

RATIONALITY, MODERNISM AND TURKISH
CONSERVATIVE ENGINEERS

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İSTANBUL ŞEHİR UNIVERSITY
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This is to certify that we have read this thesis and in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Cultural Studies.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Esra Şanlı', written in a cursive style.

ABSTRACT

RATIONALITY, MODERNISM AND TURKISH CONSERVATIVE ENGINEERS

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This study aims to provide a background for interpretation of rational thinking and modernization in late Ottoman and Turkish Republic eras. In order to do this, the idea of rationality and rise of conservatism is reviewed by following the ideas of Weber, Habermas and Marcuse on rationality, bureaucratization and technology in the West. As a reactionary movement, main pillars of conservatism is discussed and the reflections of these ideas in late 19th, early 20th century in Ottoman Empire is given by examining the ideas of Egyptian modernist Muhammad Abduh and Mehmet Akif and in Turkish Republic era it is examined through the state ideology and conservative engineers as political figures. In this study, engineers are considered as one of the major representatives of modernization process as a profession and under the light of in-depth interviews made with conservative engineers, rational thinking and positioning of conservatism in Turkey is discussed.

Keywords: Rationalism, Enlightenment, Modernity, Conservatism, Islam, Engineering

ÖZ

RASYONALİTE, MODERNLİK VE MUHAFAZAKAR MÜHENDİSLER

Şanlı, Hatice Esra

MA, Kültürel Çalışmalar Bölümü

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Bu çalışma Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet dönemlerinde rasyonel düşünce ve modernizasyon çalışmaları üzerine bir arka plan sağlamak ve muhafazakar mühendislerin bakış açısıyla modernlik ve muhafazakarlık kavramlarına projeksiyon tutmayı amaçlamaktadır. Rasyonalite, Max Weber, Jürgen Habermas ve Herbert Marcuse'nin Batı'da rasyonalite, bürokratikleşme ve teknoloji üzerine çalışmalarından yararlanarak incelenmiştir. Muhafazakarlığın yapıtaşları ve 19. yüzyıl sonu 20. yüzyıl başı Osmanlı coğrafyasındaki yansımaları Mehmet Akif ve Muhammed Abduh'un yazıları üzerinden incelenmiştir. Cumhuriyet döneminde ise, devlet ideolojisi ve muhafazakar olarak nitelenen mühendisler üzerinden bir inceleme yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmada mühendisler, modernizasyon sürecinin ana temsilcilerinden kabul edilerek, muhafazakar mühendislerle yapılan mülakatlar ışığında, onların bakış açısından Türkiye'de rasyonel düşünce ve muhafazakarlığın yeri tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Rasyonalite, Modernlik, Muhafazakarlık, Mühendisler

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Introduction

1. Historical Background

In an age known for technological improvements, rational thinking, and a dominant capitalist economic system, engineering is one of the professions standing at the very center of these concepts since engineers are the representatives of technology in society, key players in industries that sustain the capitalist economic system, and practitioners of the rational-scientific approach known to be one of the pillars of modern thinking.

Max Weber stated that all these developments started with the idea of rationalism. His writings focused on the “disenchantment of the world,” the bureaucracy, and the lack of freedom appeared in the West. Weber used the term “rationalism” in reference to the modernization process of western civilization, and focused on the question: “Why was western civilization the only one that developed a certain kind of cultural phenomenon and had universal significance?” According to him, rationalism arose in various realms of life and varies from culture to culture. However, only the western type of rationalism has universal validity.

Other than rationalism in the social and economic realms, in Muslim societies, rationalism in the realm of religion was considered a problematic issue in the late nineteenth century. A prominent scholar that discussed the notion of modernity in Muslim societies was the Egyptian scholar Muhammad Abduh. In Ottoman lands, Mehmed Akif (Ersoy) actively defended reforms in Muslim societies in the speeches he delivered at mosques and in his writings published in periodicals. In these thinkers’ writings, discussions revolved around such topics as the

adaptability of the Muslim lifestyle to western norms, and the elimination of superstitions and baseless traditions from social practices. The major theme in discussions of these issues was the creation of coherence between Islam and western modernity.

In contrast to the approach adopted by Ottoman thinkers who sought harmony between modernity and Islam, the founders of the Republic of Turkey embraced western modernity as the goal of the state without consideration of its compatibility with Muslim society. On the 10th anniversary of Turkish Republic speech in Ankara, on 29 October 1933, the Republic's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk formulated this goal as "reaching the level of contemporary civilization." This shows that the creation of a new Turkish culture based on the norms of the West had become more important for the leadership of the times than carrying over the Ottoman religious and cultural inheritance to the contemporary world.

A new culture based on applying western notions of modernity to various spheres of life — from the public sphere such as the law, science, and the economy, to the private such as marriage and social relations — was constructed by the state, under the leadership of the Republican People's Party (RPP) that was founded as the first and only party of Turkey during the early republican period known as the monoparty era. Since the formation of this new culture was artificially realized by the state, society's participation in and acceptance of it remained limited. The inhabitants of the rural parts of Anatolia, which constituted some 80% of the population of Turkey in the early to mid-twentieth century, could not identify with the people in the government and with the RPP's policies.

Following the opening to multiparty politics in 1945, new political parties emerged in Turkey, and for the first time, a party other than the RPP won the opportunity to form a government in 1950. This new party, named the Democrat Party (DP), had gained the majority of the people's support by taking a stance

against the RPP's elitist and bureaucratic rule. The DP's criticism of the RPP's cultural policies oriented toward westernization resonated with villagers and small town dwellers, who had felt forced to give up their Islamic culture and adopt a foreign, western lifestyle.

Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, a founder of the DP, became a symbol of both economic development and the defense of traditional values. Although the DP was eventually overthrown in a military coup and Menderes was put to death, other conservative (*muhafazakâr*) figures emerged on the Turkish political stage in the years that followed, notably Süleyman Demirel, Turgut Özal, and Necmettin Erbakan. All three had been trained as engineers before entering politics, a fact that was as well known to the public as their conservative ideology. The politically moderate environment they created allowed people to adopt an Islamic lifestyle, while the economic opportunities they created for lower-middle class people opened avenues for their upward mobility.

Even though these conservative engineer-politicians positioned themselves against the policies of the RPP, which fashioned itself the protector of Atatürk's reforms, their own politics did not directly confront the philosophy of the Republic's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. On the contrary, statements were given to respect modern Turkish government developed within the guidance of Kemal Atatürk. A populist discourse was produced, encompassing the religious and cultural values of society while protecting the main pillars of the democratic state. Atatürk's vision of "reaching the level of contemporary civilizations" was preserved, while at the same time the values inherited from Turkey's Islamic-Ottoman cultural background were cherished and protected.

As part of Turkey's development plans, engineering was promoted in order to develop the country's industrial base. As a result of the increase thus achieved in the number of engineers, coupled with heavy investment in industry and

technology, engineers gained authority and became actively involved in Turkey's modernization process and politics. Although the relationship between modernization and engineering is not obvious at first sight, technocratic ideology claim that engineering can also be done for social affairs and rationalism engineers applied in industry can also be applied to society which is called "social engineering".

Industrial development is an issue of great urgency for non-western societies, as it is seen as the path to reaching a western standard of living. As the leaders of industrial development, engineers have more important socio-political role in such countries than they do in the West. Beyond commanding authority in industry, engineers are expected to encourage industrialization and rational thinking against traditionalism, and this gives them a distinguished position in society.

In contemporary Turkey, engineers' ideas on professionalism and their perspective on social affairs are likely to shed light on both industrial development and the development of civil society in the country. Moreover, since the number of religious-conservative engineers increased significantly as a result of the policies of the Nationalist Front governments in the late 1970s, and especially during the prime ministership of Turgut Özal during the late 1980s, it is of special interest to investigate the attitudes of these engineers with regard to rationalism, professionalism, religion, and modernity, particularly insofar as they may shed light upon the future of Islamism in Turkey.

2. This Study

During the late Ottoman period, modernization was taken up as the primary means to save the empire against foreign encroachments and socio-economic decline. The modernization project began with the foundation of schools of engineering and, relatedly, the development of advanced military technology. In the years that followed, the western notion of modernity was discussed among Muslim intellectuals in terms of the Islamic faith and religious laws. The present study discusses the views of the Egyptian modernist Muhammad Abduh, his teacher Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, and the Ottoman poet and thinker Mehmed Akif in an effort to highlight the debates revolving around the relationship between Islam and modernity during the late nineteenth century.

Engineers were active participants in the Ottoman drive for modernization, and today, they continue to play important social, economic, and political roles in republican Turkey. For this reason, the question posed at the beginning of this study was: “What do conservative engineers think about the modernization of Turkey?” Although the study has a historical dimension in that it seeks the roots of the discourse of modernization in Ottoman-Turkish lands, it also focuses on the sociological dimension of conservatism and religion in Turkey from the perspective of engineers.

I chose to conduct my research among engineers, rather than economists, corporate managers, or marketeers, because I was interested in their unique perspective on modernity and modernization. Although politicians have more powerful roles in society and experts in finance are the key players in money markets and the capitalist economy, the fact that engineers — with their technical education and their role as carriers of rational scientific norms into society’s everyday life — are bridges between rational methodologies and practical life led

me to write this thesis on their views. I interviewed not engineers in general, but rather those engineers who define themselves as conservative and have a religious lifestyle. It is important to note that rational thinking exists not only in western culture but in others as well. However, in this study, the terms rationality and rational thinking are used to refer to the western notion of rationalism, as this notion is also part of the “westernization” project of the Turkish state.

The aim of this study is to shed light upon the relationship between Turkey’s westernizing state policies and the engineers holding conservative views in Turkey. Naturally, the important question here is whether or not having religious views presents a challenge for embracing modernity. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to clarify the characteristics of religious-conservative thought. In addition to Islamic education, it is clear that social experiences and technical education have contributed to shaping the views of the engineers. This shaping process creates a new form coherent with modernity and Islamic beliefs; we can define this as a vernacular form that reflects the cultural and political specificity of Turkey.

This study is based on in-depth interviews with conservative engineers on the subjects of rationalism, the conservative worldview, Turkey’s modernization project, and professionalism in Turkey. The informants were selected from different fields and various positions in those fields. They came from different cultural and economic backgrounds and were not limited to a specific age range.

CHAPTER I

Rationalism and Bureaucracy

I know whence I originate!
Like a flame insatiate
I anneal me and consume.
Light grows all that I conceive,
Embers everything I leave:
Certainty is I am flame!
Nietzche¹

1.1 Rationalism from the perspective of Weber

There are images of Weber with different characteristics. The first image is of a liberal man who believes in personal salvation. He has a pessimistic character and his way of thinking resembles that of Nietzsche, finding its meaning in the motto “all the values devalue themselves”. Weber’s ideas on the nature of power and rationalization in the modern context depict the domination of man over nature, and this domination requires bureaucratization in order to exclude irrational and incalculable feelings from man’s tasks. Weber’s pessimism appears at this point, for he believed that rationalized efficiency dehumanizes its creators and leads to

¹ The poem “Ecce Homo” from “Joke, Cunning and Revenge: Prelude in German Rhyme”, Translated by Mark Daniel Cohen, Hyperion vol. 2, issue 4, December 2007.

alienation. Contrary to Marx, Weber did not believe in the temporariness of alienation. Instead, he used the iron cage metaphor to draw a sketch of the future: there is a cage made of iron that enslaves people, and iron is used as a symbol of industrialization, representing industrialized Europe.² Çiğdem interprets this thought as “modern destiny is spiritual in the beginning, mechanical in the end” (Çiğdem, 2010, p. 164).

On the other hand there is also another image of Weber that is distinguished by his nationalist character and his efforts to position Germany as a world power. Our focus will be on Weber’s first image and specifically on his studies on the loss of meaning, rationalism, and Islam.

Modernity and modernization developed from the emergence of rationalization in Western culture. Weber read this rationalization process in two interconnected phases: The rise and spread of instrumental rationalism, and disenchantment with religion and myth. Weber basically constituted his thesis on disenchantment with religion and traced it back to early religious practices (magical religiosity). He took the transformation from tribal magical religiosity to monotheistic religion as the first developmental transition, and disenchantment with these monotheistic religions as the second developmental transition stage.

In this section, the outcome of the rationalization process will be examined on a social level through the works of Max Weber on the analysis of rationalism and bureaucracy. Weber started with early historical religious performances and stated that the rules of these performances are learned through day-to-day experience, not through a rational course. Power rests in a “spirit” or “essence.” This spirit is described as “neither soul, demon, nor god, but something

² Ahmet Çiğdem explained the source of the iron cage metaphor. He referred to Bunyan’s “*The Pilgrim’s Progress*.” There is a man who has been tempted away by pleasure and had sinned and was hopelessly sitting in the iron cage. Weber associated this man’s position with the modern Christian’s position. The iron cage keeps the person disabled and hopeless. For this reason it also refers to the loss of meaning and freedom. (Çiğdem, 2010, p.164)

indeterminate, material yet visible, non-personal and yet somehow endowed with will” (Weber, 1993, p. 3). These beliefs evolved in time and turned into symbols, acts of worship performed through representation and analogy. In time, the rationalization of religion was performed by the functional specialization of gods. Weber emphasized the economic aspect of this process:

The outstanding economic importance of certain events may enable a particular god to achieve primacy within the pantheon, as for example, the primacy of the god of Heaven. He may be conceived of primarily as the master of light and warmth, but among groups that raise cattle, he is most frequently conceived of as the lord of reproduction (Weber, 1993, p. 13).

One of the most significant theories Weber posited about the recent history of religion is the connection between Protestantism and the rise of Occidental rationalism. Weber established a connection between the Protestant “calling” and the emergence of rational labor. This “calling” is explained as follows: “The only way of living acceptably to God was not to surpass worldly morality in monastic asceticism, but solely through the fulfillment of the obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world. This was his calling” (Weber, 1992, p. 40). Material prosperity is not only taken as a function of satisfying the material needs of life, but is also related to the expression of diligence in one’s calling (Weber, 2002, p. 12).

The doctrine of Calvinism, which assumed predestination, led to an unprecedented inner loneliness for individuals. The most important thing in individuals’ lives is their eternal salvation, for which they are forced to walk alone in this path to meet a destiny decreed for them by God. Their salvation is not through the church but is between God and the individual’s heart. Weber suggested:

The great historic process in the development of religions, the elimination of magic from the world which had begun with the old

Hebrew prophets and, in conjunction with Hellenistic scientific thought, had repudiated all magical means to salvation as superstition and sin, came here to its logical conclusion (Weber, 1992, p. 61).

The rationalization of religion originated from an orientation toward inner sacred values like the means of salvation and “sublimation from ritualism and towards religious absolutism” (Weber, 2009, p. 328). Man’s relations with internal and external values as well as religious and secular values were rationalized and sublimated. This position created a consciousness of the “internal and lawful autonomy” of the individual spheres. Weber said that this results from the rationalization and sublimation of knowledge of inner and otherworldly values (Mills, 1946). In his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber’s thesis was basically that modern material and secular culture is indebted to the Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century. Weber believed that the most significant success of the Reformation was Luther’s usage of the word “*Beruf*” (occupation) in his translation of the Bible. Contrary to traditional societies’ understanding of labor – they believed that working was for inferior people in society and scorned working for worldly affairs – the concept of *Beruf* legitimizes working and work ethics for societies. Luther was the first person in the West to use “*Beruf*” (occupation) for material affairs in a translation of the Bible (Sunar, 2012, pp. 174-175).

However, it should be noted that the understanding of “progress” in the modern world and the Protestant “calling” in the sixteenth century do not have the same source of motivation. Rational thinking on the foundation of the idea of a “calling” is assumed to be part of the capitalist spirit born out of Christian asceticism. However, while modern *homo economicus* seemed to be rooted in this Puritan reference, today it has already disappeared (Ascher, 2010, p. 1). Weber stated:

The old Protestantism of such men as Luther, Calvin, Knox, or Voet had little to do with what is today called “progress”. It was directly

hostile to whole aspects of modern life which today even the most extreme sectarian would not wish to do away with. So if an inner affinity between the old Protestant Spirit and modern capitalist culture is to be found, we must try, for good or ill, to seek it not in its more or less materialistic or at least anti-ascetic enjoyment of life, but rather in its purely religious features (2002, p. 7).

In his writings about his observations in the United States, Weber stated that religious affiliation had an important position in social and business life, which depended on credit relations. At that point, the crucial formations were sects (denominations). Sect membership represented the moral qualification and business morals of the individual. A sect would only accept a member whose conduct made him appear morally qualified, since the sect would be taken as a reference to creditors and would not allow the creditors to suffer losses on account of a sect member. The congregation had the role of providing a confidence in society. This confidence had strategic importance, especially in business relations. In his notes, Weber pointed out that, in general, only those men who belonged to the Methodist and Baptist churches were successful in business, and, moreover, that if a sect member moved to another place or if he was a travelling salesman, he would carry his 'certificate of congregation' with him. Thus, belonging to a sect was a certification of morality. Even though the congregations and the sects were based on religion, they were not associated purely with the religious beliefs and actions of the individuals. They had the function of controlling the economy, establishing business networks, and creating a society in which people were distinguished. Religious organizations had the role of providing leverage, especially for the middle class. As mentioned above, they established a business network and were the vehicle for becoming an entrepreneur.

