

INTELLECTUALS OF VARIED STATE TRADITIONS:
THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE VOLGA-URAL REGION

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ABSTRACT

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I intend to analyze in the present study, the status of the intellectuals under varied state traditions. The Volga-Ural region was under the legacy of Chinggis Khan. In the thirteenth century with the invasion of Mongol-Tatar groups under the leadership of Chinggis Khan's grandchild Batu Khan, the Volga-Bulghar state was removed and the Golden Horde was founded. By the collapse period of the Golden Horde at the end of the 14th century and at the beginning of the 15th century, the Khanates period began in the region: Kazan, Astrakhan and Kasım. The struggles among the khanates were used by Russia in her favor and these problems paved the way for inclusion of the region under Russian hegemony. Especially after the collapse of Kazan in 1552, a long period of Russianization and Christianization took place.

In the Volga-Ural region, where there was no Islamic state, one observes a deep impact of Turco Mongol political culture, in which distributive economics based on power-sharing mechanisms prevailed, and a lively exchange of ideas among the intellectuals as well as conflicts and clashes became the norm. The Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, was formed with conquests and ideological aggregation, which led to a concentration of power in the state. In such an environment, dynastic ideology determined the borders of intellectual life

and the ways of expression of ideas. In the present study, my concern is on more on the interference of the state in the intellectual life.

Keywords: The Ottoman Empire, Volga-Ural Region, Intellectuals, Ulama

ÖZ

FARKLI DEVLET OLUŞUM MODELLERİNDE ENTELEKTÜELLERİN KONUMU: OSMANLI DEVLETİ VE İDİL-URAL BÖLGESİ

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Bu çalışmada, farklı devlet geleneklerinin mevcut olduğu iki coğrafyada entelektüellerin konumu mukayeseli olarak anlaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. İdil-Ural bölgesinde Cengiz Han ile oluşmuş devlet anlayışı, evladı tarafından asırlarca temsil edilmiş; bölgede yaşanan Altın Ordu hakimiyetinden sonra 1552’de Kazan Hanlığı’nın devrilmesiyle Rus hakimiyeti dönemi başlamıştır. Cengiz Han devlet geleneği ulus prensibini ön plana çıkarmakta ve güçlerin dağılımı ilkesini benimsemekte idi. Bu tür bir geleneğin varisi olan coğrafyada Rus hakimiyetinden sonra ise entelektüelin kaygısı hayatiyetini sürdürebilmek üzerine kurulu olmuştur.

Osmanlı Devleti, kendisinden önceki İslam devletlerinin oluşturduğu geleneği hiç şüphesiz devraldı; fakat fetih politikaları ve devletin konumu gereği pratik kaygılarla kendine özgü bir sistemin de zamanla temsilcisi oldu. İdil-Ural sahasındaki güçler dağılımı anlayışı, Anadolu’da yerini güçlü bir merkezîyetçi anlayışa bırakmıştı. Bu merkezî anlayış, sıkı bürokratik hiyerarşi entelektüelin zihniyet dünyasını belirledi ve devlet ile karşı karşıya gelme sürecine nasıl katkıda bulundu? Bu çalışmada bu konular irdelenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, İdil-Ural Bölgesi, Entelektüeller, Ulema

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has 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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Signature:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted that comparative history enriches our understanding of the area of our specialization. There are many scholars who have contributed to the history of the Ottoman Empire by comparative studies. One can obtain rich material by comparing the Ottoman state for example with Habsburg, Chinese or Middle Eastern states.

The Ottoman Empire has its origins in the history of Anatolia of the 13th-14th centuries. Therefore, the political, socio-economic or intellectual history of the Ottomans should be understood in the general context of Anatolian history. It is generally accepted that the Ottomans inherited the state mentality of previous Islamic states such as the Umayyad, Abbasid and the Seljukid political organizations. Nevertheless, the Ottomans shaped their state organization in some kind of an “original” way. The main focus of the present study is on this “original” organization. This originality reveals itself in the works of contemporary writers. The Ottoman kind of thinking determines the intellectual world of this region. Ottoman writers interpreted the events as the dominant side of the case. They were considering themselves as staying with power, they were more concerned with the state, and less with the people inside and outside the Ottoman realm. One could even say that for the Ottoman *ulama* that they felt part of the state administration

and considered others outside of this sphere as “others” who need not to be concerned with.

