

THE REFORMIST HORIZONS OF AHMED CEVDET PAŐA: THE NOTIONS OF
CIVILIZATION (*MEĐENİYET*), PROGRESS (*TERAKKİ*), AND SOLIDARITY
(*ASABİYET*)

by
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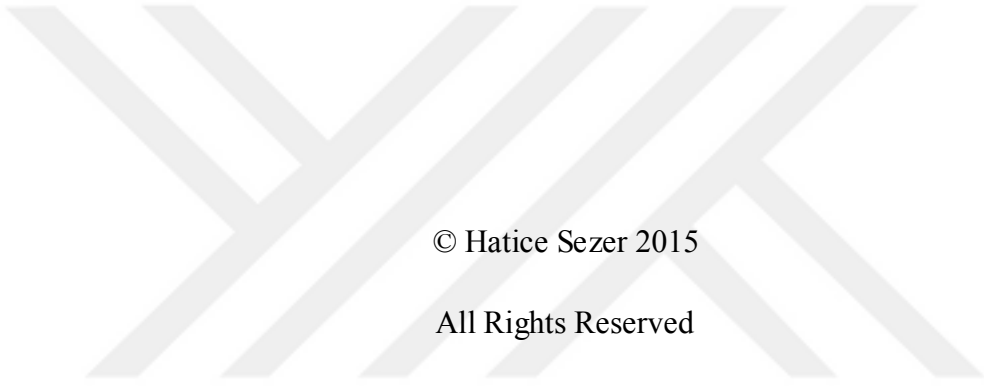
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ABSTRACT

THE REFORMIST HORIZONS OF AHMED CEVDET PAŞA: THE NOTIONS OF CIVILIZATION (*MEDENİYET*), PROGRESS (*TERAKKÎ*), AND SOLIDARITY (*ASABİYET*)

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In this thesis, the reformist horizon of the eminent nineteenth century intellectual Ahmed Cevdet Paşa is analysed. During this period of Ottoman modernization, instead of favouring the direct adoption of the modernizing socio-political system that has been developed in the West, Cevdet was mainly supporting the organic change of societies. As a result of the analyses made by looking into several works written by Cevdet such as the *Târih-i Cevdet*, the *Tezâkîr* and the *Ma'rûzât*, it is suggested that Cevdet's understanding of the three concepts; civilization, progress and solidarity can be held representative of his reformist horizon.

Throughout the study, Cevdet's reformist horizon is subjected to two different understandings on modernity chosen as a matter of my personal choice which are the Weberian analyses of different types of behaviours that are effective in the formation of the modern social order, and the Foucauldian theory on the "art of governmentality". While the Weberian understanding is instrumentalized in observing Cevdet's intellectual inclinations, the Foucauldian one is used in seeing his tendencies as to the way he considers better in the governance of the Ottoman Empire. In the end it is argued that Cevdet, both as an intellectual and as a statesman, was a thorough reformist who was partially progressive and entirely for gradual change.

ÖZET

MEDENİYET, TERAKKİ VE ASABİYET KAVRAMLARI BAĞLAMINDA AHMED CEVDET PAŞA'NIN REFORMİST BAKIŞ AÇILARI

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, Medeniyet, Terakki, Asabiyet, Modernite

Bu çalışmada, on dokuzuncu yüzyılın önemli düşünürlerinden Ahmed Cevdet Paşa'nın reformist bakış açısı analiz ediliyor. Osmanlı modernleşmesinin bu döneminde, Cevdet, Batı'da geliştirilen sosyo-politik sistemlerin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na direk uyarlanması yerine, toplumların organik değişimi fikrini savunmaktadır. Çalışmada, Târih-i Cevdet, Tezâkir ve Ma'rûzât gibi Cevdet'in yazmış olduğu bazı eserler incelenerek, medeniyet, terakki ve asabiyet kavramlarının, Cevdet'in reformist bakış açısını temsil edebileceği öne sürülüyor.

Çalışma boyunca, Cevdet'in reformist anlayışı, bu araştırmacı tarafından seçilmiş olan iki farklı modernite teorisine tabi tutuluyor. Bunlar, farklı davranış çeşitlerinin modern toplumsal düzenin oluşturulmasında etkilerini inceleyen Weberyana düşünce ve Foucault'nun "yönetim sanatı" üzerine teorisi olarak belirlendi. Weberyana yaklaşım Cevdet'in entellektüel eğilimlerini gözlemlemede araçsallaştırılırken, Foucault'nun teorisinden, bir devlet adamı olarak Cevdet'in Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun yönetimi hakkında düşüncelerini incelemeye yararlandı. Sonuç olarak, bir entellektüel ve devlet adamı olarak Cevdet'in, kısmen ilerlemeci, aşamalı değişim taraftarı ve tam anlamıyla bir reformist olduğu görüşü savunulmaktadır.



To my family

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INTRODUCTION

Studying a nineteenth century Ottoman intellectual like that of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa has its own complications. As all the other intellectuals of the time period, Cevdet was also sheltering the dichotomy between the East and the West in his character. During the time, it was already apparent to the Ottoman intellectuals and statesmen in general that it had become an imperative to initiate deep-rooted reforms into the Empire. It was no longer possible to think that these reforms should indicate a return back to the Ottoman past. The achievements of the Western countries were taken as the role model for the prospective reforms in the Ottoman Empire.

The importance of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa as one of the eminent figures in the nineteenth century Ottoman modernization process stems from the fact that he was an active participant in the reforms that were implemented in many a different branches of the Ottoman Empire. His contributions in the administrative, judiciary, educational, and intellectual spheres are highly appreciated in the academic world. However, Ahmed Cevdet's Islamic upbringing within the *ilmîye*, and his disapproval for the introduction of radical changes to the Empire invites different convictions in regard to whether Cevdet was a modern, conservative, progressive or reactionary intellectual. In this thesis my aim is to establish an understanding on modernity depending on which I can analyze the deeds and works of Ahmed Cevdet, and to see the affinity of Ahmed Cevdet's intellectual inclinations and his reformist horizon with this understanding of modernity.

The primary sources that are used in this thesis are firstly the twelve volume history of Ahmed Cevdet: *Târih-i Cevdet*,¹ which gives an account on the events between the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) and the abolition of the Janissaries (1826). This history book not only narrates the events that had happened in the Ottoman Empire during the indicated time period, but makes a comparative analysis with several other European countries and tries to extract lessons from the incidents that had happened in the West and in the history of the Islamic societies. As the piece has not been transcribed yet, I transcribed the parts I will make use of in this thesis according to

¹ Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Târih-i Cevdet*, Tertib-i Cedid, second edition, 12 volumes, (Der-i Saadet, 1309).

the style observed in the eighth edition of the New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary which is published in 1986.²

Secondly, the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* (“Memoranda of Cevdet”)³ where Ahmed Cevdet recorded the events between the 1839 and 1872 and which is composed of forty memoranda will be analyzed. It was a duty assigned to Ahmed Cevdet during the time he was appointed as the chronicler (*vak’anüvîs*). Thirdly, the *Ma’rûzât* (“Representations”)⁴ which is composed of five sections (*cüzdan*), and was written with the direct orders of Abdülhamid II, who was willing to get an accurate information about the events that had happened during the reigns of his father and grandfather which denotes the time period between 1839 and 1876, will be worked on. I will analyze these two pieces together, since both of them address approximately the same time period and complement each other by presenting different perspectives on the events that are covered in both.

Among many other pieces that had been written by Ahmed Cevdet, I have chosen these three because these are the pieces most suitable in observing first, Ahmed Cevdet’s stance toward the history of the Eastern and Western societies; second, his ideas about the reform movements that had been happening in the Ottoman Empire from the seventeenth century onwards; and third his perspective on how to make reforms in the Empire. Although one huge project he had chaired, i.e. the *Mecelle*: the first codification of the Islamic Law, allocates an important place in the discussions on Ahmed Cevdet’s intellectual dispositions, still this project is not his own brainchild and it is not always possible to know for sure whether all the ideas that affected the editing of the *Mecelle* Code had originally belonged to Ahmed Cevdet and not the other members of the *Mecelle* Commission. This is why I will not include the *Mecelle* project in this thesis.

What is more, one of the aims of this thesis is to suggest that Ahmed Cevdet’s interpretation of the three terms, i.e. civilization (*medeniyet*), progress (*terakki*) and solidarity (*asabiyet*), which is considered to be affected by Ibn Khaldun’s theory on civilization and different aspects of social development, are representative of Ahmed

² *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*, 8th ed., U. Bahadır Alkım, Nazime Antel, Robert Avery, Janos Eckmann, Sofi Huri, Fahir İz, Mecdud Mansuroğlu, Andreas Tietze (eds.), (İstanbul, 1986)

³ Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir-i Cevdet*, Cavid Baysun (ed.), (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1986).

⁴ Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma’rûzât*, Yusuf Halaçoğlu (ed.), (İstanbul, Çağrı Yayınları, 1980).

Cevdet's reformist horizon. Ahmed Cevdet's translation of Ibn Khaldun's *Mukaddime* ("Prolegomena")⁵ could have been used as a primary source here, because throughout the translation Cevdet frequently comments on Ibn Khaldun's ideas. However, Cevdet did not translate the whole book, but just completed the translation that was initiated and left half finished by *Şeyhülislâm* Pîrîzâde Sâhib Efendi after his death. The part that was translated by Ahmed Cevdet, which is the last chapter of the *Mukaddime*, does not cover the ideas on the main concepts that will be discussed in this thesis. This is why I will not make use of this translation.

Some of the secondary sources that offer a broad look into Ahmed Cevdet's works such as Christoph Neumann's "Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat"⁶, Ümid Meriç's "Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü"⁷, and the pieces that were offered in the seminar of 1986 on Ahmed Cevdet Paşa ("Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri")⁸ will be made use of in observing the different perspectives articulated on Ahmed Cevdet. It is interesting to see that apart from several remarks on the importance of the concept "civilization" in Ahmed Cevdet's thinking and apart from the comparisons made by Neumann on how differently or similarly Cevdet and Ibn Khaldun apply these terms in their writings, and Meriç's comments on what these terms refer to in Cevdet's thinking, there is not a noteworthy study made on the sources written by Ahmed Cevdet to see how these terms, i.e. civilization, progress and solidarity, affected Ahmed Cevdet's reformist horizon. In this thesis, my aim is to seek the traces of these three terms embedded in Ahmed Cevdet's argumentation by analyzing his reformist perspective as expressed in the three major pieces he had written.

What I expect is to find a way to develop a consistent understanding on Ahmed Cevdet's intellectual inclinations and on his contributions to the Ottoman modernization process by making use of these sources and discussing the characteristic features of Ahmed Cevdet's reformist perspective. However, in order to realize this expectation, it seems imperative to determine a criterion that will be observed in estimating Ahmed Cevdet's contributions to the modernization process in the Empire. Unless such a criterion is established at the beginning chapter of this thesis, my argumentation will be

⁵ İbn-i Haldun, *Mukaddime*, translated by Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, Cüneyt Kaya, Halit Özkan, Sami Erdem, Yavuz Yıldırım (eds), İstanbul, Klasik Yayınları, Cilt III.

⁶ Christoph Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, (Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000).

⁷ Ümid Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, (Ötüken Yayınları, 1979).

⁸ *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (İstanbul, Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986).

exposed to criticisms directed from a myriad of different definitions made on the nature of modernity. If I try to develop an understanding encompassing all the different viewpoints on modernity, then the consistency of this thesis will be highly questionable.

In line with this understanding, in the first chapter of this thesis, I decided to introduce the Weberian and Foucauldian understandings on modernity just as a matter of personal choice in order to see what kind of an understanding I can develop on Ahmed Cevdet through the viewpoints of these two intellectuals. What is more, since I will analyze Ahmed Cevdet both as an intellectual and a statesman, it is considered that while the Weberian approach on the different types of social behaviour that leads to the construction of modern societies can be a good means to observe the direction of Cevdet's intellectual inclinations, the Foucauldian understanding of the "art of governmentality" can be instrumentalized in analyzing Cevdet's approach to the governance strategies as a statesman. However, it should be noted I do not intend to impose these two approaches on Ahmed Cevdet directly as a measuring rod of his ideas and political deeds, since it would not make much sense to analyze whether Cevdet was a modern intellectual in the sense discussed by these two philosophers when the Ottoman Empire itself was just in the process of getting modernized. My intention will only be to observe whether Cevdet's intellectual and political inclinations are directed toward a similar pattern of development presented in the Weberian and Foucauldian analyses and to estimate the direction of his behavioural tendencies and governmental strategies.

In the second chapter of the thesis, I will make a quick biography of Ahmed Cevdet in order to ascertain the readers' belief that Cevdet was a thorough reformist as he was totally into the reform projects that were pursued in different branches of the Empire. Following this part I will resort to different ideas on Ahmed Cevdet's intellectual inclinations and try to understand the underlying reasons that make different academics think of him either as a progressive, conservative or a traditional intellectual.

In the third part of the second chapter I will discuss the relevance of the three terms which are civilization (*medeniyet*), progress (*terakki*), and solidarity (*asabiyet*) to Ahmed Cevdet's reformist horizon. While his understanding on the basic properties of a civilization converge with the Western usage of the term, it will be shown that being influenced by the ideas of Ibn Khaldun, Cevdet considers "civilization" just as one

phase of social development and not an ultimate end in itself. All the states would eventually reach to that phase of becoming a civilization after successfully passing through the stages of “*bedeviyet*”, i.e. nomadic life, Bedouinism⁹, and “*hazariyet*”, i.e. sedentary life; “*hazari*”: 1. peacetime establishment, 2. home life, domestic, 3. urban dweller.¹⁰ In line with this understanding, while *terakki* is regarded just as a tool that should be instrumentalized whenever needed in materializing the requirements of becoming a civilization, Cevdet is very sensitive toward the radical reform projects that might have the possibility to do any harm to the feeling of *asabiyet* that holds the different Ottoman social groups together for centuries.

In the third chapter, firstly by presenting the general discussions on Ahmed Cevdet’s historical understanding and methodology, I will then move into analyze the lessons he tries to give to the reader in the *Târih-i Cevdet* and to show whether his interpretation on the terms: civilization, progress, and solidarity have a considerable impact on Cevdet’s suggestions on for reform and further change. I titled this part as “Lessons on Change in the *Târih-i Cevdet*”, because I find it ironical that, Ahmed Cevdet, who emphasizes that it is a must especially for the statesmen to get utilized from history, since no human experience can be as much enlightening as the comprehensive and accurate lessons that are given by the centuries old wisdom of the history, seems to give a break in searching for lessons in the history, and tries to give carefully selected lessons to the reader that would be supportive of his own reformist agenda.

While the analysis of the *Târih-i Cevdet* will be helpful to take a comprehensive look at Ahmed Cevdet’s reformist understanding in general, the analyses of the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma’rûzât* will be helpful to see several examples on Cevdet’s stance toward several reforms that had been initiated into the Ottoman Empire and on his experiences as an office bearing person while implementing reforms in different regions of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, although it is not possible to suggest that Ahmed Cevdet has a comprehensive theory on different stages of social development, still while the *Târih-i Cevdet* will present a more theoretical framework on Ahmed Cevdet’s idea on reform, the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma’rûzât* will reflect Cevdet’s reformist horizon in practice.

⁹New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary, 8th ed., U. Bahadır Alkım, Nazime Antel, Robert Avery, Janos Eckmann, Sofi Huri, Fahir İz, Mecdud Mansuroğlu, Andreas Tietze (eds.), (Istanbul, 1986), 147.

¹⁰ Ibid, 469.

CHAPTER 1

MODERNITY IN THEORY & MODERNIZATION IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The study of an intellectual brings with it the study of his or her environment and the world he or she had lived in. Between the environment and the intellectual there is to a certain degree a relation of reciprocity. While being affected by his/her environment, the intellectual also strives for shaping his/her environment. This is why it is necessary to include both sides of this conversation (the intellectual and the environment) in a study analyzing the works of an intellectual. In the nineteenth century Ottoman case, the reform movements, which mostly focused on civilization and Europeanization, can be termed as the most important factor that had affected the lives of the Ottoman intellectuals.

In the Ottoman Empire, the roots of the process of modernization can be found as early as in the seventeenth century. It was during this period that Ottoman statesmen perceived what a great deal there was to be fulfilled in order to attain an effective administrative system.¹¹ Prof. Dr. Niyazi Berkes (d. 1988), who studied on theoretical sociology and on the transformations underwent by Turkey since the Ottoman period, asserts that, when the Ottoman intellectuals looked out for the reasons of the Ottoman regression vis- à-vis the European countries and when they realized that this was not a temporary depression, they saw that the basic institutions of the empire have turned into tumors deteriorating the traditional state structure. They diagnosed the disease correctly, however, they were not able to understand what factors led to the occurrence of these tumors, and they started research in the old state records, and laws assuming that uncovering the forgotten or neglected doctrines and practices of the past might be an effective solution in strengthening the deceased institutions of the empire.¹² This means

¹¹ Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, (Syracuse University Press, 2000), 135.

¹² Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, (Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008), 39.

that by this time the ideas on reform were driven by attempts on bringing back the “earliest and “purest” Ottoman practices.”¹³

As Prof. Dr. Şerif Mardin, the prominent Turkish sociologist, political scientist, academic and thinker, puts forward, the basic concern motivating the reform movements was to bring the military defeats to an end. He said that “...continued military defeats and losses of territory stimulated the Ottomans to look for the factors underlying Western military superiority.”¹⁴ Especially after the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, it became apparent that the empire went into rapid decline. The loss of territories and the apparent European advance in technologies motivated members of the Ottoman ruling elite in searching for the secrets of the European achievements, assuming that reforms which would incorporate the new methods, especially in military techniques, with the traditional Ottoman system would be effective in restoring the empire’s power.¹⁵

This traditionalistic understanding of reform created an amalgam of technical reforms that were to be taken from the West, and of the studies oriented to strengthen rooted Ottoman institutions. The studies made by the seventeenth century Ottoman intellectuals are considered by Berkes to form a literature of decadence (which is called as “*ihtilâl*”), reform and regulation. These generally presented an anatomy of the traditional state order, as if the panacea to the problems was hidden somewhere in the past, waiting to be discovered again. This line of thinking and the initiatives taken in this direction went on till the end of the eighteenth century. Berkes claims that we cannot find a place for the ideas of innovation or modernization (*çağdaşlaşma*) in this frame of traditional thinking. Still, instead of going back to the former Ottoman order, the system was evolving into different forms that were gradually detaching from the ancient ways.¹⁶

Prof. Dr. Şükrü Hanioglu, who is specialized on the history of late Ottoman period and on late nineteenth century intellectual history, says that it was at the end of the eighteenth century when the problems in military, economic and administrative organization of the empire became inescapably apparent to the eye that the imperative

¹³ Şerif Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 135.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 134.

¹⁵ Standford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, (Cambridge University Press, 1976), vol. 1, 225.

¹⁶ Berkes, *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma*, 39.

of reform was realized. Hanioglu asserts that the “cosmetic alterations” that were made in different institutions of the state with conservative inclinations had failed to benefit the system in any notable way.¹⁷ Mardin states that it was only by this time in the eighteenth century that the connection between reform and Europeanization was to be established.¹⁸ For the first time, during the time of Mahmud II, the reform movements started getting strongly linked with Europeanization, and the formal policy of the state reforms were supported with the use of force and propaganda. It was the first time when a government newspaper supported the Western oriented reform movements.¹⁹

Although it is not possible to speak of the “purest” Ottoman practices as ambiguous as the term is²⁰, still we can make reference to several sources of knowledge that have been constructing the ontological basis of the social and political life in the Ottoman Empire for centuries. Prof. Dr. Taner Timur, who makes sociological and philosophical studies on the Ottoman and Turkish identity, asserts that looking into the Ottoman history with a rationalistic approach, up until its final periods, rationalism has not been a dominant strand of thinking in the Ottoman culture. Contrary to modern thought, Ottoman thought had its bases in ‘belief’ rather than in skepticism. This ‘belief’ was sacred and being skeptical was regarded as a dangerous attitude ostracizing people from the society, demeaning and punishing them. This way of thinking, prevalent to a major extent up until the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire, has been considered equal to what is called as the scholastic thought in the Western tradition.²¹

As a pre-modern society, belief played a major role among most of the Muslim Ottomans up until the nineteenth century. Their worldview was based to a significant degree on the *Kur’ân*, hadith, and the texts interpreting these two.²² Thus the sources of knowledge that constructed the social and institutional environment were the *Şerîat*, *örfî* law, *âdât* (customs), and traditions. Prof. Dr. Halil İnalçık says that Ottomans developed a system of law apart from the Islamic Law, which is called as *örfî* law. The principle that allowed this second law system had been the authority of the sultan to make laws with his own will in the areas that are not restricted by the *Şerîat* or that are not within

¹⁷ M. Şükri Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Princeton University Press, 2008), 42.

¹⁸ Şerif Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 135.

¹⁹ Hanioglu, 63.

²⁰ Şerif Marin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 135.

²¹ Taner Timur, *Osmanlı Kimliği*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 1986), 12.

²² *Ibid*, 13.

the realm of the *Şeriat*.²³ There was a strong connection between these *örfî* laws and the customs of the society. *Örf* is also used as an equivalent to the word custom (*âdet*). According to İnalçık, there was in fact a close relation between the *örf-i sultânî* and *örf ü âdât*. Other than being able to make laws with his own will, the sultan was also able to elevate certain customs as a part of state policies through recognizing them as laws. Although there were controversies as to the legitimacy of these *örfî* laws, the principles of seeking the welfare and security of the Muslim community, and ensuring justice were generally accepted as factors legitimizing the making of the *örfî* laws.²⁴

The shock experienced by the Ottomans around the eighteenth century can also be interpreted as a shock of coming across new sources of knowledge other than the *Şeriat*, *örfî* laws, and customs. Indeed it was most probably not bewilderment vis-à-vis the new ideological environment constructed in the West, but rather facing the increasingly powerful political, military and economic environment that had been formed through the modern sources of knowledge. Even in the works written by Ahmed Cevdet and in the projects he participated in, i.e. the *Mecelle* project, it is possible to see the effects of the centuries old Ottoman sources of knowledge, because although Cevdet is generally supportive of the reforms initiated to the Ottoman Empire, still when it comes to adopt the European administrative or judiciary systems, he generally questions whether the adoption of foreign systems will disrupt the continuity in the Ottoman political order. While being curious of and eager to learn the new European sources of knowledge, he mostly favours reforms that are organically tied to the centuries old Ottoman meaning system and sources of knowledge. And as the West got to dominate the international environment, the sources of knowledge that determined the construction of European social and political institutions had become more noteworthy in the eyes of the Ottoman audience who for centuries displayed mainly contempt for the doings of the Occidental societies; Ahmed Cevdet was no exception.

What Mardin expresses as the will to turn back to the “purest” Ottoman practices²⁵, might be related to an urge to preserve the functioning of the centuries long Ottoman sources of knowledge against the modern sources of knowledge that the

²³ Halil İnalçık, “Osmanlı Hukukuna Giriş: Örfî-Sultani Hukuk ve Fatih’in Kanunları” *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, (1958), vol. 13, no. 2, 102; Fuat Köprülü, “Fıkıh”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (“hence TDVİA”), (İstanbul, 1964), cilt 4; Joseph Schacht, *Origins of Muhammedan Jurisprudence*, (London, Oxford, 1953).

²⁴ İnalçık, “Osmanlı Hukukuna Giriş...”, 103-104.

²⁵ Şerif Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 135.

Ottoman Empire had increasingly been exposed to since seventeenth century. As Prof. Dr. Bedri Gencer, who works on social and political theory, points out, in the West modernization has been an organic process whereas in the East it is considered as a mechanic and painful process. The West which imposes its own way of development to all parts of the world has been considered by the East as a rival model. This is why Gencer asserts that it won't be possible to understand the rationale behind the process of change in the East, before understanding the mentality behind the changes that took place in the West.²⁶

The following part will analyze the sources of knowledge that had materialized the ontological basis of the European modernity through eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These sources of knowledge can basically be called as the products of the positivist, ration-based thought. One approach I will get utilized from is the Weberian analyses of the social behaviors that he thinks paved ways for the construction of the modern societies. The analyses of Weber will help the researcher see what type of behavioral traits seem to be more dominant in Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's intellectual tendencies as a reformist. The other approach I will make use of is the Foucauldian analysis of an ideal modern governance system which he contrasts with a Machiavellian princely rule. Here I do not intent to pinpoint whether Cevdet is supporting one or the other, but to see to which direction Cevdet's deeds were directed toward as a statesman, i.e. whether he was inclined toward the policies of a Machiavellian princely rule or to the governance strategies of a Faucauldian 'art of governmentality'. Other than these two I will get utilized from Alain Touraine's definitions on modernity, not so as to judge Cevdet according to Tourain's criteria, but to draw a more idealized picture as to what are considered as the main features of a modern society and a modern individual. The importance of Touraine's work for this thesis stems from the fact that, apart from the critiques directed to the Ottoman modernization process that will also be analyzed below, Touraine makes a critique of the whole modern systems constructed in the world including the European one, thinking that the legacy of the process initiated in Europe from the fifteenth century onwards could not be rightly preserved and fully appreciated.²⁷ This critical viewpoint will be instrumentalised in order to reflect the characteristics that should be possessed by an idealized modern order according to Touraine.

²⁶ Bedri Gencer, "Medeniyet Ütopyası Peşinde" *Gelenekten Geleceğe*, (Orient Yayıncılık, 2013), vol. 2, 54.

²⁷ Alain Touraine, *Critique of Modernity*, (Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, Blackwell, 1997), 31-32.

Alain Touraine makes a full-fledged definition of modernity. He argues: “How can we speak of modern society unless we can at least agree upon a general principle that defines modernity?”²⁸ He goes on arguing that those societies organized according to the principles based on divine revelation or national essence cannot be modern. Modernism requires the diffusion of scientific, technological and administrative structures which are the products of rational activity. This will bring about the differentiation of various areas of social life such as politics, the economy, family life, religion and art.²⁹ This differentiation will give each sector a relative autonomy to function without being restricted or oppressed by other sectors of social life. The modern society is driven to function by science, but not by any religion. In this system religion is reduced into the realm of private life.³⁰ And as a protest against what is thought to be the arbitrary rule of the religious law, the eighteenth century Enlightenment intellectuals proposed to replace these with the laws of nature. The law of nature is explained by Locke as such: “Nature imprints itself on man through his desires and the happiness of that comes from an acceptance of that law of nature or the misfortunes that befall those who disobey it.”³¹

Touraine gives a more concrete definition on the classical conception of the modernist ideology. According to the classical conception of the term, “history books rightly describe the modern period as lasting from the Renaissance to the French Revolution and the beginnings of large scale industrialization in Great Britain.”³² Modernity is taken into granted to be a purely endogenous process that had happened in Europe with the triumph of reason, liberation and revolution.³³ This is a revolutionary process in the sense that there was a conflict between the values of the traditional value ridden order and the modern ideas that were struggling to implement themselves right into the social order. The modern ideology was trying to set every segment of the social order free from the domination of tradition. According to Touraine, “[t]his was not simply a conflict between the Ancients and the Moderns; nature or even the word of God were being set free from forms of domination which were based upon tradition

²⁸Touraine, *Critique of Modernity*, 9.

²⁹ Ibid, 9.

³⁰ Ibid, 9.

³¹ Ibid, 13.

³² Ibid, 28.

³³ Ibid, 28.

rather than history and which spread the darkness that would be dispelled by the Enlightenment.”³⁴

While Touraine’s conception of modernity and the process of modernization seems to be an end oriented one, Max Weber, as a sociologist, was trying to understand the dynamics of modern social actions and to see what factors have been influential in the modernization of the Western societies. He divides social behaviors into four types in order to analyze what types of collective social behavior have been representative in the foundation of modern societies. According to him there exist basically *zweckrational*, *wertrational*, affective and traditional behaviors.³⁵

The actions determined by *zweckrational* or in other names purposive / instrumental reason are concentrated on calculations of means and ends. Here we should consider the mindset of a technocrat, because the individual concentrates just on the most effective ways of reaching an end. *Wertrational*, on the other hand, is the type of a reason individuals use when they have a value oriented goal.³⁶ While affective action is termed as an action which is emotionally driven and which is not displayed by rationally weighing the consequences of the actions, traditional actions are the types that are done without thinking much upon, because these types of actions are already embedded in the everyday life of a society and experimented by the members of a society again and again. So these types of actions are taken into granted and repeatedly used within everyday life without thinking much upon them.³⁷

Weber argues that it is the first type of social action –*zweckrational*- that constructs the basic features of modern societies. He proposed that “the basic distinguishing feature of modern society was a characteristic shift in the motivation of individual behaviors. In modern society the efficient application of means to ends has come to dominate and replace other springs of social behavior... behavior is less and less dominated by tradition, values or emotions.”³⁸ Weber was associating modernity

³⁴ Touraine, *Critique of Modernity*, 28.

³⁵ Frank W. Ellwel, *The Classical Tradition: Malthus, Marx, Weber & Durkheim*, (Colorado, Paradigm Publishers, 2005), 54.

³⁶ Ibid, 55.

³⁷ Ibid, 55.

³⁸ Ibid, 56.

with an ascetic discipline in worldly issues, anti-magical beliefs, textually based rationalism and rational procedures for forming legal rules.³⁹

He “proposed that the basic distinguishing feature of modern society is best viewed in terms of this characteristic shift in motivation” and “he rooted the shift in the growth of bureaucracy and industrialism.”⁴⁰ While *zweckrational* refers to rationalization in the sphere of human behavior, bureaucratization is regarded as rationalization in human organizations.⁴¹

The process of rationalization is given a start with scientific specialization of people in different occupational groups and technical differentiation of materials in production. In the long term this gives way to the formation of bureaucracies and causes increasing division of labor which makes it more functional to produce and distribute goods and services. This process will also lead to the secularization and depersonalization of social life.⁴² This is because, in the process defined above, the ultimate goal of human behavior turns into finding the most efficient means to achieve a desired end. This causes an increase in the regulation of social life. When social life is increasingly regulated through institutions designed by men, the significance of the value ridden religious institutions gets weakened. “The bureaucratization process has encouraged such superstructural norms and values as individualism, efficiency, self-discipline, materialism, and calculability (all of which are subsumed under Weber’s concept of *zweckrational*). Bureaucracy and rationalization were rapidly replacing all other forms of organization and thought. They formed a stranglehold on all sectors of Western society.”⁴³

Weber enlists several characteristics that an ideal type bureaucracy should possess such as: ‘hierarchy of authority’, ‘impersonality’, ‘written rules of conduct’, ‘promotion based on achievement’, ‘specialized division of labor’, and ‘efficiency’.⁴⁴ When speaking of an ideal type, he does not suppose that bureaucracies are the best systems of governance. It is rather, he observes that states are bureaucratized because; the management of the large-scale planning of modern states and modern economy

³⁹ Larry J. Rey, Michael Reed, *Organizing Modernity: New Weberian Perspectives on Work, Organization and Society*, (Routledge, 1994), 8.

