The Popularization of Politics and the Shift in Mass Politics

People’s participation in politics started to emerge in the Ottoman Empire in the course of the 19th century. The Ottoman state began to intervene in the daily life of its subjects as it modernized social, economic and political structures and institutions. Mass politics and social mobilization of the masses were modern devices that the elite of the empire utilized in order to cope with the new needs of politics. As the relationship between the state and its subjects changed drastically and different kinds of networks emerged among the people, the domain of politics encompassed expanded. These changes required new politics through which state and society transformed each other.

These changes developed thanks to the incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World Capitalist Market, expansion of market relationships within the empire, the formation of middle and professional classes, the modernization of the civil and military bureaucracy, modern communication technologies, and the emergence of a modern education system, the daily press, and different social and political networks and organizations. The expanding public sphere provided the space in which new politics took shape. Within the emerging mass politics, different sections of Ottoman society found appropriate and convenient ways in which they could represent themselves. The Ottoman state also exploited the formation of the modern public sphere for ruling society. This is why the
emerging mass politics had two dimensions. On the one hand, it provided an opportunity for the elite to rule its citizens. New governing policies were put forth to ensure the consent of the people and secure the legitimacy of the political and social system. On the other hand, different segments of society, different classes, and social groups took advantage of the transforming public sphere and participated in politics in different ways. Yet, in order to evaluate this change one has to define the concepts of public sphere and civil society; this is also necessary in order to clarify one’s position in Turkish historiography, because a significant number of scholars object to the use of these terms in the Turkish or Middle Eastern context.\(^1\)

The notion of public sphere provides the space and the opportunity for a social movement or a mobilization process to emerge in an extended arena where people did not have face-to-face relationships. A modern public sphere is a social realm in which people imagine communities. On the other hand, the pre-modern publicity, which Habermas calls “representative publicness,” depended on concrete visibility and was directly related to the court.\(^2\) However, the definition is the subject of a vivid debate. Habermas has argued that the public sphere is a realm that mediates between the private realm of the family and civil society (the realm of commodity exchange and social labor) and the sphere of public authority, the state.\(^3\) For him, the public sphere has two crucial dimensions: rational-critical discourse, and openness to popular participation.\(^4\) Furthermore, the public sphere is not only immune from the intervention of the state authority, but also constituted against the state. Therefore, both the market, which belongs to civil society, and the state are outside it. Since the state is not included, there is no coercion in the public sphere, and free rational discussion can take place among the peo-

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ple. Public opinion emerged thanks to communication and rational discussion between people.5

His approach and definition have been harshly criticized and can be classified under two points. First, Habermas has been criticized for an idealized definition of the bourgeois public sphere, for attributing to it openness and free accessibility. Negt and Kluge have argued that Habermas did not pay attention to the concomitant exclusionary mechanisms at work, by which the bourgeois public sphere blocks “all those sections of the population that do not participate in bourgeois politics because they cannot afford to.”6 Negt and Kluge have concentrated mainly on class structures. Landes and Ryan have depicted different exclusions by focusing primarily on the gender relationships of the bourgeois public sphere.7 Secondly, Habermas has been criticized for overlooking the existence of public spheres other than the bourgeois one, such as alternative or counter-publics. Negt and Kluge, for instance, have described the “processing of social experience” and the “proletarian context of living as it exits” and highlighted the presence of different publicities.8 Fraser has also depicted how feminists have built “subaltern counterpublics” with their own journals, bookstores, publishing companies, social and cultural networks, lecture series, research centers, conferences, conventions, festival, and the like. These alternative institutions have helped women decrease their disadvantage within the “official” public sphere.9

Habermas has omitted these two significant traits of the public sphere and considered the flow of interests into this realm as the degeneration of the public sphere. He has mainly accused “the pressure of the streets”

9 Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 123. Geof Eley has also mentioned that the public sphere is comprised of a variety of publics, such as the peasant, the working class, and nationalist movements who have “cultural and ideological contest and negotiation” in between these. Geof Eley, “Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century,” *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 306.
for the degeneration of the public.\textsuperscript{10} As Hill and Montag have argued, his analysis is very much related to his defense of social democracy within the context of the Cold War and his “acceptance of capitalism as an absolute horizon,” the “fear of the masses,” and “the restriction of politics to parliamentary politics.”\textsuperscript{11} This is significant, since the historiography on Turkey is also very much influenced by the conservative mentality of many scholars. The literature on Turkey to a great extent equates the public sphere with civil society. It has widely been claimed that civil initiatives and democracy in non-Western societies are weak. Civil society was something that emerged in spite of state authority. It was a domain of freedom, free trade and autonomous organizations that developed against the authority of state. Therefore, as Mardin has asserted, these concepts are considered a “Western dream” and “part of the social history of Western Europe.”\textsuperscript{12} According to this point of view, Turkey has had a strong state tradition that strangled civil society. There was no room for different sections of society to play their part. As argued in the first chapter, the social classes and agency other than the state structure have been excluded in the historiography on Turkey. This also is the case when it comes to the concepts of public sphere and civil society. The fundamental elements of this thesis—mass politics, social mobilization patterns, social movements, and the agency of different sections of society—did not exist in Turkey’s history, according to this perspective.

However, Islamoglu has raised the question whether it is empirically possible to identify state and society as separate domains actually interpenetrated by each other. Abbot, in a similar vein, has claimed that a weak civil society might result from a weak rather than a strong state.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{10} Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere,” p. 235.


An “overriding antagonism between state and society” paves the way for an essentialist analysis for different societies. An individual or a civil society free from state intervention is only a liberal conception of civil society. The definition of democracy which derived from this conceptualization is also based on liberal ideology. Therefore, as the subject of this thesis indicates, the expansion of the public sphere, the flourishing of civil society and the centralization of state power go hand in hand. One should not attribute essentialist characteristics to the concepts of public sphere and civil society as the domain of democracy and freedom. As Trentmann has argued, these notions are composed of paradoxes: “While it may open doors for freedom and plurality, it may also bring in some cases suspension of tolerance and mutual recognition.”

The discussion of these concepts is crucial, since the literature on Turkey to a great extent refrains from employing concepts and underlines the unique character of its history. Although different countries and societies do have crucial differences in their histories, scholars cannot recruit different concepts and categories for each society. This particularism leads Turkish historiography to “essentialist” or “exceptionalist” evaluations, while trying to avoid reductionism. There are also endless differences and variations in the history of each society and country, which may require further particular conceptualization. Yet, essentialism precludes comparisons between different cases and complicates the understanding of different societies. Making use of the concepts of social sciences and debating their definitions and meanings may help uncover the uniqueness and peculiar features of particular cases.

