Kural Shaw: History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Vol. I; Bernard Lewis: Emergence of Modern Turkey.

Selim admitted the inefficiency of the state's foreign policy also particularly after witnessing the consequences of Bonapart's Egyptian invasion, the unsuccessful Turco-Russian War, and Serbian revolts which started a question of nationalism among various subjects of the Empire. Abandoning the Ottoman tradition of French alliance, he negotiated with England, Russia, Austria as well and started a balance policy. He established permanent embassies in major European capitals in order to pursue relations. Unfortunately, all the mentioned positive approaches stirred the reactionaries in the Empire. They once more displayed their disapproval to permit such developments. Penetrating western mentality which would soon stimulate mental liberation and diminish the influence of the ulema was the greatest enemy of the reactionaries. Europe had entered the XIXth century following the downfall of aristocracy, despotism and bigotry. These were all essential factors for the biased, reactionary ulema, accustomed to living off from ignorance. Unquestionably, if westernisation was allowed in the Ottoman Empire, it would place the Ottoman Empire on a similar liberal path as observed in European monarchies. Nevertheless, the Ottoman ulema was determined not to let ignorance be overcome with the emerging educational and military systems. Hence, started a great biased propaganda against the Nizam-ı Cedid. This influenced the people extremely. It is noted that a Paşa publicly stated "I would rather see my son a Christian rather than an İstanbul Turk-a la France- or part of Nizam ı Cedid"⁷. Conservative ulema incited the also ignorant janissaries and displayed a reactionary uprising which cost Selim first his throne, and later, his life.

Selim's successor Mustafa IV did not refrain from siding with the reactionaries whom he owed his Sultanate to. However, he too was dethroned after a very brief reign, this time by Selim's followers, making way for Mahmut II to succeed to the Ottoman throne.

Mahmut II, crowned the Ottoman sultan in 1807, inherited from Selim a zeal for reforms as well as experiences which made him the actual preparer of Tanzimat. His reign was full of domestic catastrophes such as the Serbian and Greek uprisings, as well as the continuing prob-

⁷ As a matter of fact, the *Ulema*, once the enlightened men of the Ottoman state, had by the mentioned time become the representatives of conservatism. Selim, and later, Mahmut II, keenly attempted to secure their reforms by increasing the ulema's participation in reformative activities. Ref: David Kushner: *The Place of the Ulema in the Ottoman Empire During the Age of Reform (1839-1918)*; Turcica, Tome XIX, 1987, p. 53-55.

lems with the French and Turco-Russian feuds. On top of these, Mahmut also confronted problems from the Arab provinces, the Wahabi uprising and the diastorous Mehmet Ali question, the uprising of an Egyptian Paşa who at first was an aid to the State and later, a direct threat to the Empire. All these problems bore traces of the French Revolution. The convenient situation of France in Europe aided the principles of the French revolution to spread throughout the continent rapidly. Liberalism and radicalism nourished by nationalism opened the way to emergence of nation-states. None of these was welcome by absolute European monarchs. On the other hand, it was not possible for the Ottoman Empire which had recently started to milder its isolationist policy, to totally escape from these influences. The Ottoman state chose to remain indifferent towards the impacts of the French revolution rather than condemn them as observed in case of other totalitarian European states. Hence, nationalism easily penetrated into the Ottoman provinces, starting from the Balkans, with the Serbian uprising. The Serbs gained autonomy in 1817 and the Greeks, independence, in 1830.