⁴⁰ Ellwel, *Classical Tradition*, 57.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 58.

⁴² *Ibid*, 69.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 69.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 58-59.

necessitated the growth of bureaucracies.⁴⁵ So this is the reality of modern states not something Weber titled as the best, and the characteristics listed by Weber are what he considered as the features of the best functioning bureaucratic system.

While purposive reason (*zweckrational*) has dominated other motivations of action, it also had an effect on the belief systems. In Weber's thought, rationalization in religion is one factor contributing the modernization of a society. He elaborates on Protestantism's considerable effects on ensuring the development of capitalist economies. It has been due to the ethics of Protestantism, which motivates the individuals to reflect the best of their capacity in this world that religion has turned into an effective tool increasing the efficiency of modern institutions. In line with this perspective Weber argues that "Protestantism represents the most developed form of religion because it has most systematically eliminated the magical means of salvation, and the ascetic action of Protestantism has most effectively led to an inner-worldly oriented ethic..."⁴⁶ It is partly due to the failure of other religions in getting rid of the magical aspects of their belief systems that construction of modern societies has been retarded. Instead of performing religious rituals the individual should consider himself as tool of the divine will or as the vessel of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷ All sacramental meditations have the idea of affecting the will of God, which leads the performers into a contemplative and passive life. As opposed to a reason-based understanding of life, such ritualistic religions fit best into value ridden and traditional social systems. According to this theory, in building a modern state secularization thus becomes essential. This rationalizes the religion itself by restructuring the idea of the function of the God on the lives of human beings. While the calling of the God used to focus on motivating people in striving to attain a better life in the afterlife, the calling of modern societies is demanding the fulfillment of worldly duties with the best performance of the individual. By severing the connection between other-worldly concerns and religion, "two aims were attained: the disenchantment of the world and the path to salvation is turned away from a contemplative 'flight from the world' and towards an active ascetic 'work in the world'."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Ellwel, *Classical Tradition*, 60.

⁴⁶ Anthony J. Carroll, "Disenchantment, Rationality, and the Modernity of Max Weber" *Forum Philosophicum*, (2011), vol. 16, no. 1, 117-137, 122.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 119.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 121.

Touraine adds that the idea of disenchantment is not merely related to rationalization. It is also about bringing the connection between the divine and the worldly powers to a near end.⁴⁹ In understanding that characteristics of modernity we cannot merely focus on rationalization. We should add to that the process of subjectivation as well. Subjectivation as a term denotes the liberation of the subject from the dominion of the surrounding objects such as religion, and the emergence of the subject as a free and creative being.⁵⁰ The subject who had previously been oppressed by the doctrines of divine revelation, is now to be governed according to the laws that are embedded within the subject. Rather than being led by the transcendental values, the subject's actions will be directed by the light of the reason.

While Weber's theory can be understood as an explanation on the rationale motivating human behaviors that constructed the basis of modern institutions, Foucault can be read as an ideal shedding light on the spirit of modern form of governance. In Foucault's theory of the modern government, the term 'government' is not merely used to designate the activities of the state and its institutions.⁵¹ The theory does not present us a definition as to the structure of a modern government. Rather than that in Foucault's terms, "'government' generally refers to the conduct of conduct"⁵² The diagnosis he makes is that modern governments have the function of guiding "the conduct of human beings through acting upon their hopes, desires, circumstances, or environment."⁵³ In this understanding, the management of human conduct becomes an inseparable part of the government in the modern sense. Thus, government becomes a word used to denote an action. This action of government works upon, regulates, shapes the actions of the human beings in a given country. This active nature of modern governments in leading and administering the conduct of individual lives is called as 'governmentality' by Foucault.

Government has been problematized since the sixteenth century, after the authority of the prince upon his subjects started to be questioned. The prince used to stand "in a relation of singularity and externality, and often transcendence to his

⁴⁹Touraine, *Critique of Modernity*, 205.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 205.

⁵¹ Ina, *Anthropologies of Modernity*, 1.

⁵² Ibid, 1.

⁵³ Ibid, 1.

principality.”⁵⁴ Subjects and the territory had been standing apart from the prince and the main aim of the prince’s ruling was to maintain his sovereignty. Governmentality on the other hand introduced the art of government into politics. We can talk of three types of government which are linked to each other as the essential disciplines in this art of government. These are “the art of self-government, connected with morality; the art of properly governing a family, which belongs to economy; and finally the science of ruling the state, which concerns politics.”⁵⁵ The subject placed into society both creates himself and is created by the results of his actions through that scheme.

Governmentality is separated from the princely rule in the sense that the prince is thought to be oblivious to the reality and changing nature of his society as his main concern is to legitimize his power upon society against rival powers. There is a divergence of interests between the prince and the society. That is why there would be a discontinuity in the decisions he makes. Governmentality, however, anticipates continuity between the three disciplines it sets up. These are upwards and downwards continuities. The first supposes that “a person, who wishes to govern the state well, must first learn how to govern himself, his goods and his patrimony”⁵⁶, and the latter that if a state is well run, both the household and the individual would know how to govern themselves properly.⁵⁷ Every side and aspect of the state is considered in governmentality and the parable given to show how that occurs is that of a ship. Governing a ship requires to take charge of the boat, the sailors, all other parts and also to deal with the winds and possible other external effects influencing the ship.⁵⁸

According to Foucault, this theory of three types of governments that would work simultaneously in connection to each other is not necessarily a purely theoretical one having no connection with the worldly governance methods. The two major social changes that resulted in the formation of the modern art of government were the collapse of the feudal institutions and the Reformation and Counter Reformation movements. These two factors together became a starting point for people to question the methods of governance.⁵⁹ Starting from the sixteenth century, which commenced the long term growth of capitalism and population, the art of government got related to the

⁵⁴ Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, Peter Miller (eds.), (University of Chicago Press, 1991), 89-90.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 91.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 91.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 92.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 93-94.

⁵⁹ Inda, *Anthropologies of Modernity*, 2.

formation of the territorial, administrative state as well as the growth of governmental apparatuses.⁶⁰

The three types of governments indicated above are instrumentalized to explain the general character of a modern government. The art of self governance, the art of governing a family and the art of governing a state⁶¹ are all connected to each other in the construction of modern governments. Medieval sovereign rule of a prince generally instrumentalized just one of these three which is the government of a state. However, in the art of governance these three have become inseparable. Especially merging together the governance of a household with the governance of a state is an example to this. Here the two key factors are the management of economy by the state and growth of population to be dealt with.⁶²

Historically explaining how this became possible, we can think of the functioning of prebend based economic systems where each district was to ensure its own welfare and security. The system was making it possible for each prebend to sustain its economy alive without much regulation from the state. However with the gradual destruction of that system, the central government became responsible for the direct management of most of the issues related to all districts. The growth of bureaucracies which had become the only way to deal with this huge responsibility helped the governance of a state to penetrate into the governance of individual households. As Foucault explains, after the growth of the bureaucracies, the purpose of government is no longer limited to the act of government itself. It now also includes observing the “welfare of the population, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health and so on”. The means governments instrumentalize in order to fulfill these desired ends are all, in a sense, inherent in the population. Government will act on the population either directly through campaigns or indirectly through developing techniques that would make it possible for the government to have an influence upon the daily life of the population such as on stimulating the birth rates or on directing the population to participate to certain religions or activities.⁶³ In other words, the basic emphasis of Foucault’s theory of governmentality is the connection between the individuals and the state.

⁶⁰ Inda, *Anthropologies of Modernity*, 4.

⁶¹ Foucault, “Governmentality,” 91.

⁶² Ibid, 92.

⁶³ Inda, *Anthropologies of Modernity*, 5.

After looking at several aspects of modernity by certain modern sociologists and how modern governments are imagined to work like, we will discuss several arguments on the problems experienced by the Ottoman Empire during the process of modernization in understanding Ahmed Cevdet's stance vis-à-vis these problems.

According to Berkes, at the beginning of the Second Constitutional Era in 1908 it was accepted by all different currents of thought in the Ottoman Empire that the military defeats and the gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire that had started during the Tulip Era had grown and gained a general character in the sense that all the ideas embraced by the state such as Islamism, Ottomanism and Turkism were not fostering the development of the country. Westernists related this to the insufficiency in establishing close ties with the West. They thought that the minds of the Ottomans were being curtailed by the doctrines of Islam that permeate into all spheres of life. Doktor Abdullah Cevdet (1869-1930), who is known to be an extreme representative of Westernism is quoted as saying that the reason why the Ottomans fall behind the contemporary level of civilization is the Asian mindset preserved by the empire. According to him, "the power that defeats the empire is nothing but the eyes we have unwilling to see, and the brains we have unwilling to think." The think that hinders the development is this system which combines religion and the state.⁶⁴

On the other hand, although the Islamists who were different than the Islamists of the Abdülhamid II's period, were now accepting the failure of the Muslims not only in the material achievements but also in the level of civilization, they still considered this backwardness to be a result of not widening the scope of the religion in all the spheres of the state and society. Mehmed Said Halim Paşa (1865-1921), who had been the Grand Vizier between 1913 and 1917, is given as an example to the intellectuals in this second group arguing that the solution cannot be westernization but islamization, and the main reason prohibiting progress in the Muslim countries has been the continuing influence of pre-Islamic or un-Islamic customs or beliefs in everyday life.⁶⁵

Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), who is seen as the ideologue of the party of Union and Progress, disagrees with Said Halim Paşa's argument in the sense that the backwardness of the Islamic countries cannot be due the pre-Islamic traits embedded in their cultures. If that were to be the case, these societies would have been expected to

⁶⁴ Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, 412; Abdullah Cevdet, *İçtihat*, (Eylül 1904).

⁶⁵ Berkes, 412-414.

decay centuries ago. Gökalp also argues that the developments in the Western world cannot be held as a direct reason for the decadence of the empire. Although a civilization can be defeated by an enemy power, still it is also possible that the challenge of an enemy can further the developments in the side of the opponent. Gökalp sees two reasons why the challenge of the West was not received positively in the Ottoman Empire. Firstly the Ottomans neglected the novelties designed by the contemporary world order and avoided re-interpreting their religion in line with these novelties and could not reconcile its language with the contemporary meaning system. Secondly, when the Islamic civilization got weakened across the modern civilization, the communities of Islam, who lost their national identity under Islamic civilization defined by the cultural framework of the *ummah*, were left unable to stand on their own.⁶⁶ The second factor Gökalp propounds gains further importance considering that the two sides challenging each other were no more to be regarded as Islam versus Christianity, but these two sides were gradually perceived as the East and the West.⁶⁷ Thus the context in which the discussions on reform and change were made has gradually changed. European civilization that established itself upon the power of reason by limiting the powers of religious institutions was necessitating the Ottomans to establish their identity upon a similar basis supported by the tools of modern thinking, which can be considered as being part of one universal civilization.

In reaching the level of that universal civilization, Prof. Hilmi Ziya Ülken (d. 1974), a renowned philosopher and sociologist, and especially been effective on the researches made on the Turkish intellectual history, thinks that it is the same whether people totally refuse modernization, interpret it as a compromise of the old and the new ways of thinking or just go no further than passively copying the West. This is because, while the first two groups of people who reject modernization or who support a compromise, will render the society into a suicidal situation with their primitive refusal of participating in the creativity of the modern culture, in the case of the latter group, although modernization apparently will be achieved in a radical way, it nevertheless will produce a passive admiration towards the high culture by limiting creative thinking and won't prepare the underlying structure for future developments.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Berkes, 415; Ziya Gökalp, "Tenkit", *Yeni mecmua*, II, 40 (1918), 275-277.

⁶⁷ Berkes, 381.

⁶⁸ Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye Düşünce Tarihi*, (Konya, Selçuk Yayınları, 1966), vol. 1, 9-10.

For Ülken, the reactionaries and the ones merely imitating the European ways have always caused problems to the reformists who were thinking of establishing a basis for Western sciences by bringing several Western scholars to the country. He terms the first group as the representatives of the fanatic-scholastic thought and the second group as the representatives of the bureaucratic mentality whose primary aim is to answer the urgent and practical demands of the day. Ülken argues that it was hard to fight against the first group, yet it was defeated to some extent. However, the fight with the second group proved much harder. This latter group has been the main reason hindering the establishment of a scientific mentality in Turkey.⁶⁹

Taner Timur also states that starting from the nineteenth century, Ottoman institutions that were functioning on the basis of the principles of religion started to lose their effectiveness. Continuous military defeats, financial problems, and internal problems made it possible to induce even the most conservative-inclined statesmen inclined to accept the necessity for change. Though this could be regarded as a positive step, yet Timur states that all radical social changes in the world history are accompanied by the change of the ruling groups. For instance the transition from the traditional to the modern social order in the West was enabled by the gradual elimination of the aristocracy by the bourgeoisie. However, in the Ottoman Empire it was primarily the sultan, the Grand Vizier and the traditional ruling elite who wanted to change the former order. This makes Timur ask the question, as to when is it that these people who are in fact a product of the traditional institutions, got themselves changed to a degree so that they would like to change the system. Timur infers that these statesmen were obliged to make reforms in order to prevent the decline of the system that worked in line with their interests. This would only demonstrate how insufficient and artificial these reforms had been.⁷⁰

In explaining the Ottoman backwardness during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Timur states that one of the deficiencies of the Ottoman Empire during the time was the lack of the presence of “independent intellectuals” in the Empire, who can act free from the hegemony of government and get critical open mindedly.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ülken, *Türkiye’de Düşünce Tarihi*, 27.

⁷⁰ Timur, *Osmanlı Kimliği*, 161-162.

⁷¹ Ibid, 86-87.

According to Prof. Mümtaz Turhan (d. 1969), who had been working on experimental psychology, it is a known fact that the latest reforms that were done in Turkey during 1950s were mostly focused on adopting the Western life style. Turhan considers this a natural process, as every civilization or culture is nothing but a certain way of living. And the societies who would like to take part in a civilization would naturally take on several of its characteristics. However, this Western life style is a product of a certain mentality, value system, institutions, a particular economic order, and different tools of production and consumption that have been developed in a particular historical process.⁷² According to Turhan, while moving into a new social order different than the centuries old life style of the Turkish society, Turkey is in need of the scholars and the institutions that would bring up these scholars, who would be concerned to find solutions to the problems that may arise during different phases of development.⁷³

Considering that Ahmed Cevdet Paşa was a statesman pursuing the interests of the central authority, it is not possible to consider him an “independent intellectual” who works free from the hegemony of the government. However, whether Cevdet’s reformist horizon was merely motivated with an agenda to strengthen the Ottoman political system that as a statesman would be representative of his own interests is another question. The analyses that will be made below on the reform projects Cevdet participated in will reflect whether Cevdet’s reformist horizon displays the artificiality and shallowness observed by Timur⁷⁴ in the reform projects pursued by the Ottoman statesmen. And although Cevdet cannot be considered an “independent intellectual”, still the roles he played in the foundation of the institutions that would educate future scholars and the intellectual projects he partook in, i.e. the writing of the *Târih-i Cevdet*, *Tezâkir* and the *Ma’rûzât*, that became important resources to be utilized by the future scholars will also be of great importance in understanding Cevdet’s contributions to the process of modernization in the Ottoman Empire.

⁷² Mümtaz Turhan, *Garplılaşmanın Neresindeyiz?*, (İstanbul, Türkiye Yayınevi, 1959), 9.

⁷³ Ibid, 9-10.

⁷⁴ Timur, *Osmanlı Kimliği*, 161-162.

CHAPTER 2

AHMED CEVDET PAŞA AND HIS LIFE

After demonstrating several ideas on Ottoman modernization process, some authors' concerns in regard to the difficulties the Empire had come across, and establishing the bases to this work by presenting two theories selected to establish a view on modernity, this chapter will be a short survey on Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's life as a means to develop an understanding of the biographical background of his intellectual development and attitudes. Without understanding the specific environments Ahmed Cevdet's ideas took shape, it will not be possible to know where to fit Cevdet's intellectual understandings or to fully appreciate the level of their importance which will be discussed later on.

According to his own testimony Ahmed Cevdet Paşa was born around 1823/1238 AH in the city of Lofca in Bulgaria. His family originates from Kırklareli (formerly known as Kırkkilise).⁷⁵ His father Hacı İsmail Ağa was a member of the administrative council in Lofca and his mother Ayşe Sümbül Hanım was a descendent of Topuzoğlu family in Lofca.⁷⁶ Beginning from his early ages, being supported by his grandfather Hacı Ali Efendi, Ahmed Cevdet started learning Arabic and Islamic sciences. He took several lessons from *âlims* of Lofca such as Hacı Eşref Efendi and Hâfız Mehmed Efendi. In 1839/1255 AH at the age of seventeen, he was sent to İstanbul by his grandfather to further his studies. This was the year when the *Tanzîmât*-edict was proclaimed by Mustafa Reşid Paşa. One might assume that this crucial event made a positive emotional impact upon young Ahmed, as it is attested with his own words mentioned below. In addition to traditional *medrese* courses, Ahmed was also interested in modern mathematics and was learning Persian with Murad Mehmed Efendi by reading *Mesnevî*, and reading *dîvâns* of Şevket and Örfî with the help of poet Süleyman Fehim from whom he received the *mahlâs* (nickname of bureaucratic and

⁷⁵Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir-i Cevdet*, Tezkire No. 40, Cavid Baysun (ed.), (Ankara, Türk Tarik Kurumu Basımevi, 1986), 3.

⁷⁶Yusuf Halaçoğlu, M. Akif Aydın, "Cevdet Paşa", *TDVİA*, (İstanbul, 1993), cilt 7, 443; Harold Bowen, "Ahmad Djewdet Pasha", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second ed ("hence EI2"), (Netherlands, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1986), vol. 1, 284.

learned strata) Cevdet, and attending the talks of the well known intellectual Kuşadalı İbrahim Efendi.⁷⁷ While mentioning these days, Ahmed Cevdet says “What nice days I have lived at those times. What a sweet life I have went through. All the time tranquillity and inner-peace had been my companions. What a nice world it used to be...”⁷⁸ These were the times when we can call Cevdet as a thorough *âlim* as he was a product of the *ilmîye* system and was willing to pursue a career within the *ilmîye*, as well.

Completing his education Ahmed Cevdet started his career in January 1844 as *kadi* (Islamic judge) of Premedi (Premeti: south Albania) within the Rumeli province. In June 1845, he got the certificate for being a *müderris* (medrese professor) of İstanbul.⁷⁹ When Mustafa Reşid Paşa (1800-1858) became the Grand Vizier in 1846 Reşid Paşa applied to the office of the *Şeyhülislâm* (administrative head of the *ilmîye*-class) for an open minded *âlim* that can provide him the knowledge of the *Şeriat* necessary for the proper drafting of the laws and regulations he was to take care of. Ahmed Cevdet was chosen for this task. And until Reşid Paşa’s death, Ahmed Cevdet remained closely attached to him, even lived in Reşid Paşa’s house and became the tutor of his children. During these thirteen years Ahmed Cevdet got acquainted with Mehmed Emin Âli Efendi (1815-1871) and Keçecizâde Mehmed Fuad Efendi (later Paşas) (1814-1869) and with the insistence of Reşid Paşa, he worked for several administrative and political duties.⁸⁰ It was during these thirteen years that Ahmed Cevdet is considered to receive a second education, and thus it is no more possible to consider him after this period directly as an *âlim*, as these days were implicitly preparing Cevdet in becoming a statesman.

In August 1850, he was appointed as director of the recently founded *Dârülmualimîn* (Teacher Seminary for Rüşdiye Schools) and became a member of *Meclis-i Maârif* (Council of Education) as its chief secretary.⁸¹ Around this time he went to Bursa with Fuad Efendi and had written the *Kavâid-i Osmâniye* (Grammar of the Ottoman Language) and the regulation of the *Şirket-i Hayriye* (“Auspicious Company”, i.e. public company for steamboats to serve transportation within

⁷⁷ Halaçoğlu, Aydın, “Cevdet Paşa,” 443; Bowen, “Ahmad Djewdet Pasha,” 284; *Tezâkir*, Tezkire No. 40, 7-17.

⁷⁸ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire No. 40, 17: “Ol devirde ne güzel günler gördüm. Ne tatlı ömür sürdüm. Her dem ferâğ-ı hâtir ile safây-i derûn bana hem-dem idi. O âlem ne güzel âlem idi...”

⁷⁹ Halaçoğlu, Aydın, “Cevdet Paşa,” 444.

⁸⁰ Bowen, “Ahmad Djewdet Pasha,” 284.

⁸¹ Bowen, “Ahmad Djewdet Pasha,” 284.

Istanbul)together with Fuad Efendi. Upon his return back to İstanbul in 1851, he got membership in the *Encümen-i Dâniş* (the ill-fated Ottoman “Academy of Sciences”) revised the *Kavâid-i Osmâniye* and presented it to Sultan Abdülmecid as the first piece produced by the *Encümen-i Dâniş*.⁸² In his return from a state visit to Egypt with Fuad Paşa in 1852, he started writing his famous history work the *Târih-i Vakâyi-i Devlet-i Âliye* (“History of the Events of the Sublime State”) as another project entrusted to him by the *Encümen-i Dâniş*, to which he started after the closure of the institution and completed the first three volumes of the book during the Crimean War (1853-1856).⁸³

In February 1855 he was appointed *vak’anüvîs* (court chronicler). After this appointment, Ahmed Cevdet had written his *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* (“Cevdet’s Memoranda”)in which he recorded the political events of the time, while he was still writing the other volumes of the *Târih-i Cevdet*.⁸⁴ Still it is interesting that up until the end of his duty he wrote nothing and just took several notes as the *vak’anüvîs*, and put together the *Tezâkir* only much later.⁸⁵

In 1857 he was appointed to the Council of *Tanzîmât* and took lead in the composition of a new criminal *kânûnnâme* (law code), and participated in the composition of another *kânûnnâme* related on *tapu* (land deeds) as the president of the *Arâzî-yi Seniye Komisyonu* (“Commission of Imperial Lands”).⁸⁶ While dealing with these official duties and the writing of the *Târih-i Cevdet*, he was also working on the prominent late Medieval Arab historian and social scientist Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), who influenced and strengthened Ahmed Cevdet’s perception of history. He completed the translation of Ibn Khaldun’s *Mukaddime* (“Prolegomena”) which had been initiated and left half finished by *Şeyhülislâm Pîrî-zâde Sâhib Efendi* (1674-1749).⁸⁷

After the death of Mustafa Reşid Paşa in 1858, Âli and Fuad Paşas suggested Ahmed Cevdet become the *vâlî* (governor)of Vidin which he refused.⁸⁸ Although he was charged with several significant administrative duties from 1846 onwards, during the time he worked for Reşid Paşa, it was not before another eight years that Ahmed Cevdet was appointed as a governor. During this period (1858-1866), he was made a

⁸² Halaçoğlu, Aydın, “Cevdet Paşa,” 444.

⁸³ Bowen, “Ahmad Djewdet Pasha,” 284

⁸⁴ Âli Ölmezoğlu, “Cevdet Paşa”, *Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (“hence MEBIA”), (1997), cilt 3, 115.

⁸⁵ Christoph Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, (Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000), 36.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 285.

⁸⁷ Ölmezoğlu, “Cevdet Paşa,” 115.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 115.

member of the commission formed to reform the official newspaper *Takvîm-i Vakâyi'* ("Calendar of Events"). In June 1861, he had written the regulation of the of *Meclis-i Vâlâ* ("Sublime Council") which had been formed by the incorporation of the *Meclis-i Âlî-i Tanzîmât* ("High Council of Reorganizations") and the *Meclis-i Vâlâ-yi Ahkâm-ı Adliye* ("Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances"), and he was appointed a member to this council.⁸⁹ Apart from these memberships, in 1861 he had been sent to İşkodra (Shkodra: north-western Albania) as the head of a reform commission to pacify the area. After being remarkably successful in this task, in 1863 he was sent to Bosnia as inspector with the *ilmîye*-rank of *kadiasker* of Anatolia. Ahmed Cevdet stayed in Bosnia for eighteen months as the head of another reform commission during which he succeeded in restoring order in the region. In 1865 he had also been sent to Kozan in southern Anatolia to resolve the unrest by introducing several reforms.⁹⁰

In 1866 Ahmed Cevdet was appointed governor of the Aleppo region which had been constituted according to the new Ordinance of *vilâyets* out of the provinces of Aleppo and Adana, and the *sancaks* of Kozan, Maraş, Urfa and Zor.⁹¹ Baysun says this was not a voluntary change for Ahmed Cevdet. Scanning through his *Tezâkir*, Baysun gives evidence as to Ahmed Cevdet's unwillingness to change careers and how this change was arranged by Âli Paşa, the contemporary *Şeyhülislâm* Sadeddin Efendi and several others who were envious of Ahmed Cevdet's achievements and the possibility of him becoming the next *Şeyhülislâm*.⁹²

In 1868, he was recalled to the capital to become the president of the *Dîvân-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* ("Tribune of Judicial Ordinances", i.e. supreme administrative court), which had been one of the two bodies that replaced *Meclis-i Vâlâ*, the other being *Şurâ-yı Devlet* ("Council of State"). The foundation of *nizâmîye mahkemeleri* ("regular courts", i.e. semisecular courts) is attributed to the efforts of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's works in this post.⁹³ Ahmed Cevdet worked on a regulation which designated the organization of *nizâmîye* courts and the *Dîvân* according to which *Dîvân-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* was reorganized, consisting of two bodies such as the Court of Appeal (*Temyîz*) and the Court of Cassation (*İsti'nâf*), and the presidency of the *Dîvân* was transformed

⁸⁹ Ölmezöğlü, 115.

⁹⁰ Bowen, "Ahmad Djewdet Pasha," 285.

⁹¹ Ölmezöğlü, "Cevdet Paşa," 116.

⁹² M. Cavid Baysun, "Cevdet Paşa, Şahsiyetine ve İlim Sahasındaki Faaliyetine Dair", *TM*, (1954), cilt XI, 213-230, 218-220.

⁹³ Bowen, "Ahmad Djewdet Pasha," 285.

into the Ministry of Justice. The regulations prepared to foster the establishment of *Dîvân-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* were mostly edited during Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's ministry.⁹⁴

During his first term as the Minister of Justice Ahmed Cevdet provided law courses for the instruction of the judges and the improvement of the judicial procedure. During this time a beginning was made to the project of composing a civil code called the *Mecelle*. Ahmed Cevdet was supported by Fuad and Şirvanizade Rüşdü Paşas (1828-1874) in arguing that a codification of the Islamic law should be preferred rather than adopting a foreign civil code. Although it is sometimes claimed that one of the main opponents of an Islamic civil code was Âli Paşa⁹⁵, it is generally accepted that the main opponent of the project was Midhat Paşa (1822-1884), who favoured the adoption of the French *Code Civile*.⁹⁶

Although the *Mecelle* project is generally accepted to be an undeniable achievement in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, still the dual character of the project firstly as being a project based on the Islamic law, which causes controversies as to its progressive character, secondly as being revolutionary in being the first codification ever made in the history of the Islamic Law can create confusions. On the subject, the comments of Zafer Toprak, a professor of economic history, may help clearing these confusions. Toprak asserts that "codification" in itself is a direct sign of secularization. Even though it is the codification of the Islamic Law, by becoming planned and edited through human effort, the *Mecelle* can be thought as "formulating the *Şeriat* provisions as positive laws."⁹⁷

While chairing the *Mecelle* Commission, Ahmed Cevdet served as the Minister of Justice until 1870. During this time four volumes of the *Mecelle* were published and after the fifth one was completed he was dismissed from this post. After a brief time of employment as the governor of Bursa, he remained unemployed until August of the next year.⁹⁸ For a while he focused on contemplation and writing and completed

⁹⁴ Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 116.

⁹⁵ Baysun, "Cevdet Paşa, Şahsiyeti...", 225; Bowen, "Ahmad Djewdet Pasha," 285.

⁹⁶ Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, (1988), 162-163.

⁹⁷ Zafer Toprak, "From Plurality to Unity: Codification and Jurisprudence in the Late Ottoman Empire" *Ways to Modernity in Greece and Turkey: encounters with Europe, 1850-1950*, Anna Frangouldaki, Çağlar Keyder, I.B. Tauris (eds.), 2007, 33.

⁹⁸ Bowen, "Ahmad Djewdet Pasha," 285.

seventh and eighth volumes of the *Târih-i Cevdet* and the *Takvim el-Edvâr*, a treatise on calendar reform. The sixth volume of the *Mecelle* had been published with his absence and it was due to the intense criticisms the sixth volume received that Ahmed Cevdet was recalled to duty in August 1871, and supervised the preparation of the final volumes until 1877 including the rewriting of the sixth volume.⁹⁹

In the interval he had been appointed as the Minister of Education in 1873. In this post he established a commission to ensure the implementation of hitherto non-enforced articles of 1286 *Maârif-i Umûmiye Nizâmnâmesi* (“Regulation of Public Education”). He improved the conditions in the traditional primary schools for boys (*sıbyanmektepleri*), revised the curricula for *rüşdiye* and for *i’ dâdiye* secondary schools that were being established, and reorganized the *Dârülmualimîn* to meet the demands of these three schools. He had written the books *Kavâid-i Türkiye* (textbook titled “Turkish Grammar”) as well as *Âdâb-ı Sedâd* and *Mi’yâr-ı Sedâd*, textbooks on ethics and proper conduct named after his son Ali Sedad, with the request of the commission.¹⁰⁰

After the appointment of Hüseyin Avni Paşa (1820-1876) as the Grand Vizier in 1874, Ahmed Cevdet was sent away to Yanya as *vâli*, because the Grand Vizier was considering overthrowing Abdülaziz, and Ahmed Cevdet was regarded as a possible obstacle. After Hüseyin Avni’s fall, in 1875, Ahmed Cevdet was recalled to the capital again as Minister of Education. In the same year he had been appointed as Minister of Justice for the second time.¹⁰¹ He placed the commercial courts within the realm of Ministry of Justice, which was formerly depending on the Ministry of Commerce. However, he displeased the Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Paşa (1818-1883) when he opposed the Grand Vizier’s grant of customs concessions to foreign capitalists. In March 1876 he was sent to Rumelia for inspection and later on was dismissed from the Ministry of Justice and appointed *vâli* to Syria. When Mahmud Nedim Paşa was dismissed from the Grand Vizierate while Ahmed Cevdet was getting prepared for the duty, he had already been appointed as Minister of Education for the third time.¹⁰²

At the end of 1876, when Abdülaziz was already deposed, and after the short period of Murad V.’s sultanate, which came to an end when it became apparent that he

⁹⁹ Bowen, 285; Ölmezoğlu, “Cevdet Paşa,” 116.