Religion had the role of faith and belief, which was taken as a guarantee or certificate of confidence and moral values. As Weber pointed out, people believed that a person who had faith in God and who controlled his actions with

the belief that a higher power was watching him would not cheat other people, as opposed to those who did not believe in a higher power and might not obey social contracts (Gerth and Mills, 1948, pp. 303-308). I believe that this is an important nuance and should be taken into consideration in analyzing the process of bureaucratization.

Bureaucratization is the practice of regulating moves while processing or performing an action. It reduces the gaps in which people can use their subjectivity, and all actions have to be recorded; thus a person who is in bureaucracy may not necessarily be a moral person, but her/his movements are restricted by regulations. This situation eliminated the need for religion as a guarantee of morality in business relations. However, it should be noted that the sects described by Weber did not only provide economic benefits. They also provided spiritual benefits; thus a complete rational transformation of society cannot be said to have occurred at that stage of history.

Since we have been examining the social effects of religious sects, we should note that Weber was not oriented toward the core of religion in his studies, but rather toward the experiences of the believers and their thoughts and missions, all in order to reach a definition through analyzing the given meanings of religious acts. He considered religious acts in terms of their worldly meanings and interpretations (Çiğdem, 2010, pp. 137-138).

Weber pointed to the start of the secularization process as a change in the procedure for admitting members to denominations. Specifically, members began to be admitted by “ballot,” independently of their religious beliefs, following an examination of their virtues and morality. So far, we have focused on Christian religious traditions and emphasized the role of Puritanism and its transformation into a methodical, rational way of life within which modern capitalism arose. Weber also pointed out that this is the formation of the ethos of the modern

bourgeoisie. This is the basis of Weber's rationalism theory. The disenchantment of the world is a stage in the rationalization process, and it opens the gates of modern capitalist virtues. Thus, Weber referred to a certain kind of rationalism, one that valued the Protestant ethic in the rise of different dimensions of rationalism. The reflections of this thought can be seen in the preface of his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. There, Weber claimed that modernity is only possible in the West because of the vitality of those dimensions of rationalism mentioned above.

It is my belief that Weber's essentialist claims about the Muslim community and its incapability to form a rational and capitalist system conflict with his research methodology. Weber used *singular causal analysis* in his studies. As a method, singular causal analysis leads the researcher to focus on selected potential causes and to compare additional conditions that may or may not cause the result in question. When it comes to the problem of evaluating a very large, potentially infinite number of possibilities, Fritz Ringer gave an illuminating explanation of Weber's use of this method:

According to Weber, we cannot assess the causal significance of an allegedly crucial political decision — or of any other possible cause — without trying to imagine what would have ensued in its absence. After all, a potentially infinite number of causal 'moments' or antecedent conditions have to be present to produce any concrete outcome. To identify significant singular causal relationships at all, therefore, we must inquire into the degree to which a particular cause 'favored' a given effect. But this in turn requires us hypothetically to 'compare' the result that actually followed with alternate possibilities. Thus historians need not apologize for their recourse to the "seemingly anti-deterministic category" of the merely possible, more or less probable. They cannot avoid reasoning, counterfactually, about historical events that did not occur, in order to identify the significant causes of what did occur (1997, p. 70).

The paragraph above draws the portrait of a man who had freed himself of an essentialist perception. However, I would argue that Weber's writings on Islam conflict with his methodology. In his

Weber and Islam, Bryan Turner stated that Weber's studies centering on his understanding of Eastern and Western societies are highly contrasted. The West represents a rational and systematic character while the East represents "arbitrary and unstable" economic and political conditions in low industrialized civilizations.

Lutfi Sunar has made a comprehensive comparison between the East and the West in Weber's studies. The differences between the worldviews (*Weltanschauung*) of the East and the West created a contrast and dichotomy in their respective social structures. The common view reflected by Orientalist studies draws a portrait of "passive Eastern" and "active Western" cultures. In the East, religion isolates individuals from the world, while in the West religion directs individuals to the world (rationalism). Thus the East is mystic while the West is devotee (Sunar, 2012, p. 173).

Talal Asad's understanding of the secular can shed light upon the terms 'mystical' and 'devotee.' Pietism and the Enlightenment affected Christianity by attempting to eliminate the autocracy of the clergy and the dogmas of Christianity. Secularism is the way in which people create a moral system based upon individual conscience and rights. Contrary to a belief in the sacrifice of Jesus for the sake of humanity, if the world needs to be rescued, then a person must rescue himself in the first place. According to Asad, the history of Christian missions converted a spiritual promise (Jesus sacrificed himself for us) into a political project (change the world for Jesus), a modern way of salvation (2003, pp. 85-86). This explanation can be taken as the formation of devotees in the Christian world. According to Weber, the Islamic world lacked continuity and failed to form a rational worldview.

1.2 Science and Modernity

In the previous section, we reviewed Weber's views on rationalism. The common idea is that rationalism reformed people's way of thinking and formed a system of thought based on scientific perception. Starting with the Age of Enlightenment, rational thinking began to dominate the social spheres and common sense. These reformations also affected the social spheres in terms of the urbanization of people's lifestyles and technical improvements in communication and transportation, thus opening up the gates of industrialization. It must be underlined that there is a strong correlation between the rationalization of the Western world and industrialization. In this section, we shall review science and technology in relation to industrialization and modernization. The first issue to be discussed is the basic features of a modern, industrialized society.

1.2.1 The Features of Modern Society

At the beginning of his article "Modernization and Industrialization," Krishan Kumar notes that "Modern society is industrial society. To modernize a society is, first of all, to industrialize it" (1990, p. 255). Essentially, modernization is a process of individualization, specialization, and abstraction. Habermas has described some of the historico-philosophical narratives of individualization. One such narrative is Kantian, another, Hegelian. The Kantian model describes the modernist situation and can be useful to describe individualization (Holub, 2001, p. 275). First, according to Habermas' view, the project of modernity is the continuation of the Enlightenment. According to this Kantian model, cultural modernity was described by the separation of three types of activity: "science, morality, and art". As mentioned in the first section, since the eighteenth century,

religious worldviews and the conception of metaphysics had begun to disintegrate and society has become disenchanted. These problems of religion and metaphysics were rearranged to fall under the aspects of “beauty, truth, authenticity, and normative rightness.” Then these questions were specified as questions “of knowledge, of justice and morality, and of taste”. The spheres of science, morality, and art began to form as domains of expertise, and criticism, jurisprudence, and scientific discourse were institutionalized within these domains. The problems of these domains are discussed through the views of experts (Habermas, 1981, p. 8).

Habermas pointed out the negative effect of this situation. As discussed earlier, modern societies developed a systematic and consistent approach – we can say professionalism – in various spheres of science, morality, and art. In Weber’s terms, the formation of these areas of expertise was named rationalization. If we approach the theory of rationalization from Habermas’ perspective, this latter applied his research interest in rationalism to the theory of communicative action. The theory is based on three dimensions and the “relativity of rationalism based on hermeneutics” is its first dimension.

Regarding this first dimension, we know that he saw a close relation between rationalism and knowledge. Rationality does not mean the possession of knowledge; rather, it is a way of acquiring and using knowledge. Following his assertion about the existence of a close relationship between rationality and knowledge, Habermas clarified his argument. How can an expression be counted as rational since knowledge can be unreliable and open to discussion? (Habermas, 1983, pp. 8-9). Habermas answered this question himself:

An expression satisfies the precondition for rationality if and insofar as it embodies fallible knowledge and therewith has a relation to the objective world (that is, a relation to the facts) and is open to objective judgment. A judgment can be objective if it is undertaken on the basis of a *transsubjective* validity claim that has the same

meaning for observers and nonparticipants as it has for the acting subject himself. Truth and efficiency are claims of this kind (1983, p. 9).

As a hermeneutic approach, communication in a society has importance because of the platform it creates for communication between individuals. To be rational is to have a valid claim and to compete with other claims from the same variation. Validity has the precondition of a comprehensible statement, making the self understandable by other individuals or in communication with other individuals (Çiğdem, 2010, pp. 204-205). Habermas' theory of rationalism is basically elucidated with the theory of argumentation in that sense. He stated that "Openness of rational expressions to criticism can create a ground for argumentation and argumentation is a learning process by which we can acquire theoretical knowledge, extend and renew our evaluative language and overcome our self-deceptions" (Habermas, 1983, p. 22).

Going back to the point where we discussed the spheres and the specialized culture developed by experts in these spheres, Habermas saw a problematic issue here. He noted that the experts belonging to the spheres of science, morality, and art were more consistent than normal people on "cognitive-instrumental, moral-practical, and aesthetic-expressive" rationalities. Thus, the distance between the experts and society had grown, and, as a result, the culture cultivated and accrued by the experts could not totally diffuse into society and be part of everyday praxis. This kind of cultural rationalization became impoverished since traditional values had already lost their significance.

Habermas' approach to technology showed the same characteristics by which he divided life into spheres and represented technology as suitable for some spheres and unsuitable for others. His approach defined the proper sphere for technology as neutral, while outside of its proper sphere technology causes "social pathologies" known as the major problems of modern societies (Feenberg, 1996,

pp. 46-47). For Habermas, technology remains unchained, not interacting with society, and originally related to success and control directly (Feenberg, 1999, p. 157).

In the end, the point I want to emphasize is the goal of the Enlightenment. Enlightenment thinkers aimed at releasing science, morality, and art from their esoteric bonds, developing an objective methodology, and using the cognition developed by these domains to enrich society for the rational organization of everyday life. Thus, the intention of Enlightenment thinkers was not only to develop an objective science and control nature, but also to use it for enhancing communication in society, understanding the world and the self, developing universal morality and justice, and, beyond that, increasing happiness in the world (Habermas, 1981, p. 9).

Did the project of modernity achieve its aims? Was science released from its esoteric bonds and ideologies to develop free cognition? At this point we will continue with the ideas of Herbert Marcuse and Jürgen Habermas on science and ideology.

1.2.2 Marcuse's "One Dimensional Man"

The concept of "rationalism" was introduced as the extension of rational thought in society, bureaucratic formations in law and administration, and capitalist economic activity. It also referred to industrialization, which changed not only work discipline and instrumental action in the workplace but also entire social areas through urbanization through technologies of transportation and communication. On the other hand, rationalism also referred to the disenchantment of the world, the idea of freeing the mind from unexplained values and beliefs, and the elimination of magic from everyday life in order to

achieve technical and scientific progress and improve the material world. In his study “Technology and Science as Ideology”, Habermas said that Marcuse took Weber’s understanding of rationalism – modern administration, industrial laborers, capitalist entrepreneurialism – as his point of departure and reinterpreted the implications of this term. Marcuse claimed that what is defined as rationalism is, as Weber referred to it, a “specific form of unacknowledged political domination” (Habermas, 1989, pp. 81-82).

Marcuse established a connection between slavery in earlier times and the industrial man of the present. He thought that domination now creates a higher rationality in which the efficient use of natural and mental resources leads to larger scale distribution of the benefits of this efficient usage. As a result, the man’s enslavement grown by productive apparatus and this struggle reached an international level. Marcuse pointed to advanced industrial society as being responsible for the incorrect organization of society. For him the ideology of this society is the struggle for existence.

We live and die rationally and productively. We know that destruction is the price of progress as death is the price of life, that renunciation and toil are the prerequisites for gratification and joy that business must go on and that the alternatives are Utopian. This ideology belongs to the established societal apparatus; it is a requisite for its continuous functioning and part of its rationality. However, the apparatus defeats its own purpose if its purpose is to create a humane existence on the basis of a humanized nature. And if this is not its purpose, its rationality is even more suspect. But it is also more logical for, from the beginning, the negative is in the positive, the inhuman in the humanization, enslavement in liberation. This dynamic is that of reality and not of the mind, but of a reality in which the scientific mind had a decisive part in joining theoretical and practical reason (1964, p. 98).

Society adapted itself to the outcomes of technical rationality and manipulation. Technical knowledge and management reformed cultural and political areas as well as economic areas. A total submission to reason and technical knowledge

requires domination over the senses as well as practical/daily life experience. Marcuse said that “the ‘nature of things’ including that of society, was so defined as to justify repression even suppression as perfectly rational” (Marcuse, 1964, p. 99). The outcome of this rational reformation of cultural, political and economic areas is increasing productivity. All in all, a higher standard of living is created.

What could be the effects of this scientific rationalization on people’s lives, and how did pure science turn into an instrument with practical concerns? The rational perception including the quantification of nature separated the true from the good, and science from ethics. What the concept of nature is only valid – scientifically rational – in terms of general laws of motion – physical, chemical, and biological. Under these circumstances, values are considered subjective and exiled from the rational world. Marcuse said that the only way to rescue these values is a metaphysical sanction, but such a sanction is not verifiable either. In the end, values may have higher dignity, but they are not taken as objective and so they are accorded less credit in business life.

Business life is dominated by scientific rationality in terms of being objective or “professional”. Values and beliefs are considered non-objective even if they are highly recognized in society. The only way to increase their significance is to recognize them as “ideals.” For this solution, Marcuse said that by taking values as ideals, “they don’t disturb unduly the established way of life, and are not invalidated by the fact that they are contradicted by a behavior dictated by the daily necessities of business and politics” (Marcuse, 1964, p. 99).

Habermas used the term “purposive rational action” to define these actions required through domination. Marcuse clarified the difference between pure science and purposive science by referring to Husserl. The quantification of qualities yields exactness as well as universality and a special kind of “seeing”. This “seeing” of the world is seeing in a purposive context in spite of its pure

character. It is anticipation and projection. It is emphasized that anticipation and projection interpret the world in calculable relationships. Exactness is the way of interpretation and it is a prerequisite of the domination of nature. A question arises at this point as to whether the domination of nature has any effect on creating a domination of man.

The philosophy of science changed the metaphysical question “what is...?” to the functional question “how?” and a methodology free from commitments other than to objective limits was thus established. It also meant that science had turned into an instrument. This conception of turning from metaphysical to functional worked as an *a priori*, projecting the way of the transformation of nature. This projection of taking nature as an instrument can be named a *technological a priori* (Marcuse, 1964, p. 101). Since the transformation of nature involves that of man, and man-made products require the societal ensemble, a *technological a priori* is also a *political a priori*. Even though Marxian theory claims that mode of production, rather than technology, is the basic historical factor, Marcuse believed that when technique becomes the universal form, it surrounds the entire culture and protects the legitimacy of domination. The relation between social facts and scientific facts lies at this point. While science freed nature from inherent ends, society freed men from the natural hierarchy of personal dependence and related them with quantifiable qualities. The relation between social quantification and scientific quantification, in Marcuse’s opinion, is as follows. In a given universe, cognition of data may vary since interpretation and theorizing can be done by taking a position in this structured and defined universe. However the instrumentalist character of scientific rationality is “*a priori technology and the a priori of a specific technology, namely technology as a specific control and domination*” (Marcuse, 1964, p. 104). The legitimacy of instrumental rationality expands political power and absorbs all the spheres of culture. All in all, Marcuse thought that the freedom of man is limited by the

scientific method, which provides concepts and instruments to dominate man and nature by man. Domination expanded as technology expanded, and technology absorbed all the cultural spheres. If this claim is taken as fact, one of the most common reactionary ways of thinking against the transformation of society is by embracing the inherited values and traditions of a society. Therefore, “conservatism” is worth analyzing.

1.3 Conservatism

The idea of rationalism paved the way for a new way of thinking. It meant the rejection of the old beliefs of everyday life and uncorroborated theories of science; it also meant building a new concept in thinking, production, and living by disregarding sacred values and beliefs. Rational thinking caused radical changes in the order of life, and reason began to take a central role against tradition, customs, and revelation in a period called the “Age of Reason” or the “Enlightenment”. Some scholars trace back the idea of conservatism to the birth of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment is the symbol of the philosophical disengagement of the common understandings on humans and the universe; it is the historical process, which built new representations and was the source of the ideas maintained by the French Revolution.

Kant’s description of the Enlightenment is illuminating in understanding the rational mind and making a brief introduction to conservative thought. Kant described the Enlightenment as “man’s release from his self incurred immaturity, by the use of his own reason, undistorted by prejudice and without the guidance of others” (Outram, 1995, p. 2). By following this philosophy, modern people began to think that the technocratic mind (or, to put it another way, setting no

limits on the use of technology) would be the right instrument to establish a utopian world.

Marcuse and most of the Frankfurt school scholars thought that this new understanding of “disenchantment” or “the era of the Enlightenment” has led to the captivity of man, instead of freeing him as expected. Marcuse went further and put the politicizing power of technology and science into the center of late capitalist societies. It was reinterpreting science as a dominating ideology.