In this thesis, the public sphere is employed as a social space in which different sections of society can express themselves, where the relationship between different classes takes place, and the relationships between individuals, people, state and civil organizations occurs. It is the social realm and space that provides both face-to-face and imagined interactions between different social actors. Civil Society, on the other hand, is used in order to refer to the notion of agency. It is recruited in order to refer to the initiatives of social and political actors in a society, such as civil


organizations, associations, unions, classes, individuals, and the spontaneous actions of the ordinary people. There are different dynamics in the transformation of the public sphere and the emergence of civil society in the Ottoman Empire of the 19th century. Different ethnic religious communities and different social classes competed with each other in the expanding public sphere and influenced its structure. The state was a crucial actor in the formation and regulation of this modern space. Yet, reciprocally it is also deeply influenced by other political and social actors.

As mentioned above, various practices of new politics paved the way for broad sections of society to play their part in the expanding public sphere. Official and public holidays, the invention of “national” celebrations, the use of new political symbols, campaigns of imperial or national charities, different acts of public benevolence, and imperial and national anthems were some of the significant elements in this newly emerging mass politics.16 Elections, economic boycotts, strikes, social and political organizations, the total mobilization of the society during wars, mass sport activities, commercialized mass entertainment, and mass spectacles were other instances of emerging mass politics. One of the main practices of the new politics was the social mobilization of people.

Mass politics began to acquire prominence in the course of the 19th century in the Ottoman Empire. As is widely claimed in the literature on Turkey, the Imperial Edict of the Rose Chamber (1839) standing at the beginning of the Tanzimat period paved the way for a structural transformation of Ottoman imperial institutions and society. As a result of this reform process, the notions of public and public opinion emerged as crucial realities that the elite had to take into account in their manner of rule. This is why the early modern state began to show interest in the opinion of its subjects on political issues. As a result, the state began to become involved in its subjects’ daily life.17

The monarchs no longer represented themselves as semi-divine rulers, but rather as paternalistic father figures who worked for the well-being of their subjects. They put forth new policies in the public sphere, in order to obtain the loyalty of the people who were now considered cit-


izens. Fundamental elements and devices of mass politics culminated in concrete practical forms during the reign of Abdülhamid II. During these years, although the policies of the state did not go further than demanding unilateral conformity from the Ottoman public, it took into account public opinion in its policies. That is to say, the social mobilization of people in public spaces did not emerge as an official policy in this period. However, the elite of the Ottoman Empire tried to legitimize their power in the eyes of the public opinion with the help to the new devices, such as charity campaigns, in which ordinary people could participate. The state did not want ordinary people to gather as crowds in the streets, but to find different ways to contribute and participate. Legitimization policies increased in variety during the second half of the 19th century. The elite resorted to these devices in order to obtain the loyalty and consent of the Ottoman public, and the public sphere provided the space in which these new mass politics could emerge. The 1908 Revolution brought on change and a turn in mass politics and social mobilization patterns in the Ottoman Empire.

The 1908 Revolution marked the beginning of a new era. During the Second Constitutional Period, there occurred clear-cut instances of mass politics and social mobilization patterns. The change in mass politics was due to the rise of the Committee of Union and Progress, which attributed great significance to the mobilization of the masses and the participation of different sections of society in politics such as workers and merchants. Nationalist celebrations, lively civil associations, voluntary organizations, mass movements and the flourishing daily press provided an opportunity to ordinary people to voice their opinions. The particular problems and interests of different segments of society turned into public issues. Henceforth, these were openly debated. Therefore, mass politics and social mobilization practices during this period had a bilateral character, in which state and different sections and classes of society played reciprocal roles, in contrast to the general characteristics of the previous era.

In the previous era, the masses were kept passive and motionless. The affirmation of their consent and loyalty was enough for the elite. The congregation of crowds in public places was rare, and the direct mobilization of the masses on the streets was not intended by politics from above. One of the main traits of the period after the 1908 Revolution was the mobilization of masses in the public spaces. Studies that have collected visual material on the 1908 Revolution reveal that the most spectacular phenomenon after the revolution was the gathering of crowds in public places. Mass parades, marches, public meetings, demonstrations, and street actions became ordinary instruments of politics. Even funeral ceremonies after political assassinations turned into political mass protests in which thousands participated. Since the Second Constitutional Period was an era of wars (with the Italo-Ottoman War in 1911-12, the Balkan Wars in 1912-13, and World War I), the mobilization of the Ottoman public emerged as a significant issue for the elite. Protesting foreign states was no longer exclusively the domain of the diplomats, but also of public meetings. Mass demonstrations for protesting the Great Powers became a well-known phenomenon during the rising Muslim/Turkish nationalism after the 1908 Revolution. The inter-ethnic conflicts also turned into large-scale clashes, as nationalism spread among the Ottoman population. National issues were no longer restricted to intellectual circles, but became public issues that affected the daily routines of ordinary people.

At this point, it should be underlined that there are different patterns of mass mobilization. One is the mobilization of different segments of society from below for their rights; the other is the mobilization of the society from above. The 1908 Revolution paved the way for these two mobilization patterns. The mobilization of the masses from below was what made the promulgation of the constitution a revolution. The narratives on the revolution generally depict it as a coup d'état of young military cadres who thereafter would dominate politics. The 1908 Revolution is considered the root of military intervention in politics. This orthodox view

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21 Osman Köker (Ed.), Yadigar-ı Hürriyet, (İstanbul: Birzamanlar Yayını, 2008); İlkinci Meşrudiyyet’in Ilanını 100’üncü Yıllık, (İstanbul: Sadberk Hanım Müzesi, 2008), Sacit Kutlu, Didar-ı Hürriyet Kartpostalarda İlkinci Meşrudiyyet 1908-1913, (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2004).

on the revolution therefore defines it not as a revolution, but as the promulgation of the constitution. This view, firstly, neglects the revolutionary struggle of different ethnic groups, such as the Albanians, Bulgarians and Armenians. Secondly, it ignores the actions of the lower classes all over the empire. The Committee of Union and Progress was not able to take the revolution into its hands due to the mobilization of ordinary people on the street. It was not a simple transition from one political system to another, or simply the promulgation of a constitution. 23 July 1908 marked a political revolution in which different political, social, and ethnic groups played their part, as well as a turning point that drastically changed the order of things in the Ottoman Empire.23 However, the mobilization patterns from above prevailed in the course of the Second Constitutional Period as the Committee of Union and Progress gained power.

Following July 1908, the Ottomans resorted to different types of actions—such as strikes, boycotts and mass demonstrations—and many people participated in these new types of politics. After this turning point in the history of the Ottoman Empire, the Ottomans expressed their social and political demands in mass demonstrations and in the Ottoman press which freed itself from the censorship of Abdülhamid II. The abolition of censorship had more impact on the Muslim/Turkish community, since non-Muslims had had a much more vibrant press before. Yet, the 1908 Revolution did also bring about a boom in the number of non-Muslim periodicals and organizations.24 Ottoman people started to organize meetings and establish organizations. As Tunaya has stated, politics became accessible for ordinary citizens to express their opinions.25 One of the main reasons for this vibrant political life following the promulgation of the constitution was the chaotic political circumstances after the revolution.26 From the very beginning of the Second Constitutional Peri-

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24 I am grateful to Mehmet Ö. Alkan who shared with me his preliminary findings of his detailed research on civil organizations in the Ottoman Empire. This detailed index of civil organizations is forthcoming in two volumes.