As reflected in historical sources there are some different characteristics of the Volga-Ural region. The Tatar and Bashkort people of the region were not on the side of power. They were under the control of the Russian state after 1552. Also before that, their state tradition did not entail strong centralization. In the historical writing of the Volga-Ural region, the discourse was many-sided. In other words, the writers did not see themselves on the side of power and as a result did not focus only on the state. They were able to contemplate about their environment and recount stories, sometimes even of mythical nature. As a result the people were more represented in the intellectuals’ works. Another outcome of this state of affairs, was the dialogue among writers, which was reflected in the texts of this region. One could perhaps say that this dialogue among the ulama may have also contributed to the development of Jadid movement later in the Volga-Ural region.

There is no work which look at Anatolian and Central Asian cultural and intellectual development processes in a comparative context. The intellectual history of the region consists of multifaceted problematics. The *ulama* have mostly been evaluated as a static group in itself. (The term *ulama* refers to the Muslim *ulama*. They were responsible for putting into practice the Islamic law in the Ottoman Empire. In the Volga-Ural region, on the other hand, they were responsible for maintaining their Islamic culture). But there were always debates, conflicts, and factions among the *ulama*. Sometimes these disagreements constituted the main cause for some of the revolts. A close reading of the works written by these scholars, and a comparison of these sources with those of their

contemporaries, such as travel reports constitute a promising research topic for a better understanding of the Ottoman and Central Asian intellectual history.

The Ottoman Empire and the Volga-Ural region have very distinct peculiarities in terms of political culture and the role of *ulama* in politics. In the Volga-Ural region, where there was no Islamic state, one may come across deep impact of Turco-Mongol political culture, in which distributive economics, power-sharing mechanisms prevailed and a lively exchange of ideas among the intellectuals as well as conflicts and clashes became the norm. The formation of the Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, was based on conquests and ideological aggregation, which led to a concentration of power in the state. In such an environment, dynastic ideology determined the borders of intellectual life, and the ways of expression of ideas. In the present study, my concern is more on the interference of the state in the intellectual life. The confrontation of the state with the *ulama* may reveal itself in intellectual debates among the *ulama*, and complaints filed by the intellectuals directly to the administration. The starting point of disagreement among the *ulama*, and their confrontation with the state arose from internal problems of the scholars as a social class as well as from the external influences over the *ulama* class. The question is whether the confrontation happened when the state was involved in the discourse of the *ulama*, or when the *ulama* mobilized itself in the form of a political movement.

In the Volga-Ural region the domination of various powers as Chinggisid¹, Golden Horde² and Russia³ make the way for somewhat different mentality. My

¹ For the personality of Chinggis Khan as an emperor and a glance of his descendants see: İsenbike Togan, "Chinggis Han ve Moğollar", *Türkler*, eds. H.C. Güzel, K. Çiçek, S. Koca, vol. 8, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara 2002, pp. 235-355. The English version: "Chinggis Khan and the Mongols", *The Turks*, trans. by Murat Yaşar, eds. H.C. Güzel, C.C. Oğuz, O. Karatay, vol. 2, Yeni

main focus is on the Russian administration in the Volga-Ural region, because I try to analyze the situation of the intellectuals under the Russian rule. This arises from two reasons. First, there is an abundance of material on the intellectual life in the region under the Russian rule, and this period allows us to compare the applications with the Ottoman state mentality in a relatively more comfortable way.

In this study, my aim is not to make a biographic or prosopographic research on intellectuals. My main concern is the status of intellectuals under various state traditions.⁴ By looking at the internal dynamics of the class, I concentrate on the tradition of formative mentalities that shaped the viewpoints of individuals. As a result, I try to analyze the mentalities in the historical context. And when it is the problem of confrontation of the intellectuals with the state, my focus is on the state traditions.