On the other hand, one of the best-known and inspirational scholars of conservatism, Edmund Burke, stood against the idea of ignoring guidance and prejudice. Burke believed that the existing order contains the values and the natural and constant habits of people, and thus cannot be ignored, as did the French revolutionaries. For Burke, prejudice is rational.

It is the collective, non-propositional knowledge of peoples, races, cultures: a *wisdom* handed down through custom and tradition... For Burke, prejudice is the complex of knowledge, attitudes, responses, and habits, which is expected for a civilized mode of life within a given community. Thus there is an essentially social dimension to prejudice. Needless to say, such a conception of prejudice is neither scientific nor individualistic. But though representing neither of these traits of Enlightenment rationality, it possesses a kind of rationality, since it is composed of the wisdom of generations (White, 1998, pp. 2-3).

These were the ideas of scholars criticizing some points of rationalism, at this point, we can take a look at the idea of conservatism. However, we cannot posit conservatism as a counter-argument to modernity, as there are strong conflicts between these two ideas. The first thing we can say about conservatism is that it is not an area outside of modernity; it owes its existence to modernity and stands alongside it. Conservatism has the ability to sustain the continuity of the ancient and existing order, traditions, and sacredness. It exists by reforming traditions against new streams. For this reason, conservatism can be characterized as

reactionary, or, in the words of Mannheim, “rationalized traditionalism” (Bora, 1998, p. 54).

For the philosophy of the Enlightenment, “reason” is a limitless power to realize the truth, find out the mysteries of the universe, and create a utopian world without the help of heritage, traditions, or religious knowledge. Reason is the ultimate power to discover the most supreme mission of life, and this belief creates an understanding of “perfectibility” (Özipek, 2011, p. 34). Contrary to the optimistic perception of “reason” of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, conservatism carries a feeling of scepticism and insecurity against a rational way of creating systems, universal designs, and deeds regarding society, and most of all against abstract notions. This conservative sense of scepticism creates a social pessimism, or better, a pessimism against the social. However, the paradox here is that the conservatives’ efforts at reforming traditions and embracing the existing order converts pessimism into cynicism (Bora, 1998, p. 57).

Burke stood against ideologies because he believed that ideologies do not cover the relevant issues as a whole, but rather analyze these issues from a one-dimensional perspective. According to Burke’s view, approaching a social problem and its solution from a single angle cannot lead to a permanent solution, because truth is not one-dimensional but has multiple dimensions to consider. This might be the reason why Burke was not using “reason” but “wisdom” to denote a leading mind. Yet, prominent thinkers write on conservatism, including Mannheim, defined conservatism as a way of thinking rather than an ideology.

According to conservatives, ideologies have been trying to establish an artificial heaven in the world. The difference between ideologies and conservative thought is lying beyond this claim. Conservatism is the way of making adjustments and reformations on the existing system, instead of creating a new one. One of the counter-arguments to conservatism is that sometimes it is better to remove all the

dysfunctional institutions from the executive branch of the state. On the other hand, conservative scholars think that revolutionary movements tear a society from its roots, traditions, and habits in an attempt to create a ‘utopia,’ instead of dealing with the existing society (Dural, 2006, pp. 55-66).

Nevertheless, in the age of ideologies, conservatism itself has been representing an ideology even though conservatives reject the idea. Conservatism has its own utopia as well. However, it is not projected as a utopia but commonly taken as a transcendental, dignified order of life realized by obeying the commands of God. The reformation process supported by these religious-conservatives aims to resurrect the forgotten commands of God – which people once knew and then forgot – in order to reach the ideal societal form. In case of ignorance of this dignified order, conservatives believed that modern people would suffer from the by-products of modernism.

Non-conservatives can interpret the conservatives’ claim of establishing a society according to God’s commands as utopian; furthermore, this can be seen as a dichotomy in conservatism. On the other hand, conservatives believe that this “order” had been established earlier, and that people once “had” knowledge; thus what is desired is a resurrection by means of reforms. To use Kirk’s description of conservative thought, “They think that society is a spiritual reality, possessing an eternal life but a delicate constitution: it cannot be scrapped and recast as if it were a machine” (Kirk, 2001, p. 8).

This position of believing in a future utopia, versus believing in a past order that can be resurrected in the future, draws a portrait of the understanding of time in modernist thought and conservative thought. Modern/revolutionist thought ignores the past and focuses on the future, using the present only as a step to the future, while conservatives value the past and see the present within the heritage of the past. It is no accident that Mannheim questioned himself, asking whether

conservatism is a universal and eternal thought which encompasses all people and all time, or an idea that belongs to the social circumstances of recent times, one that includes modern cultural and political thoughts. Then he answered his question as “both of them”.

I believe that Kirk’s six canons of conservatism are enlightening in drawing an initial frame for the characteristics of conservatism. The first canon is the “belief in a transcendent order”. This order rules over society as well as the conscience, and is claimed to be higher than people’s reason. The second canon is to believe in the complexity of human nature and variety in existence. Conservatives claim that revolutionaries ignore this complexity and reduce their policies to a uniform and simplistic form arranged by the use of reason and logic. The third canon is the conviction that society needs social classes, against the idea of the French Revolution’s “classless society”. For Burke, the attempt of “pure democracy” in France became an ignoble oligarchy. He believed that in a democracy, the majority of the citizens would exercise oppression upon minorities; thus, in the end, that could carry much more fury than a simple scepter’s dominion (1790, p. 103). The fourth canon is the connection between property and freedom. Burke said that “The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him and to distinguish him is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature” (1790, p. 114). The fifth canon is distrust of “sophisters, calculators and economists” since they build society upon an abstract system. This canon reflects an opposition against the idea of building a logical system based upon scientific facts and technical methods. The sixth canon is the recognition that change may not be the most appropriate reform. Hasty innovations can lead to undesired conclusions. Society must change not through radical changes but social preservation, something that is possible with prudence (Kirk, 2001, pp. 8-9).

David Hume's understanding of political issues followed a conservative path. Hume was in favor of the oligarchic regime of Britain rather than of revolutionary France, because he believed that the rationalist attitudes of change might cause a "philosophical explosion"³. The main argument of Hume's conservatism can be explained as follows. Human reason is not capable of establishing beliefs that are vital for everyday life. Imaginative and sensitive processes are more suitable to that. Therefore Hume believed in an evolutionary path toward establishing these beliefs. Uniformities in the human mind tend to converge on the empirical and moral issues of people. The implication of this argument is to discard rational political thought, since philosophers are not able to show the rationality of beliefs. Thus Hume's doctrine of conservative thought required that 'social and political institutions should be understood as devices developed in response to the exigencies of the human condition' (Miller, Coleman, Connolly, & Ryan, 1986, pp. 227-228).

I believe that the contrast between rational thought and conservative thought becomes apparent in the views of rational and conservative thinkers on the same subject. Especially in political thought, the conservative attitude of protecting the institutions and the revolutionary attitude of establishing a new order have been positioned against each other and embodied as ideological forms.

An Algerian intellectual, Mustapha Cherif, asked Derrida a question concerning religious people in the modern world: How can Muslims be modern without losing their roots? How can Muslims deal with the developing modern world and

³ Philosophical explosion evokes the term "intelligence explosion," also known as "singularity." Singularity is an argument based on a situation in which machines are more intelligent than humans. This would be the emergence of ever more intelligent machines and an explosion of greater levels of intelligence and speed. Practical results of singularity would include curing diseases, ultimate economical improvements, such as ending poverty, and scientific improvements. However, it would also cause negative results, such as ending the human race and waging a war between machines and human beings. Philosophical results would be also interesting. The main arguments would force us to think about the nature of intelligence and the capabilities of machines. It would also lead us to think about values and morality. All in all, the conflict between technical improvements and human values would clearly be seen through singularity. (Chalmers, 2010)

the spreading idea of rationalism? For Cherif there were at least three primary issues in which modernity contradicts Islam. The first one is *on the level of meaning*, by which it is claimed that modern people have fewer connections with religious people, especially Muslims. The second one is on the *political level*, which refers to the vanishing political existence in public opinion of such issues as morality, human rights, justice, and the law. The third one is on the *level of knowledge*. The rise in the demand for exact knowledge leads to scienticism, which damages intercultural relations, customs, and experience. What are the effects of scienticism and secularism in the modern world? Derrida answered that as a claim of positivist understanding, scienticism can be considered neither knowledge, nor science, and that he considered scienticism unfavorably. When it came to secularism, Derrida believed that in Europe, democracy will be constituted with secularism at the political level, while giving citizens freedom of worship. In his model of democracy, freedom of worship will be guaranteed by the state, and, unlike the present notion of secularism in France, there will be coherence between the state and religion. According to Derrida, the state is required as a guarantee for secularity. Secularity provides space not only for religious people, but also for those who do not want to be identified as religious. He said that a “religious community can very well organize itself as religious community, in a lay space, without invading the lay space and while respecting the freedom of the individual.” He implied that this space can be protected both from religious and nonreligious oppression (Cherif, 2009, pp. 48-51).

For the solution of the problem of coherence between Islam and modernity, Derrida pointed to a new understanding of democracy in Europe which would provide space for both religious and non-religious people, and would not give authority to either sides. In his model, the state will be the guarantor and democracy will be the medium of secularism as well as the existence of religious communities. Derrida was aware of the fact that secularism today does not

coincide with the image he desired. So he added that secular people must be more open to dialogue, and must exercise tolerance toward religious cultures in order to provide freedom for religious practices.

CHAPTER II

Ottoman Scholars' Ideas on Islam and Adaptation to the Modern World

The task to be accomplished is not the conservation of the past, but the redemption of the hopes of the past. Today, however, the past is preserved as the destruction of the past.

Adorno and Horkheimer⁴

Having reviewed some of the great changes in western worldviews and beliefs that were later reshaped as a rational worldview, in this chapter we shall go through the effects of these changes in the Ottoman Empire, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the changes in the conception of Islam and the views that built the secular Republic of Turkey. In the late Ottoman era, there were many attempts at modernization in economics, politics, science, and daily life. These attempts brought about challenges between Islamic and modern worldviews and led Ottoman scholars to express their own views of modernity based on Islamic and Western values and thoughts.

The effects of scientific developments in the Western world in the era of industrialization and technology reached Ottoman-Muslim lands during the nineteenth century. The traditional order of society, the economy, and the law were challenged by the social order of the West, which was subjected to reason. Scholars in the Muslim world discussed the dilemma faced by Islamic societies:

⁴ From the book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Verso Publishing, 1997, p. XV

whether to follow traditions and the *shariah*, or create a new paradigm that would establish closer cultural ties with the Western world. This chapter discusses the responses of nineteenth-century Islamic scholars, particularly Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, to the effects of modernity and the alternative solutions generated to find a way between Islamic and Western cultures.

These new series of questions that Muslim scholars faced – questions that underscored the vital changes necessary to adapt Ottoman-Muslim society to the modern world – were also discussed by several orientalist scholars in Europe. One of the main questions was the sustainability of traditions. Against the rapidly changing Western world, with its new ideologies and philosophies and especially the mainstream thoughts of rational thinking that undertook a critique of traditions and religion, was it feasible or even reasonable to preserve the traditions of society, was it possible to reinterpret the Quran and accomplish reforms in the social order? What were the problems that had caused the Muslim world to lag behind the West?

The Ottoman Empire faced those processes mechanically and artificially. Since those processes had not been confronted naturally over time as an answer to the demands of society, was it possible to produce an appropriate critique of tradition? In similar cases, one of the most common approaches had been to assume an absolute reference point and carry out adaptations according to that reference point, independently of the actual conditions of society. For instance, in western colonies, the colonizers attempted to adapt the colonized societies to their own social order. However, the Ottoman Empire had never become a colony of the West. In this regard, Ottomans had to find their own model of modern society regarding cultural heritage and political circumstances.

Certain vitally important figures may help illuminate the main points of the problem of modernization in the Muslim world during the nineteenth century. One of the key figures in this regard is al-Afghani's student Muhammad Abduh. Raised in Egypt and educated at al-Azhar University, Abduh received the degree of *'alim* in 1877, after which he taught at the same university for two years. During his years at al-Azhar, he was influenced by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, who had been traveling throughout the Muslim world and Europe to spread his ideas on the achievement of unity in the Muslim world. Al-Afghani's mission was to organize Islamic countries and lead them to revolt against the political influence and economic pressure of the West, and thus to unite the entire Muslim world under the flag of a single caliph. Although he was known primarily for his political views, he also had opinions on Islamic civilization and on the synthesis of modernism and Islam so as to adapt Islam to the West in the context of rational and scientific ways. However, he did not fully develop these ideas, which were later further elaborated by his student Abduh; this latter symbolizes the reinterpretation of tradition in order to reconcile the Islamic faith and the scientific age. This idea, expounded by Abduh, was the main concern of the Ottoman Empire during that period.

Between tradition and modernity, the Ottoman Empire had to find a way to deal with the social and technological standards of the West, and in this regard, Islamic scholars had to face critics of the traditional interpretation of Islam. These critics were not developed naturally in time, but originated from concerns over the reconciliation of Islam with the West. Gencer claims that there were two main obstacles resisting reconciliation. First, there is no use of the noun *al-'aql*, which means reason, in the Quran; rather, a verb is used to point using reason (*al-'aql*), which means to use the reason given to people. This usage is interpreted to mean that reason is not used autonomously by a human being, but that it clearly refers not to individuals but to transcendental guidance. The second issue is the

hermeneutical interpretation of the Quran. Using hermeneutics to interpret the Quran as it was used to interpret the Bible drove the Quran away from universalism, and created a dogmatic understanding (Gencer, 2012, p. 496).

2.1 Modernism against Tradition

Traditions are part of everyday life and embody the values of society coming from its past, bringing them to the present with some modifications over time. In most cases, the strictness of traditions is supported by society, since they represent good values based on social relations, religion, and morality. However, the stability of the circumstances of society depends on economics, social policies, and technical improvements. External influences on this stability can cause defects in the system and thus traditions need to be adapted to these modifications.

In a period marked in the Ottoman Empire by the dilemma between modernity and tradition, Abduh tended to reject the traditions instead of requiring them to evolve according to the new circumstances. Rejecting traditions is a less complicated way of reformulating Islamic attitudes in the contemporary era since rejection releases the boundaries of time and the burden of inherited thoughts and habits from the origin of Islam. According to Abduh, Islam as an institution was centered on the individual's direct relationship with God by appealing to the Holy Book. Like the classical *salafis* Abduh followed the way of Ibn Taymiyah's discourse on *ijtihad* (juristic reasoning) and defended the inevitable role of reason in Islam.

Abduh and his followers supported the idea of going back to the origin of *shariah* as well as linking to the essence of the faith by releasing society from the boundaries of tradition. Abduh defined his position as follows:

I spoke out on behalf of two great causes. The first of these was the liberation of thought from the chains of imitation and the understanding of religious faith as the members of the early Community understood it before dissension arose, and the return of religious learning to its original sources, and consideration of religion in the scales of human intelligence that God created to repel the excesses of faith and diminish its errors and stumbling, so that the human social order prescribed by God in His wisdom may be attained. In this way religion may be counted the true friend of science, a stimulus for inquiry into the secrets of the universe, and an appeal to respect established truths and rely upon them in cultivating our spirits and reforming our actions (Rida, 1931, pp. 11-12).

As mentioned above, Abduh embraced the simplicity of religion by appealing to its primary source, the Holy Book. By using it as a reference, he claimed that man can use his own reason to explore beyond what is known and this methodology goes well with science and technology. He supported his argument by giving an example from Prophet Muhammad's life. Abduh said that Prophet Muhammad banned tree grafting, but after this ban, the trees' yield decreased and so he decided to rescind the ban. Abduh interpreted this case with the limits of divine knowledge. He said that prophets had divine knowledge about religious issues and there could be no doubt on this count; however, in rescinding the tree-grafting ban, the Prophet gave his followers the message that issues related to human development and daily life are open to research and discussion. People have to develop and use their experiences in their lives (Abduh, 1986, p. 134).

However, Abduh's position was still paradoxical since the western path to modernization and the Enlightenment were considered to be rooted solely in reason. In interpreting the logical system of Abduh's rationality, Rashid Rida argued that according to Abduh, reason and revelation cannot contradict each

other and they are only different paths that lead to the one truth. Abduh explained that there are two kinds of conclusions; one is decisive (*qat'i*) and the other is suppositional (*zanni*). Decisive conclusions of both reason and revelation must always be in agreement. If most of the indications from both sides are suppositional then it is subject to interpretation (*ta'wil*). Reason offers grounds to validate religious doctrine and confirms its coherence. In the end, if rational investigation fails, the case should remain as known only to God (Kerr, 1966, p. 110).

Abduh and his student Rashid Rida believed that Muslims stopped practicing Islamic law (*Shariah*) because of its inadaptability to the modern age. For this reason, Abduh argued for the importance of a revolution by practicing *ijtihad* in religion, which would be the projection of the revolution that occurred in the West and resulted in the secularization process. This argument has two problematical aspects. First, secularization is the end product of a long process of thought and revolutions in the West. Abduh's intention of applying a practical solution by focusing on the end product cannot be considered to be a genuine solution for Islamic society. Second, from the perspective of Abduh as well as some other scholars, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) did not coincide with modern jurisprudence, and this causes problems in terms of adaptation to the modern world.