¹⁰⁰ Ölmezoğlu, “Cevdet Paşa,” 117.

¹⁰¹ Bowen, “Ahmad Djewdet Pasha,” 285; Ölmezoğlu, 117.

¹⁰² Bowen, p 285; Ölmezoğlu, 117.

got mental problems, Abdülhamid II became the new sultan in August 1876. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa apparently played no role in these events. His expressions on this incident both in the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* and the *Mârûzât* indicate that he was rather opposed to it.¹⁰³ After Abdülhamid's accession to the throne, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa returned to the Ministry of Justice. During the negotiations on the first Ottoman constitution known as *Kânûn-i Esâsî*, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa and Midhat Paşa had a bitter quarrel which deepened their already strong estrangement. Midhat Paşa considered Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's attitude as reactionary while Midhat Paşa was labelled by Ahmed Cevdet as an extremist.¹⁰⁴ However, throughout Midhat's Grand Vizierate, Ahmed Cevdet remained in his post. It was after Midhat's sudden fall and banishment that Ahmed Cevdet was transferred to the newly created Ministry of Interior.¹⁰⁵ By this way Ahmed Cevdet remained within the cabinet who governed the country throughout the war with Russia of 1877-78.

Ahmed Cevdet was clearly against this war. When the war could not be prevented he fulfilled what is assigned to him. He left İstanbul without witnessing the disastrous consequences of the war.¹⁰⁶ After serving as the Minister of the Imperial Mortmains (*Evkâf*) for a short term, he was sent to Syria again as *vâli*. He remained in Syria for nine months during which he repressed another revolt in Kozan as having special knowledge of the area. And in December of the same year he was recalled to the capital to be appointed to the Ministry of Commerce. When the Grand Vizier Tunuslu Hayreddin Paşa (1819-1889) was dismissed in 1879, for ten days Ahmed Cevdet acted as the President of the Council of Ministers, and after Küçük Said Paşa (1838-1914) was appointed as the Grand Vizier, he was for the fourth time made the Minister of Justice. For three years he remained in this position which had been his longest term.¹⁰⁷ During this time *Mekteb-i Hukûk*, i.e., Law School, whose preparations for foundation had begun during the time of the previous minister of justice Said Paşa, was opened with a speech of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa. He delivered the first lecture in the opening day. He also delivered courses at the Law School on *Usûl-i Muhâkeme-i Hukûkîye*

¹⁰³ Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 117.

¹⁰⁴ Bowen, "Ahmad Djewdet Pasha," 285; Ölmezoğlu, 117.

¹⁰⁵ Bowen, 285.

¹⁰⁶ Ölmezoğlu, 117.

¹⁰⁷ Bowen, 285.

(“Methodology of Legal Judgement”) and next year on *Belâgat-ı Osmaniye* (“Rhetoric of Ottoman Language”) and *Tâlîm-i Hitâbet* (“Exercises of Oration”).¹⁰⁸

A major event in Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’s life has been his role as a judge at Midhat Paşa’s famous Yıldız trial in 1881, where he was accused of having planned to kill Sultan Abdülaziz. By this time Ahmed Cevdet had already denounced Midhat Paşa as being pro-Christian and Ahmed Cevdet himself travelled to Smyrna as ex-officio head of the body assigned to arrest Midhat Paşa, the governor of Aydın province, and transfer him to the capital.¹⁰⁹ Prof. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı says that, head of this court was Ali Sururi Efendi, who was not in good terms with Midhat Paşa. He was suggested to this post by Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, who was the Minister of Justice by that time.¹¹⁰ During Midhat’s trial, two golden gilded chairs were allocated to Ahmed Cevdet, which were situated behind the chairs of the head of the court and the public prosecutors. Cevdet was responsible to prevent any infraction of the rules or any wrongdoing, and was supposed to sit sometimes behind the head judge and sometimes behind the public prosecutors in order to warn them.¹¹¹

Already from the time of the negotiations on *Kânûn-i Esâsî* in 1876 onwards, it had become apparent that Ahmed Cevdet was not favouring Constitutionalism (*Meşrûtiyet*). Ölmezoğlu argues that this may not be due to his hatred of Midhat Paşa or due to a concern to flatter Abdülhamid, but due to his conservative tendencies.¹¹² However Tanpınar considers the conviction of Midhat Paşa to capital punishment as a strain on the overall career and character of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa. He thinks that after the death of Abdülaziz, Ahmed Cevdet, who became one of the main actors in the institutional transition towards autocracy, became a tool of Abdülhamid.¹¹³

After Ahmed Vefik Paşa was appointed as the Grand Vizier in 1882, Ahmed Cevdet left the Ministry of Justice. For some time he remained unemployed and focused on educating his two daughters -Fatma Aliye and Emine Seniye- in what can be considered a modern way. This was also the time when he completed his *Târih-i Cevdet*, edited the fourth and fifth volumes of the *Kıyas-ı Enbiyâve Tevârih-i Hulefâ*

¹⁰⁸ Ölmezoğlu, 118.

¹⁰⁹ Bowen, 285.

¹¹⁰ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Midhat Paşa ve Yıldız Mahkemesi*, (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000), 229.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 234.

¹¹² Ölmezoğlu, 118.

¹¹³ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 167.

(“Traditions on Prophets and History of Caliphs”) and revised the *Kavâid-i Osmaniye*.¹¹⁴ It was only in 1886 that he was given the same office again for the last time. He remained in this post for four years during which he also became one of the three members of the special committee convened by Abdülhamid for the discussion of sensitive political issues.¹¹⁵ He finally presided over a commission set up to compose a *fermân* to modify the regulations of the province of Crete in 1889 which had been introduced after suppressing the rebellion on this island in 1878. In 1890, Ahmed Cevdet resigned due to the political differences with the Grand Vizier Kamil Paşa and no longer played any part in public affairs.¹¹⁶

Tracing back several steps Ahmed Cevdet Paşa took throughout his life helps the researcher see that as a man moving in between different institutions of the Empire he was mostly in the middle of the reform projects to be realized in different branches of the empire ranging from educational, judicial to administrative institutions. So in this part the researcher is content to call Ahmed Cevdet as a through reformist and partially progressive statesmen. The reason why ‘partially’ is because, although Cevdet was for socio-political change in all the different institutions of the Empire, still he never questions the essence of the system and mostly against any inclination for radical changes.

2.1. Cevdet Paşa as an Intellectual

Having provided a brief summary of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’s life as a statesman, the tracks of his life present an outline, which would make it easier for the researcher to evaluate the works of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa and to understand in particular the environments in which his ideas took shape. This has been the basic concern of the researcher in following a deductive method up until this point by explaining several aspects of the process of modernization and giving a basic outline of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’s life. Following these analyses the last step will be to analyze several discussions made on Ahmed Cevdet’s intellectual world.

¹¹⁴ Ölmezöglü, 118.

¹¹⁵ Bowen, 285-6.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 286.

Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar defines Ahmed Cevdet as a man in between different traditions. In Tanpınar's terms, he is a man of neither...nor. He neither gives up the old values of the Empire, nor directly turns his back on the innovative thoughts coming from Europe. This dual character of Ahmed Cevdet can be traced back to the times of his *medrese* education. He was not content with focusing solely on the Islamic sciences and was trying to find ways to compensate his lack of modern sciences by taking extra lessons from people of modern disciplines. For example he took mathematics course from a military officer, Colonel (Miralay) Nuri Bey and in return he helped Nuri Bey in reading several scholastic Islamic books like *Muhtasar*, *Meani*, *Kadı Mir*.¹¹⁷

This dual character of Cevdet's formation must have also been reinforced by the two different types of education he received. The first one, as already mentioned, was the *medrese* education. Authors like Chambers and Ölmezoğlu indicate that those fifteen years Ahmed Cevdet spent in the circle of Mustafa Reşid Paşa should be considered as a second and maybe a more influential phase of educational formation.¹¹⁸ As a consequence of Reşid Paşa's support, Ahmed Cevdet had gradually moved into the realm of politics. According to Tanpınar this transition left Ahmed Cevdet alone in this new and worldly community. But because he was grown up within the ranks of *ilmîye* and then left his former social environment to join his new friends in politics he was ostracised from his old environment. Tanpınar maintains that Ahmed Cevdet's emphasis on his political neutrality was due to this feeling of being ostracized from his former community.¹¹⁹

This so called neutrality can both be understood as neither siding with the ones for Westernization nor with the traditionalists or as not siding with any one of different political groups of his time. Thinking of the first aspect, Tanpınar maintains that Cevdet was able to integrate himself with the public. This was thanks to an approach he used in all the works starting from the administrative to the intellectual ones he had done, which was to make thorough surveys before taking decisions. In the reforms he was in charge of, this tactic helped him in better acquainting himself with the different social groups inhabiting different parts of the Empire that he was dealing with. Tanpınar explains this by saying that Cevdet shared the mentality of the local people which helped him better

¹¹⁷ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 159-160.

¹¹⁸ Richard L. Chambers, "The Education of a Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Âlim Ahmed Cevdet Paşa," *IJMES*, (1973), vol. 4, 1973, 440-464, 464; Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 114.

¹¹⁹ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 165.

understand the base of the society. However this mentality should be taken into consideration together with his long years of experience as a statesman.¹²⁰ As a person trying to reconcile the reforms with the nature of the society these reforms were to be implemented, it can be expected that although he was not a thorough traditionalist, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa was keeping some distance with the reformists supporting radical changes.

Thinking of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's political neutrality, one of the characteristics Tanpınar attributes to Cevdet can be given as an example. Tanpınar says that all different qualities Cevdet possessed, such as his educational background, expertise in different fields, affinity with the society, and being privileged by influential statesmen of his time such as Mustafa Reşid, Âli and Fuad Paşas, was turning Cevdet into a very beneficial "factor/element" (*unsur*) in the nineteenth century Ottoman politics. He thinks that this word "factor" rightly demonstrates one of Cevdet's basic characteristic features, as he never possessed the top positions in the political hierarchy, and always remained subject to other statesmen's orders, and reflected his true abilities in a range of different duties he was assigned to. For instance, during the Grand Vizierate of Reşid Paşa he was the most trusted man of the vizier, during the time of Abdülaziz, he depended on the sultan's favour across other statesmen, and became an "element" of moderation by thus balancing the internal politics. And during Abdülhamid's period, Tanpınar calls Cevdet as a direct tool of the sultan.¹²¹

Although Ahmed Cevdet Paşa led a considerably active life as a statesman, Ölmezoğlu states that Ahmed Cevdet's inclination had been to remain as an *âlim* from the beginning till the end of his life. Even though his main inclination was to remain within the ranks of *ilmîye* with a considerable amount of salary, still Ahmed Cevdet was slightly pushed into the politics due to the influences of Mustafa Reşid Paşa.¹²² After the death of his mentor, when Âli and Fuad Paşas asked him to become the governor (*vâli*) of Vidin, he refused their request as he was not willing to change track. His main inclination was still to secure a position in a *medrese* with an acceptable salary.¹²³

Even though these depictions imply a picture of relative modesty on behalf of Ahmed Cevdet's personality, Baysun in contrast describes Cevdet as an individual with

¹²⁰ Tanpınar, 166.

¹²¹ Ibid, 166-167.

¹²² Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 114.

¹²³ Ibid, 115.

a drive for power. Baysun says that, while Ahmed Cevdet was still working within the ranks of *ilmîye*, his main ambition was to reach the top *ilmîye* position of the *Makâm-ı Meşihat*, also known as the *Şeyhülislâm*. When his opponents, such as *Şeyhülislâm* Saadettin Efendi and Âli Paşa, succeeded in removing him from *ilmîye* career to the civil service (*mülkiye*), he was very unwilling to accept such a shift made without previously informing him. Now having been forced to accept this shift, it meant the end of the *meşihat* dream for Ahmed Cevdet, yet a new dream for the position of Grand Vizierate (*sadâret*) got started.¹²⁴

It is ironical to see that, although Ahmed Cevdet was previously insisting on remaining within the *ilmîye* and aimed at attaining the position of *Şeyhülislâm*, those modern administrative institutions that potentially restricted the powers of this office were in fact established partly thanks to his contributions. He was very much into the reformist movements as he became the first Minister of Justice, the first director of the *Dârülmualimîn*, i.e. the Teacher Seminary to train secular teachers, and the first one to open the *Mekteb-i Hukûk*, i.e. Law School. The *Mecelle* project in particular was restricting the role of the *ilmîye* by breaking their monopoly over Islamic jurisprudence (*fikh*).¹²⁵

These facts indicate that he was actually in favour of the development of the new institutions. However, even though he is understood as being supportive of ‘*terakki*’ (progress), he was not neglecting the significance of religious institutions altogether as these institutions were embraced by the Ottoman society. This is why Tanpınar likes to compare Ahmed Cevdet’s character to the character of the *Tanzîmât* period. He says Ahmed Cevdet’s dual character reflects the tides and turns of the period as well. He was accepting changes mostly at the institutional level; but these changes had to be strictly in line with the customs (*örf/âdet*) of the society. Any negligence in regard to the inclusion of the *örfs* and *âdât* to the process of reforms was unacceptable in his eye.¹²⁶ At least in this sense having a character being split upon two seemingly opposite sides, Ahmed Cevdet could be perhaps imagined as a “neutral” person, keeping equal distances to traditionalists and modernists. It is clear that a person of his kind cannot be judged as being conservative since his political actions would disprove this. At the same time, though he was instinctively admiring Europe, he cannot be called a supporter of

¹²⁴ Baysun, “Cevdet Paşa, Şahsiyeti...,” 219-220.

¹²⁵ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 165.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 164-165.

Westernization as well, since his religious background would disprove it again. Thus, by sheltering two very distinct sides in his personality he found a way to be neutral between the traditionalists and modernists, at least to the point of not being strictly the man of one side only.

This “neutrality” attributed to Ahmed Cevdet Paşa can interestingly be linked to the different types of social behaviour analysed by Weber. As discussed previously, Weber used to argue that it is the *zweckrational* behaviours that prepared the grounds for the construction of modern societies, whereas *wertrational* (value oriented), affective (emotionally ridden), or traditional behaviours (the actions repeatedly done as they are taken into granted), are observed in traditional societies.¹²⁷ Although we cannot deny the effects of religious thinking in Ahmed Cevdet’s mentality, still considering his support for reforms such as the establishment of *nizâmîye* courts, which were done at the expense of limiting the powers of the *ilmîye* (his former track of career) and the methods he used in implementing the reforms such as the thorough surveys he had done to yield an effective result are indications that his actions were not emotionally or value driven and we cannot observe a yearn to repeat the practices that were for so long taken into granted.

Cevdet’s educational background gives some clues as to his curiosity for novelties. Chambers indicates that more than the classes on the religious sciences, Cevdet was mostly intrigued about philosophical and literary subjects. The study of logic and eloquence (*belâgat*) are given as examples to the subjects having an important place in his curriculum. Chambers finds it quite surprising that, a *medrese* student like Ahmed Cevdet who was not as much interested in the Islamic Law and theology as he was in modern sciences in fact became one of the leading figures working on Islamic Law during the nineteenth century.¹²⁸ Chambers also argues that as a scholar Ahmed Cevdet fully utilized from the opportunities available in İstanbul on the Islamic sciences, but at the same time after taking notice of Mustafa Reşid Paşa he did not hesitate to become a student of “the new intellectual currents coming from the West.”¹²⁹

Although Chambers implies that Cevdet was relatively more interested in the modern sciences as compared to the religious sciences, this analysis might have been

¹²⁷ Ellweil, *The Classical Tradition*, 55-6.

¹²⁸ Chambers, “The Education of a Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Âlim Ahmed Cevdet Paşa,” 455.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 463.

made to demonstrate Cevdet's interest in variety of different subjects which mostly differentiated him from his contemporaries in the scholarly environment. In his *Tezâkir*, Ahmed Cevdet states that since he as a student had no financial problems like others had and since he was regarding most of the holidays as an opportunity to further his studies, he digested the course material which would take ten years of a normal *medrese* student's time, just within five years.¹³⁰ Chambers seems to be rather impressed by Cevdet's qualities since he appreciates Cevdet's "more than ordinary" intelligence that managed to overcome all the challenging tasks he was handed over, which can only be a sign of Cevdet's strict self discipline and dedication.¹³¹

However Chambers also adds that Ahmed Cevdet's interest in modern sciences or the second education he received in the entourage of Reşid Paşa could not erase the effects of his traditional and Islamic origins, which made him "unabashedly" an *âlim*. So Chambers is of the opinion that Ahmed Cevdet was a conservative both in his public and private life. Yet, the conservatism Chambers attributes to Ahmed Cevdet is not a blind conservatism, as Chambers also admits. Though Ahmed Cevdet was willing to remain within the track of the *ilmîye*, still he was one of those who harshly criticized the quality of the institution which was increasingly degenerating during the nineteenth century, and he was indeed one of the pioneers of the educational reforms. However one example to the cases Chambers considers an example to Cevdet's conservative tendencies is Cevdet's role in the project of the *Mecelle*. Although he was aware that the Ottoman judiciary system was to be adapted to the modern system of law, still in preparing a civil code he supported the adaptation of the Muslim law to the modern system of law instead of favouring the importation of a foreign law.¹³²

Cevdet Paşa's Islamic inclinations which are regarded as a sign of his conservative tendencies by Chambers are thought to be the key to Cevdet's success according to Ümid Meriç. Ümid Meriç, a well-known sociology professor, claims that Cevdet's superiority to his contemporaries was not related to his affinity to the European sciences or to the West, but rather thanks to his combining of Ottoman traditions with Islam.¹³³ Meriç gives several examples from his *Târih-i Cevdet* in order to support this argument such as Cevdet's contemplations on the foundation,

¹³⁰ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40, 7.

¹³¹ Chambers, 463.

¹³² *Ibid*, 463.

¹³³ Ümid Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, (Ötüken Yayınları, 1979), 11.

development and decadence of the states. Accordingly, each of these phases has its own laws that would be effective in solving its specific problems. This is why Ahmed Cevdet would not seek for solutions that would be applicable to all times and all different societies.¹³⁴ In this line, while moving from one phase to the other states should be extremely cautious. The proper approach is to change the institutions of the former order with the novel ones but without letting the social order get disrupted. This approach accepts that ‘change’ is one of the basic laws of life, and resisting against change is nothing but a blind conservatism. The important thing is to establish the future without destroying the past. So Cevdet’s position is explained as favourable for reform, but reform after long and hard thinking.¹³⁵

Prof. Şerafettin Turan, a historian of late Ottoman period, asserts that Cevdet tries to make a synthesis of the traditional Eastern culture and the civilizationist West in his character. Although Cevdet is basically an Ottomanist-Islamist, the methods he follows and his purposes are civilizationist. Turan also thinks that this is an indication of the duality in Cevdet’s character. Cevdet’s understanding of civilization includes both a historical and cultural perspective. His opinion is that civilization is not an ideal to be reached but a social phenomenon. It is one of the phases societies go through since human beings are inclined to live as a civilization by birth, and civilization (*medeniyet*) is the third and the last phase following nomadic life or mobilization (*bedeviyet*) and settled life (*hazariyet*). According to Turan this is an indication of an historical and sociological viewpoint on civilization. Turan also argues that Cevdet gives a cultural dimension to the term “civilization”, because civilization is described in the *Târih-i Cevdet* as something that opens space for the development of human nature other than meeting basic human needs. So the main concern of a civilization is raising human beings capable in using their full potential. Turan thinks that this must be why Ahmed Cevdet Paşa spent so much effort in making educational reforms.¹³⁶

Most of the time, it seems true that Ahmed Cevdet Paşa had the inclination to preserve the essence of the traditional order. However, exactly this inclination translates itself in a will to implement the most effective reforms. According to Prof. Christoph Neumann, who is mainly specialized in the cultural history of the late Ottoman period,

¹³⁴ Meriç, 39; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 18.

¹³⁵ Meriç, 39-42; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 88.

¹³⁶ Şerafettin Turan, “Cevdet Paşa’nın Kültür Tarihimizdeki Yeri,” *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (İstanbul, Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986), 13-21, 13-15; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 16.

this is not due to Cevdet's Islamist tendencies, but rather due to his pragmatic concerns. He was neither a positivist thinker nor a secular person. He was a Muslim contemplating on what solutions can help the empire better in facing various difficulties. His emphasis on Islam, i.e. in the *Mecelle* project, can be considered to be an outcome of his pragmatic concerns, because in order to realize thorough reforms, it would be more effective to make the prospective changes in a way that would be better understood by the audience. For instance, thinking of the *Mecelle* project, it might have been considered more effective to go through an Islamic codification, as the jurists and the society have had a better affinity with the Islamic law, but had no knowledge whatsoever on the French civil code. In addition, the adoption of the French civil code would have required for the jurists to be extensively educated, and would have injured the self identity of the Muslims. The protection of that identity, rather than the realization of the word of God, is argued as Cevdet's main concern.¹³⁷ In this context, Neumann is very critical of evaluations like that of Meriç's, stressing that she turns Ahmed Cevdet Paşa into a modernist Islamist in terms of present-day Turkish politics.¹³⁸ In Cevdet's works, we see "Islam" as nothing but a factor influential in the composition of the general social atmosphere to which Cevdet also belonged. For Neumann, this neither clashes with his pragmatic approach nor can be held as evidence to a desire to form a more Islamic state order.¹³⁹

Neumann also states that it is a widely accepted belief that Cevdet was a reactionary man as he was an *âlim*. But actually we do not know to what extent he was thinking of himself as an *âlim*. He was known to be an *âlim* after he was acquainted with Reşid Paşa or at the time he was a member of the *Encümen-i Dâniş*. However, at the beginning of 1866, when he was appointed as a vizier, there had already been ten years since he last worked as *âlim*.¹⁴⁰ Neumann concludes that Ahmed Cevdet was an *âlim* mainly as a result of his educational background, and he was a high ranking, modern, administrative politician as a result of his professional experiences.¹⁴¹

Now speaking about Ahmed Cevdet Paşa as a "modern" politician, one should ask about his perception of politics. Although some historians regard Cevdet Paşa to be a modern politician, still his approach to the position and rights of the sultan can be

¹³⁷ Christoph Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, (Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000), 209-212.

¹³⁸ Neumann, 10.

¹³⁹ Neumann, 212.

¹⁴⁰ Neumann, 35.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, 37.

considered very much the same with a Hobbesian approach. Cevdet says nothing about restricting the rights of the sultan. More concretely, no evidence can be found in his works indicating a support for constitutionalism that would restrict the powers of the sultan. Cevdet makes the claim that in all the civilized countries, regardless of the different types of governments they have, it is considered crucial that the sovereign holds immunity against all the criticisms in order not to disrupt the political order.¹⁴² In fact, the perception of an authoritarian and strong sultan was something Cevdet was familiarized with through the Ottoman tradition, and this perception was reinforced by his readings of Ibn Khaldun. Yet, it is striking that for justifying the centrality of the sultan's authority he does not resort to the religious arguments or to a kind of a legitimization like that of Hobbes' based on the natural rights. He accepts the institution of sultanate as a given; the sultan has the right to be the sultan as he already has been. If that were not to be the case, he would not have been the sultan.¹⁴³ Neumann also observes that Cevdet's understanding of the public opinion in the Ottoman Empire is quite different than the public opinion in other countries. In Cevdet, public opinion is not an integral part of the politics but rather regarded as a threat to the public order. And one of Cevdet's purposes is to protect the government against the public opinion.¹⁴⁴

Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's pragmatic approach to politics, the methods he followed in the implementation of reforms that allowed him to get an affinity to the meaning system of Ottoman social groups, and his concern to establish a better bureaucratic system, which has been termed as an unconscious "search" for a Weberian bureaucratic organization, in which the bureaucratic positions would be assigned to the people on the basis of merit (*ehil-erbâb*),¹⁴⁵ makes it nearly to impossible to think of him as a reactionary statesman or as a conservative intellectual. The arbitrariness of labelling him as a conservative or a reactionary would be apparent once we think that even the analyses on his intellectual inclinations are mostly made by observing the path he followed while implementing reforms.

However it might also cause several misunderstandings in regard to Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's intellectual inclinations to call him a modern politician or a modern intellectual. Apart from the fact that we cannot expect Cevdet to act in the same line

¹⁴² Ibid, 126; *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40, 270.

¹⁴³ Neumann, 126-127.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 201-201.

¹⁴⁵ Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, 196-197.

with the statesmen of the twentieth or twenty first centuries, regarding him a modern man would also invite a confrontation between the characteristic features of Cevdet's deeds and the theories of modernity presented previously; this would be resulted with the conviction that Cevdet was not a modern man. In nineteenth century terms the judiciary, educational and administrative reforms he implemented were a sign to Cevdet's progressive character, as he took radical steps considering the political system and social structure of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire. However, once we enter into a discussion on whether Ahmed Cevdet Paşa was a modern statesman or not, present-day theories on modernity would distort our perception, and make us obliged to position Ahmed Cevdet somewhere opposite modern ways of thinking. This would be both unfair and unrealistic considering that he was mostly the part who struggled to find ways in convincing his contemporaries to accept different reform projects.

In order to make my point clear, considering the analysis made by the post-modern thinker Foucault on the ancient and modern governance strategies, Cevdet's ideas would stand closer to the governing strategies of a Machiavellian princely rule. Thinking of the public opinion as a potential threat to the political authority, Cevdet clashes with the so called "art of government" explained as an ideal governing system by Foucault. In the art of government, individuals and the state institutions are regarded as actors all of whose contribution is at the same rate crucial for the correct functioning of the state system. In this system, the main vision of the government is to govern and regulate the actions of the individuals with the active participation of the individuals themselves. On the contrary, in a princely rule the main concern is rather to maintain the prince's sovereign authority, and the laws and regulations that are used in the governance of the society do not aim to include the individuals into the system but rather aims to create a peaceful environment in which the "subjects" will not threaten or question the sovereign's authority. The prince feels threatened by both external and internal enemies. He thus both has to protect his territories from the external enemies, and has to prevent upheavals within the territory by establishing an orderly social system.¹⁴⁶

If we do not evaluate Ahmed Cevdet within the terms of the nineteenth century and directly expose him to the modern definitions or ideals on the state formation, then we will have to label Ahmed Cevdet Paşa as a conservative statesman, since the two

¹⁴⁶ Foucault, "Governmentality," 90.

concerns of the prince, i.e. safeguarding his territory and ensuring the obedience of the subjects by regulating social order, in maintaining his authority are quite the same with the two basic duties attributed by Cevdet to the state, which are ensuring the protection of the borders (*hifz-ı bilâd*) and the social justice by observing the rights of the subjects (*ihkâk-ı hukûk-ı ibâd*).¹⁴⁷ Neumann indicates that the second duty advocates a strong state system, in which the state should grant the subjects their due and make them content lest they be rebellious.¹⁴⁸

Similarities between the main governance strategies of a princely rule and the duties attributed to the state by Cevdet are quite obvious. But considering the differences between the European and Ottoman tracks of modernization, I apply the Weberian and Foucauldian approaches in analyzing whether Cevdet's thoughts and actions as a statesman could be evaluated as steps not merely moving toward anywhere but moving on the path that might open the road for the future modernization of the empire according to the two theories I hold onto. So we shouldn't judge Cevdet by comparing his ideas or deeds with the outcomes that are presented as modern by Foucault or Weber. What we can do is to observe whether Cevdet's deeds are inclined towards the steps explained by the two philosophers that would lead to the formation of modern societies. Here while Foucault's analysis of governmentality helps us in making an analysis of Cevdet's actions as a statesman in pursuing political reforms, Weber's observations on different types of social behaviours helps us in observing Cevdet's personal characteristics that shapes his intellectual standing.

It is already stated that although we cannot call Ahmed Cevdet a thoroughly progressive intellectual, Weber's analysis of modern behaviours which are motivated by rational thinking and focused on making the most effective decisions, is closer to Cevdet's stance as compared to the value ridden, emotional or traditional types of behaviours. Although it would be absurd evaluating Cevdet by isolating him from Islam and from the effects of the Ottoman meaning system he too was a part of, still what is called as Cevdet's "pragmatic" attitude toward religion is also given as an example to show that when he deems it necessary, Cevdet could advocate reforms that would to an extent limit the powers of religious institutions, as well. What is more, although in line with the Foucauldian analysis, Cevdet could be judged as a supporter of the principles

¹⁴⁷ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40, 97.

¹⁴⁸ Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, 189.

of a traditional order, we should consider the case that it would have been too much to expect Ahmed Cevdet give his direct support for constitutionalist or democratic reforms in an absolutist monarchical order, while even the idea of a republican order was considered to be a rebellious and blasphemous thought. In the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, even the codification of the Islamic law, i.e. the *Mecelle* project, was radical enough to make a statesman call a reformist and progressive thinker.

What is more, it would not be accurate to call Cevdet a thorough supporter of a princely rule in the Machiavellian sense, because while in the princely rule the detachment of the prince from his subjects, which can be called an alienation to the subjects, is the main theme emphasized, in many of his duties like that of in Bosnia we observe that Cevdet becomes one “factor” –as Tanpınar calls him-¹⁴⁹ in getting familiarized with the customs and traditions of the societies of the Empire in order to introduce the reforms as they would be fit to the character of the respective society. In that sense, it is possible to say that although Cevdet’s vision of a state is very much different from a Foucauldian analysis of an ideal state, still the direction of his thoughts on ideal governance strategies were not heading towards approving the strategies used in a princely rule defined above, which is enough of a proof for the researcher to think that Cevdet was a progressive statesman and reformist considering the Ottoman political order during the nineteenth century.