The intellectual field at a given time and place is made up of agents who have various intellectual positions. Yet the field is not an aggregate of isolated elements; it is a configuration or a network of relationships. The elements in the field are not only related to each other in determinate ways; each also has a specific “weight” or authority, so each field competes for the right to define what is “intellectually established” and “culturally legitimate”. This field’s constituents

Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara 2002, pp. 767-785.; and also see: A. Zeki Velidî Togan, *Moğollar, Çingiz ve Türkler*, Arkadaş Matbaası, İstanbul 1941.

² For a comprehensive study on the Golden Horde see: Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania 1994.

³ On the Russian state mentality and the Mongolian impact on Russia see: Donald Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols: Cross-cultural influences on the steppe frontier, 1304-1589*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2000.

⁴ On these various state traditions, the Mongolian and Ottoman: İsenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation in Steppe Formations: The Kerait Khanate and Chinggis Khan*, Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1998.

may be individuals; or they may be small groups, “schools”, or even academic disciplines. Indeed, one can imagine field-like relationships within subfields that in turn occupy particular regions within broader intellectual fields. But the main point lies in the emphasis given to the positional and relational attributes of ideas. The views expressed in a given setting are so thoroughly intertwined that they can be adequately characterized only in their complementary or oppositional relationships to each other. Indeed, the opposing positions within an intellectual field tend to condition each other; their interaction is dialectical in the strictest sense of that term. The prevailing orthodoxies of a given context help to shape the heterodox reversals they call into being, and of course they determine the structure of the field as a whole. At the same time, heterodox ideas may well acquire a certain dominance in their own thought.

The intellectual field is influenced by the concerns and conflicts of the larger society. The social group which the historian of knowledge are most interested in, of course, is the group or category of the intellectuals. If intellectual history is going to touch upon social environments at all, then surely it must try to chart the social role of intellectuals.⁵

Now, let me define the need for this kind of an intellectual history in the context of the present study.

The Need for Intellectual History

The study of intellectual history can and must be pursued in a manner which will see in the sequence and co-existence of phenomena more than mere accidental relationships, and will seek to discover, in the totality of the historical

⁵ Fritz Ringer, *Fields of Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 4-5,14.

complex, the role, significance, and meaning of each component element. “It is this type of sociological approach to history that we identify ourselves..... The conception of ideology is valuable for the analysis of the intellectual situation.”⁶

The attempt to escape ideological and utopian distortions is, in the last analysis, a quest for reality. All conflicting groups and classes in society seek this reality in their thoughts and deeds, and it is therefore no wonder that it appears to be different to each of them.⁷

For Wallerstein, the study of past must incorporate both universal and nomothetic (systemic) and particular/idiographic (historical) features. This allows us to conceptualize the sociohistorical domain as a totality..... Wallerstein has also tried to add more civilisational substance to his notion of historical systems. He has argued that such systems represent an “integrated network of economic, political, and cultural processes the sum of which hold the system together”. In light of Wallerstein’s more detailed work on structures of knowledge and geocultures, one is more inclined to take him more seriously on this issue.⁸

There are different characteristics of political history, economic history, military history, intellectual history. Depending on our choice of field, our analysis will be different. Our task is to go beyond the alignment of factual knowledge, to seek an understanding of these complex processes through analyses which,

⁶ Karl Manheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, London-Rutledge, 1996, p. 83.

⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 87-88.