2.2 The Tradition of Islamic Jurisprudence and Methodologies

Etymologically *fiqh* means intelligence and knowledge, and it is the name given to Islamic jurisprudence. It covers all the aspects of Muslims' existence, including religion, politics, business, and everyday life, and regulates them according to Islamic law. Traditional *fiqh* literature and methods date from the

second half of the eighth century, and *fiqh* remained as jurists' law that was discussed and developed by Islamic scholars until the nineteenth century (Johansen, 2009, pp. 315-318).

During the development of Islamic sciences, *fiqh* acquired the leading position. In the eleventh century, we see the examples of *madrasas* that specialized in a certain school of *fiqh*. Indeed, there are different schools of *fiqh*, and each individual can choose the one to follow from among them. Since *fiqh* as a jurists' law produces norms that constitute laws for individuals and particularly emphasizes their subjective rights, different schools of thought present a range of ideas on each specific issue that can be considered evidence of the dynamic structure of *fiqh*. These schools may follow different methods, different sources on particular issues, or they may interpret the texts in different ways, but they all use certain basic sources considered valid. For the Sunni schools of law, these confirmed sources or methods are the Quran, the sayings and practices of the Prophet (*sunnah*), consensus (*ijma*), and analogy (*qiyas*). The latter is a method, while the others are recognized as sources. For the Shi'i schools of thought, the sources are the Quran, the sayings and practices of the Prophet and the Imams (leaders from the Alid line), and, instead of analogy (*qiyas*), Shi'i scholars use reason (*aql*) and rational thought. *Fiqh* is valuable in terms of Islamic sciences in part because of its rigor in protecting the authenticity of its sources. In other respects, this commitment to sources is a disadvantage in terms of adapting to a world that changes rapidly. Another value of *fiqh* is the importance given to variation in the thoughts of individual jurists and the ways of different schools of thought. For this reason, a literary genre called dissent (*khilaf*) was produced, and it historically represented the respect accorded to licit differences among the *fiqh* schools.

All in all, *fiqh* encompasses all the issues of Muslims' lives, regulating them based on a body of rules. Moreover, *fiqh* has a dynamic structure with a multi-

dimensional perspective, and it is open to debate and reinterpretation based on the sources. *Fiqh* was enriched over time by inheriting different values and perspectives as the Muslim lands expanded and encompassed different cultures each with their own law codes and traditions.

When it came to the sources of *fiqh*, Abduh had different views. He argued that the students of Vasil bin Ata had believed in the necessity of scientific proofs for Islamic beliefs (*akide*). However, they could not distinguish scientifically proven beliefs from those arising from their suspicions. For this reason, he thought that non-religious ideas leaked into religion, and that this did not stop until many *madhhabs* had flourished (Abduh, 1986, p. 86). As a result of this view, Abduh had a skeptical approach to *fiqh*, while supporting *ijtihad*.

Fundamentalist scholars thought that a new interpretation of Islamic law could be derived from the sources in light of economic, social, and political needs. As he was such a scholar, Abduh believed that the preservation of societies does not only depend on human reason but also on submission to God and the Divine Order (1986, p. 151). However, he was not only a religious revolutionary. Abduh also believed that religious revolution is a step in social revolution (İşcan, 1998, p. 218).

The modern way of criticizing traditions and reinterpreting the sources uses an ideological discourse to alter the meanings of traditional terms. Abduh gave new meanings to traditional Islamic terms such as *ijma*, *ijtihad*, *shura*, and *maslaha* in order to adapt them to the modern world in the process of transforming traditions. Thus, *maslaha* became “benefit,” *shura* became “parliamentary democracy,” *ijma* became “public opinion,” and religion became “civilization” to support the mission of development (Hourani, 1962, p. 144).

Abduh’s intention of changing Islamic terms re-regulated Muslims’ lives from the economic to the political domain, and this bears a resemblance to the idea of

disenchantment in Europe. Beyond changing terminology, Abduh believed that referring directly to the main sources would release the boundaries of tradition from social life and open a space for rationality in dealing with social life. I believe that Abduh's understanding of religion and his thoughts on adapting it to the modern world without abandoning fundamental Muslim thoughts and his reinterpretation of the terms of social life constitute a kind of modernity. In Abduh's understanding of theology, the content of religion points to inner dimensions, such as submission to God, respecting the Prophet Muhammad, and respecting the Quran. There is no room for mysticism in Abduh's theology, as he refers to the original sources alone. According to him, early Islam had a more rational character and instead of deepening religion, his theology acquired an "apologetic compromise" by turning back to authenticity (Gibb & Kramers, 1953). For me, Abduh's intention was to create separate spaces for religion and reason. He allocated a personal space for religion and a common space in society for reason. I believe that he was not in favor of using *fiqh* practices in common affairs, since he believed that they were incompatible with the contemporary world. Thus, in his own way, Abduh opened a gate to modernity for Islamic society. His vision dealt with an alternative modernity, one that suited the spirit of the culture in which it flourished.

During the same period in the Ottoman capital, there were also discussions and conflicts about altering the legal system and adopting one based on modern law instead of *fiqh*. This alteration did not only mean systematic changes in the legal system, such as agreeing upon fixed codes in certain issues and forming courts specialized in certain issues. Beyond that, there was also the Ottoman notion of justice as law; protecting the lives and property of the Empire's subjects, fighting against unjust governing, and supporting the oppressed. The notion of justice was also a motivation and a political principle that was not clearly defined in written,

rational codes, since this notion was different for each case based on the factors that created them.

The reliability of the Ottoman legal system was seen as the main obstacle against standardization for Western observers. In Weber's studies and in the studies of Western political consultants, the Ottoman legal system was interpreted as non-rational. Beyond non-rationality and a non-Cartesian system of thinking, *fiqh* had its own model of knowledge in which the practice of law depends on regional and personal factors, and decisions are made based upon local customs and beliefs. In this sense, there was not a one-dimensional, fixed decision for each issue; rather, there was plurality based on the facts that made that case unique, such as region, family, and customs. Decisions were not made based on the personal opinions of the *qadis* (religious judges); rather, they benefited from the Quran through which they gave meaning to the order of the whole universe at the macro level, and to social life at the micro level.

During the period of revolutions in the late nineteenth century, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha studied Islamic law as a legislator to make a codification in law. The aim of this study was to make the reforms of the Tanzimat easier and to standardize the rules of *fiqh* in the entire Empire. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha supported this study rather than the transferring of the codes from Europe, because he claimed that to transfer another culture's codes would lead to the deformation of the nation.

At this point, I would like to emphasize that the attempts to make reforms were centered on Islamic principles. However, there were not only religious concerns in those attempts. On the one hand, there was pressure to modernize the empire according to the norms of Europe, and on the other, there was a society with its own cultural roots formed and developed through the centuries. In that highly politicized environment, these were attempts to find the middle ground between Western modernization and the basic principles governing Islamic societies.

2.3 Mehmet Akif's Opinions on Abduh's Thoughts

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were many political movements in Ottoman lands, among which only a few were widely accepted. According to Akçura's best-known article "Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset" (Three Types of Politics), which reflects quite clearly the political environment of the day, three political movements dominated the scene: Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism, and Turkish nationalism. While scholars like Ahmed Cevdet Pasha adopted the stance of nationalism, the poet Mehmed Akif opposed this idea.

In an article written around 1903-1904, Ağaoğlu Ahmed Bey (who was originally from Azerbaijan) indicated that four or five years before the first proclamation of the Constitutional Monarchy (*Birinci Meşrutiyet*, 1876), he and his friends had begun to publish a newspaper when new ideas began to flourish in the Turkic-Islamic world. Scholars were searching for the means of survival by empowering the Turkic-Islamic world against the Western world. At the time, there were basically three movements in the Islamic world: The Wahhabis, who closed the doors of religion to reforms and new interpretations; Afghani and Abduh's way of reinterpreting religious sources based on the principles of Islam; and Westernization through submission to the ideas of the Western world (Fergan, 2011, p. 68).

Mehmed Akif's views were closer to Abduh's revolutionary ideas and the notion of multiple modernities. Al-Afghani and Abduh were followers of the reformist Islamist way in Egypt, while Mehmed Akif followed a parallel way in the Ottoman capital. Akif published translations of Abduh's writings in his journals *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and *Sebilürreşad*, and had similar views, as can also be seen in his own writings.

Some scholars today claim that although there are parallels between the thoughts of Akif and Abduh, their inspirations and sources were different. According to others, however, Akif directly supported the ideas of Abduh's rationalist Islam model, and he can be considered his follower. İsmail Kara and Sezai Karakoç support the first argument. Kara points first to the argument behind Abduh's thesis, which was to reread and reinterpret the sources and create a new perspective in light of Islamic primary sources while ignoring any traditional knowledge believed to stray from the original form of Islam. Here, Kara asks how nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars could have noticed deviations from original sources that previous Islamic scholars had not seen. For Kara, this was not a revolutionary religious movement; rather, it was a movement of salvation. In the Islamic world, under the circumstances of colonization, setbacks, and serious threats, there was a lack of technology and technical instrument and military power, and this salvation movement symbolized an awakening, leading to developments and improvements by rediscovering Islam. In his masterpiece *Safahat*, Akif problematized the issue of setbacks. He said that instead of reading and improving on inherited knowledge, young people had been dragged into a hopeless situation over the last two to three centuries. Kara emphasized the revolutionary character of Akif and represented him as a conditional supporter of modernism which he viewed as the way to salvation. Akif had parallel ideas with Islamic modernism that were based upon the primary Islamic sources and simple and practical approaches which covered actions more than theory, removing superstitions and baseless beliefs from religion, opening the gates of *ijtihad*, improving the educational system, and taking the West as a model in science and art (Kara, 2011, p. 343).

Karakoç also argued that Akif was not a follower of Abduh. The similarity between the thoughts of Akif and Abduh was that they both reflected the common perspective of early twentieth-century Islamic thought. Akif's views as articulated

in his poems and articles had been developed from family, common culture, society, and state. Abduh, on the other hand, had the inclination of developing a new system of thinking and state-building by looking at the primary Islamic sources. In other words, Karakoç claimed that even though Akif translated Abduh's writings and benefited from them, there was an ontological difference between their thoughts. While the Egyptian modernist's aim was to create a new understanding of Islam as a system, Akif's aim was to revive the spirit of Islam through the existing system of society (Karakoç, 2007, pp. 22-24).

The scholars who claimed that Akif had been a follower of Abduh based their arguments on Akif's articles and poetry. A common example given from *Safahat* indicates Akif's desire for revolution, much like Abduh. However the method of this revolution did not seek to dismiss the government and create chaos in the country. On the contrary, it suggested achieving a smooth transformation of society by means of education and opening schools. Moreover, an anthology of works on Mehmed Akif prepared by one of his friends, Eşref Edib Fergan, as well as excerpts from Akif's works, also gave the impression that Akif had followed the way of Abduh. In one of these excerpts, Akif said that he had been translating Abduh's articles for two years and saw no evidence of influence of the Wahhabi School in those articles (Akif, *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, 1326). In another article, he mentioned societies' obsession for protecting traditions, the results of which leads to the prevention of any improvements. Akif also emphasized the fact that some of scholars ignored all traditions for the sake of embracing Western culture (Akif, *Sebilürreşad*, 1330, p. 4).

In many articles, Akif pointed out the importance of reason (*aql*) in Islam by referring to the words of the Prophet. In one of his sayings (*hadith*), the Prophet declared that "Religion is the substance of reason. If a man has no reason, he has no religion" (al-Hindi, p. 7033). In many other examples from daily life, Akif showed ways of using reason to understand Islamic law and abandon the false

beliefs produced by society. These examples show that Akif's way of thinking had great similarities with that of Abduh, and he had sympathy for Abduh, an attitude that could be qualified as a master-follower relationship.

2.4 Mehmed Akif's Opinion of Science and Western Civilization

Reviewing the ideas of Egyptian Muslim modernist Abduh and al-Afghani and their visions, plans, and position in the *fiqh* tradition provides historical background that leads to a deeper understanding of Akif's ideas and vision, since he was sharing many basic principles with them.

Several theses and articles have been written on Mehmed Akif's ideas on tradition and modernity. Coming from a middle class family, Akif was involved in social and political discussions based on concerns of the society. Contrary to the top-down revolutionaries who ignored the culture and norms of their own society, Akif's thoughts and vision suggested a smoother transition from a traditional society to a contemporary society while preserving the elements of the society's identity. For this reason, his practical solutions and way of thinking can be examined to build a model of his vision, and this model can be compared with Turkey's current social and political visions.

For Enlightenment scholars, reason was taken as a guide. For Akif, who based himself on the Prophet's saying "Religion is the substance of reason. If a man has no reason, he has no religion," the guide was the Quran. The Quran is the representation of reason itself, in the light of belief. Thus, the Quran was taken as the guidance on the path of modernity, Akif's definition of which was salvation from an idle position while obtaining improvement in science and technology. His method of reaching modernity involved, first and foremost, separating

western culture from western technology. In other words, instead of westernizing as a whole, he was only interested in acquiring science and technology from the West. He believed that it was possible to modernize a country without complete westernization, and Japan was a remarkable example in this sense. The focal point here is the connections between past and future, and Akif used a tree metaphor to describe these connections. Just like the branches of a tree that is connected to the earth with its roots, he argued, society must be connected to the roots of its past. A tree without roots would die; thus all the branches of a tree must be fed through the roots (Yetiş, p. 138-143). Establishing a connection between branches and roots reflects the desire to make adaptations in the doctrine of religion for the contemporary world instead of cutting down the tree and raising a new tree from the roots, which is to desire a total transformation as in the example of Abduh and al-Afghani. At this point, different than Abduh and al-Afghani, Akif was consequently in favor of smooth adaptation rather than revolution in the last period of the Ottoman Empire and during the establishment of the Turkish republic.

In Akif's writings, there was also harsh criticism of government policies. The government's use of Islamic values as a pressure factor to control the society was defended with the excuse of the circumstances of the era. For Akif, this was a pragmatic use of religion. Akif claimed that the government put pressure on its subjects to prevent new ideas and progressive movements, and to achieve this aim, Islamic pillars were used as obstacles. This misrepresentation of religion was internalized by society and shaped its understanding of Islam (*Sirat-ı Müstakim*, 1328).

Basically, Akif's conception of faith and his perception of religion require rethinking and questioning the traditions that made him known as a reformist in that era. In an article in his journal *Siratü'l-Müstakim*, he wrote that any scholar from any religion must be respected. This means that he did not have strict ideas

about Islamic partisanship; on the contrary, he had respect and tolerance for other beliefs. In his critique of one of the writings of Abdullah Cevdet, he said that the salvation of the state can be reached by uniting Muslim groups under the roof of Islamic discourse, and then uniting non-Muslim groups with the bond of homeland. When it comes to the idea of progress, he was aiming for the progress of the entire society rather than that of a group of people. In education, Akif promoted courtesy to scholars and activists who felt responsible for the progress of society, and informed his readers about their works to create awareness within society. For Akif, welfare meant educating not only a small group of people but society as a whole (Akif, Sebilürreşad, 1337). Thus, he supported the idea of simplifying language in order to help all members of society understand what was written in newspapers and periodicals. In supporting the simplification of language, he gave an example from a Crimean newspaper, saying that it had successfully formed a simplified language without losing the beauty of Ottoman Turkish (Akif, Sırat-ı Müstakim, 1328). This is a characteristic thought of Akif: making revolution without losing the traces of heritage and values.

All in all, Akif's point was to accomplish reforms in the correct perception of Islam. In his writings, he mostly complained about the baseless norms produced over time by society that were still being taken for granted without questioning. In response, Akif adopted a dynamic and critical way of writing. In matters related to daily life, he supported a scientific approach, while in the case of faith and morality, he leaned on Islam.

2.5 Creating Multiple Modernities

The social theorists of the nineteenth century, such as Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, pointed to a modernity that had flourished in Europe. As their ideas

spread throughout the world, this vision of modernity would be taken as a model for all modernizing societies. However, as can be seen in the case of nineteenth-century Egyptian scholars, adopting modernity did not directly actualized. Structural differences, as well as dissimilar belief systems and inherited traditions, were the major causes of variability in a wide range of institutions in most of the societies outside Europe. In the first place, the definition and organization of family life, educational system, political structure, economy, urban life and relations all varied greatly by region, and these variations in social structures caused different ideological and institutional patterns. These patterns did not necessarily conform to the western type of modernity since they were greatly influenced by their own historical and cultural backgrounds. The term “multiple modernities” was developed in order to explain such variations (Eisenstadt, 2000, pp. 1-3).

The term “multiple modernities” suggests a conception of modernity as multi-dimensional and culture-related, rather than as uni-dimensional and culture-independent. This approach criticizes the overarching character of modernity and supports enrichment in light of different cultures and historical backgrounds.