Now, being unable to call Ahmed Cevdet either as conservative or progressive so as not to blur minds loaded with different theoretical approaches, and being of the opinion that he was a fervent supporter of the reforms necessary in boosting the powers of the Empire, my suggestion is to regard Cevdet neither as someone who stood against modern currents of thought nor someone against tradition, but a person who was basically against the invention of traditions. I agree with Neumann that most of the discussions on Cevdet’s political inclinations arise from the dichotomy created between the political inclinations of the rival statesmen Cevdet and Midhat Paşas.¹⁵⁰ As Midhat Paşa was a supporter of Western-oriented reform projects and stood for a constitutional order to be constructed, the deep fight between the two on these subjects made the observers think as if Cevdet was resisting against the process of modernisation of the Empire. However, evaluations of such kind would only hide the real aspect of events,

¹⁴⁹ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 166-167.

¹⁵⁰ Tanpınar, 10.

because these two men as different visions as they possessed were both strict reformists. The main issue that differentiated these two reformists was that while Cevdet advocated an organic change, Midhat was for adaptation of the products of an unfamiliar meaning system to the Ottoman Empire, which could be called as the invention of traditions in Hobsbawmian terms.¹⁵¹ It was exactly this approach Cevdet vehemently stood against.

2.2. Several Concepts Effective in Cevdet Paşa's Thinking (*Medeniyet, Terakki, Asabiyet*)

In the classical Islamic philosophy, the connection between the words *medine* (city), *medenî* (*civilis*), *medeniyye* (civilisation) and *es-siyâsetü'l-medeniyye* (governance) is established as a philosophical discipline by Fârâbî (d. 950), an eminent Islamic political philosopher. The starting point of the philosopher was that of meeting the human needs, which require the contribution of more than one person, as a community with solidarity and through division of labour, and that of the obligation to create a social life in order the human beings to realize the capacity intrinsic within human nature. Fârâbî's theory on governance (*es-siyâsetü'l-medeniyye*) tries to put forward the principles of a socio-political order possessing scientific (*ilmî*), moral and religious features of a virtuous society.¹⁵²

Despite the existence of a well-established Islamic intellectual tradition discussing the notion of civilization, the term *medeniyet* itself, ironically, was introduced to the Ottoman Turkish from French towards the end of the nineteenth century. While it is apparent that in the classical Islamic conception of the term, religion was considered an inseparable part of the political organisation known as *medeniyye*, the nineteenth century meaning of the term purported a secular political order which was considered to be a characteristic of the European political system and situated in contrast to the "traditional oriental dynastic despotism".¹⁵³ While the definitions made on the term generally agreed that *medeniyet* denotes the level of life and opportunities that are provided within an urban setting in the social, political, intellectual,

¹⁵¹ Eric Hobsbawm, "Inventing Traditions", *The Invention of Tradition*, Hobsbawm&Ranger (ed.), (Cambridge, 1983), 1-14.

¹⁵² İlhan Kutluer, "Medeniyet", *TDVİA*, (2003), cilt 28, 269-270.

¹⁵³ Niyazi Berkes, "Medeniyet," *EI2*, vol. 6, 968.

institutional, technical and economic fields of life,¹⁵⁴ Ottoman intellectuals from the nineteenth century onwards mostly used the terms civilisation or *medeniyet* in order to indicate the superiority of the European political system. The basic features of this system were basically identified as “enlightenment, rationalism, freedom of conscience, the dissemination of education and the prevalence of literacy, the accumulation of scientific knowledge and its role in the advancement of inventions, equality of all the subjects before the law and orderly application of it by government officials, and economic policies pursued to promote the interests of the people.”¹⁵⁵

The person introducing the French term civilisation into the Ottoman Empire was Mustafa Reşid Paşa. In his official writings made from Paris, Reşid Paşa could not find an exact equivalent of the term and translated it into Turkish as ‘*terbiye-i nâs*’, i.e. proper upbringing of people, and ‘*icrâ-yı nizâmât*’, i.e. application of rules. Although ‘*medeniyet*’ literally corresponds to the concept of civility, and the literary correspondent of civilization is ‘*temeddün*’, the term ‘civilization’ became settled in Turkish language as ‘*medeniyet*’. Ahmed Cevdet was using both terms ‘*medeniyet*’ and ‘*temeddün*’.¹⁵⁶ The significance of the term during the *Tanzîmât* was due to the fact that ‘*medeniyet*’ as a term carried with it the duty of ‘*medenileşme*’, i.e. becoming civilized. According to the ideas that shaped the character of the *Tanzîmât*, ‘*medeniyet*’ became equivalent to ‘Europe’. Thus civilization meant modernity, and becoming civilized meant modernization.¹⁵⁷

It has been argued that Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, while using the term civilization was influenced by the concept of *medeniyet* used in Ibn Khaldun. According to Neumann, Cevdet briefly mentions a unique social theory in the sense that although at the first glance it seems to be originated from the ideas of Ibn Khaldun, it is possible to see a line of argumentation similar to the Hobbesian social theory in Cevdet’s ideas.¹⁵⁸ However, both in Ahmed Cevdet and in the Ottoman historiography in general, the ideas of Ibn Khaldun have been instrumentalized by severing them from their original context¹⁵⁹ and using them without establishing a theoretical background. This mainly

¹⁵⁴ Kutluer, 269.

¹⁵⁵ Berkes, “Medeniyet,” 968

¹⁵⁶ Bedri Gencer, “Medeniyet Ütopyası Peşinde,” 59; Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of Bourgeoisie Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1996), 117- 137.

¹⁵⁷ Hasan Aksakal, “Yüzyıl Önce, Yüzyıl Sonra: İbrahim Şinasi ve Cemil Meriç’in Medeniyet Anlayışları Üzerine” *Gelenekten Geleceğe*, (Orient Yayıncılık, 2013), vol. 2, 67-79, 68.

¹⁵⁸ Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, 155.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 171.

demonstrates that Ahmed Cevdet did not accept the ideas of Ibn Khaldun as a whole, but was rather using Ibn Khaldun's ideas in supporting his theses. These theses were most likely in line with the ideological background of the *Tanzîmât*. As Aksakal indicates, the *Tanzîmât* has been a project shaped by the idea of civilization. And the ideology of the period –if there is any such thing- could be called as *medeniyetçilik/civilizationism*.¹⁶⁰

Neumann claims that Ahmed Cevdet merged the concept of civilization of Ibn Khaldun with the idea of a “European civilization”.¹⁶¹ While historically European civilization and the Islamic civilization, represented by the Ottoman Empire from the Early Modern age onwards, often used to clash, the idea that Ottoman Empire and Europe actually shared the same perception of civilization is more commonly emphasized at the *Târih-i Cevdet*. Cevdet Paşa does not seem to prefer the Islamic understanding of civilization to the European one, on the contrary, he takes the European meaning of the term which encompasses scientific developments, discoveries, welfare and modern governance.¹⁶²

In line with Ibn Khaldun's theories, Ahmed Cevdet identifies human beings as political animals living in different stages of social development such as nomadism, peasantry, urban life, and statehood in the final stage. As stated above, although it is possible to say that Ahmed Cevdet merges this theory with ideas that might seem to be inspired by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), a British political thinker who proposed the notion of social contract, still it would be more realistic to assume that he was rather influenced from the writings of the Ottoman statesmen that preceded him such as Tursun Bey (d. after 1440), who worked as a highranking bureaucrat in the Ottoman chancery. For instance, Cevdet states that the duty of the state is to protect the citizens from each other. The state acquires this function when everyone in the society entrusts their private and common rights to the hands of the sovereign by giving their consent to the sovereign in making judgements and protecting their rights.¹⁶³ This idea bears considerable similarities with Tursun Bey's contemplations on how to establish a world order (*nizâm-ı âlem*) after a period of disorder which is suggested in his *Târih-i Ebü'l Feth* (History of the Conqueror, i.e. Mehmed II). According to Tursun Bey, God created

¹⁶⁰ Aksakal, “Yüzyıl Önce, Yüzyıl Sonra...,” 68.

¹⁶¹ Neumann, 174.

¹⁶² Ibid, 174.

¹⁶³ Neumann, p 155-156; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt 1, 16; “herkes hukûk-ı zâtiye ve ‘umûmiyesini cânib-i hükûmete tevdi’ ile anın hükûm ü himmetine râzî olarak levâzım-ı kemâlat-ı insânîye tahsiline meydân-ı ferâgat bulurlar.”

humans as social beings who are to live together within a community in which they will act in solidarity and live through mutual aid. However, due to increasing social differentiation and variety of interests, it is inevitable that conflicts and enmities arise in time. This threatens the order in the primeval societies which brings forward the need for a ruler who will confine every human being to his or her appropriate social role. It is only by the establishment of such a system that the world order can be secured.¹⁶⁴

Medeniyet (civilization) and *asabiyet* (solidarity) as terms inspired by Ibn Khaldun are further explained by Meriç. According to her, Ahmed Cevdet uses the concept of *medeniyet* in two cases. One denotes a social stage while the other usage is for the big and unique civilizations that accidentally emerge in history.¹⁶⁵ Looking into the first usage, we can see that in Ahmed Cevdet's perspective *medeniyet* is not the ultimate goal that would lead the societies into the best way of life. He rather thinks of this as a stage in the development of societies like the other stages which are tribal societies, village communities, and then the societies forming a state.¹⁶⁶ And when a society reaches to the level of *medeniyet*, this means that it might be approaching toward its decay. For him development is not a process which continues for societies eternally, there can be drawbacks on and off in the history of a community. This way of thinking distinguished Ahmed Cevdet from many of his contemporaries who thought of civilization as an ultimate goal for the further development of a country.¹⁶⁷

As a response to historians who are calling Ahmed Cevdet as a strict follower of Ibn Khaldun, Neumann argues that during the *Tanzîmât* period, Ibn Khaldun was a widely read intellectual, and most probably Ahmed Cevdet wanted to entertain the reader and attract more attention to his books by including some of Ibn Khaldun's ideas.¹⁶⁸ It is also observed by Neumann that the usage of several concepts Ahmed Cevdet uses in his works also differ compared to Ibn Khaldun's interpretations. For instance, the concept of "*terakki*", i.e. progress, which can be considered as an inseparable segment of a civilizing or modernizing society is used differently by Ahmed Cevdet and Ibn Khaldun. While Ahmed Cevdet considers *terakki* as an indispensable

¹⁶⁴ Tursun Bey, *Târih-i Ebü'l Feth*, Mertol Tulum (ed.), (İstanbul, 1977), 12; Gottfried Hagen, "World Order and Legitimacy" *Legitimizing the Order: Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, Maurus Reinkowski and Hakan Karateke (eds), (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 55-83, 61.

¹⁶⁵ Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, 31.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 26.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 29.

¹⁶⁸ Neumann, 180.

factor in the construction of civilization, Ibn Khaldun regards *terakki* to be a product of civilization.¹⁶⁹

Neumann underlines that *terakki* is considered to be one of the key concepts of the intellectual current of Islamic modernism. In Ahmed Cevdet's writings, however, this concept does not have the same critical importance as among Islamic modernists. For him *terakki* was more a means rather than an end for itself. It was merely a tool for attaining wealth, good quality education, and security.¹⁷⁰ Ahmed Cevdet does not seem to establish a relationship between *terakki* and developments further in time. Accordingly, scientific innovations do not change the human beings or their status on the earth. When societies go through certain levels of development they will not become superior compared to previous times, they will only be living in better conditions.¹⁷¹ In addition, Ahmed Cevdet was of the opinion that any kind of development within a society should be connected by the reformists to the customs and traditions that the society is already familiar with or to something that is already embedded in the respective society's perceptions.¹⁷² Unless these conditions are observed by the reformists, the society cannot digest and naturalize the reforms that are initiated by the administration. Thus, Ahmed Cevdet seems to have understood the concept of *terakki* as a force that should be instrumentalized when social change is necessitated in different periods of history.

Another crucial term which Ahmed Cevdet adopts from Ibn Khaldun, is the concept of *asabiyet/asabiyya*. Ibn Khaldun is said to be the first Islamic scholar and indeed one of the first social scientists in general who seriously analyzed the term with an objective methodology while explaining his theories on history and the state. Although he does not give a full definition of the term in his works, generally it is accepted that he considered the term as the unity and solidarity that may be established with the effects of racial, geographical, political or religious factors. According to him, *asabiyya* is a feeling inherent in human nature, and it is the energy of the masses having a role in the foundation, development and decadence of all the communities starting from complex states to the smallest social organisations.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 175-176.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 147.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 147.

¹⁷² Ibid, 148.

¹⁷³ Mustafa Çağrıncı, "Asabiyet", *TDVİA*, (1991), cilt 3, 454.

In the Islamic hadith tradition, *asabiyya* was mainly prohibited, since it was regarded as one of the characteristic behavioural patterns of the pre-Islamic age of ignorance. So the term used to be attributed to a specific time period known as the *jahiliyyah*, and it was defined as aiding one's own kinsmen blindly regardless of whether they are doing injustice or not.¹⁷⁴ However, it is seen that Ibn Khaldun attributed *asabiyya* a general meaning different than the Islamic conception of the term by stating that *asabiyya* can be both constructive and destructive. It is with the energy provided by the feeling of *asabiyya* that states are formed and in due time destroyed. This destruction can be understood to be caused either by the disappearance of the *asabiyya* in a community altogether, or as a shift of that feeling of solidarity from supporting one social organization to support another one. Other than helping the foundation of the states, Ibn Khaldun also argued that it would be desirable to use that feeling and energy of *asabiyya* in realizing the God's orders. He emphasized that in fact religions and *Şerîats* too become widespread through the support of *asabiyya*, and if they become devoid of that support their bases will get shattered.¹⁷⁵

For Ahmed Cevdet *asabiyet* had a crucial importance when it came to the issue of reforms. According to him, even if events like *inkılab*, i.e. transformations, are in the nature of social life,¹⁷⁶ Ahmed Cevdet is of the opinion that such major changes should be implemented extremely carefully without damaging the bonds bringing different communities together, i.e. *asabiyet*. States are born, they grow, and advance, and finally they come to die. They go from one phase into another. And these transitions from one phase to another are governed by laws unique to each society. So each society should transform itself according to its own law by finding its own recipe.¹⁷⁷ Using the recipe of another community would be of no use.

As mentioned above, Ibn Khaldun uses the concept of “*asabiyya*” as a factor maintaining the unity of large states by creating a feeling of allegiance, disappearance or loosening of which will cause the decay of the organization of a state. Following the full consolidation of a state, the feeling of “*asabiyya*” is doomed to weaken once a comfortable and secure environment is established.¹⁷⁸ While the “*asabiyya*” enables the formation of larger states by strengthening the links between different segments of the

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 453.

¹⁷⁵ Çağrıç, 454.

¹⁷⁶ Meriç, 41.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 39.

¹⁷⁸ Neumann, 121.

society, this enlargement and the welfare it provides for the society would gradually cause the weakening of that feeling of being united. In Ibn Khaldun's theory each state has a lifetime of approximately one hundred years. After one hundred years states will become worn out and the bonds previously provided by the *asabiyya* will become disintegrated. The states that are to disappear will be replaced by others where the feeling of *asabiyya* will be stronger than the previous ones. However, Cevdetis of the opinion that for a state like that of the Ottoman Empire, which had been existing for centuries and is composed of a variety of different communities, this theory cannot be fully applicable.¹⁷⁹

This deterministic understanding that all civilizations are destined to collapse once they reach to their zenith and to be replaced by smaller Bedouin *dawla*'s was a source of concern for numerous literate Ottomans.¹⁸⁰ Cevdet, on the other hand, does not display such a deterministic viewpoint. In adapting Ibn Khaldun's theory on the lifespan of states to the actual history of the Ottoman Empire, Cevdet seems to indicate that in each hundred years of Ottoman history we observe a period of stagnation. He argues that one hundred years is as long a lifetime for the states as it is for human beings, so as human beings get exhausted over the course of time it is normal for the governments to get weakened over time. Yet this is not a factor causing the ultimate destruction of the state in Cevdet's viewpoint, because at the end of each a hundred years a ruler rejuvenates the empire again as if establishing the state anew. In the first era of the Ottoman history, during the time of the fourth *pâdişâh* Yıldırım Bayezid (1354-1403) the state was nearly destroyed which is expressed by Ahmed Cevdet as a state of "becoming loosened" and in the second era of the state during the reign of the Bayezid II (1448-1512), a slight discontinuity in the conquests had been visible.¹⁸¹

In addition to this new approach pasted into Ibn Khaldun's theory, Cevdet also focuses on different social groups within a state that create their own societies and exist side by side.¹⁸² For instance, Cevdet uses the term *asabiyet* to explain the root of the problems which emerged within the Janissary corps. The problems were hard to be cleared away due to the feeling of inner solidarity among the Janissaries. In order to

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 122.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 172.

¹⁸¹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 38: "... yüz sene insana bir uzun ömür olduğu gibi mürûr-ı zamân ile hükûmetlere dahi yorgunluk gelmek umûr-ı tabî'iyedendir. Ve devr-i evvelin âhîrinde dördüncü pâdişâh olan Yıldırım Bayezid Han zamânında devlete gevşeklik gelmiş olduğu gibi işbu devr-i sâninin âhîrinde dördüncü pâdişâh olan Bayezid Han-ı sâni zamânında dahi Devlet-i âliye fütûhâtça biraz durgunluk gelmişti."

¹⁸² Neumann, 177.

make them obedient to the state, the authorities were primarily supposed to break down that internal solidarity. For conceptualising that feeling of solidarity, Ahmed Cevdet uses the term *asabiyet* again.¹⁸³ Within this context Neumann states that the main problem causing the Janissary rebellions was not disorder, but a “counter order”.¹⁸⁴

While the stages of development are an indispensable part of Ibn Khaldun’s theory, Cevdet does not think that the states which move towards different stages of development will always face the same end as Ibn Khaldun predicted which is to be destroyed within a hundred years of time. The existence of the states that had collapsed before they reached to their golden ages indicates that in some cases it is also possible to treat the weaknesses of an old aged empire.¹⁸⁵ Juxtaposing Ibn Khaldun’s and Cevdet’s usage of the terms *asabiyya* and *asabiyet*, it becomes clear how differently Cevdet applies it. The feeling of *asabiyet* within the Janissaries does not have much relation with the *asabiyya* of Ibn Khaldun’s bedouins. Neumann argues that, the idea of applying this concept to understand the conditions of a group within the organization of state as in the case of the Janissaries would have been considered a very absurd though by Ibn Khaldun.¹⁸⁶

The three terms “*medeniyet*”, “*terakki*” and “*asabiyet*” that are analyzed above have become helpful in observing Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’s intellectual inclinations, and his vision of the road in which the Empire could have been saved. As all the reformists of the nineteenth century, we saw that Cevdet was also a civilisationist. Yet the one thing that differentiated him from his counterparts was that of the difference in his interpretation of the term by bringing together Ibn Khaldun’s interpretations on civilisation, which is the last stage of development for a community which is to be followed by a decay, with the European conception of the term in which civilisation denoted a society organized with the scientific, intellectual and political developments as in the European case. What is more even though in his writings his understanding on the features of a civilisation is similar to the European understanding of the term, he still does not think that becoming civilised is the ultimate goal of the societies, but just one of the developmental stages in the history of a state.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 118-119.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 120.

¹⁸⁵ Neumann, 177; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 18: “...bazen bir devlette ziyâdesiyle inhitât ve fûtûr emâreleri zuhûr etmişken tedâbir-i hakimâne ile teceddüd edip tazelandığı vardır... Ve nice devletler dahi son vukûfunu ikmâl edemedi kendi kusurlarıyla yahud bir kaza zuhûruyla mahv u münkariz olmuştur.”

¹⁸⁶ Neumann, 173-4.

As Cevdet does not think that civilisation is the ultimate goal to be reached, he is also of the opinion that *terakki* (progress) is not something whose eternal presence is to be yearned for, but it is something that should be instrumentalised while moving in different stages of development in order to attain a better quality life style. *Terakki* is not an end in itself which will come out as a result of being civilized, but a means in attaining the goal (not the ultimate one) of becoming civilized. So it may be argued that Cevdet would be against the idea of enforcing any measures in order to ensure further development and progress if the conception of progress in question would weaken the feeling of *asabiyet* within a society in a notable way. Any development which has the threat of tearing apart that social bond inherent in the meaning system of the society would be considered detrimental in Cevdet's thinking.

Cevdet's stance is thus in support of *medeniyet*, which is to be established through the instrumentalisation of progress. Although he stands in favour of progress, it is a kind of a progress that will not damage the feeling of *asabiyet* within a community. This is because, in line with Ibn Khaldun's theory, if the bonds established by *asabiyet* are not observed while making developments, once the state reaches to the level of becoming a *medeniyet*, the social bonds already got loosened in the process of becoming a civilisation will be further dissolved in the comfort provided by a civilized life, and will bring the state to the edge of an even greater defeat. Thus the suggestion already made on Cevdet's intellectual stance can be reinstated here by saying that Cevdet was against the adoption of the foreign models of development and he was for an organic change lest the projects of development hurt the feeling of *asabiyet* holding the Ottoman social groups together as parts of a whole, or lest the feeling of *asabiyet* among different social groups of the empire, i.e. the Janissaries, would turn against the new order that was endeavoured to be established.

CHAPTER 3

A GENERAL LOOK AT CEVDET PAŞA'S HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Now that an insight as to Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's intellectual inclinations is displayed, his viewpoint on the Ottoman and the European history will be one of the best means to elaborate Cevdet's stance toward Ottoman modernization process. The significant roles he was granted in the administrative duties can help the researcher only partially in understanding Cevdet's general look into the Ottoman politics. One reason for this is that all the duties he was assigned to present inevitably only a one-sided perspective of Cevdet ideas. Additionally, throughout his life Cevdet was given duties in many different offices of the state, therefore none of his administrative duties was having a single dominant impact upon him as to shape his whole worldview. During the days Cevdet was given his first administrative duties under the protection of the Grand Vizier Mustafa Reşid Paşa, Cevdet's political and historical perspective possibly should have been already matured to a considerable extent.¹⁸⁷ This is why Cevdet's place in Ottoman historiography, his methodology and his perspective on the subject matters he elaborates will be of crucial importance in shedding light on what kind of ideas he was motivated by in contributing to the reforms throughout the second half of the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire.

Looking into the early inquiries on Cevdet Paşa written around 1940s, Cevdet is described by the eminent professor of history Mükrimin Halil Yinanç (1900-1961) as "the best of all historians we have without a doubt". He says that Cevdet used all the data available on the period he was writing on; he utilized sources such as the chronicles, autobiographies, memories, narratives told by the people who were still alive, as well as official state records. Bringing all these different sources together he had written his large chronicle. At the beginning of his work he deliberated on the emergence, advance and demise processes of the empire, where he analyzed the different groups living within the Empire. Even though Ahmed Cevdet compiled the historical events in the form of annals, using the same form as what his predecessors

¹⁸⁷ Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, 39.

had been doing, he was different in the sense that he was trying to show a different perspective of events by pointing at the conditions of the European countries, their relations with each other, and their policies toward the Ottoman Empire.¹⁸⁸

Yücel Özkaya, a historian specialized on the eighteenth century, corroborates Yinanç by saying that Ahmed Cevdet is the leading figure in historiography in his own time. The histories of the chroniclers preceding Ahmed Cevdet have also used *hatt-ı hümayûns*, *fermâns*, or various different documents, yet they did not proceed with the evaluation and interpretation of these documents.¹⁸⁹ The nineteenth-century specialist Prof. Dr. İlber Ortaylı's also supports this viewpoint by pointing that Ahmed Cevdet brought to an end the conventional chronicling and initiated a new phase in the methodology of history.¹⁹⁰ Yinanç goes even further and claims that Ahmed Cevdet Paşa was at the same level with the most significant historians of the West of the nineteenth century in the sense of collecting the data and critically evaluating them, establishing links between a current event and a former event related to it, analyzing their consequences. However, as he had been following the old style of history writing in the form of annals, i.e. writing that is mixed with mystic influences as well as moral and normative values, and as his writings were full of irony and direct criticism against the opposing view he should still be considered as a historian of the East.¹⁹¹

Turning to Ahmed Cevdet's interest in European history, it provided him the introduction of several methodological novelties to Ottoman historiography. One of these novelties, according to Ortaylı, was Cevdet's acquisition of substantial knowledge on synchronology. It was thanks to this that the historical methodology in Turkey got modernized. Although Cevdet was not the first Ottoman historian intrigued about the European and world history, still he was the first who –instead of writing an Ottoman history or a European chronology of its own- had endeavored to establish links between the two.¹⁹² More than that, he grasped the importance of the French Revolution. In order to understand how this would affect the Ottoman Empire he dealt not only with the time of the Revolution but also with the political developments and institutions of Europe

¹⁸⁸ Mükrimin Halil Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete Kadar Bizde Tarihçilik", *Tanzimat*, (İstanbul, MEB Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999), cilt II, 576.

¹⁸⁹ Yücel Özkaya, "Ahmed Cevdet Paşa'nın Tarihi'nde Arşiv Belgelerini Kullanış ve Değerlendiriliş" *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986), 145-163, 145.

¹⁹⁰ İlber Ortaylı, "Cevdet Paşa ve Avrupa Tarihi", *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986), 163.

¹⁹¹ Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete Kadar Bizde Tarihçilik," 576.

¹⁹² Ortaylı, "Cevdet Paşa ve Avrupa Tarihi," 163.

that paved way for the occurrence of the Revolution.¹⁹³ He saw that the Revolution culminated in the coming of a new era affecting the social and cultural life in Europe, and in the creation of a new system of international relations. The status of Ottoman Empire in this new system is evaluated in detail in the *Târih-i Cevdet*.¹⁹⁴ One of the main issues that concerned Cevdet was the Russian modernization process. He endeavored to observe the factors culminating in the gradual strengthening of Russia compared to the simultaneous weakening of the Ottoman Empire. He was also aiming to comprehend the Ottoman-Russian relations since the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774).¹⁹⁵

Although Christoph Neumann, an expert on Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, also emphasizes the significant place allocated to the European history in the *Târih-i Cevdet*, he does not think that this necessarily proves that Cevdet was a modern historian, or in Bekir Kütükoğlu's (1926-1990) terms that the *Târih-i Cevdet* was a transitory step between the Eastern and Western historiography.¹⁹⁶ Just the fact that Cevdet was very critical of the methods pursued by the *vak'anüvîses* or that he was intrigued by the European history cannot be enough arguments to think of Cevdet as a modern historian pursuing a scientific methodology.¹⁹⁷ Contrary to Ortaylı's analysis, Neumann thinks that the main reason Cevdet worked on the European history was not to make a scientific analysis of the different events that had happened in the European history and to observe their effects on the Ottoman Empire. Neumann rather links it to Cevdet's intellectual curiosity as a nineteenth century Ottoman literate toward the increasing pressure of European modernization. As an individual he had to analyze the cultural and political origins of this pressure.¹⁹⁸

In 1975 in her book on Cevdet, the sociologist Ümid Meriç undertook a comparison between history in the Islamic countries and history in Europe.¹⁹⁹ In the prologue of her study she states her own opinion on how to look into the history of a society. Accordingly, social events are a continuation of one another, so the sociologic studies in Turkey should depend on the history of Turkey. The theories of Western scholars, which are formulated by looking into the history of the West, cannot be

¹⁹³ Ortaylı, 163-164.

¹⁹⁴ Ortaylı, 163-164; see also Edip Uzundal, "19. Yüzyıl Tarih Yazıcılığı ve Ahmed Cevdet Paşa," *Türk Tarih Eğitimi Dergisi* ("hence TUHED"), (2013), vol. 2, no. 2, 108-128, 120.

¹⁹⁵ Ortaylı, 164.

¹⁹⁶ Bekir Kütükoğlu, "Tarihçi Cevdet Paşa", *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986), 107-115, 114.

¹⁹⁷ Neumann, 167.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁹⁹ Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, 1-4.

equally valid when it comes to the application of these into the Ottoman society, because Ottoman society does not have a common history with the West.²⁰⁰ It might be said that throughout her book she tries to see whether Cevdet, his works, and his claims do comply with this first hypothesis that she puts forward at the beginning of her study. On the other hand, Neumann is very critical of Meriç's approach in this book arguing that Meriç does not make a distinction between what she wishes to see in Cevdet's works and the actual works themselves. So according to Neumann, throughout the book she tries to cover certain inconsistencies manifesting themselves in Cevdet's ideas.²⁰¹

Accepting Cevdet as superior to most of his predecessors and to his contemporaries, Meriç contemplates on several reasons for this superiority she takes for granted. According to her one possibility why Cevdet is held in high esteem is related to his knowledge on European history. As already mentioned above, some scholars claim that Cevdet injected the Western system of history into the Eastern system of history, while some others add that his thoughts were very much influenced by several European scholars such as Michelet, Taine, Hammer-Purgstall, Buckle, Macaulay, and Montesquieu.²⁰² For instance, though accepting that this is open to debate, Kütükoğlu indicates that the pedagogue Selim Sabit (1826-1910) -a student of Cevdet- cites him saying that in the formation of Cevdet's thoughts, Michelet, Taine, Ibn Haldun and Zehebî have been very influential. In addition, he utilized the works of the Austrian orientalist Joseph Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856), English historians Henry Thomas Buckle (1821-1862) and Thomas Macaulay (1800-1859) as well as the French *philosophe* Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755).²⁰³ Edip Uzundal, an academic interested in Ahmed Cevdet, seems to be of the opinion that the contribution of these intellectuals in the development of Cevdet's thoughts is a well-known fact.²⁰⁴ Historians like Zeki Arıkan and Ali Ölmezoğlu are also of the same opinion saying that Cevdet was getting utilized from the translations made by Ali Şahbaz Efendi (1838-1898), who was one of the first Ottoman jurists of international law, and by official translator and bureaucrat "Hoca Sahak" (Sahak Abro or "Abro Çelebi", 1825-1900).²⁰⁵ Arıkan states in addition that it is possible to find evidence in Cevdet's statements on the idea that it

²⁰⁰ Meriç, prologue.