26 For an evaluation of the chaotic atmosphere of the post-July days, see: Zafer Toprak, “Hürriyet-Müsavat-Uhuve‘ Her Yerde Bir Politika Tufanı Var,‘‘ Manastır’da İlham-ı Hürriyet 1908-1909 Fotoğrafçı Manakis Biraderler, Roni Margules (Ed.), (İstanbul: YKY, 1997);
od, Ottomans filled the streets and public squares and built mass organizations. The Committee of Union and Progress, the initiator of the constitution, could not control or dominate the political life of the empire. It gained more power after the counter-revolution of the 31 March Event (13 April 1909) and became the most powerful organization in the empire after the *Babiali coup d'état* in 1913.

Between 23 July 1908 and 13 April 1909, when the 1908 Boycott took place, there was an optimistic atmosphere in the Ottoman Empire regarding the ideals of the constitution: Equality, Freedom, Fraternity, Justice and the *ittihad-i anasır* (union of ethnic/religious elements)—that is to say, Ottomanism. As is widely accepted, the Committee of Union and Progress could not come to power just after the promulgation of the constitution, because it was composed of low-ranking military and civil officers who did not have seniority. The Committee of Union and Progress lacked senior members who had a significant reputation. At first, they thought they were incapable of assuming power. Furthermore, although the Committee was the leading factor in the promulgation of the constitution, it was not organized throughout the empire. The Young Turks sought to mobilize public opinion and initiate action in order to attract support for their policies. This necessitated the mobilization of the population from above and compelled the Committee of Union and Progress to find different means to this end.

The Committee of Union and Progress attempted to be more active and strong in the parliament; as result, the first elections were held in a tense political atmosphere. Both these elections and the 1908 Ottoman Boycott revealed the significance of a development that appeared after 23 July: public opinion and mass politics. The elections to the Ottoman parliament always became an occasion for mass politics, which has not been dealt with in the literature. The political struggles between the different communities and different political groups revealed itself in election campaigns. For instance, the 1912 elections developed into an open clash between different political groups, and the Committee of Union and Progress suppressed different political attitudes and organizations dur-

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ing that time. This election gained the name “battered elections” (sopaltı seçimler). The 1914 elections were held under the absolute hegemony of the Unionists, and the tension between the different religious communities contributed to the emergence of the Boycott Movement against non-Muslims in 1913-14.

Mass politics also paved the way for the emergence of social movements within particular social classes, such as the working class. The constitution was followed by an unprecedented wave of strikes. Workers organized many demonstrations in August and September of 1908 and refused to work until their demands were met. This was a significant moment in Ottoman history when workers struggled for their interest all over the empire. However, further research is needed to uncover the relationships and the networks among the workers of the Ottoman Empire. These mass actions of the working class ended thanks to the initiative of the Committee of Union and Progress. The other significant feature of these actions was the general fraternal atmosphere of the 1908 Revolution. The nationalist and ethnic divisions among the Ottoman working class did not matter during the 1908 strike waves. Its goals were mostly based on economic demands, and ethnic divisions did not impede its struggle against the companies.

Such a wide-spread strike wave in the Ottoman Empire never appeared again after 1908. However, as I have argued in previous chapters, workers found an opportunity to express themselves in other social movements, such as the 1908 Boycott or the 1910-11 Boycott. For instance, the port workers whose demands had been suppressed by the Ottoman government during the strike wave of 1908 successfully presented their interests in the 1908 Boycott, an Ottomanist movement that helped them acquire certain rights. As they proved themselves to be the most powerful social base of the Boycott Movement from 1908 to 1911, they enhanced their position in the economy.

It was not only the workers that pursued their interest; women who were traditionally kept distant from political life began to come on the

public scene in the course of the Second Constitutional Period. Women emerged and participated in the social life in a more deliberate way. They began to appear in theaters, public concerts and to represent themselves in the public sphere. Primary education for girls became mandatory in 1913. Since the Second Constitutional Period was an era of wars, the recruitment of women into the workforce facilitated their entrance into public life. They published journals and formed societies and did participate, if very little, in the 1908 Boycott. Ottoman women also came onto the scene as activists within the workers’ movements, as it happened in Bursa in 1910.

Similar to workers, women could also find a particular place for themselves both in the discourse and movement of nationalism. Within the rising Muslim/Turkish nationalism, women reserved for themselves positions in which they found an opportunity to become active. During the boycotts of 1910-11 and 1913-14, women had different functions. At first, they were considered to represent the honor and purity of the nation. Moreover, there appeared instances in which women denounced actions against the rules of the Boycott Movement at a grassroots level. They also functioned as main characters of nationalist stories told during the Boycott Movement. Although their place in the division of labor was confined according to gender lines, it is still possible to hear their voices.

One of the significant aspects of mass politics was the civil organizations and societies that citizens established after the 1908 Revolution. The revolution brought a boom in the number of associations organized by Ottomans. Voluntary organizations and civil societies were crucial

31 For the most significant group of feminists and their journal Kadınlar Dünyası in the Ottoman Empire, see: Serpiş Çakır, Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1994).
34 For the place of women and feminists in the nationalist movements and state policies regarding the destitute Muslim women in the Ottoman Empire, see: Yavuz Selim Karakışla, Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire: Society for the Employment of Ottoman Muslim Women 1916-1923, (İstanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2005).
35 Mehmet Ö. Alkan, “Osmanlı’da Cemiyetler Çağı,” Tarih ve Toplum, No. 288, October 2003, pp. 4-12. I am grateful to Alkan for allowing me read his forthcoming index book on civil organizations of Ottoman communities which will be published in two volumes. See also his; Mehmet Ö. Alkan, “1856-1945 İstanbul’da Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları,” in A.N. Yüceök, İ. Turan, M.O. Alkan, Tanzimattan Günümüze İstanbul’da STK’lar, (İstanbul:
elements of the social and political life of the Second Constitutional Period. There emerged numerous organizations with a variety of goals, such as philanthropy, national economy, education, nationalism, and sports. These organizations popularized politics and increased the participation of ordinary people in public life. Apart from the organizations of the Boycott Movement, flourishing civil organizations such as the Donannya Cemiyeti played a significant role in the making of the Boycott Movement. The economic organizations of Muslim merchants, nationalist associations and semi-official organizations supported each other and contributed to the emergence of a Muslim/Turkish nationalist popular movement.