Such developments of Mahmuts' reign motivated him to enlarge the modest doses of reforms Selim performed. Mahmut was anticipating to preserve the integrity of the Empire by reformation and granting privileges to the Ottoman subjects. He made no changes in the theocratic and absolute state administration. However, he pronounced his famous quotation indicating that he wanted to distinguish his Muslim flock in a mosque, the Christians in a church and the Jews in a synagogue⁸. This was important in the sense that it was the first step an Ottoman Sultan took towards equal recognition among the Ottoman *ummet*. The *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire allowed the non-muslim communities a fairly liberal practice of their life styles and social and religious traditions. However, this was not applicable to Muslims. The fact that the Ottoman ruler was the caliph of the Sunni Muslims made them "the favorite sons" of the Sultan. The non-Muslims from time to time, were subjected to many visual distinctions such as having to paint a wall of their houses a darker shade, or wear certain color shoes, wear a trade-mark on their head gear, even having to walk on the street, not the side walk⁹. Mahmut's mentioned quotation meant dissolving such distinctions which made the non-Muslims appear inferior as it made the Muslims feel privi-

⁸ Davison, Roderic: Reform in the Ottoman Empire, New York 1973, p. 34, see also Karal, the above text p. 186.

⁹ Karal, Enver Ziya, Osmanlı Tarihi V.V, p. 152

laged. As a step towards equality and renovation, Mahmut enforced fez as a common head gear. He modernized clothing and introduced slacks and stambolin, a black frock coat, to be worn at least among the beurocrats. His interest in improving beurocracy was not restricted to appearance alone. He also tried to overcome bribery and pay regular salaries to government employees. He established a new modern army of a western model. The example Selim displayed by keeping a traditional army next to the modern, and the unfortunate conclusion of his military reform was enough to show Mahmut that in cases of co-existence, the traditional would soon win over the modern. So he abolished the jannissary system of the Ottoman Empire by a revolutionary step he took in 1827. The new military system kept the way open for more western influences. A military academy was established in 1834. Some of its graduates were sent to Europe for higher education. Military instructors were invited from western states. The medical school was also of success. Military fortification of the state contributed to the fortification of the central government. Although it is possible to claim that increasing the authority of the palace prepared the way towards personal oppressions of Abdulaziz and Abdulhamit II¹⁰, it guided the way to restoring the state's prestige. The corruption derebeyis and valis caused in the provinces were largely overcome by a combination of force and diplomacy. The general westernization of provincial administrations served its purpose and State authority once more became prevalent over the local notables. Military fiefs and revenues were put in order. Censuses were held¹¹ to justify the revenue system and prevent exploitations. A postal service, passport and quarantine systems were established for the welfare of the people. For the first time in Empire's history a regular official newspaper, "Takvim-i Vekayi", was published. It even had a counterpart in French: *Moniteur Ottomane*! Arbitrary confiscation of estates belonging to deceased officials was discontinued. A reasonable limit was considered for military service, which once was a life-long task. A reserve system was established for the soldiers so that the people could tend to their professions as well.

The administrative developments of Mahmut's reign included the re-formation of the government so that ministries of foreign affairs, interior and treasury functioned in the western manner. The Sadrazam (Grand Vezir) became the Prime Minister.

10 *Ibid.* p, 9

11 Davison, Roderic: Reform in the Ottoman Empire, p, 32

Mahmut also founded assemblies in order to serve the new administrative system. Dar-ı Şurayı Askeri was the first assembly to be founded. It was designed to solve military problems.

Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkam'ı Adliye (Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances) was charged with preparing new regulations. Dar-ı Şurayı Bab-ı Ali (Supreme Council of the Government) was to reinforce the prior.

Initiation of the three assemblies indicate that judiciary developments of Mahmut's reign were unignorable. The mentioned councils were to attend the judiciary problems of all Ottoman subjects. In the course of time, these assemblies, by transformations, developed to include representatives from minority groups and functioned on equal basis for all Ottoman subjects.

Trophying over all mentioned developments was the education renovation. It was clear that reforms would actually take root and flourish to change the Ottoman society in the positive sense only by education. Education innovations were designed to provide modern educational institutions as alternatives to medreses, which no longer were institutions of positive knowledge. Elementary education was made compulsory. In the years to come, this obligation was extended to cover girls too.

All schools, above all, War School and Medical School required sources in order to pursue education. Thus, translating necessary sources became an obligation. Tercüme Odaları (Translation Chambers) were established to meet this requirement. Many scholars, even those who later served as backbones of the constitutional era such as Âli, Fuat, Safvet Paşas, and Namık Kemal became participants of the Chamber.