²⁰¹ Neumann, 10.

²⁰² Meriç, 10-11.

²⁰³ Kütükoğlu, 111.

²⁰⁴ Uzundal, 114.

²⁰⁵ Zeki Arıkan, "Cevdet Paşa'nın Tarihinde Kullandığı Yabancı Kaynaklar ve Terimler" *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (Istanbul, Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986), 173-199, 181-182; Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 114.

became a must to resort to the European sources due to the intensified Ottoman-European relations.²⁰⁶ However, Meriç does not support this viewpoint. The resources that Cevdet uses in writing his history are clearly visible, and according to Meriç there is no Montesquieu, no Buckle or no Macaulay. For Meriç it is even doubtful whether Ahmed Cevdet had been aware of the existence of such intellectuals.²⁰⁷ Ahmed Cevdet uses the works written by former Ottoman historians rather than these names.²⁰⁸ While writing the *Târih-i Cevdet*, he worked exclusively on chronicles as well as other traditional sources like *mecmûas*, i.e. text collections, *lâyihâs*, i.e. reports, *sefâretnâmes*, i.e. envoy accounts, archive documents, and utilized the opinions of eye witnesses. As other authors have also indicated, at the end of each volume of the *Târih-i Cevdet*, official documents, *fermâns*, texts of the treaties that are related to the content are included.²⁰⁹ In the view of Meriç it is this quality of Cevdet's work that captures the gist of the Ottoman society, and this is how history in Ottomans gets a "social" (*içtimâî*) character.²¹⁰

According to Meriç, Ahmed Cevdet's superiority as a scholar was due to exactly the opposite reason often maintained by the historians. Cevdet was in fact not Europeanized. He represented, in the view of Meriç, a mixture of Islamic and Ottoman intellectual traditions.²¹¹ Uzundal is also of the opinion that Ahmed Cevdet stands apart from his predecessors and contemporaries, because he not only brought the Western understanding of history into the Eastern historiography, but he also did this without ignoring the reality and values of his own society. While getting influenced from the European philosophy of history, he did not get Europeanized.²¹² According to Uzundal what makes Ahmed Cevdet's thoughts original seems to be that Ahmed Cevdet had evaluated and written history with a perspective of a sociologist. In his own terms, while evaluating the incidents that come about as a result of social events - "*nev'î beşerin içtimâî mülâbesesiyle ârız olan ahvâl*" - certainly it is necessary to approach the

²⁰⁶ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 13; Arıkan, "Cevdet Paşa'nın Tarihinde Kullandığı Yabancı Kaynaklar ve Terimler," 182; "Avrupa havâdisinin tashihi zmnında Avrupa târihlerine mürâcaat olunagelip halbuki Bonaparte'nin zuhûrundan sonra Devlet-i âliye düvel-i Avrupa ile münâsebet ve muâmelâtı tekessür etmekle nice vekâyi Devlet-i âliye'nin istiknâhı Avrupa havâdisinin bilinmesine mevkûf olduğuna mebni Avrupa'da yazılmış olan târih ve risâlelere daha ziyâdece mürâcaata mecburiyet elvermiştir."

²⁰⁷ Meriç, 12.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 15.

²⁰⁹ Uzundal, 118; Zeki Arıkan, "Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Tarihçilik" *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul, İletişim), vol. 6, 1583-1594, 1585.

²¹⁰ Meriç, 15.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, 11.

²¹² Uzundal, 116.

issues from the perspective of the respective society.²¹³ Other than that, Uzundal states that the most important point in Ahmed Cevdet's historiography is that while comparing and analyzing the information and rumors he collected, being affected by his jurist identity he makes judgments, which means that he was not only transferring knowledge (*nâkil*), but also acting as a critic.²¹⁴

Meriç insists that compared to the above mentioned European intellectuals, Ahmed Cevdet was much more influenced from Ibn Khaldun. Actually she states that among all the Ottoman historians Cevdet has been the closest one to Ibn Khaldun.²¹⁵ The reason why is that both of them were living in a period of depression, both of them were great statesmen, and both of them were trying to understand their own era and secure their own countries from decay.²¹⁶ Leaving factual problems in this statement aside, I am not so sure if this argument itself would be sufficient to declare Cevdet as the most similar historian to Ibn Khaldun. What is more, Cevdet was in fact not the first Ottoman historian who got influenced from Ibn Khaldun. For instance, the Ottoman bureaucrat and historian Mustafa Na'imâ (1655-1716) who directly witnessed the debacles of the Empire following the Second Siege of Vienna (1683), and the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699) that brought about the loss of huge territories, could be cited. If we were to make a comparison between Na'imâ's and Cevdet's works, Na'imâ, who adopted Ibn Khaldun's deterministic view on the idea that as the human bodies wear out in time, states do gradually get older and disappear, as well,²¹⁷ ought to be considered as a much more faithful follower of Ibn Khaldun.

Still it cannot be ignored that Ahmed Cevdet as being one of the most important Ottoman historians of his own era could have been closely attached to the ideas of Ibn Khaldun. According to Neumann, it was more or less a general trend to deal with Ibn Khaldun in the nineteenth century,²¹⁸ so it would be normal that this famous historian of the nineteenth century would also be initiated with the works of this great thinker. But as I discussed before in the chapter 'Several Concepts Effective in Cevdet Paşa's

²¹³ Uzundal, 116; <http://www.belgeler.com/blg/cf0/Ahmed-cevdet-pasa-nin-tarih-anlayisi>, (Erişim tarihi: 20. 06. 2013).

²¹⁴ Uzundal, 117.

²¹⁵ Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, 7.

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, 7.

²¹⁷ Cem Doğan, "16. Ve 17. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Siyasetnâme ve Ahlâknâmelerinde İbn Haldûnizm: Kınalızâde, Kâtip Çelebi ve Na'imâ Örnekleri", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, vol. 6, issue. 27, 197-214, 208.

²¹⁸ Neumann, 180.

Thinking', utilizing the concepts used by Ibn Khaldun cannot automatically make Cevdet a strict follower of him.

If we are to establish some parallels between Ibn Khaldun and Ahmed Cevdet, one may argue that they both try to extract lessons from what had happened in the past. This might be due to Meriç's argument that both of these men lived in a time of decline and crisis,²¹⁹ so it is not unexpected of them to try to find a panacea by looking through the historical events. Ibn Khaldun's ideas on the phases of states from being born to reach their peak and then finally come to death as an inevitable circle and Ahmed Cevdet's interpretations on this theory are most probably due to the troublesome atmosphere of their own era, so that they contemplate on an end and the ways to delay it or totally avoid it.

I already have touched upon these subjects in the chapter 'Several Concepts Effective in Cevdet Paşa's Thinking'. Yet it would be useful to mention these again while dealing with Ahmed Cevdet's historical perspective, so as to understand the ideological background –if any- he had while looking into history. For instance, it is important to know that Ahmed Cevdet was not having a deterministic viewpoint on the different phases states go through as Ibn Khaldun did so. The term *asabiya* which is said to be used by Ibn Khaldun in explaining the establishment, growth and decay of the states as a force determining the level of attachment felt among the members of each state organization, was interpreted in Ahmed Cevdet as a force uniting small groups within each state and establishing a sense of belonging to that group. So it can be interpreted that in Ahmed Cevdet, *asabiyet* can be destructive or constructive in any phase of development a state goes through. This depends on whether the feeling of *asabiyet* is organized against or in support of the central authority.

Beside the ideas on civilization and state, it is possible to observe Ibn Khaldun's influence on Ahmed Cevdet with regard to philosophy of history. According to Ibn Khaldun, the duty of history is to shed light on the past which means to analyze the works that pass from one generation to another. At this point, Cevdet also has a utilitarian historical understanding. According to him, the purpose in reading history is not only to learn the time period an event took part in the past, but to reach a lesson

²¹⁹ Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, 7.

from the events that occurred in the past by analyzing and synthesizing these by applying relevant information.²²⁰

Both Neumann and Uzundal also argue that Cevdet had a utilitarian approach in history. At the beginning of the first volume under the heading of “*ilm-i târihin lüzûm ve fâidesi beyânındadır*” (on the necessity and benefits of the science of history) Ahmed Cevdet presents his view on history by telling the reader that “*ilm* of history as one of the scientific disciplines has the duty of teaching and informing everybody –especially the statesmen- of the secret and hidden events that have happened in the past. And it is a science which is of great use and should be treated with high respect by the governing bodies.”²²¹

According to Cevdet protecting the order of states would be possible by detecting and preserving the old methods through making use of history, and by utilizing from these methods when needed according to the necessities of the day.²²²

As to his historiography Neumann lists three principles embraced by Cevdet. Firstly, history writing should be distinguished from the “science of composition” (*fenn-i inşâ*). Secondly events that happen on a daily basis (*günlük*) or once in a year should have no place in history. These do not contain beneficial information and do not help explaining the reasons of historical events. Thirdly, while describing an event the author should strive for being neutral which means not siding with a person or a party.²²³ According to Meriç, Cevdet was carefully observing the chain of events in order to grasp the gist of them. He was strictly following the principle of objectivity, weighing each judgment, deliberating on each testimony, looking into what was happening more than what was said about.²²⁴ Yet Neuman indicates that Cevdet was occasionally not remaining loyal to his principles.²²⁵ For instance, what Cevdet calls as being objective cannot be the same with what we call as objective history-writing at present time. Neumann remarks that in his works Cevdet does not bother to hide his side while explaining an event. He openly criticizes what he dislikes. So while criticizing the

²²⁰ Uzundal, “19. Yüzyıl Tarih Yazıcılığı ve Ahmed Cevdet Paşa,” 115; Kemal Sözen, “Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’nın Tarihçiliğimize Getirdiği Yeniliklerin Felsefi Tahlili” Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi, (2002), vol. 9, 11-20, 12.

²²¹ Uzundal, 115; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 15: “İlm-i târih efrâd-ı nâssı vakayi’ ü meâsîr-i mâziyyeye ve vükelâ ü havâssı hafâya ve serâir-i mukteziyyeye muttali’ edip nef’-i âmme-i âleme âid ve râci’ olduğundan makkûl ü mergûb bir fenn-i kesirü’ l-menâfi’dir.”

²²² Uzundal, 115-116; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 17: “hıfz-ı nizâmât-ı düveliye ilm-i târih ile olur”

²²³ Uzundal, 119-120; Neumann, 153-167.

²²⁴ Meriç, 16.

²²⁵ Uzundal, 120; Neumann, 153-167.

historians or chroniclers for not being neutral he was not opposing them when they took sides. He criticized them mainly because they did not defend their viewpoint till the end, but adapted it to different political situations they went through. So according to Neumann, Ahmed Cevdet was essentially against partisanship and opportunism while writing history.²²⁶

Among the sources Ahmed Cevdet got utilized for the writing of the *Târih-i Cevdet*, Neumann indicates that *Âsım Târihi*, written by Mütercim Ahmet Âsım Efendi (1755-1820), which consists of two volumes and covers the years between 1797-1808, was, among others, the most frequently used source. Again Neumann states that Cevdet was not applying a systematic methodology of critical evaluation for choosing the sources, but instead was adapting the relevant information and descriptions he had chosen from different chronicles into his own style.²²⁷ So Cevdet's convictions were almost independent from the sources he made use of. The excerpts he had taken from other sources were selected in a way to make him have an easy win.²²⁸ Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar considers Cevdet's historiography nothing more than a careful summary and analysis of different sources he worked on. Although we had already discussed on several differences in Cevdet's and Ibn Khaldun's perception of different historical terms, Tanpınar argues that Cevdet's historical analyses cannot surpass or differ from the ideas of Ibn Khaldun.²²⁹

Although Neumann presents *Âsım Târihi* as the primary source Cevdet used in his *Târih-i Cevdet*, the Ottomanist Mücteba İlgürel states that Ahmed Cevdet mostly utilized the chronicler Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi (ca. 1730-1806)'s *Mehâsin'ül-âsâr ve Hakâikü'l-ahbâr* ("The Charms and Truths of Relics and Annals"), which includes the time span between 1783 and 1805. As İlgürel underlines, Cevdet expresses in more than two hundred different parts in his work that he took recourse to this source.²³⁰

When it comes to topics related to Western history, we have no reliable information concerning the sources he utilized in learning the European history. As discussed above it has been claimed that among the European sources Ahmed Cevdet mostly got influenced including names like Michelet, Taine, Hammer, Buckle,

²²⁶ Neumann, 59.

²²⁷ Neumann, 108; Uzundal, 117.

²²⁸ Neumann, 164-165.

²²⁹ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 172.

²³⁰ Mücteba İlgürel, "Cevdet Paşa Tarihi'nin Kaynaklarından Vasıf Tarihi" *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri*, (İstanbul, Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986), 115-127, 115-116.

Macaulay, and Montesquieu. There were names such as Ali Şahbaz Efendi and Hoca Sahak, as above mentioned, who enabled Ahmed Cevdet to have access to certain Western sources. Ali Şahbaz Efendi, according to Arıkan, was continuously working on the Western sources and preparing regular notes for Ahmed Cevdet. Hoca Sahak Abro and the translations made by the *Encümen-i Dâniş* constituted additional means to get access to foreign sources. All these demonstrate that he was, albeit in an indirect way, continuously in connection with Western sources. We should remember that it was Cevdet himself who was arguing that it is a must to resort to the European works.²³¹ However, in places where he referred to the ideas of certain European intellectuals he did not cite their names, and only used expressions such as “several European historians say so...”.²³² Therefore, although it is possible to assert that he was familiarized with the works of several European intellectuals, still it is not certain which one of them he precisely worked on.

Looking into Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’s general historical perspective, we see that at the beginning of his *Târih-i Cevdet*, Cevdet emphasizes his utilitarian stance vis-à-vis history by underlining that both the society and especially the statesmen ought to make use of history in order to witness the experiences of various people and various societies throughout the centuries and extract lessons from these.²³³ However, while trying to teach lessons in his writings, as Neumann asserts, Cevdet was not pursuing absolute neutrality.²³⁴ He has chosen the historical events he wrote on in a way to give the reader the messages that are indicative of the threats directed to the existence of the Empire and of the ways that would be better in ensuring the welfare of her. There was a path of development in his mind which he thought it might secure the Empire from decline. This path is basically the path of organic change, which means change without altering the essence of the system at once and altogether. In order to support this argument Cevdet has chosen examples from the Western countries in a way to demonstrate how gradual changes help the formation of orderly communities, i.e. England, while countries that go to extremes or that cannot manage to introduce the necessary changes

²³¹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 13

²³² Arıkan, “Cevdet Paşa’nın Tarihinde Kullandığı Yabancı Kaynaklar ve Terimler,” 182; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 65,70; cilt II, 120-121, 207, 246, 280; cilt III, 12, 91, 238; cilt IV, 19, 32; cilt VI, 185: “Lâkin bazı Avrupa müverrihleri derler ki”, “bazı ecnebî târihlerinde mastûr olduğuna göre”, “bu bâbda Avrupa târihlerinin yazdığı”, “bazı ecnebî târihlerinde musarrahtır”, “Avrupa müverrihlerinden bazıları”

²³³ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 15-17.

²³⁴ Neumann, 153-167.

to their communities, i.e. France, are destined to collapse. The way he used these arguments will be further elaborated below.

3.1. Lessons on Change in the *Târih-i Cevdet*

The *Târih-i Cevdet* –a twelve volume history of the Ottoman Empire which covers the years between the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) and the abolition of the Janissaries in 1826 - is stated to be the most important historical work of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa.²³⁵ Although this is a book written on the Ottoman history, as mentioned above Cevdet makes a comparative study by including several parts of the European history beside the Ottoman history. This is not only a history book in the conventional sense, but incorporates political analyses of different historical events.²³⁶ A series of bitter shocks experienced by the Ottomans after realizing the superiority of Europe in military technologies had made it impossible to think of invoking what was thought to be the “purest” Ottoman practices.²³⁷ Holding on to the previous methods or preserving the old practices would be of no use in meeting the necessities of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Ottoman Empire facing the onslaught of European technologies and institutions.

This was in a way a confrontation between different systems of knowledge that shaped the institutional and social bases of societies. In the course of the Early Modern Era, societies in the Western Europe underwent processes where pre-modern systems of knowledge were gradually transformed into a new ration-based knowledge. This development brought about a positivist way of thinking which reinforced the emergence of modern social and political institutions in these countries. When we turn to the Ottoman Empire, the main sources of knowledge that were embedded in the Ottoman institutional and social practices for centuries had basically been the *Şerîat*, *örf* and traditions.²³⁸ Now that we are speaking of the impossibility of a turning back to the old practices of the Ottoman classical age, a restructuring of the former system of knowledge that supported the former Ottoman polity and society became a necessity.

²³⁵ Halaçoğlu, Aydın, “Mecelle,” 448.

²³⁶ Ortaylı, “Cevdet Paşa ve Avrupa Tarihi,” 163-164.

²³⁷ Marin, Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, 135.

²³⁸ Timur, *Osmanlı Kimliği*, 13.

During the first years of Selim III's sultanate in 1792, when the prominent commanders, statesmen and the *ulemâ* were ordered to present their views on the reformation of the Ottoman Empire, in the end basically three different viewpoints were presented. The first one was suggesting turning back to the classical Ottoman institutions, the second was supporting to make partial reforms without going through radical changes in the present institutions, and the third was to go through a radical reconstruction.²³⁹ Cevdet favours neither the direct adoption of the European system of knowledge nor the strict preservation of the former Ottoman system of knowledge. In this work he appears to be willing to make modifications at the former Ottoman system of knowledge by means of inquiring the history of the Empire and of the European countries. This might be what Cevdet meant when he stated that the real purpose of history is to take lessons from the past.²⁴⁰

Before analyzing this major historical work it is important to understand the motivation behind the production of the book, because it would help our analysis a lot to know whether it was edited with Cevdet's own initiative or as a consequence of a state order. In fact, this work was not written by Cevdet's own initiative, but rather commissioned by the *Encümen-i Dâniş*. The *Encümen-i Dâniş* was one of the projects of the Temporary Council of Education (*Meclis-i Maârif-i Muvakkat*), which was an organization trying to materialize the education reforms and was responsible to make suggestions as to the establishment of a modern education system.²⁴¹ Another project of this council was to found a university (*Dârülfünûn*). The *Encümen-i Dâniş* was mainly supposed to produce the books that would be used during the lectures at the *Dârülfünûn*, the future university.²⁴² The *Târih-i Cevdet*, all of the volumes altogether having been prepared in thirty years' time, turned to be one of the very few products of this scientific organization.²⁴³ A striking feature of the *Târih-i Cevdet* is its rather clear linguistic form and the relative simplicity of Turkish which aimed at avoiding the complicated literary writing style of Ottoman Turkish. The goal was to make this work readable and easily

²³⁹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt VI, 4-52.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, cilt I, 15-17.

²⁴¹ Teyfur Erdoğan, "Maârif-i Umumiye Nezareti Teşkilâtı", *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, (1996), cilt 51, sayı 1, 193.

²⁴² Neumann, p 14; Baysun, "Cevdet Paşa, Şahsiyeti...", 227.

²⁴³ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 6, 13.

understandable for any literate person in the Empire.²⁴⁴ Yet, it cannot be said that Ahmed Cevdet fully succeeded in simplifying the language throughout the book.²⁴⁵

It should also be taken into consideration that the book was written in a sense by the indirect support of the sultan, as it was Abdülmecid who issued the 1845 *fermân* on education reforms.²⁴⁶ So it would not be too farfetched to claim that the *Târih-i Cevdet* was to be in line with the sultan's agenda. Other than informing the reader on past events, the official history writings also have the duty to impress the reader by presenting depictions on the deeds of the Ottoman sultans. In the case of this work, would it be possible to claim that the audience who was supposed to be impressed were all the subjects of the sultan, as the book had the duty to reach all the population? If the answer would be affirmative, what could have been the implications of the *Târih-i Cevdet* as a book that was compiled at a time during which Europe had established its economic and political hegemony over most parts of the world whereas the Ottoman Empire was suffering increasingly greater losses in warfare and politics? Then the main theme of this officially-sanctioned book possibly could not focus on boasting how great the Ottoman system was doing at the time.

Just in the contrary, the main theme of the *Târih-i Cevdet* seems to concentrate on how to take lessons from the failures and successes of several different states that had existed in history, in other words to foster an understanding of reform among the audience. As Neumann also indicates, Ahmed Cevdet displays a utilitarian approach toward history.²⁴⁷ In analyzing the reasons for the shortcomings of the Empire he does not merely look into the Ottoman Empire and its own experiences, but also analyzes what difficulties different states went through and how they managed to come over these difficulties by establishing links between different events that happened in the West, i.e. the French Revolution, and the Ottoman Empire.²⁴⁸ Rather than eulogizing the doings of the sultan or what is called by Mardin as an attempt to turn back to the "purest" traditions and practices,²⁴⁹ throughout the *Târih-i Cevdet*, Cevdet mainly stresses the necessity of the reforms to take place in any community.

²⁴⁴ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40, 72.

²⁴⁵ Yusuf Halaçoğlu, "Ma'rûzât'a Dâir", *Ma'rûzât*, (İstanbul, Çağrı Yayınları, 1980), XII.

²⁴⁶ Teyfur Erdoğan, "Maârif-i Umumiye Nezareti Teşkilâtı", *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, (1996), cilt 51, sayı 1, 193.

²⁴⁷ Neumann, 208-215.

²⁴⁸ Ortaylı, "Cevdet Paşa ve Avrupa Tarihi," 163-164.

²⁴⁹ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 135.

While discussing the necessity of history, Ahmed Cevdet presents an argument which is reminiscent of Hobbes' social contract theory. Stating that human beings are wicked and greedy, Ahmed Cevdet says that there are times when the interests of two or more people do not converge. In those times if they were to be left alone and unrestricted by the law they would hurt each other without mercy. Other than personal conflicts, it is natural that societies living side by side frequently quarrel with each other, as well. In order to prevent these incidents and further atrocities, everyone should surrender their public and private rights to the government. It is only by the help of governance, and through the authority and assistance of the governments that communities get a chance to develop themselves together with humane values. When a community with a certain degree of social justice is fully established, the level of well-being would continuously increase and society would gradually become civilized. Yet, in a society with a high level of well-being, simplicity in daily life and political systems will no more be possible, and necessities will grow up, which will enhance personal interests and personal enmities. These will cause difficulties in the governance of a state. Regaining the order in such an environment would depend on the attention, care and talents of the administrators. However, the only way to be skilled in politics is to have enough experience in the political field, yet even a hundred years' of experience would not be enough in understanding all the complications of politics. This is why according to Ahmed Cevdet the politicians should take lessons from the science (*ilm*) of history whenever needed.²⁵⁰

After explaining the necessity of the *ilm* of history, Ahmed Cevdet goes on to give brief information on several types of governments that have existed in Europe and

²⁵⁰*Tarih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 16: "Şöyle ki def'-i mazarrat ve celb-i menfa'at dâiyesi insanda bir emr-i cibillî olup bazen bir maksadda bir nice kimselerin emel ve arzuları müttehid ve mezâhim oldukça başlı başlarına kalsalar yekdiğere gadretmek istediğinden ve bazen dahi bir maslahat-ı 'umûmiyede bir cem'iyet ile diğer cem'iyetin beyninde bittabi' münâza'at ve muhârebât vâki' olageldiğinden herkes hukûk-ı zâtiye ve 'umûmiyesini cânib-i hükûmete tevdi' ile onun hükm ü himmetine râzı olarak levâzım-ı kemâlat-ı insâniye tahsiline meydân-ı ferâgat bulurlar. Ve ol millet sınıf sınıf ayrılıp kimisi zirâat ve ticâret ve kimisi umûr-ı mülkiye ve askeriyede hizmet eder. Ve 'ulûm ve sanâyi' kuvvetiyle yüz kişinin havâyic-i zarûriyesini on kişi hâsıl etmeye ve müddet-i medîde zarfında hâsıl olabilecek mevâdd az vakt zarfında husûle gelmeye başlayıp ol milletin evkâtı havâyic-i zarûriye tahsîlinden fazla kalarak ve işbu fazla vakitler dahi hasâ'is-i kemâliye-yi insâniye tekmiline masrûf olarak levâzım-ı hazariyet ve medeniyet günden güne bu nisbet üzere müterakkî olup gider. Ancak ol millette artık sâdelik ve sebûkbârlık kalmayıp tecemmülât ve tekellüfât artarak ihtiyâcât çoğalır. Ve ona göre menâfi'-i zâtiye ve agrâz-ı şahsiye dahi tezyüd ü terakki bulur. Ve gittikçe ol milletin idâresine su'ûbet gelecek hüsn-ü idârenin husûl bulmasıyla devletin ilerilemesi ve milletin sa'âdet-i hâl kesb idebilmesi mahâret ve vukûf-ı eshâbenin sarf-ı ihtimâm ü dikkatine mevkuûf olur. Böyle umûr-ı siyâsiyyede mahâret ise ancak tecrübe ile hâsıl olabiliş her sûreti tecrübeye dahi bir adamın ömrü vâfi ve bir asrın tecrübesi kâfi olmadığından ve 'ârif olanlar (Essaid-ü men ittaaba bi gayrihi) Hadis-i Şerîfi mü'eddâsınca her şeyi nefsinde tecrübeye kalkışmayarak sâ'irinden 'ibret ü nasîhat alageldiklerinden vükelâ ve havâss 'ilm-i târihden sâ'ir eşhâs gibi ahvâl-i zâtiyelerince müntefi' olduklarından başka masâlih-i düveliyece dahi müstefid ve mütemetti' olurlar."

in the Ottoman Empire. At the beginning he states that the chaos of life consists of every day novelties. And the nature of these novelties is inherent in all essential (*a'yân*) and non-essential (*a'râz*) events.²⁵¹ So each state and form of government is to face difficulties, and their well being is to be jeopardized while moving through different phases of a state in different periods of time. The medicine to treat the illnesses of a state should be sought within the respective era and within the developments unique to that era.²⁵² Then Cevdet goes on to give examples from Europe and argues that although the hegemony of Christian states in politics is mainly due to the scientifically prepared laws, their governments had been divided into two parts. One of these parts consist of religious authority (*hükümet-i rûhâniye*) such as the government of the Pope in Catholicism, while the other is the worldly (“material”, *cismânî*) government. In the past, the ordinances of these ‘religious governments’ had been very much influential in Europe for a long time, and the kings went through great sufferings due to the dominance of the popes in politics. However, gradually worldly governments sought ways to eradicate the importance of religious authorities, and this development enhanced the powers of the worldly regimes.²⁵³

The worldly types of governments are listed as absolute governments, monarchies and republics. After very briefly analyzing their features Ahmed Cevdet goes on to analyze what he thought to be the adverse sides of the French revolution of 1848 which may give us some hints as to which type of governments he is inclined to give his support to. After the revolution of 1848, a republican government had been established; however, there was a conflict within the population. While some of them were in favor of the absolute government some others have sided with the customary republican regime (*âdi cumhuriyet*) that was by the time organized. Yet there were still some others who, according to Ahmed Cevdet, have not been content with a customary republican regime, thus went astray, and wholly crossed the borders which were observed by the law. They denied the property rights and the laws on matrimony and demanded equality in all matters. Ahmed Cevdet says that many a vile men considered

²⁵¹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 17: “Bu ‘âlem-i dünyâyâ nazar olunsa teceddüdât-ı yevmiyeden ‘ibâret bir hengâme-yi ‘ibret olduđu rû-nümâ olur ve bu ma’nâ-yı teceddüd cemî’ a’yân ve a’râzda bulunur.”

²⁵² *Ibid*, cilt I, 18: “Velhâsıl hangi devlet olur ise olsun bir tavrıdan tavr-ı âhire nakl idegeldiği cihetle her devirde bir tavr-ı mahsûsda bulunur. Ve her devirde bir türlü davranmak ve her devrin mizâcına göre çâre ve ‘ilâc aranmak lâzım gelir.”

²⁵³ *Ibid*, cilt I, 27-28.

these thoughts agreeable to their frame of minds and had an attempt to colour the French republic to such a colour.²⁵⁴

During the revolution of 1848, Ahmed Cevdet says that the Austrian population also got caught up by this will for liberation, and by shedding great amount of blood they strove for turning their government into a constitutional monarchy. Eventually the emperor defeated them and the revolutionaries had to give in to the absolute government. Cevdet says that any sort of wickedness should be expected from every one of these revolutionaries. According to Ahmed Cevdet these so called transgressing fractions of the republican thought are the idle and void ones (*fikr-i bâtil*) that are totally devoid of logic and have no relation whatsoever with the natural laws (*nevâmis-i tabî'îye*).²⁵⁵

Cevdet apparently was thinking that while the European states previously used to struggle with the interference and dominance of the religious governments in state affairs, after solving this problem of having two heads in governance, they faced another problem which is the emergence of the ideas such as liberty and equality in the revolutionary sense.²⁵⁶ In other words, sovereignty should no more be in the hands of a monarch, but should belong to the population as a whole. This way of thinking would in the short run cause rebellions, in the long run the creation of small nation states, and eventually would bring about the disintegration in most of the European countries.

It seems apparent that Cevdet was not content with such political developments happening in the West. When it comes to speaking of the governance in the Ottoman Empire, he states that in the Islamic governments, caliphate (“*hilâfet*” or religious government) and *saltanat* (material government) are incorporated within the person of the sovereign (*Pâdişâh*) of Islam. Although towards the ends of the Abbasids, caliphate and sultanate got separated from each other as a result of the great revolutions that had

²⁵⁴ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 20: “Bin iki yüz altmış beş senesi hilâlinde vukû’ bulan Fransa ihtilâlinde yine cümhûr olup Louis Napoléon’u dört senelik olmak üzere re’îs-i cümhûr nasb ettiler. Lâkin ahâlî beyninde ittifâk olmayıp kimisi krallık taraftârı ve kimisi teşkil olunmuş olan ‘âdî cümhûriyet taraftârı oldular. Birtakımı dahi böyle ‘âdî cümhûriyete kanâ’at etmeyip azıttılar. Ve bütün bütün hadd-i ma’rûfun öte tarafına gittiler. Şöyle ki hukûk-ı mülkiyet ve zevciyeti inkâr edip ve herkes kâffe-yi husûsatda müsâvât üzere olmalıdır deyip bir çok edânî dahi bunu mizâclarına muvâfık görmeleriyle Fransa cümhûriyetini bu renge boyamaya teşebbüs ettiler.”