After the 1908 Revolution, and particularly after the joyful revolutionary days of fraternity, the relationship between the different religious and ethnic communities deteriorated. Competing nationalisms affected the daily life of the Ottoman people and undermined co-operation between different communities. Although there had already occurred numerous instances of ethnic violence over the course of the 19th century, clashes, struggles, hostilities and strife became one of the fundamental aspects of the Second Constitutional Period.\(^{36}\) The economic boycotts and Muslim protests against non-Muslims, which were relatively peaceful actions compared to ethnicity-based atrocities, were an integral part of this process and the rising Muslim/Turkish nationalism. The rise and strengthening of a Muslim/Turkish bourgeoisie became one of the main aims of the rising Turkish nationalism and the Boycott Movement after 1910. The Muslim notables, the state elite and wealthy Muslims also took advantage of this process and contributed to the movements.

To sum up, different actors in Ottoman society began to express themselves more widely, and the masses found an opportunity to take action. The Committee of Union and Progress successfully mobilized the masses in order to enhance its status and reinforce its political power. The Committee usually legitimized its policies and actions by presenting them as the demands and interests of the Ottoman nation. Social movements presented an opportunity for the Committee, and by mobilizing the public, it avoided a possible opposition against the new regime. It not only used devices such as boycotts to organize the Ottomans, but also established local organizations. To accumulate more power, the Committee of Union and Progress sought legitimate public support for its policies to create di-

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Tarih Vakfı, 1998).

\(^{36}\) Donald Quatert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922*, pp. 172-191.
verse reactions. Particularly after 1908, the boycott weapon was turned against non-Muslim communities, and the mobilization of Muslim and Turkish Ottomans became inevitable in the course of the Second Constitutional Period.

Mass Politics, National Economy, and the Boycott Movement

The promulgation of a boycott against Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria in 1908 coincided with a wave of mass public meetings and mass spectacles. Crowds of people marched and chanted slogans against the above-mentioned states and defended the sovereign rights of the Ottoman Empire on Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria. The targets of these marching crowds were the foreign embassies. These actions were followed by spontaneous demonstrations and meetings which instilled fear in the elite of the Ottoman Empire. The government, the Committee of Union and Progress, and the Turkish press tried to control the mobilizations of the crowds on the streets and to appease their nationalist sentiments. The same social phenomenon repeated itself in the initial phase of the 1910-11 Boycott Movement. The elite of the empire both played with the widespread support of the public opinion and, at the same time, was afraid of the mass mobilization after it reached a certain level.

The Young Turks were worried about the possibility that the masses might turn against the young constitutional regime and be utilized by reactionaries. They were very much influenced by the thoughts of Gustave Le Bon whose fear of the masses depended on the belief that masses and crowds played only subversive and ruinous roles in society.\(^{37}\) Thus, the Young Turks did not to ban mobilization of masses, but rather try to manipulate and control them by means of organized and orderly public meetings and demonstrations. The prominent figures of the Committee of Union and Progress and its local cadres were not entirely absent from the first reactionary spontaneous demonstrations. However, these actions were not under their control. The contemporary newspa-

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\(^{37}\) A crowd is not a collective of individuals, but becomes something totally different. The psychology of the crowd turns an individual into a savage. For an evaluation of Gustave Le Bon’s theory, see: Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, “Tarih ve Kuram Arasında Toplumsal Hareketler,” Toplumsal Hareketler: Tarih, Teori ve Dencyim, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008), pp. 18-20. The significance and place of Le Bon in Turkish political thought is also mentioned in: Şükru Hanıoğlu, “Osmanlı-Türk Şekülinin Unutulan Kuramcsi”, Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Zihniyet, Siyaset ve Tarih, (İstanbul: Baglam Yayıncılık, 2006), pp. 93-97.
pers claimed that these meetings were the largest in scale and extent, after the promulgation of the constitution. As a result, the first reaction of the elite to these meetings and the mobilization was a call for sobriety and moderation to those who were already on the streets. The Ottoman press praised the so-called famous “Ottoman temperance.”

The meetings that followed these spontaneous reactions were well-ordered and planned. Their time and place were announced ahead of time, and the demonstrations were pre-arranged. Tellals (publiccriers) were recruited to announce of these public meetings. Banners, flags, drums, and posters were widely used in the public sphere during the Boycott Movement. These instruments of mass politics facilitated the popularization of the movement and its symbols. Posters, signs and stickers were designed to simplify the basic demands of the Boycott Movement. These should be considered symbolic signs and marks, rather than plain texts. The symbolic, simple language on these posters was functional in reaching ordinary people who to a great extent were illiterate. These posters were hung in public places and rallied the Ottoman public regarding national issues or advertised the targets of the Boycott Movement, such as Austrian stores in 1908 or Greek shops after 1910. Boycott targets and foreign observers, such as diplomatic consuls, took these public notifications very seriously and often complained to the Ottoman government, in the fear that they may provoke the Muslim population. There were not many complaints about the lists of targeted merchants published in the newspapers, but much more fear regarding similar lists posted on public walls. Both the Ottoman state and the foreign consuls considered this imagery an assault and coercion during the 1910-11 Boycott Movement.

Fliers, hand-bills, leaflets and pamphlets were also used in order to attract the attention of Ottoman citizens to issues related with the Boycott Movement. The state of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria in 1908, the sufferings of Muslim Cretans in 1910-11, and the misery of Muslim immigrants from the Balkans after the Balkan Wars enhanced the mobilization efforts of the boycotters. There appeared many publications concerning the state of Muslims in the lost territories, which called

38 By simple language I mean inscriptions that are received as pictures or signs by illiterate people. One does not need to be able to read to understand symbolic words such as “toilet,” “telephone,” “police,” and the like. The Boycott Movement also popularized the words such boykotaj, harb-i iktsadi, milli, yunani, rum, and so on. They were no longer merely words, but also signs.
Muslims to action. These pamphlets contributed to the rise of Muslim/Turkish nationalism and reinforced Muslim identity. In the first instances of the Boycott Movement, the pamphlets and fliers announced the targets of the Boycott Movement: the persons or companies that should be boycotted. Yet, in the last phases of the boycotting wave the announcements were all about the Muslim stores where a proper Muslim should shop. There was no longer a particular non-Muslim target. As a whole positioned, they were positions vis-à-vis Muslims.

Flags, banners, placards, pamphlets and fliers were also widely used in well-organized meetings. Public speeches in these meetings were held in the different languages of the Ottoman communities. The meetings were convened in many urban centers of the empire, and the representatives of different religious communities participated in these protests. This was arranged to underline the official fraternity policy of the new constitutional regime. The representatives of the empire’s different religious communities again participated in the meetings against the Cretan National Assembly and against Greece in 1910 and 1911. The participation of the Ottoman Greeks was significant, since they thereby confirmed their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. Although the members of different communities attended the meetings during the 1910-11 boycotts, meetings started to become much more anti-Christian as the fraternal atmosphere of the 1908 Revolution evaporated.