⁸ Boris Stremelin, “Bounding Historical Systems: The Wallerstein-Frank Debate and the Role of Knowledge in World History”, *Review*, vol. XXIV, n. 4, 2001, pp. 516, 523; for the evaluation of historical processes ascribed to ‘the structure of knowledge’ see: Immanuel Wallerstein, “Islam, the West, and the World”, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 10:2, 1999, pp. 109-125.

individually, will necessarily be incomplete, but which will contribute to a richer overall picture.⁹

In the present study, I analyze the *ulama* in a historical perspective in chapter I. The traditional characteristic of ulama which defines the future applications. In chapter II, I talk about the Volga-Ural intellectuals with the historical background with special reference to the state tradition in the region. The last chapter deals with the Ottoman intellectuals functioning with the state apparatus. The conclusion is a comparison between these two systems.

⁹ Francis Higman, "1350-1750? The Perspective of Intellectual History", *Journal of Early Modern History*, 1,2, 1997, p. 96; for an critique of studies in England on Muslim intellectuals see: P.M. Holt, "The Study of Islam in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century England", *Journal of Early Modern History*, 2:2, 1998, pp. 113-123; and for a different perspective reflecting the debates among various scholar from East and West see: Muhsin Mahdi, "Orientalism and the Study of Islamic Philosophy", *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1, 1990, pp. 73-98.

CHAPTER II

THE ULAMA IN HISTORICAL PROCESS

The ulama have long been seen as a very distinct group, a regulated and structured body, expressing the popular voice, constituting the solid framework of permanent government behind changing dynasties. In fact, during the first two centuries of Islam, they consisted of a relatively small number of people, engaged in the elaboration of *fiqh* and concentrated at Medina, in the south of Iraq and in the caliphal capitals. As a result general lines of informal consensus were more easily established than it was subsequently going to be the case. This consensus into an institution was comparable to a legislative body. However, they had a consciousness of their identity which marked them as a distinct group.

The political traumas of the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries contributed not a little to the consolidation of the power of the ulama, who, together with other urban elites, played an important role in the life of Muslim cities. Towards the mid-5th/11th century, whereas hitherto they had been essentially a religious elite, they also became a social and political elite.

The professionalization of the ulama proceeded apace, for example, in Cairo in the second half of the 8th/13th century. Between this period and the beginning of the 11th/16th century, appointments to posts in education were often controlled by the Mamlûks or by the intellectual elite itself.

Personal relations between scholars also played a role in appointments, as is evident from the favours enjoyed by Walî al-Dîn Ibn al-‘Irâkî (d. 826/1423) on the part of the friends of his father Zayn al-Dîn. Some were anxious to guarantee lucrative posts for their children.

In order to comprehend both the personal relationships among scholars and also their concerns internally as a class, one must realize their definition of “knowledge”, their historical background and functioning of their system as appointments, relationship with their rulers etc. My concern is on these issues in the following pages.

2.1. Knowledge

In the view of Muslim scholars, “knowledge” (that is, *‘ilm* or “religious knowledge”) and its transmission were the linchpins that held medieval Muslim society together. The vast body of knowledge as represented for medieval Muslims was, above all, the power to transform the world. Religious knowledge as embodied in Islamic law and the related sciences, although in a sense ideal, was also grounded in the exigencies of daily life. Consequently, it assumed its highest expression in the oft-quoted Qur’ânic injunction to “command the good and censure the evil”. This duty, falling collectively on the shoulders of the Islamic community, lay at the core of its moral vision and of the ordering of its social relations.

Maintaining the integrity of “knowledge” was a difficult task. In large part this difficulty resulted from the openness and flexibility of the scholarly class itself. The transmission of knowledge in medieval Islamic societies always depended upon the personal relationship between teacher and pupil, and not on any network of institutions. With a system of transmitting knowledge that was

informal, personal and oral, and in the absence of any formal institutional system of control, the ulama remained an inherently open and permeable body, and included not only professional teachers, but a host of educated or semi-educated individuals active on the margins of intellectual life.¹⁰

Comprehending the definition of knowledge and its transformations reveals various applications throughout history. A historical analysis paves the way to realize this intelligence manner and its results.