Nilüfer Göle has proposed a program to elaborate a conceptualization of modernities outside the western world. The first step of her program is to shift the center of modernity from the West to local points and construct a synchronizing model between western modernities and these local points. The following steps are to identify the extreme moderns and focus on the decline of traditions. In order to shift the center of modernity from the West, it is necessary first to change the common perspective. Normally, to analyze modernity, non-western countries are considered with respect to the standards of western countries. What Göle offers is to reverse this consideration by understanding the relations of non-western countries with modernity. This evaluation makes visible the active relations between non-western countries and modernity, rather than the generally

assumed passive relations. On the other hand, western modernity retains the role of pioneering modernity and leading the innovations, while the agenda of non-western societies concerns synchronizing themselves with the West.

As mentioned earlier, Abduh's intention was not to adopt all the cultural elements of Western modernity. The first step in his plan was to eliminate the baseless interpretations and superstitions that had invaded religion. In this respect, he believed that *fiqh* traditions had to be revised in order to build a proper understanding of Islam. The second step was to find solutions to the new era's problems. In an age in which the world was rapidly changing, immense questions in many aspects of everyday life confronted scholars. Abduh believed that a more dynamic system was required to deal with these issues. It is significant that he was aware of the real need to find solutions to these social issues. He believed that to deal with the modern world, it was first necessary to understand the logic of the western mind instead of directly transferring science and technology from the West. Moreover, Abduh asserted the importance of identifying the strong points of western civilization, which in his opinion were morality, art, commerce, and justice.

For Abduh, the weakest points that prevented Muslims from achieving progress were the lack of spirit to make progress in development and lack of focus. According to him, modern civilization works as a key to solve these problems by providing guidance with its scientific perception. Abduh chose to stand between traditionalists and followers of westernization (İşcan, 1998). In this regard, I believe that Abduh's position is coherent with the notion of creating alternative modernities articulated by Eisenstadt, who wrote:

The attraction of many of modernity's themes and institutional forms for many groups in these societies was caused first by the fact that it was the European (later the Western) pattern, developed and spread throughout the world by Western economic, technological,

and military expansion, that undermined the cultural premises and institutional cores of these ancient society. The appropriation of these themes and institutions permitted many in non-European societies – especially elites and intellectuals – to participate actively in the new modern universal (albeit initially Western) tradition, while selectively rejecting many of its aspects – most notably that which took for granted the hegemony of the Western formulations of the cultural program of modernity (2000, p. 14).

The position of creating a new collective identity without giving up the main components of traditional identities described above is a cornerstone of Abduh's social plan and can be seen as adopting a modern attitude while holding an Islamic worldview.

Nilüfer Göle has said that one of the most important characteristics of modernity is simply its capacity for continuous self-correction. This requires empirical data, which are not absolute and can be refuted by new experimental results. In this manner, solely embracing the scientific (*ilm*) perspective of the West instead of focusing on the inherited knowledge and transformation of the Muslim World could not survive as an “ideology.” For ages, Muslims have embraced immensely different cultures by means of translations, conquests, commerce, travel, and political relations. A profound understanding of Islamic civilization can only be achieved by understanding these “networks” and by benefiting from Islamic philosophy to realize the concept of divine knowledge, ontology, and reason (*aql*).

Referring to the epigraph from Adorno and Horkheimer at the beginning of the present chapter, in an environment that perpetuates itself by the destruction of the past, Abduh's ideas could be taken as the rekindling of hopes to form an idiosyncratic modernity and as a motivation to follow those hopes. I believe that Akif was supporting Abduh's ideas in this respect. However there is a difference between ignoring inherited knowledge entirely and ignoring superstitions that

appeared gradually over time. Abduh's model of referring back to primary sources was not sustainable since society had changed over time, and societies benefited from *fiqh* only for religious practices rather than in every parts of daily life. I believe that alternative modernities create a space that makes it possible to preserve culture and adapt to western societies in the social, political, and economic domains. In the next chapter, I discuss the politics of the Republic of Turkey which, after all those reform attempts and policies of the late Ottoman era, preferred to abandon Islamic references entirely and establish a country based on the principles and values of the West. The following chapter further examines what kind of space these policies produced in the interstice between the policies of the state and the culture of the people.

CHAPTER III

Turkish Political History and the Engineers

3.1 Construction of a New Identity

In 1923, a new Turkish state emerged from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, after World War I had broken up the Empire's territory into successor nation states. The establishment of the Republic of Turkey was led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who had originally been an Ottoman soldier and later the commander of the Turkish national movement in the War of Independence (*Kurtuluş Savaşı*).

On the verge of the establishment of the new state, Mustafa Kemal had to confront head on certain questions as to the type of the regime he was founding. Some of his supporters in the national struggle were conservative and wanted to preserve the traditions of the 600-year-old reign of the Ottoman dynasty, seeing no alternative to a constitutional monarchy under the rule of the caliph as spiritual leader and head of the Assembly. According to them, the constitution of the state had to be written in light of the principles of *shariah*, and the caliph would ensure that *shariah* was not violated. However, Mustafa Kemal and some of his other supporters believed that a new order was required to establish and develop the new state and to be in harmony with the progress of Western countries (Ahmad, 1993, pp. 52-53). They considered an Islamic state to be an obstacle to the transformation of the new Turkey into a modern state. Within this group, a Kemalist ideology emerged during the establishment of the modern, secular Turkish state. As the official ideology of the newly founded Turkish state,

Kemalism had two main objectives: elaboration of the modernist agenda and adaptation of Western norms through a process called “westernization,” and giving the state a national character. The realization of this dual process under the name of Kemalist ideology represented the only path that the new state could follow (Yerasimos, 1987, p. 66).

In order to eliminate any ambiguity that may result from the clash between the conservative and modernist tendencies, and for the realization of the Kemalist agenda, the first move was to clarify the governmental bodies of the state. Mustafa Kemal’s proposal was to amend the constitution so that Turkey would be a republic governed under a president selected by the National Assembly. As a result of this political move, Mustafa Kemal was elected as the first president of the Turkish Republic. However, the social and political environment was still not ready to implement Kemalist principles. Parliamentary decisions were not enough to erase the remnants of the monarchy. Furthermore, the institution of the caliphate, with its strong ties to Ottoman history, still existed and had a political presence and influence in the Muslim World. The Kemalists wished to eliminate all references to the Islamic-Ottoman past as well as any institutional representation of the Muslim World.

Since the caliphate and other Islamic institutions were still in existence, reforms made by Mustafa Kemal and his associates could be interfered with by supporters of the old regime by using the symbols of Islam. To prevent this and relieve the newly founded state from its Islamic-Ottoman roots, the Grand National Assembly abolished the caliphate and the Ottoman family was exiled from the Republic of Turkey. This was the beginning of the secular program of the new Turkish state.

Also in accordance with this agenda, the idea that Ottomans were glorious ancestors was devalued in order to loosen society’s ties with its Ottoman heritage.

In the case of loosening the idea of an Islamic state, Kemal said that Islamic states had been misled by distorted ideas and were destroyed by their enemies (Yerasimos, 1987, pp. 76-77). Given the abandonment of the memory of an Ottoman heritage and Islamic origin, a new ideology was needed to counter it. This new ideology was built upon “the history, the soul, the customs of the nation,” in Mustafa Kemal’s words. According to official ideology, the origins of the Turkish nation, before Ottomans and Islam, were supposedly Sumerians and Hittites. As in the case of other modern nations, the Turkish Republic constructed its national identity on a mythical past. From the perspective of Mustafa Kemal, the notion of culture represented the civilizational background. For him, the origin of civilization took root in ancient Greece, not in Christian and Muslim civilizations. This interpretation created a neutral medium that aided in positing ties to western civilization, since the national culture of Turkey was said to have the same background as western cultures (Göle, 2008, p. 86).

3.2 Westernization

During the process of constructing a new identity apart from Turkey’s Muslim-Ottoman identity, several reforms in different areas were completed in a short time. Kemalists, who were the founders of these reforms, were also the leading group of them. In a society in which classes in the modern sense were not yet fully formed, Kemalists saw themselves as the leader of the people and accelerator of the reforms. The slogan of those years was “Let us smash the idols!” and it was put into action on the iconic values and issues of society, such as upholding *shariah* law. In 1926, the government introduced the Italian Penal Code, the German and Italian Commercial Codes, and the Swiss Civil Code. In addition to legislation, attire, the unit of measure, and the calendar system were

altered and the activities of mystical orders were banned. The main goal of these attempts was to break off the Republic's ties to Islam and the Ottoman heritage, and the common point of all the attempts was that they were not organic to society but were implemented from above by the government.

One of the most significant reforms was the "Script Revolution" of 1928. It would be an oversimplification to consider this reform merely a case of "adaptation to Western norms"; in fact, it has had deeper and long-term effects on cultural memory and on the traditions of society. After the Script Reform, it was no longer possible for new generations to read and understand books written or printed in Ottoman (Arabic) script, and books written in western languages became more familiar to them than those in Ottoman, Persian, or Arabic. Almost a century has passed since the Script Reform but its effects continue to be discussed in academia. In an interview, Şerif Mardin revived the problem of the new generations' inability to read Ottoman script, saying that studying the Tanzimat Era of the Ottoman Empire was so hard precisely because students could not read Ottoman; thus they had to use secondary sources, making their study almost impossible (Mardin, 2004, p. 8). In the early 1970s, this problem was portrayed by a well-known engineer politician, Necmettin Erbakan, as an attempt to break society's ties with the Islamic scientific tradition (Erbakan, 1974, pp. 9-45).

The Kemalists claimed that the relatively high rate of illiteracy in Ottoman society was the result of the difficulty in learning Ottoman script and orthography, and that it would be easier to learn how to read and write in Latin script; thus, the Script Reform was said to be necessary to increase the rate of literacy. Pursuing populist policies, Mustafa Kemal proposed to simplify the language as well as the alphabet in order to reduce the gap between the cultural elite and the rest of society. Also, eliminating Arabic and Persian words from Ottoman would create a new language that better represented Turkish identity.

In this environment, there were two cultures worth mentioning. The first was the secular, westernized culture of a tiny but powerful minority that held the power of the bureaucracy, namely the Kemalists. The second was the indigenous culture of the masses associated with Islam. The elites or rulers adapted themselves to western culture, and this added a further dimension to the alienation of the elites from the masses, the rulers from the ruled. After World War II, this portrait changed with the development of a viable political opposition, and this was the beginning of the Islamic reassertion in the history of the Republic of Turkey.

Modernity was a precondition of Kemalist ideology, and secularism an instrument to create a national identity based on “universal” values.⁵ After creating a universal identity, the following step was to create a national economy. Kemalists believed that without economic sovereignty there could be no political sovereignty, the two were inseparable. Even before the announcement of the Republic, the organization in 1923 of the Economic Congress of Izmir was a sign of this desire for economic sovereignty. After all, in the writings of the era, economics represented the basis of a modern state, and the continuation of the Kemalist reforms was directly related to a sound economy.

The government took responsibility for creating an idealized environment and embracing the universal values mentioned above. As stated earlier, in the case of Turkey, these reforms did not occur as natural responses from Turkish society over time; instead they were sanctions imposed by the government. State intervention was not limited to defending the reforms. In the field of economics, intervention gradually became the official policy of the state.

⁵ Universal values represent the rational values systematized by West.

3.3 Economy Politics and Etatism

In the economic domain, after the Great Crash in 1929, crises occurred throughout the capitalist world. The consequence of these crises in Turkey was the growth of state intervention, a development that led to a stronger monoparty system. After the War of Independence, the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union were good, and it was decided that Turkey could benefit from the industrialization experiences of the Soviets. In 1931, a Russian delegation came to Turkey to craft a report on which industries could be established in Turkey, as well as the feasible locations and estimated costs of such facilities. The ideas derived from this report were formulated in the direction of greater state intervention in Turkey. During the following year, a journal named *Kadro* was founded by ideologues who supported state intervention and the continuation of the republican reforms. In all fields, such as economics, education, and health, comprehensive planning was necessitated and had to be carried out by dedicated cadres (*kadro*) (Okyar, 1965, p. 100). The state's intervention in the economy led to etatism, which became one of the six fundamental principles ("Six Arrows") of the ruling Republican People's Party (RPP). In the party program, etatism was defined as follows:

Although considering private work and activity a basic idea, it is one of our main principles to interest the State actively in matters when the general and vital interests of the nation are in question, especially in the economic field, in order to lead the nation and the country to prosperity in as short a time as possible.

The interest of the State in economic matters is to be an actual builder, as well as to encourage private enterprises, and also to regulate and control the work that is being done.

The determination of the economic matters to be undertaken by the State depends upon the requirements of the greatest public interest of the nation. If the enterprise, which the State itself decides to undertake actively as a result of this necessity, is in the hands of

private entrepreneurs, its appropriation shall, each time, depend upon the enactment of a law, which will indicate the way in which the State shall indemnify the loss sustained by the private enterprise as a result of this appropriation. In the estimation of the loss the possibility of future earnings shall not be taken into consideration (Webster, 1939, pp. 308-309).

Thus, the main principles of etatism had been articulated; however, the ideologues of the time did not state exactly what they had in mind. Even tone of the aims of choosing etatism for the economy was for the bourgeoisie to develop, abandoning the chances of development leading to centralizing, totalitarian tendencies in the party. In 1935, the party and the state were identified as united when Recep Peker, the party's Secretary General, stated that the fundamental principles of the party would henceforth also be those of the state. In this case, the party became the ideological vanguard of the state. For example, the etatist policy of the era required the participation of citizens in the development process. Accordingly, towards the 1950s, 500 People's Houses and, in small villages, 4000 People's Rooms were established. These establishments were directly under the supervision of the Party and were managed by teachers. Beyond cultural activities, the aim of these houses and rooms were to enlighten the people about the party program. However, only middle-class urban citizens were reached within this plan and the aim of bringing the center closer to the periphery failed (Göle, 2008, pp. 94-95). In this environment, revolutionaries established a modernized state structure without making changes in the social and economic systems that reached the periphery. The rural parts of Turkey in which almost 80% of the population lived were thus not affected by these structural changes (Ahmad, 1977, pp. 7-8).

Industrialization was one of the key dimensions of the Kemalist plans to build a new Turkey. The Kemalists considered industry a sign of advanced civilization; in this respect, industrialization, technological improvements, and, relatedly, an independent industrialized economy were intended to achieve the goal of a high

level of civilization. Industrialization was also the main justification for etatism, who were thinking that it would be a short-cut to the goal of civilization. The industrialization movement also represented a strong image of democracy and reform (Ahmad, 1993, p. 93). To realize this goal, reforms were made in university education to open the way for an emerging class of technicians, engineers, and bureaucrats to staff public enterprises.

In the meantime, while officials and the intelligentsia were demanding change and supporting the reforms, merchants and landowners did not trust the state as it was threatening their interests through land reform and monopolies. There were contradictions between the tendencies of the emerging bourgeoisie and the national identity formed by the state. Also, the effects of state intervention caused tension between the emerging bourgeoisie and the Kemalist intelligentsia. The attempt to create a national capitalism by using the state apparatus and the ruling party reached its limits. The bourgeoisie was ready to take the lead and integrate itself into the world market (Yerasimos, 1987, p. 91).

3.4 The Era of the Democrat Party

The year 1945 marks an important landmark for Turkish political history, because the often-voiced intention of developing a multi-party regime finally became a lasting reality. There were several reasons that convinced the “National Chief” İsmet İnönü, then president of Turkey, to make this decision toward liberalization. First, even though Turkey had not participated in the Second World War, it kept a massive army mobilized throughout the war years for national security; this was a great economic burden to the state and required direct sacrifices from the peasantry. Prices increased four times during wartime, affecting the entire society. Top-down modernization attempts had created

discontents in the traditional segments of society, and since the Republican People's Party governed the country without opposition, all anger was directed against the government and the ruling party. People needed a more democratic environment that would grant them space to express their thoughts and needs. The second reason was the changed dynamics of society. During wartime, a certain class of people had amassed wealth which now gave them influence in politics. This class was the "National Bourgeoisie" that had been the desired outcome of statist policies. The bourgeoisie who were landowners or amassed wealth during the war were now demanding expanded rights since they did not trust the monopoly regime and were unhappy about the party's intention to implement land reforms. The solution for the bourgeoisie was to create a political opposition against the ruling party. The third reason concerned the political situation after the War. Turkey wanted to prevent Soviet domination and the spread of communism. However, after the devastation of Germany, the Soviets had become the greatest power in the region and were pressuring Turkey by demanding territories from the eastern region of Turkey and a base near the Bosphorus in Istanbul. İnönü decided that Turkey alone could not stand against the Soviet Union, and thus he approached western powers, especially the United States. In order to join the western alliance, however, Turkey needed to apply the democratic norms of the West. Another factor that may be considered important is that the intention to create a multiparty system had existed ever since the *Tanzimat* era. During the lifetime of Atatürk, this had been attempted twice but failed both times because there was yet no political stability in the country. Thus, İnönü may have thought that if he could achieve the creation of a multiparty system, he would be a leader who succeeded where Atatürk had failed (Eroğul, 1987, pp. 102-103).