Nevertheless, perhaps the most important and rewarding accomplishment of the new educational system culminated in sending young students to European capitals such as Paris, London, Vienna, to further the mediocre education they received at home. This approach led to the creation of an Ottoman political elite. This was how the Ottoman intelligentsia, who soon became the constructors and practicers of Tanzimat developed, and in decades to follow, Ottoman constitutionalism emerged¹². Young men sent abroad lost no time in learning abo-

¹² For the first Ottoman census see: Karal, Enver Ziya: Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda İlk Nüfus Sayımı, İst. 1942.

ut the western mentality as they pursued their education. When they returned to the Empire they attempted to fortify the reforms from above with renovations of mental development they possessed. This actually enlarged the base ready to accept developments.

A most serious handicap for Mahmut lied in the fact that he lacked a supportive cadre to execute his reforms. They antagonized many of his people and he was severely criticized by those who had vested in the status quo as well. It is a fact that all western reformers were also apprehended by their people when they set out to reform. However, it must be borne in mind that they continuously turned towards Christian civilisation while modernising. In the case of Mahmut, indeed the task was more difficult, for he was trying to penetrate Christian trends into an empire with Muslim majority. His reforms which defied tradition provoked the conservatives, mainly the ulema, This obliged him to confront a larger opposition. His renovations were regarded as infidel trends. Mahmut was called the infidel sultan by many of his people for disturbing the traditional Islamic applications. He also had to confront opponents quite disturbed by his approaches toward crushing the influence of the notables.

In later years, Mahmut was appraised critically for taking up civilisation from the wrong hand with external influences like the enforced change in clothing, rather than depending on enlightenment. Nevertheless, it is a fact that his reign contained a number of beginnings and initiatives which opened up possibilities for the future development of mentality in the Ottoman Empire.

In order to evaluate the developments of Mahmut's reign and the emergence of mental development in the Ottoman Empire, perhaps it would be worthwhile to pause here and briefly reflect the difference between the oriental and western mentalities at that time:

A very simplified definition of western mentality for the period concerned can be formulated with the famous phrase of Descartes "I think, therefore I am". Western mentality, based on rationalism and individualistic opinion on life and trends, was a product of centuries of steady developments. Since the development of human mind is extended to pre-Christian times by westerners, it would not be very just to classify it strictly as a Christian mentality or civilisation. Western mentality is a composition of various civilizations, nourished by renaissance, reform and humanisma movements. Therefore, it very well can be classified as

universal. As Descartes's phrase, taking root from ancient and universal base flourished, opening the way to the liberation of human mind and freedom of conscience, a path was opened to political revolutions and modern liberal states, striving to free from the yoke of absolutism¹³.

On the other hand, the Ottoman state, considered the representative of the east, escaped the long medieval epoch Europe lived. However, albeit its Turkish founders, the State, founded close to the closure of medieval epoch, considered itself İslam from the start, and based itself on İslamic principles. The prevalent philosophy was "*I believe, therefore I am*". Existing mentality was unquestionable and considered correct as long as it served İslamic divine principals. Islam was not only a way of worship but also a way of life. Islamic cannon law, the *Sheria*, contained not only the religious but the social code as well. The Ottoman monarchy after capturing the Caliphate in the XVI th century, became the administrators of both social and religious life. Thus, the state was theocratic, its institutions and principles divine, undisputable. Hence, since the State and its institutions were unsusceptible to criticisms, it remained unsusceptible to renovations¹⁴.

When western superiority became apparent, the scientific, intellectual, economic and political developments enabling this superiority were overlooked and Sultans were held responsible for the Ottoman failures. On the other hand, the Ottomans had not been subjected to renaissance or reformation; burst of technologic inventions; scientific or rational developments or voyages of discoveries the west had had. They were not stirred up by humanisma or stimulated by revolutions¹⁵. Failing to understand that western advancements were results of these progresses, they took refuge in holding fate responsible. The cure for the misfortunes the Empire encountered was sought in deposing either the Sultan or the Grand Vezir.