As the chapters above have argued, these public meetings and the mass mobilization of different segments of society were not a secret undertaking or a conspiracy of the Committee of Union and Progress, as is widely accepted in Turkish political thought. Like other political and social actors, the Ottoman government and the Committee of Union and Progress tried to make use of these meetings. As the political and social power of the Committee increased, its hegemony in these public demonstrations grew. However, the power of the Committee of Union and Progress and the Ottoman government over the mobilization of the masses was not absolute. In the course of the Boycott Movement, the Ottoman political elite tried to limit the mobilization of the people at the grassroots level. During the protest meetings, the crowds did not disperse quickly. Furthermore, there appeared initiatives to form volunteer battalions to support the Ottoman Army. Public meeting waves gave birth to volunteer enlisting initiatives, particular organizations for forming battalions and a network of these organizations. These volunteer societies effectively
communicated with each other in Asia Minor, from Trabzon to Erzurum, from Konya to Izmir, and from Salonica to Edirne.

The government considered these initiatives an intervention of the common people in the affairs of the imperial state. This is why the government ordered the governors to prevent such mobilization activities and wanted them to convince the Ottoman citizens that the government was in charge. In some of the towns, the convened crowds refused to disperse and demanded guarantees that the government was doing its best to solve the national problems. The Ottoman government ordered the governors to use military force to disperse the crowds if they insisted on continuing their actions. The newspapers used various argumentations to limit public meetings to formal and conventional forms. Furthermore, for the elite the boycott should be nothing but the customers’ refusal to buy certain goods; picketing store or assaulting merchants were banned and condemned, particularly in the 1908 and 1910-11 boycotts.

The network between the boycotters in different parts of the empire facilitated the emergence of an empire-wide social movement. The modern communication technology and networks that emerged in the 19th century—such as telegraph services, the daily press and civil organizations—contributes to the construction of such a network and the mobilization of people dwelling in various parts of the Ottoman Empire. The mobilization of Ottoman society after the 1908 Revolution provided a social base for the emergence of the 1908 Ottoman Boycott. One of the most active elements of the Boycott Movement, the port workers, was on strike for almost two months before the emergence of the boycott. There appeared a sharp rise in the number of newspapers and civil organizations thanks to the revolution. This is why the Boycott Movement made use of this revolutionary atmosphere and constructed its own network. Boycott organizations such as the Harb-i Iktisadi Cemiyeti (Society for Economic Warfare), the Boykotaj Sendikası (Boycott Union) and the boycott journal Gave appeared in the initial days of the boycott. Ottoman newspapers and journals in Turkish, Greek, Armenian and other languages zealously supported the boycott against Austria and Bulgaria and contributed to the popularization of the movement. The civil organizations, which experienced a revival during the revolutionary days, also supported the Boycott Movement. Thanks to this mobilization and popularization, the Boycott Movement succeeded in building its own social network.

The Boycott Society did not legalize itself in 1909 when it became of-
ficially mandatory to register civil organizations. Until the Balkan Wars, the boycott organization to a great extent depended on the network of the port workers. However, the boycott organizations and the movement also reinforced the network and the social power of the port workers in the Ottoman Empire. The port workers and the boycott organizations generally used telegraph services to communicate with each other. Local boycott organizations, on the other hand, proclaimed their announcements in the daily press. The Muslim merchants who were involved in the movement were organized in Boycott Unions. They were to a great extent co-opted into the movement due to the boycott certificates that they received from the boycott organizations. These certificates were to ratify the legitimacy and power of the Boycott Movement and also expanded the scope of the boycott network. Salonica rose as the most important center of the movement during the 1910-11 Boycott, and Kerim Aga, the head of the porters of Salonica, as the most prominent figure of the movement. In this particular boycott, the boycott network reinforced its operation between different towns of the empire and strengthened its power over the local bureaucrats and notables.

After the Balkan Wars, the configuration of the boycott network and organizations evolved into a much more nationalist form. The boycott organization henceforth was comprised of local nationalist cadres and local nationalist notables who worked for the elimination of the non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. The boycott organizations began to work like nationalist gangs, particularly in the provinces. This is why, during the 1913-14 Boycott, the names of political figures such as Eşref Kuşçubası (a well-known member of the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa) were mentioned in the documents. The evolution of the boycott organizations and the boycotting network that was comprised of people from all walks of life contributed a great deal to the construction of a Turkish nationalist network. Therefore, the movement as a whole indicates that Turkish nationalism and its political organizations, such as the Committee of Union and Progress, was not only an intellectual current, but also had deep social origins. This social base was fed from different sources. The immigrants from Crete and Macedonia constituted both a street force in terms of grassroots politics and a significant number of entrepreneurs within the framework of National Economy policies. The urban notables who owned lands and a modest capital in the provinces were at least mobilized within the policies of the Committee of Union and Progress,
if they were not a member of the organization. Social movements such as the Boycott Movement and its social network played a crucial role in the popularization of ideas and political thoughts. The corporations and guilds that survived at the beginning of the 20th century, such as the port workers, were a crucial social base in the political life of the Ottoman Empire. Besides the military bureaucracy, who are mostly referred to as the main social base of Turkish nationalism, civil bureaucracy, and professional classes (such as lawyers, doctors, and teachers) established one of the main components of the nationalist movement.

Apart from the mass public meetings against foreign states, there appeared different types of public gatherings and conventions. Public conferences that took place in theater halls and coffee-houses were such occasions. The audiences of these conferences and lectures were informed about the goals of the Boycott Movement and learned how and why to boycott. On the other hand, the audience found an opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in these meetings. Well-known intellectuals, journalists, and political figures addressed people in these public places in each boycott wave. These public meetings in the neighborhood context reinforced the place of the boycott within people’s daily life.

The most conspicuous and apparent aspects of the boycotts in the Ottoman Empire were concrete actions. A classical concrete action in the context of a boycott is the picketing of a store. Ostracism of a personal, social or national target is the main goal of a boycott movement. Yet, ostracism and picketing require different vehicles of enforcement. There appeared demonstrations in front of famous Austrian stores, such as Stein, in 1908. These demonstrations were not only protest meetings, but also constituted de facto picket lines. Some Austrian shops had to put up French and British flags in order to appease the crowd gathered around their shops. The boycotted stores were closely watched both by the boycotters and the Ottoman public. After 1910, there appeared around boycotted shops watchmen who kept away prospective customers. Customers who continued to frequent these establishments were pulled out of the shops by force. Such incidents worried the Ottoman government, since they were undermining the public order. After the Balkan Wars, the intensity, persistence and frequency of picketing increased, and the different patterns of direct action now included violence. The Boycott Movement turned into the organized violence of gangs in 1913 and 1914 and heralded the ethnic clashes that would occur during World War I.
In its most basic definition, the boycott was the consumers’s refusal to buy certain products. The boycotters tried to convince the public opinion and the merchant class to act in accord with the rules of the Boycott Movement. However, it was not easy to obtain the consent of the Ottoman public, particularly of those interest groups who benefitted from breaching boycott regulations. Therefore, acts of violence against those who did not obey the rules of the Boycott Movement accompanied the official regulations of the boycott organizations. Those merchants who insisted in conducting business with boycotted countries and businessmen in many cases were stopped by force. Boycotted merchandise—such as sugar, flour, glass, and fezes—were all destroyed or publicly burned, if their owners tried to get them through the custom houses during the boycotts.