²⁵⁵ *Ibid*, cilt I, 20: “... Fransa ihtilâli arasında Nemçe halkı dahi serbestlik sevdâsına düşerek ve pek çok kanlar dökerek hükümetlerini hükümet-i meşrûtaya kalb etmek istediler ise de hükümet-i imperatoriye gâlib gelerek yine hükümet-i mutlaka tahtında kaldılar. Bunların her birinde birer güne fenâlık melhûz ve meşhûd olup hele cümhûriyyetin zikir olunan fırka-yı mütecâvizisi bütün bütün ‘akldan ve nevâmis-i tabî’iyeden ba’id bir fikr-i bâtildir.”

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, cilt I, 27-29.

happened in the Islamic lands, and although caliphate and sultanate got separated from each other to the level of forming a religious presidency (*riyâset-i dîniye*) beside the material presidency (*riyâset-i mâddi*), after the appearance of the Ottomans, the Islamic community (“*millet*” or nation) had been fit into its original condition once again through reforms and renovations (*teceddüd*). The Ottoman governance has not been two headed as previously used to be the case in Abbasid realm. And Ahmed Cevdet is very much thankful to the God that there have not been violent revolutions enhancing fragmentation in the Ottoman Empire.²⁵⁷ Ahmed Cevdet speaks of the separation of the religious authority from the worldly governance as a sign of political fragmentation that creates a two headed political system. However, considering that the Ottomans reformed and renovated (*teceddüd ederek*) this chaotic situation by merging religious and political authorities in the person of the sultan, Ahmed Cevdet displays a conservative attitude by clearly being against secularization. This also indicates how differently the words “reform” and “renovation”, which are generally associated with the modern ways of state formation in the present-time, were being used in the writings of a nineteenth century Ottoman intellectual.

Trying to extract lessons from the histories of the Western countries, Cevdet argues that the devastation of France within a series of wars with other European states such as Spain and England during the reign of Louis XIV, and the erroneous policies of the aforementioned king’s grandson Louis XV, had paved ways for the French Revolution. During the wars, more than one million people died, and whole the country got affected by famines and drought. Taxes and other liabilities had reached an unbearable state, so that people who could no more make any profit out of their vineyards started destroying them with their very own hands. When their animals had begun to be confiscated in return for the unpaid taxes, some people even started exterminating their own animals. In such ways the agrarian system was thoroughly

²⁵⁷ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 20: “... hükûmet-i islâmiye hilâfet ve saltanatı câmi’ olub İmâmülmüslimîn olan pâdişâh-ı islâm hâmi-yi şerî’at muhyî-yi saltanat olmağla lillâhilhamd bu güne teferruk ve teşettütten beridir. Ve eğerçi... devlet-i Abbâsiyye’nin evâhirinde memâlik-i islâmiyede zuhûra gelen ihtilâlât-ı ‘azîme hasebiyle hilâfet ve saltanat ayrılarak hilâfet bir riyâset-i dîniye ve saltanat riyâset-i mâddî derecesine vardı ise de mu’ahharan Devlet-i âliye-yi Osmâniye’nin zuhûruyla millet-i islâmiye teceddüd ederek yine hâlet-i asliyesini buldu.”

destroyed, which was to endure as crumbled apart as it was until the great revolution of France.²⁵⁸

Ahmed Cevdet further states that, Louis XIV insisted on the absolutist rule (*hükümet-i mutlaka*) of the king. He used to conduct policies according to his own will and did not appreciate any sign of free or independent action (*serbestlik*). The people in turn acted in harmony with his character and chose the path of hypocrisy. Ahmed Cevdet claims that experiences of different countries demonstrate that the domination of hypocrisy in a society brings forth vices and irreligion. This is why after Louis XIV's death, the French system further deteriorated. Apart from spoiling the moral qualities of the French society, Louis XIV wasted great amounts of money in pleasures and amusements and spend ample money on prostitutes. Apart from these, the three billion Frank debts Louis XIV had left to the country had pulled the country deep down toward the way for the French Revolution.²⁵⁹

Ahmed Cevdet mentions Louis XVI as a man of good intentions, as a man who displayed a very strict religious perspective, which Ahmed Cevdet considers not fitting to his era. This king neither had the necessary courage nor a remarkable acumen to overcome the difficulties of his own age. The prestige of impious people had declined during the reign of Louis XVI, and by choosing his deputies among the people of good moral values he strove for establishing an order by fixing the wrong-doings of his predecessors. As such, his rule at the beginning seemed to be worth being praised. However, his entourage and camarilla were not fond of virtuous men and were trying to hinder all necessary attempts that intended to further the development of the country. Louis himself was also acting hesitant in carrying out the necessary reforms (*ıslâhât-ı lâzıme*).

²⁵⁸ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 227: "... Fransa'nın muhârebe münâsebetiyle bir milyondan ziyâde nüfusu telef olmuş ve her yerinde kaht ü gala zuhûra gelmiş olup vergi ve tekâlif-i sâ'ire ise ifrât derecesine vardığından ahâlden bazıları bağlarının hâsılâtından fâ'ide görmez oldukları cihetle kendi elleriyle bağlarını tahrib ettikleri gibi bazıların vergiye mukâbil ellerinden hayvânları alındığından bir takım dahi kendi elleriyle hayvânlarını öldürürler idi. Bu cihetle zirâ'ate külli hâlel târi olmuştu. Fransa'nın hâli hemân büyük ihtilâli zamânına kadar bu minvâl üzere gitmiştir."

²⁵⁹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 228: "Lüi Katorz tam bir hükümet-i mutlaka ve efkâr-ı hod-serâneye mâ'il olarak bir şeyde serbestliği sevmeyip, halk dahi onun mizâcına tevfiğ-i hareket üzere bir riyâkârlık yoluna dökülmüşler idi. Riyâkârlığın sonu ise bed huyluğa ve dinsizliğe müncerr olmak mücerrebâtdan olmasıyla onun vefâtından sonra artık kimse bir şeyden ihtirâz etmeyerek bir fenâ yola gidilmeğe başlamıştır. Bu cihetle Lüi Fransa ahâlisinin ifsâd-ı ahlâkına sebep olduğu gibi zevk ü sefâyâ ve bir takım fâhişelere pek çok akçeler harc ettikten başka açtığı muhârebelerde dahi bunca hazîneler telef olduğundan vefâtında Fransa üzerinde üç milyar ya'ni otuz bin kere yüz bin franklık borc bıraktığından denilebilir ki Fransa büyük ihtilâlinin esbâbı onun zamânında hâzırlanmıştı."

The man Ahmed Cevdet transliterates as ‘Morpa’ (Minister of State Comte de Maurepas) as the head of the council of ministers is considered to be an old and unreasonable man by Ahmed Cevdet. While seeing the deteriorations in the system, he was not able to perceive that it was imperative to take steps further and was expecting the obstacles would disappear in time. Whenever Louis asked him for the execution of the new and modern reforms (*islâhât-ı cedîde*) he preferred to resign from his post, and insisted to return to the old order.²⁶⁰

Ahmed Cevdet is of the opinion that there were not many people in the society who were for the revolution apart from a group of villainous individuals. Had Louis XVI been arduously and with more courage negated the privileges of the nobility and the priests, he could have fixed the problems of France. Yet as Louis had not been resolute enough in his policies he could not make reforms, argues our author.²⁶¹ As exemplified in the French case, Ahmed Cevdet thinks that reforms are certainly necessary for maintaining the absolute authority of the sultan. Reform movements are to be promoted as this is the only way to keep the authority of the sultan secure. Louis XVI could not achieve this at the time of the French Revolution, and Ahmed Cevdet seems to think that the Ottoman Empire should take a lesson from the decline of the monarchy in France. The best way to make these reforms is –as stated above-²⁶² to establish continuities with the former laws and the previous conditions of the state, and by this way to go through a gradual change. Ahmed Cevdet’s appreciation of the British system was partly due to the fact that the freedom of thought did not develop in France gradually as it has been the case in Britain.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 238-239: “Lüi niyeti güzel bir zât olup ancak ol ‘asra muvâfik olmayacak derece ta’assuba mâ’îl ve dirâyet ve cesâreti ‘asrın hall-i müşkilâtına kâfil ve kâfi değil idi. Binâen-‘ala-zâlik ceddinin zamânında çoğalmış olan dinsiz kimselerin nüfûzu tenezzül ettiği gibi bir vakitten beri her din ü mezhep ve de’b-i âdâb u hüsn ü ahlâkım hâricinde olarak yapıлып meydâna çıkmış olan te’lifât dahi i’tibârdan düşüp... vükelâsını ekseriyâ ehl-i ‘ırz takımından intihâb ederek güzel nizâmlar vaz’ ü te’sîs... ile... Fransa’ya ‘âرز olan fenâ hallerin islâhına... sa’y etmiş olduğundan mebd’-i hükûmeti memdûh idiyse de mukarribin ve kurenâsı nezdinde öyle ehl-i ‘ırz adamlar makbûl olmadığından her gûne tedâbir-i haseneye karşı muhâlefetler peydâ olurdu. Lüi dahi islâhat-ı lâzîmenin icrâsında tereddüd eder... idi. Ve re’îs’ül-vükelâ nasb ettiği Morpa ihtiyâr ve sebükmağz bir adam olmakla Fransa’nın sû-i ahvâlini görüp durur iken teşebbûsât-ı cedîdenin lüzûmunu derk-ü iz’ân edemediğinden cism-i devletin istirahatıyla bu misilli ‘avâızın bittabi’ mündefi’ olacağı ümidinde olarak Lüi ba’zı islâhât-ı cedîdenin icrâsını dermiyan ettikikçe me’mûriyetinden isti’fâ eyler ve ileri gitmek şöyle dursun eski hâl ü hey’ete rücu’ a çalışır.”

²⁶¹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt VI, 162: “Ma’ mâfih ba’zı erâzil-i nassdan başka kimesne ihtilâl efkârında olmadığından Fransa kralı gayyûr ve cesûr bir zât olup da hemen asilzâdeğân ile papas guruhunun imtiyâzât ve mu’âfiyâtını ilğâ etmiş ve hüsn-ü idâre ve tasarruf yolunu tutmuş olsaydı Fransa’nın ahvâlini sektesizce islâh edebilirdi, lâkin Lui icrâ’âta gevşek davrandığından islâhâta dâ’ir bir şey yapamadı.”

²⁶² *Ibid*, cilt I, 84.

²⁶³ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt VI, 173.

Turning to the Ottoman Empire from the line of events in France, during the reign of Ahmed III, Cevdet harshly criticizes Grand Vizier İbrahim Paşa concerning the superficiality of the reform attempts displayed by Sadrazam İbrahim Paşa. When the Ottoman Empire lost *Temeşvar* (present-day Timișiora in Romania) to Austria, Ahmed Cevdet displays understanding to İbrahim Paşa's idea on making peace with Austria, since the Grand Vizier's aim was putting into order the undisciplined soldiers of the Ottoman army before engaging in war once again. Yet the soldiers and the *ulemâdîd* not agree with this decision and they waged war on Austria which came to an end with yet another loss: the loss of Belgrade. It was only after losing Belgrade that Ottomans agreed making a peace treaty with Austria. At this point Ahmed Cevdet criticizes İbrahim Paşa's overemphasis on making peace which in fact emboldened the enemy to a degree as it became hardly convinced to sign a treaty even being rather nefarious for Ottoman interests.²⁶⁴

Ahmed Cevdet states although İbrahim Paşa acted thoughtlessly in this incident what had happened cannot be counted as a great crime. If he were to be sincere in his offer to make regulations in the army and in establishing peace, all his faults could have been forgiven.²⁶⁵

Şerif Mardin comments on the reformist attitude of İbrahim Paşa in a favourable way. According to him, "İbrahim Paşa had a hand in carrying out the first military reforms of the Ottoman Empire which is not generally known. Yet it was during his grand vizierate that one of the first-known documents elaborating the reason for Western superiority, couched in the form of a dialogue between a foreign officer and a Turk, was presented to the sultan. It was during his vizierate too that the first proposals to modify Ottoman military practice in accordance with Western European methods of training and warfare were made by the French Huguenot Comte de Rochefort. The adoption of this plan was seriously considered by İbrahim Paşa."²⁶⁶ What is more, Niyazi Berkes argues that what hindered the project was not the "*taassub*" (fanaticism) of the *Şerîator* unwillingness on the part of İbrahim Paşa, but basically the Catholic fanaticism against the Huguenots and the French commercial interests that were against

²⁶⁴ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 61-62.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*, cilt I, 62: "Her ne hâl ise iş bu mertebeye varıp da mağlûbâne sulh olunacak olduğu halde mu'âhedece elbette ba'zı mertebe-yi ziyân görüleceği mukarrer olub İbrâhîm Paşa'nın bunda cüz'î bir hiffeti olsa bile pek büyük kabâhat olmayıp şimdilik sulh olunsun da 'askere nizâm verilsin diye bir seneden berü vird-i zebân etmiş olduğu kavli samîmî olsa ve 'amelîne mütâbık gelse idi cümle kusûru 'afv olunurdu."

²⁶⁶ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 136-137.

the plans discussed between İbrahim Paşa and Rochefort. It was due to the Ottoman translators that no meeting between the Ottoman Empire and the European states was remaining confidential. The European ambassadors were hindering the projects which they deemed to be against their economic and political interests by means of bribery.²⁶⁷

Looking at Cevdet, his opinion on İbrahim Paşa does not seem to be very high. He asserts that although İbrahim Paşa had acted as Grand Vizier in a sovereign manner for more than twelve years, he disrupted the former order and methods of the state, let alone restructuring the army. According to Ahmed Cevdet, İbrahim Paşa was not thinking of anything but prodigality and extravagance; the mentioning of words like soldiery or warfare was making him as irritated as being personally offended. As a result he became indulged in the trivialities and formalities of development and civilization without ever investing efforts to the essentials (*emr-i ehemmi*) of them; he hasn't given a thought to build a civil administration and a military order which would have protected and supported the essentials of development and civilization.²⁶⁸

Ahmed Cevdet says that those were the times when the ideas on moving towards the ways of a new civilization (*bir yeni medeniyet*) and organizing trained soldiers were being discussed in the Ottoman Empire. However, Ahmed Cevdet thinks that the reform attempts during this Grand Vizierate of İbrahim Paşa were undertaken with a faulty approach of implementing reforms without establishing a firm foundation for them. He argues that without making sure if the building is placed on a solid basis the İbrahim Paşa administration preferred to decorate the roof of the building. Rather than applying the sciences and industries of Europe to the Ottoman Empire, they were distracted by the sweepings brought by the river of civilization such as prodigality and extravagance. This situation prevented the public from accepting the reforms. At the time of İbrahim Paşa, people of İstanbul were very determined (*mutasallib*) and fanatical (*muta'assıp*) about their religious views, so they started hating such conducts of the high ranking officials which made them scared of all sorts of modern things (*muhdesât*). They even

²⁶⁷ Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*, 49.

²⁶⁸ *Tarih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 62: "Hâlbuki on iki seneden mütecâviz istiklâl-i tâmm ile makâm-ı sadârette bulunup 'askere nizâm vermek şöyle dursun devletin eski usûl ü nizâmını bile muhtell etti. Ve isrâf ü sefâhatden başka bir şey düşünmeyip hele 'asker ve muhârebe sözü 'inde kelime-yi küfr gibi 'add olunurdu. Velhâsıl 'imâr ve medeniyetin teferru'ât ve zihâfâtından olan tekellüfâta düşüp bu emr-i ehemmi muhafaza eyleyecek nizâmât-ı 'askeriyeyi ve onu besleyecek idâre-yi mülkiyeyi düşünmedi."

started considering the buildings which were made according to the new and modern style (*tarz-ı cedîd üzere*) as detestable and abominable.²⁶⁹

Here one noteworthy point is that, previously it was shown that Ahmed Cevdet is very critical of the separation of the religious authorities and material governance from each other as had been the case in the Islamic lands right after the Abbasid period. He indicates that the Ottomans had restored the order in the Islamic lands by bringing the two headedness in politics into an end and by merging the religious and material authorities in the person of the sultan through reforms and renovations (*teceddüd*).²⁷⁰ It is noticeable that in this usage the word “*teceddüd*” as an Islamic word denotes a support neither for the European ways of development nor for secularization. However, when we come to the seventeenth century, while being critical of the methods pursued by İbrahim Paşa in the implementation of several reform projects, Ahmed Cevdet speaks very affirmative of the modern order and uses the word “*cedîd*” i.e. new and modern, as a word referring to the the new methods and styles that were established in the West and accepted as the representative of the new civilization from the seventeenth century onwards. The variation in the usage of the words “*teceddüd*” and “*cedîd*”, as the words sharing the same root, can be considered demonstrative of the duality in Ahmed Cevdet’s thinking which was affected both by the traditional and the modern currents of thought.

Ahmed Cevdet’s comments on İbrahim Paşa reflect that although our historian has a notion of a universal civilization, when he writes on the period after the seventeenth century, ‘civilization’ as a word is generally ascribed to the West. Neumann asserts that Cevdet merges the concept of civilization of Ibn Khaldun with the idea of a “European civilization”.²⁷¹ While the European civilization was expected to run counter to Islam or to the Ottoman civilization, the idea that Ottoman Empire and Europe agree on the same perception of civilization is more commonly emphasized in the *Târih-i Cevdet*. However, he does not impose the Islamic understanding of civilization over the

²⁶⁹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 67-68: “O asırda Devlet-i Âliyece bir yeni medeniyet yoluna gidilmek ve ‘asâkir-i mu’allemeler tertîb edilmek efkârı zuhûr etmişti. Lâkin işin başından başlanmayıp kuyruğundan tutulmuş ve binânın temeline bakılmayıp sakfın nakışına özenilmiş ya’nî Frengistan’da münteşir olan fûnûn ü sanâyî’ in neşr ü tervîcine himmet olunmak lâzım gelirken enhâr-ı medeniyetin getirdiği has ü haşak, isrâf ü sefâhate aldanılmış idi. Ol vakit ise İstanbul halkı pek mutasallib ve muta’assıp olduğundan tabaka-yı ‘ulyâda bulunan me’mûrînin bu reftarından nefret ederek her türlü muhdesâtın ürkmeğe ve tarz-ı cedîd üzere yapılan ebniyeyi bile kerih görmeye başlamışlar idi.”

²⁷⁰ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 20.

²⁷¹ Neumann, 174.

European one; on the contrary, he takes the European meaning of the term which encompasses scientific developments, discoveries, welfare and modern governance.²⁷² Aksakal also states that in line with the ideas that shaped the character of the *Tanzîmât*, ‘*medeniyet*’ became equivalent to ‘Europe’. So civilization meant modernity, and becoming civilized meant modernization.²⁷³

If we apply Ahmed Cevdet’s understanding of Europe to the theory of Ibn Khaldun on the different stages of development that any country has to undergo,²⁷⁴ Ahmed Cevdet states that it is a law of nature that every state and “*millet*” (community or nation) will in the course of time transfer from mobilization(*bedeviyet*) to settled life (*hazariyet*) and will progress (*terakki*) throughout various levels of civilization (*medeniyet*). Still, at each stage precautions in line with the necessities of the time being should be taken by the state.²⁷⁵

Cevdet observes that during the seventeenth century it was Europe that had been progressing in sciences and industry, and that the military institutions were developing according to the new methods. This is why, in line with the principle of countering the opponent by using the opponent’s methods, the Ottoman Empire was to reform its military order, which was in a state of chaos, in line with new methods.²⁷⁶

Cevdet’s approach to the history of social development can be considered similar to what we know as ‘uneven development’ of world societies, i.e. that there is no fixed date for all the societies of the world to go into different stages of development at the exactly same time period. For instance around the fifteenth century, Ottoman Empire was displaying full strength. In comparison to the military powers of the other states of the time, the Ottoman army was very much disciplined and well organized. Mehmed II had given importance in using firearms and urged the production of huge cannon balls. Ahmed Cevdet states that Mehmed II’s army was a source of fear for all other countries. Yet another importance of the fifteenth century, in Ahmed Cevdet’s

²⁷² Neumann, 174.

²⁷³ Aksakal, “Yüzyıl Önce, Yüzyıl Sonra...,” 68.

²⁷⁴ Neumann, 172.

²⁷⁵ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 106: “Her devlet ve milletin mürûr-ı zamân ile bedeviyetden hazariyet ve medeniyete nakli ve merâtib-i medeniyette terakkisi emr-i tabî’î olup ancak her tavrda devlete bir türlü tedbir olunmak ve her vaktin icâbına göre davranmak lâzım gelmekle...”

²⁷⁶ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 105: “Ol sırada ise Avrupa’da sâ’ir fûnûn ve sanâyi’ ilerilemeye başladığı gibi usûl-i cedîde üzere tanzîm ve ta’lîm-i ‘asker mes’alesi dahi şüyû’ ü intişâra başlamış olduğu cihetle Devlet-i âliye dahi ihtilâl e varmış olan nizâmâtın ıslâhıyla mukâbele bi’l-misil kâ’idesince ‘asâkirini usûl-i cedîde üzere tertîb-ü ta’lîm ve âlât ü edevât-ı harbiyesini ona göre tanzîm etmek lâzım geldiği zamanlarda...”

perspective is that Europe who carried the education system and industry to a higher level had entered into the road of civilization during that century. It was after the conquest of Istanbul that the political ideas of the Europeans underwent major transformation. Ahmed Cevdet argues that the scientists that went to Europe from Istanbul strove to spread *ilm* and education there.²⁷⁷

Keeping in mind that Cevdet was not a strict follower of Ibn Khaldun's ideas, Cevdet was not supporting Khaldun's deterministic viewpoint that every society is to go through a circle of development which starts with a community of a few and then develops into a civilization. However, construction of a civilization is to be followed by decay due to the weakening of the feeling of '*asabiyye*'.²⁷⁸ Yet Ahmed Cevdet, being focused on the possibility of securing the Ottoman Empire from decay, seems to have the idea that it is possible to maintain continuous growth by repairing the weakening organs through adapting the state to the novelties that are brought forth by history. While the stages of development are an indispensable part of Ibn Khaldun's theory, Cevdet interprets this theory in different ways. The existence of the states that had collapsed before they reached to their golden ages indicates that in some cases it is also possible to treat the weaknesses of an old aged Empire.²⁷⁹

The way to treat those weaknesses was to make reforms. Ahmed Cevdet states that it is only the nature of the God that is in no need of a reform. Apart from that the laws created by human beings are to change in line with the changes in time. A law and method that had been perfectly functioning in a former world system and perfectly fitting the characteristic features of a nation to be governed at previous times, regardless of how good it may be, would be of no use in the current world order due to the changes or variations (*tagayyürât*) that come into existence in the world affairs (*ahvâl-i 'âlem*) or in the temperament of the nation (*mizâc-ı kavim*). This is why the administrators are to analyze the current necessities of the state according to the requirements of the contemporary era, and adjust the administrative system into the novelties of the time. In this way the things worthy of adopting are to be determined. The best and maybe the easiest way to reach this goal is to be cognizant of the former laws and the previous

²⁷⁷ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 186-187.

²⁷⁸ Neumann, 172-173.

²⁷⁹ Neumann, 177; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 18.

conditions of the state as well as the changes that presents itself.²⁸⁰ Giving an example to the success of this method, Cevdet gives the British example. He says that in England the aristocracy are still highly respected, however, the British have been since long searching for the reasons of the happiness of the population. They have modified in concurrence with time and conditions their system, granted the population liberty (*serbestiyet*) in terms of their political and religious thoughts (*efkâr-ı politikiye ve mezhebiye*), and thus established a moderate liberal system upon a sound social equilibrium.²⁸¹

As in the British case, the idea that gradual reform is a must and an ideal form of change was a concern for Ahmed Cevdet as one of the problems the Ottoman Empire had to face. Our historian laments that if only the Ottoman Empire would have occasionally resorted to some modifications and renovations (*tebdil ve tecdid*) in her military techniques and strategy the while the Europeans were going through reforms and renovations (*teceddüd*) in the art of warfare. In this way introduction of the favoured systems and methods to the Janissaries would have been possible. However, the disorder, that had been established and confirmed for long in the Janissary orders due to the organization's static nature which was not subjected to any significant renovation (*bi't-tedric*), had turned into a chronic disease which had already crossed the level of being treated by means of using any medicine. There had not been any gradual and considerable reforms or renewals made in the Janissary orders throughout the Ottoman history so that in the end there was no solution left but totally eliminating them.²⁸²

²⁸⁰*Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 88: "Hâsılı tagayyürden masûn olmak hâssa-yı nevâmîs-i ilâhiye olup kavânîn-i beşeriye hükm-i zamân ile mütegayyer olmakla iki yüz sene evvel pek mükemmel ve hayırlı 'add olunan bir kânûn ve usûl olvakitden beri mizâc-ı kavimde ve ahvâl-ı âlemde hâdis olan tagayyürât cihetiyle bir işe yaramaz dereceye gelmek emr-i tabî'î olduğundan vükelâ-yı devlet için asıl lâzım olacak takallübât-ı vâkî'âyı mütâla'a ve ihtiyâcât-ı hâzıra-i devleti ve zamânın ahkâmını tedkik ve muhâkeme ile idâreyi ona uydurmak ve nizâmât-ı mevcûdeyi piş-i nazar dakika-dânîlerinde olan ahvâle tatbik eylemek kaziyeleridir. Ve bu matlaba vusûl tariklerinin biri ve belki en kestirmesi bendesi oldukları devletin kavânîn-i kadîme ve etvâr-ı sâbıkası ile takallübât-ı ârizeyi bilmek olduğundan..."

²⁸¹ Ibid, cilt VI, 166: "Halbuki İngiltere'de fi'l-vâkî' asilzâdegânın i'tibârı hâlâ bâkîdir. Lakin orada öteden beri halkın hoşnûtluluğu esbâbı aranıp... îcâb-ı vakt-ü hale göre usûl ve rûsûm-ı mer'îye ta'dîl olunagelmîş ve ahâlî efkâr-ı politikiye ve mezhebiyece serbestiyet [sic!] üzere tutulmuş olduğundan muvâzene-i sahîha üzere bir mu'tedil serbestiyet usûlü husûle gelmiştir."

²⁸² Ibid, cilt VI, 15: "Kaldı ki Avrupa'da usûl-i fenn-i harb teceddüd ettikçe Devlet-i âliye dahi vakit be-vakit az çok usûl-i askeriyesini tebdil ve tecdid ederek ocaklı bu makûle teceddüdata alıştırmış olaydılar bu kere dahi mültezem olan usûle ithâlleri kâbil olur idi. Lâkin bunca senelerden beri hâlleri üzere kalarak bi't-tedric te'essüs ve takarrür etmiş olan nizâmsızlık 'illet-i müzmîne hükmüne girip 'ilâç ile tashih ve ıslâh olunabilecek dereceleri geçmiş olduğundan bunların külliyen ref'lerinden gayri çare mefkud idiğine..."

Directing his attention of the idea of ‘liberty’ Cevdet indicates that liberty is approved if it is developed in line with the political and social dynamics of a community in a way that does not disturb the balance between different segments of the respective society. According to Cevdet this was the case in England. It was because the British granted the population liberty (*serbestiyet*) in terms of their political and religious thoughts (*efkâr-ı politikiye ve mezhebiye*), they managed to establish a moderate liberal system upon a sound social equilibrium. If this balance is disrupted, this may give way to rebellions and can shatter the authority of the monarchs as was the case in France during the French Revolution. Ahmed Cevdet states that once the French population got rid of the troubles of the feudal order, they fell into the tyrannical and oppressor hands of the government. Once this government got dissolved, suddenly they were left unconfined. In line with the norm that going to excesses brings about deficiency, the society started drifting from one corner to another without a proper order. And the publications that were made by several authors had opened the ways for irreligiousness which further deteriorated the situation and all these damages left France in such a terrible condition that the country had no energies to be juxtaposed with England and they had no grounds to rely on. On top of all these factors, the American war also hastened the occurrence of the Revolution in France.²⁸³

By way of making a comparison with the feudal regimes of Europe, Cevdet indicates that during the time the governance in the Ottoman Empire was depending on liberty –in the sense explained above. He states that feudal regimes of Europe had divided the society in Europe into three. The first and second were the privileged aristocracy and priests, and at the bottom of the social hierarchy were the commoners some of whom were slaves and many were despised like slaves. The aristocracy was not treating the commoners as human beings. It was after the Crusades, when the Crusaders who witnessed the environment of liberty and freedom within the Islamic societies of

²⁸³ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt VI, 166-167: İngiltere’de “... ahâlf efkâr-ı politikiye ve mezhebiyece serbestiyet [sic!] üzere tutulmuş olduğundan muvâzene-yi sahîha üzre bir mu’tedil serbestiyet usûlü husûle gelmiştir. Ama Fransa ahâlisi feodalite belâsından kurtuldukları gibi hükûmetin pençe-i gadr ü ta’addiyâtına düşüp sonra birdenbire başıboş bırakılarak ifrât tefrîti da’vet eder kâ’idesince bir uçdan tâ öteki uca seğırtmiş oldukları hâlde bir takım mü’ellifin neşriyatı üzerine bir dinsizlik yolu açılarak her iş çığırdan çıkmış olmasıyla Fransa’nın İngiltere’ye kıyâs edecek hâli ve Fransa krallığının istinâd edecek bir mahalli kalmamış olduğu hâlde Amerika muhârebesi dahi ihtilâlin zuhûrunu ta’cîl etmiş idi.”

the Orient introduced these ideas to the Franks that they started to develop a demand for liberty for their own societies.²⁸⁴

What I deduce from all these comments Ahmed Cevdet makes is that he was a thorough reformist and a partially progressive man. The reason why I say ‘partially’ is that although Cevdet was supporting change and was considering it essential to make reforms in the institutions of the Empire, still we do not see him questioning the essence of the Ottoman political system. Though it is unclear whether it had genuinely been Cevdet’s approach or is it because the work was edited under the formal patronage of the sultan, but his affirmative approach toward the reforms have never been on the grounds to question the sultan’s legitimacy or to question whether there are any problems directly related to the current regime in the Ottoman Empire. As stated above, comparing different types of governance that were existing in Europe, Cevdet seems to be very content that the Ottoman Empire would never get affected by rebellions striving for ideals of equality or liberty or for a change in the regime.²⁸⁵ It is noteworthy that he never proposes a limitation in the prerogatives of the sultan. On the contrary, he thinks that when it becomes obligatory the ruler should have the right to take excessive measures and this cannot be interpreted as oppression.²⁸⁶

Without questioning the sovereignty of the state, Ahmed Cevdet attributes two fundamental duties to the state. First one of these is that the state is to ensure security of its borders, the other is that the state is to guarantee social justice and protect the rights of the people by observing the law (*ihkâk-ı hukûk-ı ibâd*).²⁸⁷ Neumann indicates that the term *ihkâk-ı hukûk* outwardly seems to be affiliated with the modern conception of the state of law (*rechtsstaat*). Yet, Ahmed Cevdet did not seem to argue for a system where the people of the empire would look after their own rights rather than to argue for a full

²⁸⁴ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt VI, 159: “... feodalite ‘asrında Avrupa ahâlisi üç sınıf üzere olup birincisi asilzâdegân ve ikincisi papas takımı olarak bu iki sınıf envâ’-ı imtiyâzât ve müsâ’adâta mazhar oldukları hâlde sınıf-ı sâlis ya’nî âhâd-ı nâs takımının kimi esîr ve kimi esîr gibi hâr u hakîr olarak asilzâdegân nazarında bayağı, insândan add olunmazlar idi. Muhârebât-ı salîbiye münâsebetiyle Frenkler memâlik-i şarkıyeye gelip de millet-i islâmedeki hürriyet ve serbestiyeti gördükleri gibi gözleri açılarak insânda ahvâl-i tabî’iyeden olan hürriyet sevdâsı cümlesinin efkârını sarmış olduğundan artık bunlar evvelki hâlde kullanılmayıp refte refte kendilerine ba’zı müsâ’adât i’tâsına mecbûriyet gelmiş idi.”; Christoph Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000, p 210.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid*, cilt I, 20.