In a climate where certain changes had been implemented in the name of modernization and ordinary people had grown alienated from Kemalism, the

government's economic policy led to inflation and increasing hardships for the population. This situation, coupled with the post-War trends toward political and economic liberalization throughout the world led Turkey to develop a multiparty system.

For the reasons given, a new party was founded by the senior RPP members, Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Refik Koraltan and Fuat Köprülü. The name of this new party was Democrat Party. The position of the newly founded party was an important question. During the Republican period, labor had been kept under control and the private sector had been hindered by bureaucratic regulations that had blocked its development. Even though the Democrats' main concern was not specifically to gain the support of private sector, they wanted to remove the bureaucratic constraints on the private sector. The idea gained popularity that the Democrat Party (DP) was the party of business groups which had gained wealth during wartime. Adnan Menderes, one of the founders of the party, denied this claim and said that the party was not representative of people who had selfish interests but rather was of all people who wanted to put an end to the monoparty era (Ahmad, 1977, p. 16). Democrat party had won the elections and established government under the leadership of Adnan Menderes.

The party program had two main principles: democracy and liberalism. Liberalism was taken as both economic liberalism and freedom of expression. The first thing given reference was freedom to establish trade unions and support for private entrepreneurs based on the principles of etatism mentioned in the constitution. The second principle, democracy, was announced as the main reason for the foundation of the party. The DP insisted on the institution of the principles of a secret ballot and open tabulation and the inclusion of party representatives in electoral commissions as conditions for realizing this goal. The party program stated that a new judicial system was required (Article 27) and that universities must have intellectual and administrative autonomy (Article 38). In the economic

domain, the main principle focused on private enterprise and increasing productivity, so that state enterprises could be privatized. Liberalization policies were implemented as a market principle, meaning that the state positioned itself as a passive actor in the marketplace (Article 51). One of the significant policies supported by the DP was agricultural development: the party program declared that the country's development depended on agriculture, since 80% of the population was living in rural areas and worked in agriculture (Article 54) (Eroğul, 2013, p. 18).

Zürcher has argued that the DP realized the importance of agriculture as a driver for modernization in a developing country like Turkey. In this regard, under the leadership of Menderes, they put the interests of the farmers first. This policy provided cheap credit to the farmers and regulated (supported) the prices of their products through a government agency, the TMO (*Toprak Mahsülleri Ofisi*).

The Turkish economic program had been influenced by the American system. The government encouraged investment, especially foreign investment, and expected the participation of the bourgeoisie by investing in the industrial sector. However, despite the government's encouragement, both foreign and Turkish investments remained low and the state's investments were often short-sighted, aimed at rapid growth in the short term rather than long-term improvements in technology and industry (Zürcher, 2004, pp. 224-225).

One of the most important issues in the DP era was the party's discourse on religion. As can be seen from its economic policies, the party had adopted a populist approach. They were supported by a large segment of society who had grown tired of the RPP's harsh policies on religion. During the multiparty era, competition led parties to reconsider their approach to religion. Since the RPP had embraced secularism as the hallmark of its westernization politics and in this way repressed Islam, they had to make concessions over religion to increase their

popularity while competing with the DP. In this situation, DP members chose to accuse Republicans of ignoring Islam and being hostile to it.

The Democrats' first measure was important at this point. They lifted the prohibition on the call to prayer (*ezan*) in Arabic once banned by the RPP government. This was symbolic for the majority of the society because they believed that call to prayers in Turkish was not fitting into the authenticity of religion. The following changes were the government actions to recognize religion in public spaces, such as compulsory religious lessons at school and lifting the ban on religious radio programs. It should be kept in mind that while performing these actions, Democrat leaders identified themselves as committed Kemalists just as the Republicans did. This portrait began to change after the worsening of the economy. Ahmad emphasizes that the peak year for the political exploitation of Islam in Turkey was 1958, which was also Turkey's worst year economically. Attempts were made by the government to cover up the hardships and shortages of goods, and to remedy them through religious activities. It is a fact that during this period, religion was used as an instrument to increase votes and sustain support for the government. The second point worth emphasizing was the expectations of people who favored increasing religious activities and in this regard supported the government. These supporters of the DP were deeply opposed to RPP politics and the image that the RPP represented. In this regard, with the establishment of the DP, these opponents thought that they had found a political space within which to express themselves. Thus, Atatürk busts were vandalized in several regions of Turkey. These fanatical actions can be read as expressions of anger against RPP repression rather than direct hatred of Atatürk himself. At the DP congress in Konya, there were demands to restore the *fez*, the *hijab* and Arabic script. These demands were related to the outward form of Islam, instead of its essence. Contrary to late-nineteenth-century efforts to reconcile modernity and Islam, in the mid-twentieth-century secular Republic of

Turkey, there were fundamentalist, reactionary tendencies partly as a reaction to the oppressive policies of secular RPP governments.

3.5 The Era of the Justice Party

After the 1960 coup, a new party was needed to fill the gap left by the Democrat Party and inherit its 5 million votes. The NUC (National Unity Committee) established after the coup was aware of this situation and, rather than forming a new party of its own, it decided to support the newly-founded New Turkey Party (NTP) of a former DP dissident, Ekrem Alican. This party represented the elitist, intellectual, and urban segment of society. According to Feroz Ahmad, the NTP failed to assume the legacy of the DP largely because of its narrow elitist base, and because its loyal DP supporters disapproved of the party founders, since they had been expelled from the DP and joined the RPP (Ahmad, 1977, p. 233).

The other alternative was the Justice Party (JP), founded by former general Ragıp Gümüşpala. As a former military man, Gümüşpala enjoyed the confidence of the armed forces; he was also able to gain the support of DP voters by giving positions in his organization to former DP members. Indeed, these were the key to reaching a wide base in a short time, as the JP reorganized the defunct DP branches at provincial and local levels (Ahmad, 1977, p. 234).

Two facts must be emphasized about the political tendencies of Turkish society in this era. The first is the favoring of religious, central rightist politicians. Since Democrat Party members had played this role in the past, voters supported the direct successors of the DP. The second point involved the representation of the rural population; intellectual, elitist coalitions were not favored in this regard.

The best-known leader identified with the Justice Party was Süleyman Demirel, whose modest background inspired popular support. Demirel came from a rural part of the country and had been born into a lower-middle-class family in southern Anatolia. He had been able to achieve some upward mobility through education: an engineer by profession, he had worked at several different companies. Nevertheless, voters from the countryside perceived him as one of them and this gave him a distinct electoral advantage. Demirel emphasized the Islamic character of his party and their respect for traditional values, while fighting against the communist threat and domestic leftist inclinations. He was a technocrat with plans to industrialize the country. He supported the idea of direct participation by capitalism in politics and also gained the support of big business owners. As a supporter of capitalism, Demirel emphasized the difference between nineteenth-century profiteering capitalism and his own party's program. However, development plans through foreign aid and private investment was not a new idea. The same policy had been pursued by the DP and had not yielded the expected results (Ahmad, 1977, pp. 240-242).

As the leader of the JP after Gümüşpala's untimely death, Demirel was faced with the need to maintain a balance between the different factions comprising the party, such as officers, former DP supporters, secularist intellectuals, and businessmen. He gradually lost the support of many of these factions. Big business withdrew its support because of his economic policies; former DP members withdrew theirs after he failed to take action to restore their political rights. Demirel also partly lost the support of the conservative wing of his party, small traders and landowners, after proposing a new system of taxation intended to secure funds for his industrialization program (Zürcher, 2004, p. 252).

After Demirel's resignation from an active political role following the 1980 military coup, a member of the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

accused him of having turned Turkey into an open market for Europe and the United States.

Among the politicians that gained significance after Süleyman Demirel's departure from active politics, Turgut Özal and Necmettin Erbakan deserve special mention as coming from conservative backgrounds and having received an engineering education. Although Özal became Prime Minister before Erbakan, I will discuss Erbakan first, as he was politically active long before Özal.

3.6 Necmettin Erbakan

In his autobiography, Erbakan told the story of his venture to the presidency of the Chamber of Commerce. He said while they –professionals in mechanical engineering- were struggling to manufacture engines for civil life, the Turkish government was importing busses, airplanes, and trucks with aid coming from the Marshall Fund. However, he wrote, it was possible to manufacture those vehicles in Turkey. Improvements in industry were being prevented because there were circles that had a vested interest in the continuation of importation. The Chamber of Commerce was tasked with distributing investment credits at the time. Almost all the credits were given to major import companies, while a small amount was sent to Anatolian entrepreneurs. For this reason, Anatolian entrepreneurs were facing difficulties in making investments. In order to protect the rights of Anatolian entrepreneurs, Erbakan sought and won the presidency of the industry branch of the Chamber in 1966, after which he became Secretary General of the Chamber. In his own words, he attempted to shift the credit market to Anatolia, a policy that disturbed those who had been benefiting from the major part of those credits. However, he was supported by the Anatolian investors and with that support, Erbakan became the president of The Union of Chambers and

Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB). The government and certain factions of capital blocked his efforts, and the right to distribute credits were taken from the authority of the Chamber and given to the Ministry of Industry. At this point, to continue his mission, he chose to enter politics (Erbakan, 2014, p. 10-11).

Erbakan's philosophy and politics can be discussed under three main topics: Islamic union, technology and industry, and the "Just [Socio-Economic] Order". He defines his movement with Islamic culture and a scientific background and based on these, he worked for establishing an adapted version of this Islamic based order to the modern world. Erbakan's politics differed from that of his predecessors. Other parties targeting the religious segments of society supported liberal economics and capitalism; Erbakan's "Just Order" was an example of etatist politics adapted to Islamic doctrine.

Industrial development was one of the main issues taken up by Erbakan. In his speeches, he declared that industry was essential for creating job opportunities for the increasing population. He used examples from Islamic and Ottoman history as supporting arguments. He said that without industry, no country could be strong. In order to be one of the strongest countries of the world, Turkey needed to industrialize (Erbakan, 2014, p. 187). Erbakan was comparing the histories of the West and the East from the viewpoint of technological development, and claiming that Turkey could develop a high level of technology, just as the Ottoman Empire had once done.

Erbakan problematized Turkey's industrial development in four respects. First, the mentality of importing instead of manufacturing had to be changed in order to encourage investment in industry and develop manufacturing technologies. One of Erbakan's mottos was: "Genuine industrialization is to have factories that manufacture factories" (Erbakan, 2014, p. 192). Second, Erbakan criticized Turkey's "lack of planning." For efficient industrial investment, the location of

the facilities needed to be taken into account in light of transportation, geographical, and manpower factors. In Turkey, however, these factors were not considered while investing in industry, and planning was neglected. Besides, when building facilities, technical support and engineering services were supplied by foreign companies. Domestic sources for technical support and Turkish engineers were not involved. Erbakan believed that Turkish engineers had the potential to produce engines, and to prove his claim, he founded an engine factory, “Gümüş Motor,” in order to lead the country to stop importing engines by improving the technological substructure and developing an engine industry (Erbakan, 1974, p. 97).

For Erbakan, one of the most important and strategic industries in any country was the defense industry. However, he said, although there had been attempts to develop a defense industry during the Second World War, those attempts had remained stunted and now Turkey depended on foreign countries to defend itself. Since Turkey was a developing country, Erbakan was aware of the limits of the research budgets and technological development potential that were available. He suggested realistic technological development alternatives that Turkey could produce as a first step. In his speeches, Erbakan emphasized the necessity of technology and industry while presenting his solutions for redressing the shortcomings in those areas; in so doing, he stressed his identity as a trained engineer to gain the confidence of his audience.

As a professor who had studied the natural sciences, Erbakan had certain specific views concerning the knowledge of western scientists. In his speeches, he affirmed that most of those who had not properly studied science and only had limited knowledge of it thought that the West had an unquestionable superiority over the East in this domain. Erbakan rejected this view and, based on his own academic studies at the doctoral level, claimed that the West did not have a deeper understanding of the experimental results that they had obtained, and that

they created their scientific arguments based on suppositions. In order to prove his claim, Erbakan referred to history. Muslims had benefited from the works of ancient Greece, Egypt, and India, and while doing so, they had used systematic thinking. They did not take as given the information they read, but instead experimented and improved on it. In Islamic scientific history, the sciences were improved based on references, experiments, and collaboration. In the West, Europeans took the works of Muslim scholars and translated them, although while translating, proper scientific terms could not be found because of the backwardness of the sciences in comparison with the East. For this reason, it was only in the eighteenth century that Europeans had begun to understand the works they had translated back in the fourteenth century (Erbakan, 1974, pp. 24-26).

Erbakan identified himself as an expert in technical sciences, and he constructed an argument about Enlightenment philosophy and the development of the natural sciences in the West and in Islamic history. He argued that western philosophy had developed through the reciprocal denial of the philosophers and the scientists. On the other hand, in Islamic history, scientists and philosophers improved and enhanced their predecessors' works, a tradition known as *sharh* in Islamic culture. By using this argument, Erbakan pointed out that the Western scientists' eyes were closed and that they did not know which way to follow. The only way to overcome this obstacle was to follow the science of the Quran (Erbakan, 1974, pp. 44-45).

Erbakan is one of the most important among Turkish politicians who identified themselves as both religious Muslims and engineers. He formed his perspective in light of the Quran and examined the sciences from this perspective. As a professor of mechanical engineering, he used his knowledge to create alternative plans for the industrialization of Turkey; likewise, he benefited from his religious background to formulate his social agenda. Erbakan's philosophy reached a wide range of people throughout his political career. In his talks as a politician,

Erbakan motivated his audiences by giving examples from Islamic and specifically Ottoman history. For him, contrary to popular opinion, Ottomans had been leading technological inventions and improvements, and the West had benefited from and been inspired by the inventions of Islamic scholars. In this respect, he held that it was possible to improve technology and industrialize while also preserving Islamic values instead of embracing Western values fed by Enlightenment ideas.

The monoparty era in Turkey's political history reflects the nuances of the modernization program formed by the followers of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and executed directly by the hands of the state. Contrary to the quest of Ottoman scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in terms of reconciling Islam and modernity, starting with the establishment of the Republic and the formation of the government under the influence of Kemalist doctrine, Islam was removed from the equation and modernity itself became the main goal. The RPP's party program adopted secularism as a central principle, and the main motivation behind the new regulations promulgated by the government in education, the law, and the use of public spaces. Given popular values and practices in Turkey, it can be seen that secular policies were exterior to and top-down for society. In this regard, politicians who saw the tendencies and desires of society formed their party program and discourse based on society's expectations, bound to religious and traditional values and defined as conservative.

For Turkey as a developing country, another keyword besides secularism was industrialization as part of the parties' modernization agenda. The RPP's statist strategies to develop industry with the help of the state, and the DP's liberal economic strategy of reinforcement of foreign investment and promotion of free enterprise both pointed toward the mission of industrialization. In this period, industrial investments were highly appreciated; engineers took their place on the stage as the most competent technical experts and the carriers of technology.

Particularly after 1965, within the framework of the state's industrialization policy, investment in technical education as well as the number of engineers increased. Engineers became indispensable socio-professional actors. As an engineer-politician, Erbakan emphasized his education and profession in his public speeches and thus sought to prove his abilities and vision to lead technological investments and establish heavy industry.

3.7 Turgut Özal

After the 1980 military coup, following the return to civilian rule, a new government was formed under the leadership of Turgut Özal who first served as Prime Minister and then as President. Özal is well remembered for his economically liberal discourse as well as his conservative worldview. Having been educated as an electrical engineer and worked in this capacity for both state institutions and private companies, he then studied economics and became involved with active politics in the 1980s.

Contrary to the traditional Turkish view of the "sacredness of the state," Özal considered the state as no more than an instrument. His politics were based on the idea that the state was there to serve society and not the other way around. In support of democracy, he stressed the "superiority of the elected against the appointed" (Erdoğan, 2001, p. 18-19). In this section, I will highlight his economically liberal, yet socially conservative character and his interest in technology, in order to draw a portrait of his era.

Born to a mother who was a teacher and a father who was a bank official, Turgut Özal spent his childhood in different cities in Anatolia. It may be for this reason that he was careful about closing the gaps between state and society. Erdoğan

suggests that his adoption of liberal thinking had also been facilitated by this factor, which had led him to reject any alienation from society's common values. Moderate conservative people tend to support development projects if they do not run counter to their beliefs. Özal benefited from this fact and gained the support of moderate conservatives to execute his reform program (Erdoğan, 2001, p. 24). Beyond being a populist, however, Özal's intention was to gain the support of different factions. For this, he emphasised freedom of speech, freedom of religion and conscience, and freedom of investment (Yazıcıoğlu, 2001, p. 202). Özal also took Ottoman pluralism as a model to end ethnic conflicts. Within this program, he gave Kurds the right to speak their languages in public and celebrate their traditional festival (*Nawroz*). Beyond this, his ultimate intention was to convert Turkey into an open and pluralistic society, eliminating military tutelage and the bureaucracy (Aral, 2001, p. 244). His religious personality and non-military background increased his popularity during his presidency. As an economically liberal and religious person, he aimed to ignite an Islamic Renaissance by combining modern science and knowledge with religious tolerance (Aral, 2001, p. 226).