The most spectacular direct action during the 1908 Ottoman Boycott was the “Fez Tearing Feast” (fez yirtma bayramı). Fezses were taken from peoples’ heads and torn. The newspapers described and defined these actions as “carnival.” These actions created an extraordinary atmosphere that contributed to the construction of an empire-wide social movement. The violent character of the Boycott Movement increased after 1908 in both extent and scope. There appeared inspection teams to control whether merchants had boycotted items in their stores. Assaults on shops, merchandise, caravans, gardens, individuals and groves became quite wide-spread after 1910. Often, the means of production and the products of the groves were destroyed in these assaults. The ultimate goal of these inspections and assaults was to intimidate the owners and compel them to leave the town or the region. Many Greek shops were marked and pointed out as a target. Their front walls were inscribed with slogans in chalk, or their windows were marked with boycotting signs. These boycotting marks terrified the owners of the shops and stores, and many of them shut down their business already in 1910. It was common for Muslim customers entering non-Muslim stores to receive a verbal warning after 1913, and instances of physical force towards those customers were no longer an exception. Violence and clashes between different communities compelled the Minister of the Interior, Talat Bey, and an International Inquiry Commission to conduct a tour of Western Asia Minor in 1914. The Boycott Movement and the violence it entailed forced thousands to leave their homeland, while thousands of Muslim immigrants who from elsewhere arrived in the Ottoman Empire. The boycot-
ting started to resemble banditry and became entirely different from the “Fez Tearing Feasts.”

Therefore, the Boycott Movement that appeared in the Second Constitutional Period was the economic aspect of the process of elimination of non-Muslims from the Ottoman Empire. It was part and parcel of the Milli İktisat (National Economy) policies that gradually increased currency throughout the period. The boycott actions constituted the social base of the Milli İktisat, which to a great extent is regarded as a branch of an intellectual current and rising Turkish nationalism in the historiography on Turkey. However, as an economic and social phenomenon boycotts played an influential role after the 1908 Revolution, as much as political issues such as diplomacy, wars, high politics and political ideas did. The Boycott movement generated the social force behind Milli İktisat thought and politics. It mobilized and organized Muslims within the framework of rising Turkish nationalism and turned it from an abstract idea into a social reality.

Ideas of constructing the National Economy became popular immediately after the 1908 Revolution. Thoughts on the development of a native industry, the abolition of the capitulations, and a social and economic revolution that should follow the political one were some of the issues related with National Economy and discussed publicly. It was not a coincidence to find the National Economy debates and the invention of native products immediately after the 1908 Revolution. National Economy constituted the economic dimension of the rising Turkish nationalism, and the theory started to gain popularity during this particular period.39 It was claimed that the classical liberal theory and its policies that prevailed after the Tanzimat reforms in the 19th century destroyed small Muslim producers. The National Economy thesis gave to the nation and the state a new mission to rescue the empire’s main element (Muslims/ Turks) from economic and social decline. This is why theorists of Turkish nationalism and advocates of National Economy were mostly the same. Political figures and nationalist intellectuals—such as Ziya Gökalp, Tekin Alp, Yusuf Akçura and Ahmet Muhiddin—developed theories of

39 See Zarevand for a depiction of how nationalists recruited an Islamic discourse and popularized the thoughts of National Economy. Zarevand’s narrative not only underlined the activities of nationalist cliques, but also mentioned different aspects of rising nationalism at an early date. Zarevand [Zaven Nalbandian and Vartouhi Nalbandian], United and Independent Turania: Aims and Designs of the Turks, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), [first published in 1926 in Boston].
National Economy by using the works of German economists, such as List, Wagner and Schmoller. For them, the Muslim and Turkish component of the empire should be dominant in the economic sphere. They argued that the concrete interest of the nation should remain at the center, and not the abstract concepts of the Manchester School. The German example taught them that a strong and powerful state might achieve this goal, by intervening in the economy.\textsuperscript{40}

Thoughts on the development of a national industry and economy were not entirely new in the Second Constitutional Period. These goals and projects had existed in Ottoman economic thought even before the revolution in 1908. However, economic policies and thoughts on economic theories had not been topics of wide-spread discussion before. There had already occurred several preliminary attempts of industrialization in the course of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{41} Yet, these did not happen within the framework of a critique of classical liberalism.\textit{Laissez faire laissez passer} was dominant in all economic policies and thought. Nevertheless, as the Committee of Union and Progress started to gain influence during the Second Constitutional Period, \textit{étatisme} and protectionism gradually began to dominate Muslim/Turkish thought. The organization and discourse of the Boycott Movement from 1908 to 1914 experienced this very transition. At first, it was generally argued that the state should not intervene in commercial and economic life. Demands for protectionism by means of high tariffs were exceptional. It was the citizens who should work hard for the development of a native economy, by changing their economic preferences as consumers. It was inevitable that the empire had to compete with the European economic powers, and the Ottoman public should be mobilized to buy primarily Ottoman products. The 1908 Ottoman Boycott contributed to this process and popularized the demands for a Native Economy. Economic debates, such as protectionism versus liberalism, which had been confined to scholarly works and textbooks, became widespread in the public sphere after 1908, through journals and newspapers.\textsuperscript{42}

Historians working on Turkey have argued that \textit{Milli Iktisat} gained prominence particularly after the Balkan Wars. Yet, as argued above, sig-

\textsuperscript{40} Zafer Toprak, \textit{Milli Iktisat-Milli Burjuva\c{z}i}, (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayınları, 1995), pp. 10-22.


significant aspects of National Economy can also be detected on different levels during the 1908 Boycott. It was one of the first instances of a popular nationalist economic awakening. The claims to encourage the native industry, to create an Ottoman economy, and to protect the Ottoman economy and welfare entered the Ottoman public’s consciousness. Nationalist economic symbols, such as national headgear and meetings in favor of a Native Economy, became popular during the Boycott Movement. To use and buy Ottoman products became a fashion, and this was a significant cultural input for the rise of Milli İktisat.

Muslim merchants and working classes, who were the social classes supporting the boycotts, organized themselves and moved into the public eye for their own interest within a social movement. The Muslim merchant class, particularly in Asia Minor, became active after the 1908 Revolution, and so did the Boycott Movement, thanks to the support of the Committee of Union and Progress. For instance, Muslim merchants and local notables created a national bank, Konya Bankası (Bank of Konya) in 1909. In addition to establishing banks and other economic institutions, Muslim merchants and notables in the provinces also published journals and organized voluntary associations that supported the National Economy. For instance, Ticaret-i Umumiyeye Mecmuası (Journal of Public Trade) was a journal published by prominent merchants.