2.2. Ulama in a Comparative Perspective: A Historical Journey

The Seljuq system of relations between the ulama and the state, worked out in Baghdad and Iran, was carried westward by the Seljuq conquests to Syria and Egypt, and was later adopted by the Ottoman Empire in Anatolia, and the Balkans. A similar system was constructed by the Safavids in Iran between 1500 and 1724. The expansion of Islam to the world over by conquest, trade and missionary activities also introduced these institutions to the Indian subcontinent, the islands of South-East Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and other regions.

In the Ottoman Empire the evolution of relations between the state and religious elites led to the direct control of the state over religious institutions. The Ottomans brought the ulama's judicial and educational activities under the bureaucratic control. In the course of their expansion, they created a sequence of colleges in Anatolia and the Balkans, which they organized into a teaching hierarchy.

In the Ottoman system, an interlocked hierarchy with a defined career course for both judges and teachers, supported by state salaries and endowments,

¹⁰ Jonathan P. Berkey, "Tradition, Innovation and the Social Construction of Knowledge in the Medieval Islamic Near East", *Past&Present*, 146 (1995), pp. 50-55.

brought the whole of the religious establishment under the state control. At the same time, the Ottomans suppressed independent Sufism. The Sufis were either attached to the court or dispersed. Shiism was proscribed. By defining the limits of religious autonomy narrowly, the Ottomans transformed the system of state patronage of religious activities and informal religious acceptance of the state authority into a state-dominated version of Islam.

Finally, there was an ambiguity in the concepts of “secular” and “sacred”. The ordinary functions of the Muslim community life and the daily activities of scholars and holy men involve activities which come under the purview of Islamic law and Islamic morality, but constitute from our point of view the realm of secular affairs. Business, administration of trusts, property issues and inheritances are only a few examples. The domain of the Muslim religious community which embodies the Islamic ideal is, by virtue of Islam itself, the realm of the mundane.¹¹

The hierarchial problems and also many other issues regarding the ulama deal with their daily endeavors. Their practical needs for their own life define their intellectual productivity and also their interference with the state. This case requires to learn their appointment procedure in detail.

¹¹ Ira M. Lapidus, “State and Religion in Islamic Societies”, *Past&Present*, no. 151, May 1996, pp. 16-20.

2.3. Appointments in Academic Career

In the world of higher Islamic education in the late medieval Cairo, a learned and well-placed man certainly could acquire a fair amount of money. Holding a single teaching appointment in one of the many schools of Mamluk Cairo by itself would not make a scholar rich. The stipends attached to professorships varied considerably from one institution to another, but a scholar might compensate for a comparatively small salary in one by holding more than one post.

When the founder and benefactor of an institution of learning wished to appoint particular men as professors or students, he encountered little resistance. Not infrequently do the biographical dictionaries and chronicles report that a scholar was appointed professor in a particular school by the founder of the institution.¹²

The evolution towards professionalism reached its culminating point under the Ottomans, who established a hierarchy of *muftis*, presided over by the senior *mufti* of Istanbul, the *shaykh al-islâm*.¹³

The first product of the Islamic education was the *mufti*, produced long before the Muslim institutions of learning took shape. It was in fact the *mufti*'s role in Islam that was later to mold, shape, and give final form to the institution that was to become the college of Islam par excellence, the *madrasa*.

The *mufti* was the first Muslim intellectual. He came into existence as early as the need for him arose; that is, as soon as the need arose for authoritative

¹² Berkey, *ibid*, pp. 96-107.

¹³ Cf. Gilliot, "Ulama: In the Arab World", *Encyclopedia of Islam: New Edition*, eds. P.J.Bearman, *et.al.*, vol. X, pp. 802-804; for an evaluation of ulama in a historical perspective taking into consideration different factions among the class see: Iftikhar Zaman and Shahrough Akhavi, "Ulama", *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, ed. John L. Esposito, vol. 4, Oxford University Press, New York-Oxford, 1995, pp. 258-265.

opinions to guide the community after the death of the Prophet. The first *muftis* were the companions of the Prophet, including the first four caliphs whose special designation was “the Rightly Guided Caliphs”.¹⁴

The *ulama* have no formal legislative role, and so their power is exercised through two principle indirect means: influence over public opinion and legitimization (or not) of a ruler. The first allows them to mobilize the Muslim population for or against policies, depending on their own interests or what they hold to be the interests of their society; the second gives them direct access to the ruler and helps him achieve political stability.