Besides having close political interactions with the United States and with some European countries, Özal gave importance to commerce in his liberal economic program. His motto was "Catching up with the modern and economically developed world." On technological issues, Özal coded the Kemalist aim of modernity as technology in all parts of everyday life. While he encouraged technological development, he did not impose wholesale westernization of lifestyles (Sarıbay, 2001, p. 153). Overall, in Özal's discourse, Turkish society found liberal thinking, a market economy, pluralism as an ideology, close political and commercial relations with the Turkic states of Central Asia, and an attempt at unity them after the end of the Cold War. Özal's conservatism provided a space for religious people to live in accordance with their beliefs. On

the other hand, he also aimed to provide space for people from all parts of society as part of his liberal approach.

3.8 Interpretation of Conservatism in Turkey and Conservative Engineers

İsmail Kara has defined Islamism as an activist movement that appeared during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and aimed to make Islam dominant over every part of life (faith, religious practices, ethics, philosophy, politics, the law, and education) by using a rational method to eliminate the dangers of western colonization, oppressive rulers, and popular superstitions, thus civilizing Islamic society (Kara, 1987, p. 28). According to this definition, Islamic scholars were represented as reformers of religion with a modernist approach. For example, Muhammad Abduh, Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, and Mehmed Akif Ersoy were followers of Islamist ideology.

As İsmail Kara points out, “conservatism” in the Turkish context is associated with religiosity. A conservative person implies one who is religious, a practicing Muslim who lives according to Islamic guidance. In a deeper sense, Berat Özipek has described conservatism as based on three dimensions: reason, society, and politics. The epistemological basis of conservatism was the Enlightenment’s interpretation of reason. Ontologically, human beings have a limited capacity that is not sufficient to perceive the system of the entire universe and humanity. Socially, the limited perception and limited reason of a human being cannot construct social rules independently of religion, tradition, and experience. Finally, since reason has no basis to explore the rules of society and create an idealized world, a rationalist project to transform the existing order is not approved of by conservatism (Özipek, 2011, pp. 25-26).

Regarding this historical background and the dynamics valued by society, engineering as a profession can be questioned in light of politics, religious values, and the mission of modernization. In this study, we have dealt with respondents who identify themselves as engineers and as being conservative. The meaning of conservatism can be tricky and is often confused with Islamism. The engineers we have dealt with for this study saw themselves as simply religious people who embraced religious values to form their philosophy of life, rather than as activists with a mission of reinterpreting sources and using politics as an instrument in a project intended to create a new form of piety and a new kind of Muslim individual.

One of the main dualities of the history of secularism and religion in the Republic of Turkey can be examined by investigating the characteristics and preferences of engineers who identify themselves as conservative, since they use a rational approach in their profession and regard other tendencies as irrational. From the perspective of conservative engineers, does engineering have motivations beyond providing a profession, and in which areas they feel themselves as competent can give clues about their role in society? As one of the key players in the state's principal agenda, industrialization, do they see themselves as being close to politics? The most important question is whether or not conservative engineers in the Republic of Turkey have actually realized the goal of late-nineteenth-century Islamic-Ottoman thinkers by approaching faith with a rational methodology and moving beyond the burden of superstitions and traditions for scientific progress and development.

CHAPTER IV

Conservative Engineers of Turkey - Interviews

Those who deal with biology and medicine are condemned to the laws of nature. Jurists are helpless before man-made laws. Those who work with mathematics are never free of fancy. For this reason, it is not appropriate for us to involve ourselves too much with these matters. In those who work with geometry, there is no place for fancy, geometry makes one conservative. Therefore we must be particularly involved with geometers (*mühendis/engineers*).

Shaykh Abdü'l-Azîz Efendi⁶

This chapter includes parts of in-depth interviews conducted in 2012 with engineers who define themselves as conservative. The respondents were selected from various industries as well as academia. They are described in Table 4.1, where their names are withheld to protect their privacy.

⁶ Taken from the book “Şeyh Efendi’nin Rüyası” written by İsmail Kara (2002, p. 41). The quotation was translated from the Turkish by İrvin Cemil Schick.

Table 4.1 : List of informants

Name	Sex	Age	Date of Interview
A	Male	48	3/8/ 2012
E	Male	32	5/29/ 2012
K	Male	30	7/15/2012
C	Female	37	5/14/2012
S	Male	31	3/7/2012
M	Female	32	5/6/2012
F	Male	42	5/6/2012
J	Male	55	5/23/2012
O	Male	59	6/1/2012
Z	Male	62	5/14/2012

4.1 Identities of the Republic of Turkey

The Republic of Turkey was founded on the remnants of the Ottoman Empire in Anatolia in 1923. Between carrying the heritage of a rich Ottoman-Islamic culture and the desire for founding a new country adapted to the world system, which meant European standards, the elites of society who had been educated in Europe (or at least educated in Turkey in the European style) were inclined to deny the Ottoman cultural heritage and create a new, modern identity. In this regard, these elites, as representatives of the Kemalist modernization project, constructed a new Turkish identity based on the characteristics of the West, which were fed by

trends in European history: feudalism, humanism, the Reformation, the Enlightenment philosophy of the eighteenth century, secularism, liberal-parliamentarian democracy, and the industrial revolution.

From the beginning of the sixteenth century, following the discovery of the American continent and the colonization of the Indian coasts, Europeans from Portugal, Spain, England, France, and Italy began to accumulate enormous wealth. While Portugal and Spain were not able to elaborate a system to augment their wealth, England found ways to turn its wealth into capital. The creation of a new economic system led to remarkable changes in the structure of society. A new class emerged and overshadowed the nobles and the clergy. This new urban middle class controlled the trade of money, soon shaping the perception of society and shifting from a religious to a profane worldview. Besides, immense trade flows created a workload beyond the limits of existing human resources. The lack of balance between workload and human resources opened up new horizons and led to technological developments thanks to the scientific knowledge transferred in the thirteenth century from Islamic scholars. With these new horizons, a new worldview was raised on the shoulders of merchants and engineers involving basic concern with the material world instead of wisdom (Durali, 2000, pp. 80-81).

The rise of engineering was not due to the same motivation in the Ottoman world. Cartesian thought spread across the Ottoman intelligentsia, starting from the Balkans and then gaining popularity in Ottoman bureaucratic circles. Especially after the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699, supporters of reforms led the turn westward with the aim of developing the Ottoman Empire. Because of the resistance of religious scholars (*ulama*) and traditionalists, the first westernizing bureaucrats were only able to reform the most emergent field, which was military technology. To convince the *ulama*, the Islamic principle stating that “For the sake of protecting the state, imitating the enemy’s tactics is permissible” was used and

the first schools of engineering were established to develop military technology in the eighteenth century (İnalçık, 1998, pp. 23-24).

In her doctoral thesis, Nilüfer Göle emphasized the correlation between the actions of ruling elites and those of social actors within the society. During the early Republican era, the major characteristic of politics was “democratic nationalism”. Analysis of this characteristic reveals the contradictions between secular state policies and the religious public. For the sake of establishing a modern country, the state aimed to spread the modernist values of “secularism” and “democratic consent”. Since society’s religious inclinations ran counter to secularism, the hands of the state upheld nationalism to keep the society in unity. With the motivation of nationalist thought and etatist policies, engineers appeared on the stage as the bearers of the industrial development of the country and took control of the production processes of the state’s industrial enterprises. In this manner, engineers carried the mission of spreading rational, scientific values and became the main pillar of the national economy. After 1950, the role of engineers changed with the shift from etatism to liberalism. While continuing to run industrial enterprises, their influence as some of the principal agents of the national economy vanished and engineers began to incline toward the private sector. Engineering education became popular after 1965, in view of the emphasis placed on industrial development, as well as the encouragement to follow technological developments and scientific methods in industry, and thus the number of engineers in Turkey increased (Göle, 1998, pp. 105-115).

Engineers were once the flag bearers of industrialism and indirectly of a materialist worldview in the West. In the Republic of Turkey, which had been founded on the values and principles of modern Europe, the same pattern could not be followed since the cultural and traditional background of society was different. Instead of applying exactly the same pattern, a modification was implemented and nationalism was promoted. Thus, in modernizing Turkey,

engineers were ideologically posed to serve their country. As Göle has emphasized, they were in charge of industrial enterprises and, instead of being pure technocrats, they were led by nationalism to be the bearers of developmentalist ideology in Turkey.

Another point that must be emphasized is the relatively permeable class boundaries of Turkey at the time, particularly for people coming from the rural areas of Turkey which accounted for almost 80% of the population in the 1950s. As in the example of Süleyman Demirel, education provided the means for social betterment and engineering in particular was a significant channel of upward social mobility. Mr. A's response to the question "What was the motivation of religious people for choosing engineering as their profession?" supports this hypothesis:

I think religious people in Turkey mostly belong to the lower-income segment of society, and these people believe that to obtain a higher income, one should be a doctor, an engineer, or a lawyer. They relate money to mechanical jobs rather than art or the social sciences (Mr. A, age 48).

In a similar vein, another informant expressed the social position of conservative people as oppressed and limited until recent years.

Especially in recent years, after the spread of preparatory courses for university entrance examinations, the workload of students increased and their social interests remained weak. Most of the religious people already have socializing problems. I believe that religious people were repressed and thus they limited their social space. Instead of expressing themselves socially, they remained antisocial and under this influence, their children tend to choose science departments. For them, a good engineering department was the best way to prove themselves. However, I believe that this environment will begin to change soon. Now religious people recognize their shortcomings and focus on raising children with social qualifications as well (Mr. E, age 32).

Mr E.'s response suggests that conservative people do not belong to the elite classes of society. On the contrary, in the portrait he draws, conservative people are insecure and reserved. For this reason, they tend to choose an influential job as a professional career, and in their eyes, these jobs are not in the social sciences or art departments.

Not all the responses emphasized economic concerns and financial security. A young informant with an *imam-hatip* school background, which are the schools giving religious education besides the regular curricula and functions as a vocational schools to train imams as well, emphasized the mission they carried as a conservative generation. Mr. K stated:

Most of my friends chose to be engineers. We were going to *imam-hatip* schools and in those days the university entrance exam scores of *imam-hatip* graduates were automatically reduced. They motivated us to take government positions in the future, so we left *imam-hatip* schools and then we chose engineering (Mr K. age 30).

Another response opened up a new perspective on understanding the correlation between modernization and rational thinking. One of the main ideas of Enlightenment philosophy was that advances in science would liberate the mind from religion and traditional authority. However, Mr. Z said:

I believe that people who choose engineering incline to religion rather than the other way around, because there was a religious scholar named Said-i Nursi in Turkey. He wrote addressing the interest of people who had a background in the physical sciences instead of theology or law (Mr. Z, age 62).

Regarding Mr. Z's response, a different approach to modernization is possible regarding the cultural background and intellectual heritage of a society. As a person born into a family that defines itself as Muslim but is not totally observant, Mr. Z studied sciences and at the same time constructed his own religious identity by reading the works of Turkish religious intellectual, Said Nursi. As a matter of

fact, Fuad Pasha, an Ottoman statesman in 19th century, pointed out the same relation, using the physical sciences to have a deeper understanding in religious norms, in a speech delivered at the University of İstanbul (*Darülfünûn*) in January 1863. He classified modern physics and divine *hikmah* within the same category, or, by another interpretation, he defined modern physics as an instrument for divine *hikmah* and argued that there was continuity between ancient physics (*hikmah*) and modern physics (Kara, 2014, pp. 122-123).

Regarding the Mr. Z's respond on forming a world perception based on studying physical sciences and reading Islamic works and Fuat Pasha's speech to see the relation between modern sciences and divine hikmah, I would suggest having recourse to the term "alternative modes of modernity" since these people create their own identity through reinterpretations of the form imported from the West and lying outside local traditions. As Göle stated, "In order to arrive at new prisms of analysis, we need to further de-center the West itself and look at what once were considered peripheries as centers in their own right, with their own capacity for creating history" (Göle, 2002).

4.2 The Borders of Engineering

In the eyes of conservative engineers, the areas in which engineers work effectively in Turkey's modernization process is a debatable issue. Some of the interviewees claimed that engineers' abilities basically cover industrial subjects and should remain in this area, while others thought that engineers have the capability to solve problems and analytical thinking makes them practical problem solvers for a wide range of issues.

I think engineers should not be involved in politics, and an engineer should not be promoted to a manager position until the age of 40.

Involvement in politics or being eager to get promoted before gaining seniority are equally inappropriate for engineers (Mr. Z age 62).

Mr. S supported Mr. Z's argument, saying:

In Turkey engineers work in almost all fields and they work with good performance. However, for me, the profession of engineers is technical and must be concerned with the lowest level of the hierarchy: the technical workforce. At the top level, there must be social scientists that are more able to manage people. But we engineers are not convinced about this order because managers are paid more than a regular engineer. Engineers believe that they had better scores to enter university, and they are well educated, so in this case why would they earn less? All in all, economic concerns lead them to be in higher positions (Mr. S, age 31).

Why would engineers believe that they are competent in almost all fields? Is this self-assurance fed by society's opinion? The answer is related to Mr. F's and Mrs. M's thoughts. Mrs. M said:

Engineers are present in all fields. I don't think that it is directly related to being an engineer; however, in a certain era in Turkey, students with a high level of perception were guided to choose engineering departments. Under this choice, their inclinations are different. They gain multiple identities and since they have high perception they become successful in their areas (Mrs. M, age 32).

When asked why individuals chose to study engineering and then sought employment in other fields, Mrs. M defined engineering as a guaranteed way to earn a living, like being a medical doctor. Economic concerns were emphasized in the choice of engineering. Mr. F also believed that science departments were once very popular and students chose them without questioning. He said:

Turkey is an exceptional case. Brilliant students prefer the science department in high school and then mostly enter engineering departments or medical schools. I was doing better in social sciences but I followed the mainstream and entered a science-based high school, because this is what successful students do (Mr. F, age 42).

We see that although Mr. F was doing better in social sciences, he entered an engineering department under the influence of mainstream pressures. Likewise, Mr. E stated that he would have preferred a social science department; however, under the influence of his family's expectations, he chose an engineering education. Regarding the engineer profile that Turkey needs, both Mr. F and Mr. E believed that Turkey needs engineers interested in social affairs.

Turkey needs engineers who question themselves every day to create value for their country and for their companies. We need both engineer teams occupied with technical work, machines, and tools like a regular worker in the field, and engineers with management abilities. Also I believe that engineers are needed in politics. Some rumors say that engineers could not govern the country but we also had governments led by economists, such as [Tansu] Çiller. Those governments were not better than the governments set up by engineers (Mr. E, age 32).

By focusing on the abilities obtained through an engineering education, Mr. A. was favorable to the idea of getting involved in politics: "I believe that engineers are more suitable for politics, because engineers are educated to solve problems. They are focused and have an analytical thinking background that makes them good problem solvers" (Mr. A, age 48). In contrast, Mrs. C's argument focused on leadership: "Engineers are not educated to be leaders; they should focus on improving technology and do scientific studies. This is the duty of engineers on the road to modernization" (Mrs. C, age 37).

Beyond being conservative, certain conclusions can be drawn from these arguments about being an engineer and what engineers were qualified to do. Whether or not the informants thought that engineers should only be occupied with technical work, they all believed that they had the capacity to go beyond that. They exhibited self-confidence and self-perception, and, relatedly, they felt competent to enter almost any field of endeavor, relying on their intelligence and education. When providing examples to prove this point, they mentioned Oğuz

Atay in literature; Erbakan, Demirel, and Özal in politics; a number of social scientists with engineering backgrounds; and various entrepreneurs. As discussed in the previous chapter, Erbakan used his own training as an engineer to convince his constituents in his speeches on industrialization and development.

According to the informants' responses, a prized characteristic in the conservative world is a guaranteed job. This refers to professions in which it is more likely to find employment, and are thus more appreciated by society. Based on the responses of the informants, in Turkey, these professions are law, medicine, and engineering. There are basically two reasons for choosing engineering. The first is being curious about technical instruments and having a strong quantitative ability, and the second is mainstream social pressure expressed as the tendency for smart students to choose science-based high schools or science departments in ordinary high schools. Consequently, not all engineers in Turkey have strong quantitative intelligence; there are also engineers with stronger qualitative intelligence, who chose to receive an engineering education for other reasons. One of my informants, Mr. F, argued that this is a good thing:

I think Turkey needs engineers with strong social analysis abilities. I mean engineers who can combine technical knowledge with the social sciences. In Turkey there is no ideal professional business environment, no professionalism. If you prefer to be a professional in a specific area, you would most probably be unemployed after some time. You should be able to work in different areas, which gives you flexibility to work in different departments and fields. This is ideal in Turkey's conditions (Mr. F, age 42).