Muslim merchants not only published journals, but also established civil organizations, such as Cemiyet-i Müteşebbise (Society of Entrepreneurs), Ticaret ve Ziraat ve Sanayii Cemiyeti-i Milliyesi (National Society for Trade, Agriculture and Industry), Osmanlı Sanatkaran Cemiyeti (Ottoman Artisan Society), and Milli Fabrikacilar Cemiyeti (Nationalist Industrialist Society). The journalists in the provinces encouraged wealthy Muslims to contribute to these organizations. Next to these interest groups and organizations, there also appeared other civil organizations. The clubs of the Committee of Union and Progress, the Cemiyeti İlmiye-i İslamiye (Society of Islamic Science) and Türk Ocağı (Turkish Hearth) were organizations that worked hard for the National Economy and the development of a Muslim/Turkish industry. These organizations and nationalist newspapers like Tanin organized evening courses for the Muslim and Turkish population in order to improve their skills for the

43 Ibid., p. 153.
44 Ibid., p. 113.
market.\textsuperscript{46} As a result, they were able to replace foreigners and non-Muslims. Young Turks and Muslim notables consolidated the power of the national merchant class by making the Turkish language mandatory in business transactions.\textsuperscript{47}

The 1908 Boycott to a great extent propagated an Ottomanist discourse and included and defined the non-Muslim communities within the domains of Native Economy. However, after 1910, the so-called dominance of non-Muslims in the economy began to be harshly criticized; it was openly declared that they were no longer loyal to the ideals of Ottomanism. The Committee of Union and Progress attempted to enhance the status of Muslims and Turks in the economy through the mobilization of the public opinion. The economic boycott emerged as a weapon to which Muslim and Turkish elite resorted when they sought to eliminate non-Muslims from the economy. The enterprises of several prominent Muslims in the provinces were regarded as a part of the Boycott Movement, even by foreign companies and consuls. Concepts such as \textit{Iktisadi Cihad} (Economic Holy War) or \textit{Iktisadi Harb} (Economic Warfare) were widely used in the daily press, in intellectual debates and popular slogans. This was a social and economic complement to a political nationalist project. One of the main slogans of Turkish nationalism appeared in this period, wanting non-Muslims “to leave the country if they did not love it.”

Many Muslim entrepreneurs took advantage of these circumstances and expanded their investments. The boycotts embraced different sections of society, such as merchants and the working class, and also paved the way for their increased agency. At this juncture, the influences of the Boycott Movement vastly surpassed the original designs of the Unionists and protesters themselves. Different social actors became active in this process. This is why foreign observers—such as the British, French and Greek consuls—referred to the social forces behind the Boycott Movement. The Jewish community and the \textit{dönme} in Salonica, Muslim notables in the provinces, and the leaders of the port workers in port cities were blamed for being the ultimate instigators of the movement, in addition to the Ottoman bureaucracy which was said to have nationalist and anti-non-Muslim tendencies.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 82.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 216.
Popular Ideology, Islam, and the Mobilization of the Masses

The mobilization of people constitutes one of the essential ingredients of a social movement. Social scientists have analyzed the mobilization process by focusing on its different aspects. Ideologies and discourses are directly related with culture, which constitutes one of the main ingredients of the concept of social class. Therefore, ideology matters, since it is related to the mobilization of the population and the political legitimacy and since it deeply influenced the social actions of different segments of Ottoman society.

The ideology and discourse of a social movement play a crucial role in the mobilization of the masses. In bold terms, the employment of an ideology in a social movement appeals to the common people and attracts the attention of the public opinion. Popular ideologies that address the masses and their discourse are directly related to the emergence of mass movements. Mass movements and the mobilization of people emerge not only as an outcome of concrete material interests and the organizational skills of the participants, but also as a result of a legitimizing discourse. The ideology of a social movement is also related to culture. The ideology that the organizers of a movement create generally attempts to refer to popular thoughts, belief systems, myths, conventions, traditions, symbols, and the like.

Modern ideologies are also a component of mass society and mass politics. It is not only social movements, but also states, governments, and political parties that utilize popular ideologies in order to convince ordinary people of their cause and to consolidate their hegemony over society. The expansion of the public sphere, the flourishing of civil organizations, and the introduction of communication facilities, general suffrage and parliamentary politics—these all brought competing ideologies to the agenda. This is why the emergence of mass movements coincided with the transformation of political thought into political programs and popular ideologies—such as socialism, nationalism, feminism, populism, and so on.

Ottoman intellectuals gave birth to modern political ideologies such as Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism in the course of the 19th century, particularly after the emergence of a modern education system and a

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48 Ideology has different meanings. With the concept “popular ideology” here I simply refer to an amalgam of discourses that does not pursue coherence and is comprised of different competing ideologies as well as the dominant ideology of the ruling elite.
modern daily press. Ottomanism was the idea that all people living in the domains of the Ottoman Empire—irrespective of their creed, language, religion, and ethnic origin—would be equal citizens of the empire. Ottomanism as an ideology and discourse emerged in different clothes in the discourse of different actors.\textsuperscript{49} Similarly, Islamism as a political project and ideology appeared in various guises, aiming at the union of the empire on the basis of Islamic identity. It was to a great extent the politicization of Islam and an attempt to reconcile religion and modernity. Turkism was a late-comer among these three main currents, which brought to the fore the argument that the Turkish element should be the dominant nation in the empire.

Since the intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire is one of the better-studied fields, political thought and the debates among Ottoman intellectuals form a significant part of the historiography.\textsuperscript{50} Particularly the history of the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks to a great extent depends on intellectual history. Although constituting a significant contribution to the literature, this aspect of Ottoman historiography also has a number of pitfalls. The intellectual history narratives that depict the period are based only on political thought and to a great extent ignore the social context.

First of all, the classifications made by these studies have produced the belief or certainty that there existed distinct ideological camps among the Ottoman intellectuals.\textsuperscript{51} The idea of Ottomanism, the politicization of Islam, and Turkist thought are all considered as representing a distinct school of thought. Although such a classification in understanding the intellectual currents in the Ottoman Empire may have some merits, the literature appears to be based on the idea that these currents really existed as discourses isolated from each other. This clear-cut perception of

\textsuperscript{49} For different versions of Ottomanism during the 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, see: Selçuk Aksin Somel, “Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcilik Düşüncesi (1839-1913),” Modern Türkiye\textsuperscript{ı}de Siyasi Düşünce, Ed. Mehmet Ö. Alkan, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayımları, 2002).

\textsuperscript{50} Bernard Lewis’s narrative, for example, is to a great extent a history of culture and political thoughts: Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968). Niyazi Berkes’s study also takes into account secularism as an intellectual current; Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964). Both writers have conceived of the history of the late Ottoman Empire as a struggle between good and evil, modernists (Westernizers) and reactionaries.

\textsuperscript{51} An encyclopedia of well-known scholars in Turkey makes use of such A classification; this work has become very influential in studies on Turkey. Murat Belge (Ed.), Tanzimat\textsuperscript{ı}tan Cumhuriyet\textsuperscript{ı} Türkiye Ansiklopedisi, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayımları, 1986).
intellectual history started with Yusuf Akçura's well-known article published in 1904, “Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset” (Three Genres of Politics). However, as new studies on the social and political history of Turkey indicate, Ottoman intellectual thought was much more complex and had different affiliations, relations, and complex identities.

