

or negative efforts of minor structural ones. In addition, a series of such changes, as a whole, can be believed to have originated with European penetration or rule, followed by progressive and reactionary moves in the nineteenth century. I believe that the contents of the presentations by Dr. Dundar and Mr. Tokunaga are evidently different but both are closely related with such changing processes in the Middle East. Their presentations were very helpful for us to reconsider the differences between and similarities in structural changes in the cases of the Ottoman Empire and Iran.

In connection with the above, it appears that the millet system was one of the residues in the great structural change of the Ottoman Empire, which converted from an Islamic state into a multi-ethnic state, and finally the Turkish nation-state. Being different from the Ottoman Empire, which had already accomplished a pseudo-centralized or centralized system, Iran needed a state-building exercise based on centralization. I wonder whether the issue of electoral law highlighted by Mr. Tokunaga might have represented the evidence in the significant structural change from decentralized Qajar rule to the centralization of the Pahlavi dictatorship. Moreover, during Reza Shah's period, the task of centralization was certainly accomplished to some extent by means of modernization as well as policies against armed tribes and the Shi'ite religious forces. However, both the Turkish and Iranian cases seem to have scarcely realized structural change in relation to "Islam and Search for Democratization," which is this session's main theme.

Session 2: Islam and Politics

İlmiyye ve Siyaset, Challenges between Islam and Politics in the Discourse of the Ottoman Ulema

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As a result of the Constitutional Revolution of 1908/1326 the Hamidian government was once again transformed into a constitutional-caliphate/sultanate-parliamentary system. Although not the same as the earlier project of 1876/1293, nonetheless due to revolutionary zeal the constitutional experiment of 1908/1326 was presented as a "renewal" of the top-down constitutional project of 1876/1293 and the "national will" as the Ottoman *devlet* continued to present itself as a significant actor belonging to the political concert of "civilised nations." As the sole bastion of the Islamic world, by and large free from physical colonial occupation, as well as being a European and an Islamic state, by reintroducing "modern" political structures the Ottoman *devlet* attempted to fashion itself capable from its own Islamic traditions to be able to adapt to the modern political orders.

Predominately, narratives regarding Ottoman constitutionalism had focused on the secular-Western merits of the Ottoman constitutional efforts, paying very little attention to the Ottoman proclamations of the Islamic merits of their constitutional exertions. In particular the historiography reflected that the Constitutional Revolution of 1908/1326 initiated a political turning point that paved the way for the "natural process" of the establishment of the secular Turkish Republic. Not only that, on March 31, 1909/Rabi al-Awwal 10, 1327, a rebellion in Istanbul based on the failed promises of the new Young Turk government was categorised as a "religious" reaction to the "progressive" revolution of 1908/1326. This dichotomous representation presented the ulema (the religious Muslim scholarly class), the focus of this presentation, in opposition to the constitutional efforts of the revolutionaries of 1908/1326. Yet, it will be shown that the ulema were part of the revolutionary activities of 1908/1326, and worked with the newly established government to maintain order in 1909/1327, as they were equally, if not more invested in the new constitutional order than the revolutionaries of the Young Turks.

The spirit of the revolution and the relaxation of press activity presented the opportunity for the Ottoman ulema to present in their newspapers an “ideal” that Islamic political authority reflected a conditional caliphate parliamentary system that was inclusive of ulema participation and somewhat facilitated nominal inclusion for non-Muslim minorities in the parliamentary decision-making processes. As parliamentarians the ulema consolidated their political vision via the constitutional amendment process in 1909/1327. In the Muslim press, they discussed the compatibility of the populist French Revolutionary ideals of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* or in Ottoman Turkish as *hürriyet, müsavat ve uhuvvet* (freedom, equity and fraternity) with Islamic norms while at the same time “intellectualising” Islamic traditional ideals such as *meşrutiyet* (constitutionalism), *şura* (consultation) and *adâlet* (justice).