Such was the mentality and the conditions of the Ottoman Empire when initial reforms were conducted. Nevertheless, renovating in order to stop the decline of the state hence became the chief concern first of the Ottoman rulers and statesmen and later, of the slowly emerging intelligentsia. State authority was fortified during Selim's and Mahmut's reigns, so the government stood in the center of the reforming process.

13 Davison, Roderic: Reforms in the Ottoman Empire, p. 27

14 Karal, Enver Ziya: Gülhane Hatt-ı Humayununda Batınn Etkisi, p. 583

15 Ibid. 584

In the Ottoman Empire the government was responsible for holding the people together. Therefore it had to maintain a prestigious level in order to assure a respectful observation of its commands. This largely depended upon a balance system between the local administrations and central authority. The balance system would also be an assurance of more honest and efficient local administrations as well as a prevention for further decompositions. Mahmut anticipated the formula for such a system in reformation so he earnestly desired the Tanzimat reforms which were the first reflections of changes of mentality in Ottoman administration and institutions. He found a good collaborator in Mustafa Reshis Paşa, but did not live long enough to see the Tanzimat Decree proclaimed.

Abdülmeçit succeeded Mahmut II to throne in 1839. An inexperienced young man of mild character, Abdülmeçit was only 18 when he was crowned the Sultan. However, he was fortunate to have a moving figure as his Foreign Minister to pursue reforms his father stated. This was Mustafa Resid Paşa, a brilliant and remarkable statesman, recognized as the author of Tanzimat Decree.

Mustafa Reşid Paşa¹⁶ started his beurocratic career at the age of 16 and served in various positions of the Sublime Porte. He developed his knowledge and understanding of the west during his ambassadorships in Paris and London. Exposed to western influences, he became a sincere reformer and the first of the Tanzimat men. He carefully viewed that the prior reforms with half measures remained either a partial success, a total failure or only on paper. His simple and earnest desire to put the government in order joined with his intelligence and knowledge so he was able to approach the problems the state encountered in a very rational way. He keenly observed foreign developments and noticed how big a threat Mehmet Ali was to the Empire. He also diagnosed the French and Russian ambitions in the Mediterranean. He cautiously evaluated the long diplomatic and economic record of France, and its chances for economic influence in the levant which it periodically attempted to restore and extend. He also noted that Russia had long been a displayer of hostilities. Aware of the requirement for a foreign support against these three issues, he confided in the British Foreign Minister, Lord Palmerstone. He often conferred with him to outline his ideas for a documented reform program. So Mustafa Reşid put down his ideas reflecting an effort to reconcile the old with the new; the Muslims and non

¹⁶ Ibid, 585

Muslims as Ottoman subjects under equality; the cannon law with modern judicial trends and absolutism, with constitutionalism.

Since the Ottoman Empire at that time was in need of British support and since Great Britain pursued a liberal economic policy, Mustafa Resid could not remain alien to this policy. Furthermore, the recent Turco-English commercial treaty of 1838 had newly started to be exercised. These joined factors were influential in Mustafa Resid's consideration of Palmerstone's advices on Ottoman reformation. Evaluating each and every one of these factors and advices, Mustafa Resid extended a reform program to Mahmut II prior to his death. This program based mainly on Lord Palmerstone's advices contained measures for the improvement of Ottoman military, agriculture and economy. Mahmut's principle of equality of all Ottoman subjects was added to the advices, giving the outline for the *Gülhane Hat*. "The Hat" concentrated on three main points:

1. Guarantee for security of life, honor and property to all Ottoman subjects; public trials according to regulations and abolition of confiscation (a promise of Mahmut)
2. Creation of an orderly system of fixed taxation.
3. A regular system of military conscription, with the term of service reduced from lifetime to four to five years.