In this regard, engineers could be defined as the key players in Turkey's industry and business environments. Most of the informants did not identify themselves only with technology and industry, defining themselves as omnipotent players in all fields.

4.3 Method and Initiative

According to Weber, the modern bureaucracy limits the space in which people can use their perceptions. Actions are under the control of a system designed for specific institutions; thus, under the control of a bureaucratic structure, morality and initiative are not necessarily required, compared to decisions taken by applying other methods.

I asked my informants whether initiative or methodology was more efficient in their decision-making processes. Mrs. M said:

Initiative. That is because in our system, method has not taken its place yet. The reason is that we are about to reach maturity and begin to make innovations. It is hard for us to use existing methodologies while trying to catch new ones. On the other hand we are trying to make a profit (Mrs. M, age 32).

My informants believed that methodology was the less risky path to decision-making. However, beyond the strict limits of a method, they experienced or believed that initiative could open a gate to solving the problems on which they worked. Mr. K, Mr. J, and Mrs. C's responses were as follows:

I believe that we should act within a rational methodology, but in Turkey, it's not the way you should act. You have to take initiative. Besides, it's a good thing that makes you liked by your employees. The handicap here is that if you are taking initiative on an issue you hardly know about, that is dangerous. Methods are the safest way (Mr. K, age 30).

I use rational methods more than personal initiative. However, experience has taught me that there is always a way out even if methods tell you the opposite. Initiative opens a space for you (Mr. J, age 55).

I always use reason. I take initiative only for minor issues, but rationality for me is not apart from emotions. For this reason, I'm trying to find a balance between rational thinking and my emotions (Mrs. C, age 37).

Mr. F's response represented the unbalanced bureaucratization-subjective decision level of industry in Turkey. He said "The lack of professionalism in Turkey opens a larger space for the use of initiative than would normally be the case" (Mr. F, age 42). In this instance, we might also question if Turkish engineers are professional modern elements of industrial development, or if bureaucratization is the indispensable crucial notion of modernity.

4.4 The Privatization of Religion

According to Weber, an increase of scientific knowledge and higher levels of education in industrial societies will bring about a trend toward a rational worldview. Within this framework, the most rational people in any given society must be the most highly educated and have the greatest scientific knowledge. Secularism as one of the main elements of modernity implies that the tendency to drive religion out of politics, economics, science, and the public sphere and push it into the private sphere is an inevitable result of modernity and the discrediting of religious institutions and norms in society (Casanova, 1994, p. 13).

Keyder has pointed to a certain reductionist behavior behind the problem of secularism in Turkey. He noted that in Turkey, religious identity is only associated with politics, while in daily life, from a sociological perspective, the multi-dimensional relation of religious identity with modernity is ignored. He said that the main debate revolves around the duality of "secular-modern identity" and "religious-antimodernist identity," and argued that beyond this assumption, there is a more complex and fragile relationship between religion and modernity

than is suggested by secularization theory. Keyder borrowed Peter Berger's terms "objective secularization" and "subjective secularization" to describe this complex and fragile relation (Keyder, 2003, pp. 118-119).

Objective secularization refers to the separation of religious affairs and state affairs, and to the decline of the influence of religious institutions in the public sphere. Objective secularization is associated with a social-structural process engaged to the nation state as the main dynamic of society. In this way, the nation-state's legitimacy is isolated from a religious character. Subjective secularization, on the other hand, refers to the secularization of the individuals' consciousness. An individual's free-minded, modern isolation from traditional-religious references leads him to engage himself with nature, social relations, and his personal life within the terms of a secular mindset. Put differently, the cultural formation of the modern self is the main article of subjective secularization (Berger, 1967, p. 127).

Keyder noted that the relation between modernity and secularization is not linear and causal, as is commonly assumed. In the Turkish example, the mission of objective secularization succeeded and was embraced by society. On the other hand, when it came to subjective secularization, Turkish society reacted against it, countering the danger of discrediting religion through its privatization. This reaction led to an opposite current and religion remained one of the main pillars of society. Moreover, this situation caused a sacralizing process within society. As an example, in business, organizations such as the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MÜSIAD) created a network of religious business owners and created opportunities to establish business organizations. (Keyder, 2003) This example is related to Weber's article "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism", in which he described the creation of trust between businessmen who were members of particular Protestant denominations.

An informant's response to my question as to whether or not there is a difference between conservative engineers and others supports this argument. Mr. E. said that conservative engineers have closer relations with business owners in Anatolia. His observations on the conservative engineers in his own organization may refer to the causal relationship between cosmopolitanism and modernity. In his statement, Mr. E used the toponym "Anatolia" to describe the less cosmopolitan, rural parts of Turkey, indirectly referring to them as more conservative. His emphasis on the close relationship between conservative engineers and Anatolian business owners is similar to the discourse related to both parties' conservatism.

On the other hand, Mr. E's attitude toward business life is fully professional and separate from his beliefs and private life. As mentioned above, Keyder stated that Turkish society reacted against subjective secularism out of fear of discrediting religion and privatizing their beliefs. Contrary to this observation, some of the informants stressed the separation between their beliefs, conservative worldview, and professional personae. In light of these statements, we can hypothesize that Turkish conservative engineers are generally open to subjective secularism. Mr. E said:

There is a statement that the ancients used, "*mukteza-i hale mutabakat*," which means to adapt to an existing situation. I adapt to environments if they do not directly and negatively affect my personality and beliefs. I know the profile of Turkish people and organizations, so I try to work in harmony with everyone. My motivation is: 'My position is not only for my own benefit. I might not get a promotion, but in consequence, conservative believers must be successful. Success is not for a person's career, but for being a good example.' In order to achieve this, I must adapt to different environments and I should be balanced. Non-conservative colleagues know me and do not question me, and they know that we can be good friends, work together, and share the same social environments (Mr. E, age 32).

In the same vein, Mr. K emphasized the fact that he keeps his beliefs out of his professional life, saying: “I do not stress my conservative identity to my seniors; my conservative identity becomes visible only when I ask for permission to go *Juma* [Friday] prayers” (Mr. K, age 30).

Concerning innovation and engineering, Mr. S suggested that beyond a conservative character, one’s personality also counts:

I think engineering as a concept is basically the same for conservatives and others. It is directly related to education. Moreover, as far as I have observed, non-conservative engineers have better performance. I do not know the reason. Maybe it is because of the social circles in which they are involved, or their family, but their perception about engineering is much better than that of conservative engineers. I think these abilities and the perception of engineering have just been improving recently. On the other hand, when it comes to being innovative, we can be innovative too. It depends on the character of the person. I believe that I’m an innovative person for my organization as well, but people do not say, ‘This conservative engineer is innovative.’ Instead they say, “This engineer is innovative”. I mean it is beyond these classifications (Mr. S, age 31).

Beyond their professional approach, the distinction between the behavior of conservative and non-conservative engineers was described as follows by Mrs. M:

On the difference between the attitudes of conservative engineers and non-conservative engineers, I believe that non-conservative engineers are more task-oriented while conservative engineers are more human-oriented. For example, our previous manager was requesting solutions to reduce expenses, such as using scrap paper for photocopying, etc., while the company was going through a fiscal bottleneck. However, the one who followed him directly fired workers to reduce expenses (Mrs M, age 32).

Similarly, Mr. K said: “I believe that our main characteristics are being disciplined, working hard to deserve our salary, and paying extra attention to do our jobs right. On the other hand, being conservative is an invisible characteristic” (Mr. K, age 30).

Within his idealized vision of a conservative character, Mr. O described the difference between conservative and non-conservative engineers as minimal due to inadequate Islamic education:

People who have values are supposed to perform their jobs and duties with discipline. However I think there is a problem with education. Conservative people with religious values and others are almost the same. We could not transfer our values to the next generations. People might have been protecting their values but there is a huge difference between being Muslim and living Islam (Mr. O, age 59).

Based on their answers, my informants' perception of religion appears to follow a modern, secular pattern. On the other hand, in some of the responses, the religious values to be protected were emphasized. One of the informants described the relation between religious perception and technology as follows:

We should behave like the whirling dervishes. One of feet must stand firm on the ground while our other foot is whirling. As Muslims, we should work harder, because working is a kind of worship. Working for the benefit of human beings is a practice we inherited from our Prophet. Our elders were always giving examples of these benefits, such as building mosques and fountains. However, developing technology was dismissed. Whereas that is also for the benefit of humankind (Mr. S, age 31).

In this whirling dervish metaphor, the foot standing firmly on the ground represents the values and practices of religion, while the whirling foot represents enhancing perception. This position resembles the thoughts of Muhammad Abduh and Mehmed Akif on reforming religion by considering new thought currents in the world while protecting Islamic values. Even though Abduh and Mehmed Akif were considered Islamists, the latter was realizing the conservative modernism project by suggesting a work ethic for the Islamic world, which he saw as hopeless, and by positing a clear separation between cultural values and the material needs of a civilization (Bora, 1998, p. 80).

4.5 Political Leaders Associated With the Modernization of Turkey

The events and individuals considered milestones in the political history of Turkey vary from person to person, depending upon his or her cultural and political background. A respondent described the approach of conservative engineers to this issue as follows:

For a republican government, the important issue is to ensure the participation of all segments of society in the modernization project. When we look at the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, it is obviously a modernization project maintained by the military. The Menderes era was a different breaking point, the Turgut Özal era was another one, and Erdoğan as well was a breaking point for Turkey. However, in Turkey we couldn't succeed in having a modernization project with the participation of universities, the military, the bureaucracy, politicians and society working in concert. So I am not able to indicate a milestone for Turkish modernization (Mr. J, age 55).

In the same vein, Mr. Z said:

I think we could mention four names as milestones of Turkish modernization: Mustafa Kemal, Adnan Menderes, Turgut Özal, and Tayyip Erdoğan. They have each had a different vision. Even though the last three names are recognized as conservative, this characteristic did not affect their modern spirits (Mr. Z, age 62).

Likewise, Mr. F said: "The 1980 military coup, after that the Özal era and his liberal economic policies" (Mr. F, age 42). That was the obvious milestone for my respondents, with Mrs. M adding: "For me it is the Özal era. Reforms in the economic field, the development of the defense industry, foreign policy, and economic freedom were all important. After 2001, greater freedom of expression was granted and the prejudices circulating in society were broken. Society is open to reforms" (Mrs. M, age 32).

The only response that differed from the above came from Mrs. C (age 37), who stated that Atatürk was the absolute and only milestone in Turkey's modernization process.

Almost all the informants gave the names of Menderes and Özal as milestones of Turkish modernization. These two names are iconic in Turkish politics for enacting liberal economic agendas while they were Prime Minister. Furthermore, Menderes and Özal both had a conservative profile along with their innovative, developmentalist character.

One of the interesting points about the informants' responses was their silence about Erbakan. None mentioned Erbakan's name when they talked about the modernization process. Even though Erbakan can be qualified more as an Islamist than a conservative, he was followed by religious people in Turkish society. More than that, he was an engineer-politician who emphasized his training in engineering more than any other engineer-politician, using it to legitimate his projects for developing Turkey through industrialization.

This lack of interest in Erbakan on the part of conservative engineers is significant. It would appear to suggest that for Turkish conservative engineers, modernization is more about liberal economics than about industrialization. They desire to be integrated into the modern world market and have technological interactions with it. A socio-economic order based upon Islamic principles, such as Erbakan's "The Just Order," either does not interest these engineers, or they do not believe in the sustainability of socio-economic systems outside of the one led by the western world.

Conclusion

“Modern destiny is spiritual at the beginning, mechanical at the end” wrote Ahmet Çiğdem following his readings of Weber (2010, p. 164). As a religious person who attended an *imam-hatip* school and then received an engineering education, the foremost question on my mind was “Are we modern?” I directed this question to people of a similar background who define themselves as religious or conservative, speak European languages and are involved in western culture, and, more importantly, had received an education based on European curricula.

Weber used the term “rationality” to define capitalist economic activity, the modern system of private law, and bureaucratic authority. Rationalism addresses an expansion of social spaces which are submitted to the rational decision-making mechanism. The influence of instrumental action on various spaces in life besides technological components, such as urbanization, transportation, and communication, is known as industrialization.

The further rationalization of a society requires the institutionalization of technological and scientific developments. The influence of technology and science over social spaces damages old-fashioned or inherited legitimations. Worldviews that shape the actions of people and the profanation of inherited cultural values or the “disenchantment of the world” are one of the dimensions of rationality on which I have focused in this thesis.

As in most developing countries, in Turkey too the modernization project was largely executed through industrialization. Industrialization was one of Turkish politicians’ main agenda items, and it was carried out by engineers in the

technical domain but also partly in politics. Engineers were involved in various fields during Turkey's development process. This unique position was explained by the majority of my informants as highly qualified members of society carrying their engineering identity into various sectors and performing well there. However, I take the active roles of engineers in the modernization process with preliminary implications. Basically, how do they define themselves as a religious person and engineer and how do they position themselves in the society?

Since my question was directed at conservative engineers, which, in the Turkish context, means observant Muslim engineers, I centered my research around the notion of religion: religion dealing with the Enlightenment in the West, Muslims dealing with Western modernism, the mechanical secularization of the Turkish Republic, and, lastly, reactions against this type of secularization from conservative engineers. This is a multi-dimensional problem that cannot be analyzed solely with consideration of the inner dynamics of conservative individuals; rather, it must also take into account their international interactions.

First, Muslims face many paradoxes in modern Turkey, but most do not react to them; with typical conservative behavior, they choose to adapt religion to the new order in order to maintain religion's perpetuity. This adaptation has taken shape by preserving values while adapting to the requirements of social and professional life. Questions were asked of the informants regarding the characteristics of their professional environments. The majority defined their environment as non-professional. One of the reasons given was Turkey's instability for forming professionalized fields. Engineers prefer to gain experience in different fields, in order to be able to switch fields in case of a decline in opportunities in the field in which they work. Note that for Weber, rationalization is the formation of areas of expertise. In this case, science does not represent a domain of expertise and it is not possible to mention the existence of institutionalized scientific discourse. When asked whether they use method or

initiative in their professional lives, all said that even if using methodologies is less risky, in most cases they felt that they should use initiative because poorly defined jobs call for the use of initiative whether they are in a technical or a managerial position. In this case, it would not be appropriate to define engineers as representatives of a western type of rationalism.

On the issue of creating a balance between their personal values and beliefs and their professional lives, the informants' responses suggest a secularized life. There is a division between their personal and professional lives, each of which has its own space. This division of spaces isolates these two spaces' values and standards. Even though Islamic faith requires Muslims to fashion every part of their lives according to Islam, these engineers legitimated their positions as working in concert with people from different lifestyles and values, noting professional life's philosophy of being beyond personal choices. Failures exist in the transfer of values from families to children, hence the similarity between engineers from conservative and non-conservative backgrounds. Even in examples given to illustrate difference, being human-oriented versus task-oriented may not reflect religious values. Overall, being conservative remains invisible in professional life.

On the subject of politics, the names associated with the modernization of Turkey were the same for almost all informants: the three names given repeatedly were Adnan Menderes, Turgut Özal, and Tayyip Erdoğan. The common point of these three names is their political and economic inclinations: all followed liberal economic policies, supported an open market economy, and had close relations with the West, especially with the United States. Even though these men are seen by the public as conservative and have lived in accordance with religious norms, their politics were not directly aligned with Islamic doctrine.

Regarding their decision to become engineers, two reasons were highlighted. First, engineers' interest in economic development rather than industrial development must be their priority at the first stage of the state's development (although each may lead the other to develop successively at later stages). Second, from the perspective of engineers, modernization meant economic development and adaptation to the western financial system. Even though they believed in technological development, they did not mention any industrialization drive such as the one once attempted by Erbakan. The cause adopted by Erbakan had been to establish a socio-economic order based upon Islamic values, one that did not violate religious prohibitions (*haram*) such as the one on interest. He named it "The Just Order". Erbakan also had plans to establish heavy industry in Turkey and to develop technologies independently of western technology, especially in the defense industry. Even though all the informants believed in the need for such industries, none mentioned Erbakan's name as an important figure in Turkey's modernization.

I believe this is a process of adaptation to the modern world that legitimates itself by separating personal beliefs and values from public life for the sake of professionalism. In the end, such adaptation may have occurred for the sake of the continuity and development of the country, and of preserving religion by protecting it from external interventions such as western rationalism and westernization as a state ideology.

It is hardly possible to claim that these conservative engineers are non-rational, ultimately prioritizing economics over technology. They are rational in a sense that is not purely based on reason. Contrary to the western type of tight bureaucracy that fills all the gaps in professional life with method, they take initiative, are concerned with transmitting their inherited values to the next generation, and wish to serve their country and perpetuate its state. However, in the end, they have chosen a conformist way of life under the prevailing

circumstances, instead of directly carrying their values into public life and representing their religion as they were commanded to do by the Islamic faith. A question remains after this study, pointing toward the future: do these qualities resemble the Protestants mentioned by Weber, praising work and occupation for the sake of religion (in Weber's own words, "living acceptably to God"), which evolves into a profane form over time?

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