This paper shall emphasise on the seminal moment of 1908/1326 and 1909/1327 and the challenges the ulema faced in this short but hostile period as a host of political fluctuations took place, such as the “progressive” Constitutional Revolution, parliamentary elections, Counter-revolution and the dethronement of one of the most symbolic authorities in late Ottoman history, Sultan Abdülhamid II. As discussed on each issue the ulema have been presented as either docile participants or reactionaries. However, as shall be examined the ulema were neither docile nor reactionary but instead vociferous, self-determining and central to the changes. Their activities and intellectual ideas as a networked community resonated to the masses across the Ottoman domains as their position as “guardians of the faith” continued to be reflected.

Additionally, this paper shall examine a host of supporting problems that have become dominant in the historiography. The first is the manner in which Islam and its interlocutors are framed. It will thus be asked whether the term “modernity” is helpful in understanding the Islamic nature of the Ottoman polity and the language that the ulema used. It will be argued that rather than the Islam and the ulema becoming more secular during this moment, that instead the ulema and their supporters were attempting to Islamise the so-called Western political modals that intervened into Ottoman life. As a result, this presentation will examine the role of the ulema regarding the intellectualisation of the need for a constitutional-caliphate system and how the ulema not only once again became members of the political decision-making process, but also key agents of the constitutional amendments that were undertaken in 1909 due to the chaos caused by the so-called Counter-Revolution of 1909.

This process however was not Istanbul centred, and this paper will attempt to show via the Ottoman domain-wide ulema networks that the domains was far better intellectually connected than once assumed. Suggesting that ideas of revolution and constitutionalism were just as important in the provinces as they were in the Imperial centre. As a result, this presentation will examine the ideas of various ulema throughout the Ottoman domains, with their differing intellectual and ideological positions and how they attempted to challenge and address the notion of constitutional theory.

In particular I shall be examining the ideas of two ulema. The first being Muhammad Hamdi Yazır who was instrumental in Istanbul and was a key protagonist in the removal of Abdülhamid II from power as well as a key author in making the constitutional amendments of 1909, and the second being Abdullah al-Azami from Gaza who also wrote a pamphlet at around the same time explaining the merits of a new constitutional system. It will be thus discussed that Islam, its language and authority were still integral to Ottoman statecraft and law and that the constitutional movement rather than a move towards secularism was a move towards safeguarding the Islamic integrity of the Ottoman polity of which the ulema once again became important actors.



Member of Turkish Parliament in Chamber

Nation-State, Freedom and Religion in Discussions of the 1923 Constitutional Committee: Reconsidering the Relationship between Religion and Politics in the Constitutional Kingdom of Egypt

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This presentation reevaluates the relationship between religion and politics in the early era of the Constitutional Kingdom of Egypt. It mainly analyzes interpretations of the 1923 constitutional committee members about the nation-state, freedom and religion.

Egypt had been under the British protectorate since the outbreak of the First World War. Massive national demonstrations broke out for the improvement of its status in 1919 (the 1919 Revolution). As a result, in 1922, Egypt was granted formal independence with some reservations. The 1923 constitutional committee was established soon after its independence. The committee submitted the 1923 constitution draft to the government and the King in 1922, and it was enacted in 1923. It gives parliament the power to legislate and monitor the government as well as stipulates the equality of all Egyptians under the law. It also guarantees that their freedom such as that of expression is safeguarded. The 1923 constitution seems to realize the principle of the separation between private and public, or religion and politics.

Almost all of the previous research concerning the 1923 constitution examines it from the standpoint of secular nationalism or liberalism. For this reason, the question of how the drafters of the 1923 constitution actually perceived or interpreted the relationship between religion, freedom and the nation-state has not been fully discussed. Therefore, this previous research has simply argued the secular nature of the 1923 constitution and the nation-state of that time in Egypt. In order to complement such a problem, this presentation sheds light on the 1923 constitutional process from the following three aspects.

First, this presentation investigates how the constitutional committee members perceived the relationship between