The three main points covered three vital aspects: Social, Economic and military welfare of the Empire.

The most outstanding aspect of the *Gülhane Hatt* was that it was a promise of the Sultan to extend imperial concessions to all Ottoman subjects, regardless of their religion or sect. For the first time in Ottoman history the Sultan was confronting his people with a charter, promising and taking the responsibility of their welfare. With this charter all Ottoman subjects gained identity as citizens rather than a flock, as they were previously considered.

The edict was not a constitution. There were no effective limits or sanctions to enforce its application. The Sultan, in the edict, had sufficed by "calling the curse of God upon the violators"¹⁸. It reflected only the humanitarian aspects of the previous western revolutions. The outcome of these revolutions was the display of rationalist and secular mentality,

¹⁷ For details on Mustafa Resit Paşa see: Kaynar, Reşat: Mustafa Resit Paşa ve Tanzimat, İstanbul, 1942

¹⁸ Karal, Enver Ziya: Osmanlı Tarihi V. V p. 193

expressed as the Declaration of Rights of Men and Citizens, against hierarchical society and privileges of the nobles. It included that men were identified as nations and that all mankind possessed the right to be born and live freely and equally under the warranty of laws; and that private ownership was also a sacred and identically inviolable right for all. The *Hatt* contained the fundamentals of these dramatic resolutions, however, it refrained from reflecting the administrative changes which occurred among the western states during the post revolutions. Therefore it was restricted to a reformative character rather than revolutionary.

The *Hatt* was not appreciated neither by Muslims or non Muslims. The Muslims were displeased to be regarded equal with "the infidels", while their counterparts were disturbed that they would be losing some communal privileges. For example, they would have to serve military service since the amendments of the *Hatt* were to be applied to all subjects. Leaders of the non Muslim communities were displeased that they would be losing their privileges and authority over their people, to the central government. It was even noted that the Greek Patriarch, after observing Mustafa Resid Paşa rolling up the *Ferman* upon the completion of his recital, and tuck it in his belt, remarked: "I hope it will never leave the case it is now tucked in"¹⁹.

As to the foreign powers, although Mustafa Resid Paşa issued and used the *Ferman* as a political instrument to avoid foreign entanglements in Ottoman affairs; they, in general, applauded the edict. Absolute states like Russia, Austria-Hungary did not display favorable opinions on the *Hatt* while Great Britain and France, with the liberal perspectives, expressed hearty approvals. In short, the *Hatt* was successful in acquiring the anticipated western support.

On the other hand, the *Gülhane Fermanı* reflected the duality apparent not only during the Tanzimat Era, but throughout the following reformative phases as well. The contemporary and westernized institutions were created to meet the challenges of time while traditionalist institutions of faith continued. The *Firman* was designed to dissolve separatism and provide all Ottomans a general guarantee of equal protection under law. Such an assurance was anticipated to increase the loyalty of Ottoman subjects and guide them to a coalition to preserve the integrity of the Empire. However, in a non-secular administration of Sultan-Caliph, over a heterogeneous society separatism, was in-

¹⁹ Karal, Enver Ziya: *Ibid.* 187

evitable. Nevertheless, the *Gülhane Hatt* opened the path to fundamental changes in the theocratic system of the Ottoman State particularly by holding the monarch responsible towards his people, by his oath. This replaced the Sultan's previous commitment and responsibility directly to *Sheriat*, which, by its motto "Dar ül İslam-Dar ül Harp" (meaning House of İslam or House of War) recognized no rights of existence to non-Muslim elements²⁰.

The evaluation of the *Hatt* and its implementation remain topics of separate discussions. However, it has to be pointed out once more that the *Gülhane Hatt* undoubtedly provided the basis for liberal developments in the Ottoman Empire as well as serving the genesis of a totally new cadre called the Young Ottomans, the first Ottoman enlightened elite which was to guide the Empire towards constitutionalism within the following decades.

20 Arsel. İlhan: Arap Milliyetçiliği ve Türkler, Ank. 1973 p. 232