²⁸⁶ Neumann, 2000, 126.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p 186; *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 88: “Her devletin vezâ’if-i esâsiyesi iki farîzaya münkasım olup biri dâhil-i memleketde ‘adl ü dâd ile ihkâk-ı hukûk-ı ‘ibâd mes’elesi ve diğeri serhaddâtın ta’arruz-i ecânibden muhâfazası mâddesi olarak her devletin şân-ü ikbâl ve şöret ü revnak ve iclâl-ü ‘azameti bu vazîfelerin hüsn-ü ifâ’sına sa’y-ü ikdâm ve himmeti mertebesince olduğundan Devlet-i âliyyede fi’l-asl bu farîzaların ifâsına kemâl-i ehemmiyet ile ihtimâm olunurdu.”

control of the *Şeriat* and *örfî* laws in a systematic way.²⁸⁸ For instance when he complains about the *ulemâ*, he does not express his disapproval of the unlawful acts of the *ulemâ* causing troubles to the local people, he rather complains about how they have been damaging the law of the state.²⁸⁹ The principle of “*ihkâk-ı hukûk*” carries with it the idea of creating a strong state, as the state, being governed by means of highly systematized laws, is supposed to provide for the welfare of the country.²⁹⁰ As Neumann indicates it seems therefore hard to argue for an affinity between Ahmed Cevdet’s idea of ‘*ihkâk-ı hukûk*’ and the idea of the ‘state of law’ which has been an inseparable part of the modern governance system.

What appears from Ahmed Cevdet’s descriptions of Western historical development is that he does not seem to be impressed by or interested in the roots of the process of European modernization which is said to have started around the fifteenth century together with the Renaissance and the Reformation movements. As is known, the importance of the Renaissance is not limited just to the vast production of art works during the period, but also relevant to the change in the content and conduct of these works. A fundamental aspect of the age of Renaissance was to stretch back in history and grasp the ancient Greek and Hellenistic style whose underlying thought was the humanistic thought. Yet, the legacies of Ancient Greece and Rome, being so dear to the Renaissance thinking and to the modernizing Europe were considered by Ahmed Cevdet generally as immoral. We know this, since he also touched upon the history of Ancient Rome. While he speaks of the period of the first Roman Emperor Augustus, he says that although Romans had delivered many a services to the areas under Rome’s control such as to Gaul by establishing schools, theatres and buildings alike, still the Roman civilization was based on materialism and bodily pleasures. This is why let alone striving to advance and embellish morals, they made those nations they conquered habitual to various immoralities and promoted corruption. Ahmed Cevdet further argues that as the Romans could not triumph in the Arabian Peninsula and the interiors of Germany, the morality of the Arab and the Germanic tribes were spared from Roman corruption and remained in their natural forms without being tainted by the Roman

²⁸⁸ Neumann, 187.

²⁸⁹ Ibid, 189.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, 189.

civilization. Later on it were to be these two *millet*s who renovated (*tecdîd eden*) the world.²⁹¹

Ahmed Cevdet's usage of the Islamic word "*tecdîd*" i.e, renewing and renewal, adds a third dimension to the way he instrumentalizes the words "*teceddüd*" and "*cedîd*". While using the word "*teceddüd*", as mentioned above, Ahmed Cevdet displays a conservative attitude by considering it a renovation and a reform achieved by the Ottomans to bring together the religious authority and the material governance in the person of the sultan. This view is openly against the establishment of a secular political order. Later on it is explained that Ahmed Cevdet uses the word "*cedîd*" in a way to support the socio-political developments that rendered the West the main representative of the "civilization" especially after the seventeenth century. When it comes to the word "*tecdîd*", which again comes from the same root with the other two, we see that Ahmed Cevdet uses the word in displaying his disapproval of the socio-political system that was prevalent in the Roman Empire. While the legacy of the Roman Empire had been a source of inspiration during the Early Modern period in the history of the West, Ahmed Cevdet considers this legacy a system that corrupts the world as immoral as it is. The expectation that a new "world order" (*nizâm-ı âlem*) is to be founded following a period of disorder is a thought prevalent in the writings of several Ottoman intellectuals such as Tursun Bey, Hasan Kafi Akhisari, and Kınalızade²⁹² Interestingly it is seen that the renewal (*tecdîd*) Ahmed Cevdet speaks of here bears noticeable similarities with this idea in the sense that what he calls renovation is the collapse of the Roman Empire and the establishment of new world orders by the Germanic tribes and the Arabs as the two communities Ahmed Cevdet considers untainted by the Roman legacy. The three different perspectives Cevdet possesses on reform and renovation observable as such in the *Târih-i Cevdet* are indicative of the effects of both the traditional Ottoman thinking and the modern approaches to politics in Ahmed Cevdet's thinking.

²⁹¹ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt VI, 169-170: "... Ağustos'un zamân-ı hükümetinde Galya'ya hayli Romalılar gidip mektepler ve tiyatrolar ve sâ'ir binâlar ihdâs ile Galya'da âsâr-ı medeniyeti neşr etmişler idi. Fakat Romalıların medeniyeti sırf mâddî ve nefsânî bir keyfiyet olduğundan ahlâk-ı insâniyeyi tehzîb ve islâh şöyle dursun belki ifsâd etmekle ellerine geçen yerler ahâlîsinin ekseri türlü fenalıklara mübtelâ oldukları gibi Galler dahi bu medeniyet-i Romiye ile tabî'î olan hüsn-ü ahlâklarını zâyî etmişlerdir. Romalılar bu vechile tama' ettikleri memâlikin ekserini zabt ile medeniyeti neşr etmeleriyle beraber nice milel ve akvâmın ahlâkını bozmuşlardır. Fakat cezîretü-l' Arab ile Cermânyâ'ya zaferyab olmadıkları cihetle Arab ve Cermân kavimlerinin ahlâkı Roma medeniyetiyle lekedâr olmayıp hâl-i tabî'î üzere kalmıştır. Ve sonradan cihânı tecdîd eden bu iki millettir."

²⁹² Gottfried Hagen, "World Order and Legitimacy" *Legitimizing the Order: Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, Maurus Reinkowski and Hakan Karateke (eds), (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 55-83, 61-62.

The Europeans started anticipating the Hellenistic way of thinking basically from the fifteenth century onwards. And this anticipation complemented the developments underlying the construction of the modernity in the West. However, as Meriç states, each community has a history of its own. This is why the route followed by the Western countries cannot be equally adapted to the Ottoman Empire.²⁹³ In the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire the ideas on reform or progress were not taking place in direct contrast with neither the political system presiding in the Empire nor with the religion. Although it was becoming apparent that the religious institutions of the Empire were gradually deteriorating in quality, still the Empire was basically preserving its Islamic identity. Therefore, it does not seem absurd that in his *Târih-i Cevdet*, Cevdet occasionally argues that several events are only apparent to the God as history is shaped in line with the God's will.²⁹⁴

If we were to look into the outcomes expected by the theories of modernity explained before, it would not have been possible to call Ahmed Cevdet a modern intellectual and statesman. For instance, as a nineteenth century Ottoman statesman his approaches are not in line with Touraine's viewpoints on modernity who proposes that it is a must for the modern societies to break down the dominance of the religion on everyday life of the individuals. According to Touraine, rather than being under the influence of the religious institutions, the individuals should be given their subjectivity. Weber also thinks that one of the main reasons enabling the European countries in forming the modern state order was the protestant ethics that rendered religion to the private realm and motivated the individuals to participate with their best performance in the active life rather than advising a contemplative religious life.

In fact, considering religion a threat against development as an idea would have been considered very absurd by Cevdet. Looking into the different examples taken from his *Târih-i Cevdet* presented above, it is observable that Cevdet generally links underdevelopment with the lack of skills of the statesmen in the political matters who were either willing to make radical changes and introduce unfamiliar novelties that would not fit to the socio-political nature of the Empire, or willing to preserve the contemporary state order passively hoping that the damages will recover in time if untouched. Rather than these two manners, Cevdet is supportive of the idea of finding a

²⁹³ Meriç, *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü*, prologue.

²⁹⁴ Arıkan, "Cevdet Paşa'nın Tarihinde Kullandığı Yabancı Kaynaklar ve Terimler," 178.

middle ground between the two. The reforms should observe the continuity between the past and the present, they were not to damage the essential features of the Ottoman Empire, i.e. the status of the sultan, and they were to be directed not just toward several institutions of the state but the diseases in all different parts of the state were to be treated simultaneously so as to yield an effective and deep-rooted outcome.

3.2. The Reformist in the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât*

In this part, an analysis of two other historical pieces written by Ahmed Cevdet Paşa will be made. The first one of these is the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* (“Memoranda of Cevdet”) while the second is the *Ma'rûzât* (“Representations”). The reason why the two of them will be evaluated together is because these two pieces complement each other in addressing approximately the same time period in the Ottoman history. Below, firstly I will give some information on the two pieces and on their basic characteristics in order to provide some insight on the different environments and conditions they were written in. The main concern of this part will be to underline several points that are emphasized in both the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât* that are considered by the researcher representative of Cevdet’s stance within the Ottoman modernization process.

It was after Ahmed Cevdet Paşa (Efendi) completed the first two volumes of the *Târih-i Cevdet* that he was appointed as the chronicler (*vak'anüvîs*) on 2 February 1855/14 Cemâziyelâhır 1271AH.²⁹⁵ Although Halaçoğlu and Aydın claim that the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* is written while Cevdet was performing this duty between the years 1855-1865/1271-1281AH in the form of memoirs,²⁹⁶ Neumann indicates that up until the end of Cevdet’s term in the office of the *vak'anüvîs*, he did nothing on the *Tezâkir* but to take several notes and keep them; the *Tezâkir* was to be written years later.²⁹⁷ What is more, instead of choosing the year when he commenced his duty as the *vak'anüvîs* as a starting point for his *tezkires* or memoranda, he had chosen 1839/1255AH as the beginning for the memoranda; and although his term in the office ended in 1866/1282AH, he concluded his thirty ninth *tezkire* with the year of

²⁹⁵ Ölmezoğlu, “Cevdet Paşa,” 115.

²⁹⁶ Halaçoğlu, Aydın, “Cevdet Paşa,” 448.

²⁹⁷ Neumann, 36.

1872/1289AH.²⁹⁸ Ahmed Cevdet sent his notes as *tezkires* to Ahmed Lütü Efendi (1814-1907), who had become the *vak'anüvîs* following Ahmed Cevdet. This is why he calls this piece as the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet*.²⁹⁹ As the cases written in the *Tezâkir* were on the contemporary issues of Cevdet's own era, these *tezkires* were not to be revealed immediately once they were written. In fact, Ottoman historian Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçođlu says that while sending his thirty nine *tezkires* to his successor in the office of the *vak'anüvîs* Ahmed Lütü Efendi, Cevdet warned him to keep these records confidential and secret.³⁰⁰ The first five *tezkires* are composed of short letters addressing Ahmed Lütü Efendi due to sending him documents and papers preserved by Cevdet. *Tezkires* from six to thirty nine are about the notes he kept while fulfilling his duty as the *vak'anüvîs*. And the fortieth memorandum contains his biography.³⁰¹

Tezâkir is the plural version of 'tezkiere' which derives from the Arabic word 'zîkr' whose one dictionary meaning is explained by sociologist Prof. Dr. İsmail Dođan to be the biography written on people of various occupations. In the Arabic dictionaries, while the 'zekere' [zkr] as the root of the word is translated as 'to remember', 'zîkr' is held equivalent to the verbs 'to report' and 'to mention'.³⁰² However this solely biographic nature of *tezâkir* writing belongs specifically to the era of divan literature. Dođan explains that in the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* biographies of eminent statesmen are only mentioned when the events necessitated it and this is why the main theme of the *Tezâkir* cannot be considered as the 'biographies' but the 'events'. Still Dođan is of the opinion that although the piece is not a biography, it should also not be thought as a thorough record of events. The *Tezâkir* which includes people, decisions, and implementations and which criticizes all these on and off can be considered as a type of "éclectique monographie".³⁰³

More than reflecting the political nature of the *Tanzîmât* period, the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* rather demonstrates the social and moral character of the time. It is only in the fortieth *tezkiere* that Cevdet gives a considerable account on the political matters that are

²⁹⁸ Ölmezođlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 120.

²⁹⁹ Halaçođlu, Aydın, "Cevdet Paşa," 448.

³⁰⁰ Halaçođlu, "Ma'rûzât'a Dâir," XII.

³⁰¹ Ölmezođlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 120.

³⁰² *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, J. M. Cowan (ed.) (Ithaca, New York: Modern Language Series, 1994), 310.

³⁰³ İsmail Dođan, "Sosyolojik Bir malzeme Olarak Tezâkir" *Ahmet Cevdet Paşa*, (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1997), 229- 245, 229-230.

relevant to his life.³⁰⁴ Knowing that all these information given in the *Tezâkir* is either witnessed by the historian or heard by the people who witnessed the event, Baysun thinks that as long as we do not lose the cautiousness that should be displayed while analyzing each and every book it would not be wrong to consider the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* Ahmed Cevdet's main history as a primary source material.³⁰⁵

When it comes to Ahmed Cevdet's method in the writing of the *Tezâkir*, in many of the events he describes, he is an 'appointed', 'office bearing' person. This makes him the first hand observer of many an event and provides him with the opportunity of analysing the prior and after of the emerging political and social conditions. He found himself in different regions of the Empire and within numerous social and political events due to his appointments made by the sultanate with the status of "special official with extraordinary prerogatives" (*fevkalâde memûrîyet-i mahsûsa*). From the cities of the Balkan region such as İşkodra (Shkodra: in north-western Albania) and Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Middle East, he made analyses as to the way of lives, customs, traditions and the political organization of these different people of the Empire. In addition to being a first-hand observer of the events, he also made use of the information he found in reliable sources. And Doğan indicates that some of the written statements, summary of proceedings and official records that were used in the book were in fact written by Cevdet himself, which may demonstrate the extent Cevdet had been into the events he was writing on.³⁰⁶

While the *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* was like a book of memoirs or an "éclectique monographie" as Doğan calls it, the *Ma'rûzât* on the other hand was written with the direct orders of Abdülhamid II, who wanted to get a correct information on the events that had happened during the reigns of his father and grandfather which is basically the period between 1839 and 1876 (1255-1293AH). The *Ma'rûzât* partly summarizes and partly elaborates the events described in the *Tezâkir*, since both of them address approximately the same time period. As the book was to be presented to the sultan directly, Cevdet named it as the "Representations".³⁰⁷ The book is composed of five sections (*cüzdan*) and written with a simplified Ottoman Turkish.³⁰⁸ Although the first one of these sections, which explains the events from the beginning of the *Tanzîmât*

³⁰⁴ Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 120.

³⁰⁵ Baysun, "Tezâkir-i Cevdet Hakkında," XIV.

³⁰⁶ Doğan, "Sosyolojik Bir malzeme Olarak Tezâkir," 233.

³⁰⁷ Baysun, "Tezâkir-i Cevdet Hakkında," XVIII.

³⁰⁸ Halaçoğlu, "Ma'rûzât'a Dâir," XIII.

(1839/1255AH) till the end of Abdülmecid's reign (1856/1273AH)³⁰⁹, got lost, still it is said that since the first four sections of the *Ma'rûzât* have been mostly written on the same subjects as the *Tezâkir*, we can think that this loss could be compensated to some extent.³¹⁰ The fifth section, which is composed of the events between 1866 and 1876 (1283-1293AH) was not published up until it was edited by Halaçoğlu in 1980, despite the fact that it was the main part Cevdet was inclined to write and all the preceding parts were like a prologue to that last one.³¹¹

Although the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât* are two parallel works, in terms of the form of the *Ma'rûzât*'s presentation and its purpose, there are significant differences in the latter's formation. In the *Ma'rûzât*, Cevdet uses a language that would be in line with Abdülhamid II.'s dispositions in order not to make this apprehensive sultan suspicious of himself,³¹² whereas in the writing of the *Tezâkir*, Cevdet had some confidentiality in taking notes and recording the events contemporaneous to him as the state chronicler, since his records were not expected to be published or to be read immediately in the heat of the moment. This confidentiality provided Cevdet relative freedom in expressing his convictions. This is why it occasionally becomes possible to find differing details on the same event in either one of the pieces. Since the two pieces are complementary to each other in this way, Halaçoğlu and Aydın advise that the two of them should be analyzed together so as to get a better picture of the events Cevdet describes.³¹³

Analyzing both the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât*, the methods pursued by Cevdet while performing his duty in Bosnia in 1863/1280AH can be indicative of the path Cevdet favours in initiating reforms to a community. While writing on his duty as *kazasker* (chief military judge) and as the inspector of the problems in the region, Cevdet says that one of the problems was that of the enrolment of the Bosnians into the army. Since long whenever the enrolment of soldiers was brought into question, there had been a rebellion in Bosnia against this decision. As the Sublime Port (*Bâbiâlî*) was displeased with this situation, Cevdet was to find a solution.³¹⁴ Instead of using forceful methods, we observe in the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât* that he tried to find ways to

³⁰⁹ Halaçoğlu, "Ma'rûzât'a Dâir," XIII.

³¹⁰ Ölmezoğlu, "Cevdet Paşa," 121; see also Halaçoğlu, "Ma'rûzât'a Dâir," XV.

³¹¹ Halaçoğlu, "Ma'rûzât'a Dâir," XIV.

³¹² Ibid, XIV.

³¹³ Ibid, XV; Halaçoğlu, Aydın, "Cevdet Paşa," 449.

³¹⁴ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 22, 35.

affiliate the Bosnians with the reforms by presenting them the reforms in a way acceptable to them. For instance, noticing that the Bosnians were fond of green colour, and that in the Bosnian language the word “*yeşilli*” (the one with the green) was used to indicate the honourable and fortunate people in society, he planned to make the Bosnians wear the green striped uniforms³¹⁵, and asked the *imâms* to tell the community of Muslims that during the wars of the prophet angels with green rosary-heads (*imâme*) descended from the sky and helped the Muslim soldiers to attain victory. In this way he planned to intensify the sensitivity of the community toward this colour. During a religious feast day (*bayram*), providing the new-styled Ottoman uniforms that were equipped with green stripes, he made a group of soldiers wear those and made them walk from the government building to the mosque for the morning prayer while he himself was also in greens. Later on it was ascertained that when the Bosnians going to the mosque saw these soldiers, they became as cheerful as if they were walking out in the freshness of a meadow, and as if angels descended from the sky to help the Muslims. What more, the fondness displayed by the Bosnian girls to the soldiers in green striped uniforms by calling them as “*yeşilli*” was becoming even more effective than the advice of the preachers. All these factors helped opening the hearts of the young Bosnian men up to the idea of soldiery.³¹⁶ In this way Cevdet tried to get people’s consent by presenting the orders of the government in a way that would be acceptable to the society.

As a second step, he formed a temporary council (*meclis-i muvakkat*) in Sarajevo composed of the notables of the region. In this way he was aiming to understand the underlying reasons why the Bosnians were unwilling to accept the government orders. In his motivational speech to the council, Cevdet asked the notables whether any *kazasker* ever came to Bosnia in the history of the region. They answered that it was only during the time of Mehmed II (1432-1481) that a *kazasker* had been present in Bosnia. Reminding the members of this assembly that *kazasker* means the *kadi* (Islamic judge) of soldiers, Cevdet emphasized that Sultan Abdülaziz sent him to Bosnia for the investigation of problems and gave him the title of ‘*kazasker*’. He then said; “You can comprehend what this comes to mean. I am the *kadi*-asker. Yet I have no soldiers. I demand new soldiers from you. If this does not happen I will leave without spending much time.” In this way he was emphasizing that the enrolment of the soldiers was to be

³¹⁵ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 22, 35; *Ma’rûzât*, 86.

³¹⁶ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 22, 35-36; *Ma’rûzât*, 85-86.

the main issue to be discussed in this council.³¹⁷ After intense debates made by the members of this temporary council for a month, the decision on the enrolment of the soldiers was given consent to. However, they demanded exceptions to the Bosnians in two matters. One of these was about the period of military service. While active military service in other parts of the Empire was for five years and reserve military service (*rediflik*) lasted seven years, they asked for three years active military service and nine years reserve military service. Cevdet thought that this request would have several benefits to the Empire, because it would help educating greater numbers of soldiers in short notice. The second request was not to send Bosnian soldiers out of Bosnia for duty. Cevdet argued that it was evident that the Bosnian soldiers would not be sent to any other place because there were always soldiers of cavalry and infantry in the region provided from the army of Rumelia and because even in times of warfare, Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Hersek*) could not be left without protection. Still it was not appropriate for the state to make such a commitment.³¹⁸

After establishing an affinity among the society toward the idea of compulsory military service, as it is indicated above, the temporary council helped to reveal several reasons making people unwilling in accepting the changes, which were also discussed at the council, and finally the consent of the notables was gained. The following year (1864/1281 AH), upon Ahmed Cevdet's return to Bosnia, an imperial edict (*fermân-ı âlî*) was sent to this province concerning this issue. Ahmed Cevdet made several preparations in Sarajevo for a ceremonial to reception of the edict as well as the Bosnian notables from different parts of the province. In the arrival of the edict it became evident that some of the notables were still hesitant in accepting the changes, because some of them did not come to meet the reception committee without even giving any explanation. There emerged rumours as to whether this indicated the beginning of a rebellion in Bosnia against the issue of enrolling soldiers into the army. However, in the *Tezâkir*, Cevdet says that he deems such reactions as a necessary part of radical changes. He likens this occasion to the hesitant manners of a person who at the beginning asks for a dentist to treat his problem, however changes his mind in the

³¹⁷*Tezâkir*, Tezkire no.22, 36-37; *Ma'rûzât*, 87.

³¹⁸*Tezâkir*, Tezkire no.22, 38; *Ma'rûzât*, 88

eventuality of meeting the dentist. For Cevdet, this is a natural process considering that such novelties indicate the launch of the Bosnians into the ways of the new era.³¹⁹

While receiving the edict, Cevdet made a speech before the public through which he expected to raise the feelings of excitement among the audience. At some part of his speech he said that for more than a year he had been in Bosnia for inspection. He saw that the characteristic features and praiseworthy moral qualities of this society have in no way been deteriorated. He argued that as a historian he has better knowledge on the circumstances in the region compared to its own settlers. As his official duty was on inspecting the region he asserted that he managed making a good analysis of the current situation there. He even said that “I suppose I understood you better than you yourselves.” He tells the audience that the contemporary Bosnians are still the children, grandchildren and the propitious successors of the Bosnians of three or four hundred years ago. However, as it is in the nature of human affairs that manners and conditions are destined to change in line with the innovations of the current era, there have been changes in the administrative ways, and the shape of the society (*hey'et-i müctemi'a*) of this region has changed as well. At this point Cevdet likened the Bosnians to a book whose headband has become dissipated. However this book's writings are in no way defected and its pages are still strong and intact. Once the headband of the book is woven again, the book will be the same book as it was before. And this new headband is said to be the edict of the government (*fermân-ı âlî*).³²⁰

Here Cevdet's policies can be interpreted as a mixture of a top-down and bottom-up reform making. In addition to the central authority of the Ottoman government, as part of a general policy pursued by the Empire since 1839, the Bosnians and the notables, who to a certain extent represented the Bosnians as the respected members of the society, were also included into the process of reforming the region. In telling that he knows the people of the region better than they do know themselves, Cevdet seems to be inclined to dictate the government instructions to the Bosnians with the manners of an enlightened historian who sees the real face of events that cannot be

³¹⁹ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 24, 67-68.

³²⁰ Ibid, 69: “Bir seneden ziyâdedir teftîş me'mûriyetiyle bu havâlide bulunuyorum... Müverrih olduğum cihetle memleketinizin sevâlih-i ahvâlini sizden iyi bilirim... Zannederim ki sizleri sizden âlâ anladım... Elhâsıl sizler yine üç dört yüz sene evvelki boşnakların evlâd u ahfâd ve hayrû'l-haleflerisiniz. Fakat tebeddül-i etvâr ve ahvâl hasebiyle her millette umûr-ı tabî'iyeden olduğu üzere zuhûra gelen inkılâbât-ı zamâniyeden nâşî burasımın dahi sûret-i idâre ve hey'et-i müctemi'asına ba'z-ı tegayyürât âriz olarak şîrâzasi bozulmuş bir kitaba müşâbih olmuştur. Lâkin yazılarına hiç halel gelmemiş ve kâğıdları sağlamdır. Şîrâzesi örüldüğü gibi bu yine eski kitabdır. O da şu fermân-ı âlîdir.”

grasped by the commoners. However, the methods he pursues indicate the reverse. From what he says in the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât* it can be seen that he was not inclined to implement the orders of the government forcefully. Up until Cevdet's arrival to the region the basic reason why the Bosnian society was rebellious against the orders seems to have been the predominant use of brutal force to enforce policies upon the local people without trying to understand the reasons why they were not ready to consent with the government orders.

Cevdet states that one reason why it was hard to convince the Bosnians was that they are the people of perseverance and fortitude (*eshâb-ı sebât u metânet*). Still Cevdet is of the opinion that there is a way to get a hold of every society no matter how obstinate or wild they are. The key is to find the right handle that would be representative of the customs and moral values of the respective society. It is by holding that right handle that the community can be led toward the desired direction, i.e. toward accepting the reforms initiated in Bosnia. Yet for years the state officials struggled in vain to convince the Bosnians, because, to make an analogy, instead of leading the camel by holding the headgear of the animal, the officials were just disturbingly pulling its tail.³²¹

Tanpınar states that in all the different fields Cevdet worked through, i.e. the administrative, judiciary, intellectual duties he was assigned to, making surveys was one of the techniques Cevdet used before initiating a business. Tanpınar claims that the secret to Cevdet's success in İşkodra and Bosnia-Herzegovina was the surveys he made around these regions before the reforms were to be made.³²² The way he convinced people was by understanding the issues they are sensitive about, by establishing councils where their excuses can be listened and the support of the notables in the region can be gained. So in this way, Cevdet was trying to find the right handle to hold onto in leading the society to accept the prospective reforms. Although his ultimate purpose was to involve the Bosnians into the novel Ottoman army, still he did not disregard people's opinion and considered it natural that people may disagree with a government order in order to conserve their current social order. Instead of imposing

³²¹ *Ma'rûzât*, 81: "Bir kavim ne kadar vahşi olsa ahlâk u âdâtı iktizâsınca elbette bir tutamak yeri vardır; oradan tutulup çekilirse gelir. Ters tarafından tutulursa ürküp kaçır. Boşnaklar eshâb-ı sebât u metânetten olup anlardan asker alınmak için nice seneler beyhûde uğraşmış. Bu işe me'mûr olanlar hep deveyi kuyruğundan çekmişler, yularından yeden olmamış."

³²² Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 166.

one decision on people he created environments to make negotiations and found a common ground by listening the demands of the locals.

Another thing that can be emphasized here is that while introducing reforms, Cevdet was willing to keep the centuries long essence of the community he was dealing with. In the above mentioned speech he delivered to the Bosnians he was praising the community by telling that Bosnians are still the praiseworthy successors of the Bosnians of three or four centuries ago.³²³ By likening that centuries-long Bosnian manners to a book, he argues that keeping this book intact, keeping its pages and writings safe will only be possible by following the edict of government which will help this 'book' not to disseminate across the inescapable changes that arise in time. Indeed this was also indicating the threat posed by the expansionist policies of Austria, Serbia and Montenegro. So, this analogy must have frightened the Bosnians.

Cevdet presents the main objective of the edict as keeping the book in one piece and not as writing it anew by disregarding what has already been written for centuries. In this way Cevdet also indicates that implementation of a reform in a region will only be fully successful when the habitants of the region internalize the government instructions.

In the fortieth *tezkiye* of the *Tezâkir*, Cevdet prepares a written statement on the reforms that were deemed necessary by the government, and in that statement he presents a theory which seems to justify his aforementioned approach in fulfilling government orders. The statement begins with the similar argument in the *Târih-i Cevdet* mentioned before on the two duties attributed to the governments.³²⁴ First one of these is ensuring social justice and protecting the rights of the subjects (*ihkâk-ı hukûk-ı ibâd*) which can be explained as the judicial matters (*umûr-ı 'adliye*). These were performed by the courts. The second duty is said to be the protection of the borders of the state (*hifz-ı bilâd*), which was performed by the community of armed forces. Once a government fulfils these two duties, its subjects will rightly conform to its orders and get obliged to pay their tax without reluctance. Other than these two branches of the

³²³*Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 24, 69.