The political programs, political journals, or schools of thought often embraced various elements from these above-mentioned intellectual currents. Intellectuals, political organizations and journals that pursued a political project did not propagate a pure ideology such as Ottomanism, Islamism, or Turkism. Different elements of these ideologies can be found in the works of intellectuals. Early Turkish nationalism also consisted of different paths with different political agendas. Turkish nationalists who immigrated into the Ottoman Empire from Russia had different political projections regarding a prospective nationalist program than did the native Turkish nationalists who did not want to forget entirely an Ottomanist discourse. This is why studies that focus on the relationship between social and political developments and ideologies and the impact of one on the other usually refer to interconnections. For instance, Zürcher has argued that many Young Turks supported the idea of Ottomanism, while they were emotionally attached to Turkism and lived as devout Muslims. Hanoğlu, an expert on the Young Turks, has delineated the main characteristic of the politics of the Committee of Union and Progress as “political opportunism.” He has asserted that Young Turks recruited Turkism, Ottomanism and Islamism interchangeably, although they were in favor of a dominance of the Turkish element over the other communities of the empire. Zürcher has claimed that not even

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52 This long article first appeared in 1904 in Türk, published in Cairo, and classified alternative policies for the Ottoman Empire in three different paths: Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism. The first two, according to Yusuf Akçura, were out of date for the Ottoman Empire; according to him, it was better to follow the policy of Turkism. His article was published many times as a pamphlet. Yusuf Akçura, Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993).

53 A new edition of a major work on Turkish political thought classifies Turkish intellectual history in a much more sophisticated way. The common inclination in the articles is to reveal how different currents of thought were interrelated with each other. Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce, Vol. I-IX, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001-2009).

54 For two different paths in early Turkish nationalism, see: Masami Arai, Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1994).


Mustafa Kemal used the word *milli* (nation) in its modern sense in order to refer to Turks before 1923. Rather, he referred to Ottoman Muslims. Muslim identity was still the dominant ingredient in the early nationalist movement. The definition of “us” was very much defined in opposition to the non-Muslims and this is why it is better to talk about a “Muslim nationalism.”

The ideologies and discourses of social movements are much more complex, eclectic and populist when compared to those of intellectuals. Social movements address people who embrace various interests, sensitivities, conventions, and affiliations. This feature made intellectuals employ a discourse that facilitated the mobilization of people. Their ultimate concern regarding political discourse was not consistency or coherence, but convincing the people to take action. This is also true for emerging mass politics in general. One may trace this emergence in the writings of contemporary journalists and columnists who became one of the most popular personalities of their age. They did not write about sophisticated and analytical issues in the way of theoreticians, philosophers or scholars, but took advantage of various ideas in an eclectic and superficial manner in order to convince the public on a particular subject or policy. These popular political figures, such as famous columnists, utilized various elements of different political agendas in their narratives. Their usage of popular ideas, symbols and references enhanced their influence on society.

Similarly, social movements also made use of various ideas. An amalgam of popular discourse and symbols constituted the popular ideologies. Popular movements created their own popular ideologies and dis-

57 Erik J. Zürcher, “İslam Milliyetçiliğinin Dili,” Savas, Devrim ve Uluslaşma: Türkiye Tarihinde Geçiş Dönemi (1908-1924), (İstanbul:İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayımları, 2005).

58 Therefore, figures such as journalists can be classified somewhere between philosophers and grassroots politicians, or as an intelligentsia distinct from the intellectuals, as they might be classified in East European societies. The intelligentsia plays a crucial role in popularizing ideologies. Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, “Orta Katman Aydınlar ve Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kıtleselleşmesi,” Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce, Milliyetçilik, Vol. V, Ed. Tanıl Bora, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayımları, 2002), pp. 91-102.

59 Both the social movements of the 19th century (such as workers’ and nationalist movements) and the so-called new social movements of the 20th century (such as feminism, and the green and the gay movement) did not restrict themselves to a particularistic interest or discourses of a distinct class or social group, but refer to various elements of common culture. For an evaluation and comparison between new social movements and mass movements of the 19th century, see: Craig Calhoun, “New Social Movements of the Early Nineteenth Century,” in Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action, Ed. Mark Traugott, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).
courses in order to facilitate the mobilization of ordinary people and legitimize their demands and slogans. Different fragments of popular ideology may be over-emphasized in particular cases, and this selection may change from one case to another, or can alter according to changing times and circumstances. For instance, the popular ideology that emerged during the 1908 Ottoman Boycott was to a great extent comprised of Ottomanist discourses and symbols. However, it also employed the symbols of ancient Turkish culture, pre-Ottoman Anatolian Islamic cultures, and the ideals of modern citizenship and the new regime, Second Constitutional Period. This popular ideology of the Boycott Movement was efficient in the mobilization of port-workers, merchants, and ordinary consumers from different communities all over the empire.

The boycotts after 1910 were organized against the Greek presence within the Ottoman Empire and aimed to mobilize the Muslim population. This is why Islam and Islamic discourse constituted a major part of its ideology and discourse. However, the targeted population tried to employ an Ottomanist argument in defending their economic and communal interests. The Greek merchants and notables in the provinces consulted the Ottomanist discourse in order to prevent the effects of these anti-Greek boycotting activities, by arguing that their loss was the loss of everyone in the empire. However, the elites no longer included non-Muslims within the definition of Ottomanism. Different ingredients formed the amalgam of a popular ideology whose different fragments were articulated in various ways by different actors.\textsuperscript{60} Therefore, the Boycott Movement between 1908 and 1914, which was comprised of different political and social actors, had a transforming popular ideology. They not only made recourse to a popular discourse, but also consciously propagated a popular ideology. Different classes that took action within the Boycott Movement also had various discourse and ideologies. These popular ideologies were also related to the respective cultural background. The different discourses reflected their proponents’ cultural world, which played a significant role in the formation of social classes and in their social behavior. Religious identity and the cultural baggage of different sections of society started to play a more significant role

\textsuperscript{60} For cultural elements such as rituals, symbols, \textit{Weltanschaung} and their employment in discourses and social movements, see: Gary Alan Fine, “Public Narration and Group Culture: Discerning Discourse in Social Movements,” in \textit{Social Movements and Culture}, Ed. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), pp. 128-129.
in the making of the social classes and their relationships with each other. This is why the Muslim merchant and working classes in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the Second Constitutional Period was entirely different from those of 1914. During the 19th century, the middle classes of the different ethnic communities had very distinct cultures, tastes and identities, which prevented their collaboration. Economic and commercial collaborations that could undermine these differences rarely existed. This facilitated the tensions between the different communities, and the above-mentioned changes constituted one of the main pillars of their class structure and class identity.