³²⁴*Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 88.

state (the courts and the armed forces), Cevdet includes a third party which were the executive officers.³²⁵

Thus, Cevdet presents three types of government officials who are the judges, the military officials and the executive officers. In terms of performing their duties, judges and military officials are likened to each other. This is because while the military officers have to follow the strict orders of their superiors, the judges have to make decisions within the highly elaborated frame of judicial commentaries (*şerh*) and the law (*kanûn*). On the other hand the services of the executive officers display such variety and ramifications that their duties cannot be strictly regulated. It may even not be possible to describe what political and administrative orders consist of. No matter how elaborate the orders given to the executive officials that are sent to different parts of the country would be, still attaining the desired outcome depends partly on the contemplations and observations of these officials. This is because in initiating political reforms it is necessary to take the socio-political conditions in the respective region into consideration and to bear the characteristic features of the local people in mind so as not to face a strict resistance against the reforms. Therefore, it is by bearing in mind the essence of the business and then interpreting the orders and instructions in their possession according to what the socio-political conditions in different regions necessitates that the executive officers can be on the path that would lead to the desired consequences in fulfilling their duties.³²⁶

Cevdet says that similar to the wheels of a clock that are related to each other whose proper functioning depends on all the wheels to be orderly and fit to each other, different affairs and offices of the state also depend on whether all different branches of the state can complement each other in an orderly way. Therefore, if the executive body is in disorder, it cannot be possible for the judiciary or the military bodies of the state to be in good order, as well. This is because; an office in disorder can neither reinforce the other offices of the state nor get benefit from them effectively.³²⁷

³²⁵ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40, 97-98.

³²⁶ *Ibid*, 99.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, 98: “Kaldiki bir saatin çarhları yek-diğere merbût ve sıhhat üzere işlemesi ve her çarhının düzgün ve bir-birine uygun olmasıyle meşrût olduğu gibi umûr-ı devlet dahi bir-birine merbût ve intizâm üzere cereyân eylemesi hepsinin hüsn-i intizâmında mütenâsib ve mütenâsık olmasına menûttur. Ale'l-husûs hey'et-i icrâiye intizâmsız olduğu hâlde diğer hey'etlerin devâm-ı intizâmı kâbil olamaz. Zîrâ bir hey'et-i gayr-ı muntazama bir hey'et-i muntazamayı ne besleyebilir ve ne de hüsn-i isti'mâl eyleyebilir.”

In this way Cevdet both emphasizes the importance of understanding the characteristic features of the different societies living in the Empire whose lives are to be regulated through the state orders, and the connectedness of all different bodies of the state. Here while explaining that there has to be some flexibility in realizing the executive duties, it is as if Cevdet includes the different societies of the Empire as a party, whose harmony with the other parties (different offices of the state, i.e. executive, judiciary, and military) becomes crucial in the process of reform making. Thus, different societies and groups living in the Empire are also accepted to possess considerable importance, though a passive one, in the functioning of the state whose parts as the parts of a clock always have to be in perfect harmony with each other.

Due to this idea that all different bodies of the Empire depend on each other for the proper functioning of the organization, while mentioning the different reforms pursued by the Empire, Cevdet generally gets critical of those reform steps that lack a firm basis, that do not treat all the facades of a problem adequately, or that brought about a sudden and direct change without familiarizing the target group with the respective reforms. For instance, although Mustafa Reşid Paşa had been Cevdet's protector since long, still he cannot escape from Cevdet's criticisms in the *Tezâkir* while explaining Reşid Paşa's appointment as the Grand Vizier in 1846/1262AH. Ahmed Cevdet argues that while Reşid Paşa achieved a great deal in a short time while previously acting as minister of foreign affairs (*hâriciye nezâreti*), he could not attain such important achievements after he was appointed as the grand vizier even though he gained greater authority. Cevdet states that Reşid Paşa's desire was to establish greater buildings and to possess greater revenues and properties.³²⁸ Here Cevdet seems to be alluding to the tendency of the Ottoman statesmen he mentioned in the *Târih-i Cevdet* while speaking of İbrahim Paşa who were accused of focusing on the sweepings brought by the river of civilization such as prodigality and extravagance, rather than applying the sciences and industries of Europe to the Ottoman Empire.³²⁹ Tanpınar calls this as an expression of hopelessness for the Empire due to which Ahmed Cevdet Paşa got increasingly critical of the functioning of the state mechanism and the bureaucratic elites. The criticisms he expressed toward his mentor Reşid Paşa are regarded as a sign

³²⁸*Tezâkir*, Tezkire no.6, 10.

³²⁹*Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 67-68.

of this pessimistic tone that gradually presided over his perspective on the future of the empire.³³⁰

Nevertheless when it comes to Reşid Paşa's contributions in the Imperial Edict of Reorganizations (*Tanzîmât-ı Hayriyye*) of 1839/1254AH, Cevdet says that Reşid Paşa did not fell behind in fulfilling the promises of this edict or in caring about the developments in matters of education and civilization. Firstly a temporary Council of Education (*Meclis-i Maârif-i Muvakkat*) was founded in order to discuss the conditions for the promulgation of a Regulation of Public Education (*Maârif-i Umûmiye Nizamnâmesi*). Şeyhülislâm Ârif Hikmet Beyefendi, Translator (*Mütercim*) Rüşdi Paşa and Fuad Efendi (Keçecizâde, later Paşa) were appointed as members of this temporary council. This council proposed the organization of public education in terms of three levels such as primary schools (*mekâtib-i sıbyan*), secondary schools (*mekâtib-i rüşdiyye*) and higher education (*dârülfünûn*). Later on the Ministry of Public Education (*Mekâtib-i Umûmiye Nezâreti*) and a permanent Council of Education (*Meclis-i Maârif*) were established.³³¹ The opening of secondary schools (*mekâtib-i rüşdiyye*) had been a step forward on the road of development however; Cevdet considers this a jump into the middle of the business. Considering that different levels of education were proposed at the Temporary Council of Education while it would have been expected to reform primary schools from the outset, and to open secondary schools for those children who initially would be educated in these reformed primary schools, primary schools as a consequence remained as they used to be.³³² Without reforming the institutions at the root of the education system, any reform would not be fully effective and as fruitful as it was expected to be.

It is interesting to see that Reşid Paşa, who had been the main protagonist in the editing of the Imperial Edict of 1839, reacted against the Imperial Reform Edict (*Islâhat Hatt-ı Hümayûnu*) of 1856/1272AH. While explaining the reasons to that, Cevdet states that although the preparation of an edict of a similar kind was one of the necessities of the current era and although both Reşid Paşa and other politicians were affirming this fact, still some articles of the edict should have been altered before the edict was presented to the public. However, its articles were put into force at once so as to earn the favour of the Europeans, although several parts of it should have been implemented

³³⁰ Tanpınar, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 167.

³³¹ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no.6, 10.

³³² *Ibid*, 11.

gradually, in due time.³³³ So what Ülken considers as a push forward by the West for the further development of the Empire was considered by Reşid Paşa and by Cevdet Paşa, as well, as a hindrance against the gradual and organic development of the Ottoman law and institutions.

The most problematic article of the Edict of 1856 is stated by Cevdet to be the political equality granted to the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. Cevdet says that while the non-Muslims were not performing the most important duty of the Ottoman subjects which was to perform military service, it becomes absurd that the non-Muslims were granted political equality.³³⁴ With the Imperial Edict of 1856/1272AH, it became obligatory to allow non-Muslims to enter government service. Cevdet is of the opinion that it would have suited the spirit of the Empire better if the non-Muslims were to be employed in economic affairs as they used to be instead of assigning them to the political or international affairs.³³⁵

Cevdet quotes Reşid Paşa's written statement (*lâyiha*) on the Treaty of Paris which was signed in 1856/1272AH and on the Imperial Reform Edict which was announced shortly before the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris. In this statement Reşid Paşa objects the article on the equality granted to all Ottoman subjects arguing that if there were no strong obligation in these issues it was not right to go this far. And if there were indeed an obligation, in that case this newly introduced order would turn the Empire into a colour which is in complete opposition to its six hundred years old colour. Such a significant and delicate order could bring about unwanted consequences such as the mutual slaughtering of the Muslims and non-Muslims.³³⁶

Although this is evaluated to be the most problematic article of the Imperial Reform Edict of 1856/1272, Reşid Paşa's reaction to this stipulation cannot specifically be on the political equality granted to the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. The jurist and philosopher Prof. Reşat Kaynar (d. 2006) asserts that Reşid Paşa is known to be a person who among the reforms he pursued specifically endeavoured to realize the equality of all the subjects of the Empire. He even did motivate Sultan Mahmud II in

³³³ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 10, 74.

³³⁴ *Ibid*, 74.

³³⁵ *Ma'rûzât*, 2.

³³⁶ *Ibid*, 79-80: "Her ne ise bu hususlarda mecburiyet-i kaviye olmadığı takdirde bu derece ileri gidilmek münasip görülmediği misilli şayed bir kavî mecburiyet olduğu hâlde dahi çünkü bu madde Devlet-i âliye'nin altı yüz senelik rengini tamamiyle zıdd-ı muhalifi olan bir renge koyacak ve ehl-i islâm ve hıristiyan beyninde ma'az-allahu ta'alâ bir mukatele-i azîme vuku'una sebep olabilecek bir emr-i cesim ve nâzik olup ..."

this matter. In the first volume of the article series “Ottoman men in the thirteenth century of the hegira” it is explained that Reşid Paşa was getting prepared for action in line with the things he witnessed and experienced since the time he was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. However he had always acted patiently and carefully due to the wisdom in his ideals. During the last years of Mahmud II’s reign which coincides with Reşid Paşa’s ministry, it is said that in a meeting with the foreign ambassadors, Reşid Paşa asked the sultan to say ‘I would like to see my Muslim subjects in the mosque, my Christian subjects in the church, and my Jewish subjects in the synagogue. Between them there is no difference other than this. My justice and affection towards them is steadfast, and all of them are my real children.’, and Reşid Paşa interpreted this imperial speech as a sign that the sultan accepted the equality of all the Ottoman subjects.³³⁷

Being as keen as such to make the sultan say a positive word on the equality of the Ottoman subjects, there must be other reasons why Reşid Paşa was reluctant to be affirmative toward the Imperial Reform Edict of 1856. One reason could be that although Âli Paşa, who had been the main architect in the preparation of the edict, used to be one of the protégées of Reşid Paşa, their political interests and the groups they sympathized with got changed. While Reşid Paşa was sympathizing with the British policies, Âli Paşa was favouring the French policies.³³⁸ The constellation of different political groups which were composed of people sided with either Âli or Reşid Paşa and the tension created between the two groups could be one reason why Reşid Paşa was not fully affirmative toward this attempt of reform.

Another reason, as stated by Cevdet, might be lying in the method of applying reforms. Although Reşid Paşa used to have a similar reform agenda as Âli and Fuad Paşas, he was trying to initiate the reforms slowly, without making them being felt immediately and thus preventing reaction from the society. He expected that when his administrative office comes to an end, the reforms and amendments in this direction would continue in a gradual way.³³⁹ However, some of the articles in the Imperial Reform Edict were claimed by Reşid Paşa to be against “the six hundred years old colour of the Ottoman Empire”³⁴⁰ Putting the edict immediately in force before

³³⁷ Reşat Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit Paşa ve Tanzimat*, (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), 99-100.

³³⁸ Yılmaz Öztuna, *Âli Paşa*, (Kültür ve Turizm Yayınları, Türk Büyükleri Dizisi: 106, 19889, 26.

³³⁹ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 10, 70-71.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 79-80.

changing several impeding conditions must have been regarded by Reşid Paşa as a hastily-taken decision which aimed to gain the favour of the foreigners. It is said that in this way, Âli and Fuad Paşas attracted the hatred of the Muslim community.³⁴¹ In the *Ma'rûzât*, Cevdet, in addition to the negative remarks concerning the equality of non-Muslims similar to those he made at the *Tezâkir*, claims that the main reason for the deep hostility of the Muslims against Âli Paşa was that while Reşid Paşa filled the Translation Bureau with Muslims, Âli Paşa filled the Office of Correspondence (*Tahrîrât-ı Hâriciye*) with Armenians.³⁴²

While Fuad Paşa was discussing the issue of political equality of non-Muslims with the British ambassador Stratford Canning, Cevdet quotes Fuad Paşa saying that the Ottoman Empire has been established upon four principles. If these principles are rightly preserved, it would be possible to govern the country in any desired way and guarantee further progress. Therefore, whether non-Muslims were granted political equality or not was not going to worn out the Ottoman political system as long as these principles were kept intact. These principles are stated as first, Muslim community (*Millet-i İslâmiye*); second, Turkish state (*Devlet-i Türkiye*); third, the sultanate of the Ottoman dynasty (*salâtîn-i Osmaniye*); fourth, Istanbul as the capital city (*payitaht-ı İstanbul*). Though Cevdet agrees with Fuad Paşa on these principles, he however questions whether the equality granted to non-Muslims actually had not destroyed one of these principles by undermining the political status of Muslims, who had been the dominant community or nation (*millet-i hâkime*) in the Empire for centuries.³⁴³ Here Ahmed Cevdet seems to indicate that even though there is a reform needed to be implemented in order to get rid of several obstacles to the development of the country, still if the prospective reform threatens one of the main principles of the Empire, the statesmen should be more careful in making decisions. Unless the statesmen act sensitive in these issues, the reforms might lead to the rise of upheavals among the society. So, the Ottoman society should not be left without one of the main principles

³⁴¹ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 10, 70-71.

³⁴² *Ma'rûzât*, 2.

³⁴³ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 10, 85: "Akdemce buna dâir cereyan eden müzakerat esnasında Fuad Paşa Canning'e demiş ki "Devlet-i âliye dört esas üzere müesses olup bunlar ile her nasıl istenir ise idaresi ve ilerlemesi kabil olur ve bunlardan her hangisi nakıs olur ise idâre kabil olmaz. Dört esas budur. Millet-i islâmiye, devlet-i türkiye, salâtîn-i osmaniye, pâyitaht-ı İstanbul..." Fuad Paşa'nın bu sözleri doğrudur. Fakat bu kadar yüz yıllardan beri millet-i hâkime olan ehl-i islâm teba'a-i gayr-i Müslime ile müsavat-ı tamme hâline tenezzül ettikte acabâ dört esastan biri hadm edilmiş olmadı mı."

that shouldered it to the present-time, at least without replacing it with another principle that would be as strongly embraced by the society as the one before that.

Although Cevdet was not one of the members of the Young Ottoman movement, still some of Cevdet's writings seem to be to some extent in line with the objections directed by the Young Ottomans to the government strategies of the Ottoman statesmen. For instance, Ziya Paşa (1825-1880) was of the opinion that the school of Âli Paşa had forgotten the opportunities provided by the “unfathomable sea of the *Şeriat*.”³⁴⁴ Other than that, Mardin thinks that Namık Kemal's reaction against the increasing separation of religious practices from the governing institutions of the Empire from the nineteenth century onwards, and his ideas on reviving the former Ottoman practices have had a firm and convincing bases. Mardin says that this detachment between religion and politics happened with the establishment of new civil and military institutions. Constructing an efficiently functioning system was the main intention in the creation of these institutions, and while getting away from the ideological background of former institutions, they did not tend to cover these new institutions with an ideology that would fit to these new institutions' character. Thus these reforms, oriented in principle to the physical strengthening of the state and the statesmen did not take much notice whether administrative ways of these new institutions brought about any injustices or injuries to the Ottoman subjects. Saving the Empire was the most significant duty to be fulfilled in the eye of the statesmen such as Âli Paşa. However, this line of development brought forth an ‘ideological vacuum’ since “the *Tanzîmât* statesmen contributed nothing to replace the *Şeriat* as a measuring rod of good and evil in politics.”³⁴⁵

This line of thinking can help us understand possible adversities that the reformists might come across while trying to alter the centuries' long habits or customs of a society. Even though the prospective reforms would help establishing an ideal social order, without preparing a suitable ground on which these reforms will be presented to the public, the adversities will get intensified. For instance, Mardin relates the path pursued in the establishment of new Ottoman institutions to the short sightedness of the *Tanzîmât* statesmen. He argues that by weakening the control of Islam in the functioning of the political institutions, and by rendering religion to the ‘private’ realm, the elite bureaucrats could not utilize the power of Islam to reach each

³⁴⁴ Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 115; Ziya Paşa, “Yeni Osmanlılardan Bir Zat”, *Hürriyet*, (Nisan 5, 1869), 6.

³⁴⁵ Mardin, 117-118.

and every individual and to control and regulate their actions. This in turn caused significant disequilibrium within the Ottoman society.³⁴⁶

Mardin's accusations, directed to the reformist Ottoman statesmen, could be also applied to the case of initiating reforms to the Bosnian society. While trying to convince the Bosnians to accept compulsory military service, if the most important purpose is regarded as the physical strength of the Empire and if this goal makes the statesmen undermine the factors maintaining the equilibrium of the respective society within the process of reform making, in the long run this would not only cause the disruption of the former social order, but the new order that was to be realized would also be threatened by the resistance of the society against change. This can be one of the reasons why Mardin considers the Ottoman elite to be "quite merciless and blunt in enforcing the social, political and intellectual Westernization of the country" while following the trend of being in the way of civilization.³⁴⁷ The objections Cevdet directs to the Imperial Reform Edict of 1856 might be in the same line with these criticisms directed to the Ottoman statesmen. Although the political equality granted to the non-Muslims was a step in line with the gradual detachment of religion from the practices of government and with the establishment of new institutions that were to be regulated in line with the European codes of law, still this action was to be fully implemented only after constructing the basis in line with this development.

The abolition of the Janissaries and the ensuing difficulties following this radical step could also be considered an example of how arduous it could be to make radical changes even though the necessity for this step was generally accepted and even though the ground for this drastic reform was already prepared by adopting modern military strategies. In the correspondence between the Ottoman ambassador to Vienna, Sadullah Paşa (1838-1891), also well-known as a *Tanzîmât*-poet, and Ahmed Cevdet on the publication of the twelfth volume of the *Târih-i Cevdet*, Sadullah Paşa asks how it became possible that while in Russia the abolition of the Streltsy resulted in the strengthening of the Russians, the abolition of the Janissaries could not restore the Ottoman power, although both Streltsy and Janissaries were a barrier against the

³⁴⁶ Mardin, 118.

³⁴⁷ Ibid, 116.

progress of their respective countries, and although both of these countries had similar political organizations.³⁴⁸

In his response Ahmed Cevdet Paşa states that although Russia and the Ottoman Empire followed a similar method of reformation which was run through the initiative of the ruling classes, still while Streltsy were a tumor in the shoulder of Russia, Janissaries were like a cancer in the heart of the Ottoman Empire. Janissaries penetrated to the marrow of the Empire, and as the Janissary corpses invaded the subsidiary parts of the offices of the state by depending on the patriotic feelings of society (*asabiyet-i milliye*), they were not differentiated from the person of the state. With their abolition, the feeling of solidarity (*kuvve-i asabiye*) among the Muslim societies got injured. The administrative offices could not fill the places that were emptied by the Janissaries with the new soldiers (*asâkir-i nizâmîye*). To fill such kind of gaps the implementation of many an internal reforms was needed. As the Ottoman Empire was governed through a non-centric administrative system, different administrative units were not similar to each other; all of them were following a different administrative way, so the reforms to be made had to take those differences into consideration, as well.³⁴⁹

To conclude, the methods pursued by Ahmed Cevdet Paşa while resolving the problems in Bosnia, give the researcher a slight feeling of an inclination toward the Foucauldian contemplations on the participatory art of government in which all parts of the state -with an emphasis on the individuals- are considered to be an essential factor in the governance of a state. While Foucault resembles this to the governance of a ship,³⁵⁰ where all different parts of the ship including the crew are to be in good harmony so as to survive through rough weathers, Cevdet makes an analogy between the functioning of a state and a clock.³⁵¹ Again the harmony between different parts is the key to

³⁴⁸ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40'nin Tetimmesi, 217: "...strelitz askeri nasıl Rusya ıslâhâtına mâni' ise yeniçeriler dahi dahi terakkiyât-ı osmâniyeye mâni' idi ve iki devletin kuvve-i müfekkire ve fâ'ilesi olan teşkilât-ı siyâsiyesi ke-mâ-kân yek-diğerine esâsen müşâbih ve mutâbık idi. İmdi mâni' ve mûcib iki devlette dahi mütecânis iken netâyic niçün mütebâyin oldu. Zîrâ strelitz askerinin ilgâsıyla Rusya'nın kuvvet ü mikneti fevka'l-âde tezâyüd eyledi. Bizde ise yeniçerilerin imhâsı devletin ikbâl-i sâbıkını iâde edemedi."

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 219: "...yeniçeri Devlet-i âliye'nin kalbinde bir seretân illetine benzerdi. Strelitz askeri ise Rusya'nın omzunda bir ur idi. Yeniçerilik Osmanlıların iligine işlemiş ve ocaklar asabiyet-i milliye makamına kaim olarak devâir-i devletin usûl ü furû'unu istilâ eylemiş olduğuna nazaran devletin zâtîyâtından ma'dûd olmuş idi. Anın ilgaasıyla ehl-i islâmın kuvve-i asabiyesine za'f geldi. Şu'ubât-ı idâre taraf taraf açılan yerleri asâkir-i nizâmîye ile dolduramayıp o türlü boşlukları doldurmak için pek çok ıslâhât-ı dâhiliye icrası lâzım idi. Devlet-i âliye ise idâre-i gayr-i merkeziye tahtında idâre oluna-geldiği ve iyâlâtın biri diğerine benzemeyip her biri idârece başka yol almış olduğu cihetle her tarafın ahvâl-i husûsiyesini düşünerek ıslâhât-ı matlûbeyi ana göre yapmak lâzım gelirdi."

³⁵⁰ Foucault, "Governmentality," 93-94.

³⁵¹ *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 40, 98.

success. Any act of reform that may disturb that harmonious environment is to be abstained. And if there is any reform directed to treat the flaws that occur in one part of the clock, this should be supported by simultaneous developments in the other parts so that the different parts would always be rightly fit to each other.

However, although Cevdet had been the person who chaired the *Mecelle* Commission which prepared the grounds for the *nizâmîye* courts in which both the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the Empire were to be treated equally, still when the issue is the political equality granted to non-Muslim subjects of the Empire, Cevdet does not seem to be eager to accept it. Agreeing with Fuad Paşa that the Ottoman Empire stands upon several basic principles one of which was the *millet* (community or nation) of Muslims, Cevdet says, the political equality granted to non-Muslims directly threatens this basic principle of the Empire.³⁵² Cevdet seems to feel threatened with the idea that a change in the roles that had been for centuries attributed to the different social groups in the Empire, i.e. Muslims and non-Muslims, might disrupt Ottoman social order. Remembering Cevdet's disapproval of the ideas of liberty and equality in the sense that led to the occurrence of the revolutions and change of regimes in France which had been followed by other European countries, Cevdet seems to be intolerant toward any possibility of similar radical changes that could change the socio-political character of the Ottoman Empire, for the centuries-long stability of which Cevdet was thankful to the God.³⁵³ Cevdet tries to moderate to a certain extent his disapproval of the political equalities granted to all the Ottoman subjects by indicating that he is not totally against such a change, but considers this kind of a reform too hastily made, while such a critical decision should have normally been gradually implemented within the Empire. On the other hand, considering that Cevdet was for the implementation of similar reforms in all the different branches of the state simultaneously, while non-Muslims were started to be granted equality in the Ottoman court system with the foundation of *nizâmîye* courts, it could have been considered inevitable by Cevdet that in line with this development, the non-Muslims should have also been granted political equality, as well. Therefore, Cevdet's partial disapproval of the equality of all Muslims with non-Muslims, though understandable from the nineteenth century perspective of the Ottoman Empire, can be considered as one of the handicaps that may arise out of Cevdet's inclination to support organically-driven reforms.

³⁵² *Tezâkir*, Tezkire no. 10, 85.

³⁵³ *Târih-i Cevdet*, cilt I, 20.

CONCLUSION

Observing the Weberian analysis on different social behaviours that lead to the formation of a modern social order, we have shown that it is not possible to suggest that Cevdet was an intellectual whose decisions were basically and merely motivated by the rational calculation of means and ends. Still, when comparing the rational type of behaviour described by Weber with the other types of social behaviours he exemplifies, which he claims are observed in traditional societies, such as the value oriented, affective and traditional types of behaviours,³⁵⁴ the researcher is convinced to suggest that more than these three, Cevdet's reformist attitude was mostly nurtured by the ration based behaviour.

Although Cevdet mostly favoured the reforms to be in line with an Islamic understanding, i.e. the *Mecelle* project, still in most of the places he was instrumentalizing Islam in order to yield what he considered as the most efficient results. For instance, although Cevdet favoured the codification of the Islamic Law rather than the adoption of the French *code civile*, still the *Mecelle* project, as being the first codification of the Islamic Law was both restricting the powers of the *ulemâ*, subjecting the Islamic Law to the approval of the sultan, and as being a product of a human effort turning it into a positive law. Other than that his support for the establishment of the *nizâmîye* courts which limited the influence of the religious institutions, or the methods Ahmed Cevdet utilized in implementing reforms such as making surveys and getting familiarized with the customs of the local people, all these examples and more of it that was analyzed throughout the thesis confirm Cevdet's inclination to think by way of making means and ends calculations.

On the other hand as a statesman we have indicated that Cevdet's unconditional support for the authoritarian rule of the sultan, his favour for the reforms that would not directly change the essence of the Ottoman socio-political order, and his thought that the public opinion can be a serious threat to the central authority of the sultan can display that Cevdet's vision of an ideal system of governance is quite different from a Foucauldian analysis of the 'art of governmentality', which favours the governance of

³⁵⁴ Ellweil, *The Classical Tradition*, 54.

the actions of individuals together with the active participation of individuals themselves as in the parable of the ship explained by Foucault.³⁵⁵ However, it has been argued that although Cevdet cannot be considered to have the visions of a modern statesman on governance, still it is not possible to consider him as a man pursuing a Machiavellian understanding of a princely rule, as well. In fact, when we compare the modern governance strategies with the methods pursued in a traditional princely rule, the methodology pursued by Cevdet is analyzed to be at least inclined toward the modern governance strategies. The methods Cevdet uses in implementing reforms to the different social groups of the Empire, i.e. the Bosnians, such as his recognition of the requests of the inhabitants of the region and his attempt to understand the characteristic features of the people living in the respective areas of the Empire in order to convince the society with the prospective reforms demonstrate that Cevdet was against the alienation of the government to the interests and to the different life styles of the social groups subjected to the authority of the sultan.

What is more Cevdet's sensitivity in protecting the feeling of solidarity (*asabiyet*) that cements different social groups in the Empire into each other is also indicative of his perspective that although Cevdet is supportive of the authoritarian rule of the sultan, still his views do not express a support for the arbitrary rule of the sultan. The examples found in the *Târih-i Cevdet*, the *Tezâkir* and the *Ma'rûzât* demonstrate that Cevdet is mainly supportive of a governance strategy that would allow gradual change of the state institutions and the law system. He is of the opinion that it is only through the organic change of the social and political institutions under the supervision of the government that an efficiently functioning state mechanism, which would provide its subjects with a free (!) social atmosphere, in which they can realize their potentials as human beings, can be realized. The examples he gives on the success of the British across the failure of the French governance strategies basically stems from this basic thought that is intrinsic in his writings.

Being aware of the necessity to analyze Cevdet's works according to the socio-political conditions of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century, the researcher observes that Cevdet cannot be labelled as being either a modern or a conservative intellectual. In fact the twentieth and twenty first century conceptions of these two terms

³⁵⁵ Foucault, "Governmentality," 93-94.

pose the threat of colouring our perception in analyzing the works and deeds of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa. This is the threat of judging a nineteenth century intellectual with the socio-political perceptions of the present-day. So, instead of looking at whether Cevdet was a modern or a conservative intellectual and statesman, we rather preferred to call him as a thorough reformist who adopts a partially progressive attitude. This partiality is attributed to Cevdet due to his unwillingness in accepting the reforms that might threaten the essence of the Ottoman political system. On top of this conviction suggested in this thesis, we saw that the main reason that confuses minds in regard to Cevdet's intellectual disposition on whether he should be considered as modern or not, is that of the comparisons that have been made in the academic environment between Cevdet and some of his contemporaries, i.e. Midhat Paşa. Observing that statesmen like Midhat Paşa display a more favourable attitude toward radical reforms and toward the adoption of the Western institutions by the Ottoman Empire, it is mostly taken into granted that Cevdet's endeavour to get utilized from Islam and his support for gradual reform stands opposite to the first approach. However, with such a perspective, if the first group is to be called as being composed of modern statesmen, it would not be possible to place Cevdet into the same category. And as Cevdet's reformist attitude would disprove calling him as a conservative statesman, there will inevitably be confusions.

In this thesis, the underlying perception has been to accept both Cevdet and statesmen like that of Midhat as thorough reformists, and the differences between the two are analyzed by arguing that Cevdet was against the adoption of the Western institutions and customs as a whole by the Ottoman Empire. By considering civilization as a universal phenomenon, which is one of the stages of development that every orderly state is to realize in the course of history, Cevdet indicates that every state has its own laws unique to her, and the illnesses of each and every state can only be cured by finding a treatment in line with the laws of the respective state. A statesman should basically take lessons from the experiences of other states, because the mere adoption of the treatments developed by an unfamiliar meaning system would cause a rupture from the legacy of the Ottoman Empire. So, Cevdet's reformist horizon seems to be nurtured by a support for the organic change of the different institutions of the Empire without disrupting the meaning system that holds together the different institutions and social groups existing in the Ottoman Empire through the feeling of *asabiyet*. It is the

combination of the three terms: *medeniyet* (*civilization*); as a developmental stage that offers better living conditions, *terakki* (*progress*); as a means to realize the requirements of this last stage of development, *asabiyet* (*solidarity*); whose disappearance leads to the collapse of civilizations, that is suggested to be the representative of Cevdet's reformist horizon.



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