The *ulama* support for the ruler has been a common requirement throughout the centuries, regardless of whether it was forced or given freely. Regimes have felt the need for religious legitimacy provided by the *ulama*. Though those men of religion willing to cloak their government with religious legitimacy are disparagingly labeled as the “*ulama* of the sultan”, this affiliation with power does not diminish their position as interpreters of the faith; significantly, their interpretation is perceived as no less valid than that of other *ulama*.

2.4. The Educated Elite and Patronage

Jonathan Berkey analyzes the complex relationships among the *ulama* and their connection with others in the case of medieval Cairo. In his comprehension, patronage can be a contagious game, and the story of patronage in the academic world of the late medieval Cairo is incomplete if it confines itself to the more or less obvious ties that bound the *ulama* to wealthy members of the military elite. In the absence of clear guidelines to regulate the appointment process, the people who were most likely benefited were those well-connected in the world of

¹⁴ George Makdisi, “Institutionalized Learning as a Self-Image of Islam”, *Religion, Law and Learning in Classical Islam*, Variorum 1991.

education: those, that is, whose personalities and reputations shaped the matrix of personal relationships through which knowledge was transmitted, and which in effect defined the academic hierarchy. In other words, much was left to the initiative of the *ulama* themselves, and in particular to the most reputable and powerful among them.

The intervention of the *ulama* went beyond simply making recommendations regarding who was appropriate for a particular teaching post. Scholars sometimes intervened in the appointment process to secure positions for their friends and students. Scholars could also in effect pass on their professorships to their friends and students.

The exercise by professors of this form of patronage-of electively selecting, if not officially installing, their successors- was apparently a matter of routine. Most historical and biographical sources of the period provide precious little information about the employment of individual scholars in particular schools on specific occasions.

The transfer of employment in such a manner from friend to friend or teacher to pupil was a commonplace in the Mamluk Cairo. They may be some evidence of resistance to the practice, and thus to the power and prerogatives of the *ulama*, in the deeds of endowment for several Cairene schools.

Scholars thus took advantage of a system that allowed them in effect to pass on opportunities for academic employment to their friends and pupils. That they felt free to do so may have resulted from another commonplace in the history of appointments to teaching positions in the Mamluk Cairo, and one that concentrated power and wealth in the hands of a few: namely, the tendency of important scholars to hold employment in several different institutions.

The practice of holding appointments to several academic institutions at the same time was not a new one. It was common in Syria, where the spread of madrasas had begun early in the twelfth century, and was not unknown in schools established in Cairo during the Ayyubid period.

The point of all this that the pattern of assignments to paid teaching positions in Cairene schools left much to the discretion and patronage of the educated elite themselves. The creation and endowment of an extensive network of schools providing permanent employment for a significant number of scholars may not have changed the methods or the content of higher education, but it did establish a new form of patronage by which the senior *ulama* could effectively control access to prestigious professorships. If the others held the formal right to make appointments in various schools, the decisive influence was in fact often wielded by the *ulama*. They might intervene to help secure a post for their friends, or leave particular employment to individuals of their own choosing. Individually, they might collect a considerable number of separate academic appointments and select their favorite students as substitutes, for themselves or for their sons. Teaching posts were valuable commodities, and it is no surprise that individuals highly placed in the academic hierarchy sought to control them.¹⁵

The Ottoman Empire absorbed the *ulama* into the ruling class and controlled them tightly-but even so depended on *ulama* support.¹⁶

¹⁵ Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. 1992, pp. 107-119.

¹⁶ Gibreel Gibreel, "The Ulema: Middle Eastern Power Brokers", *The Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2001, Vol. VIII, n. 4.

CHAPTER III

VOLGA-URAL INTELLECTUALS

It is known that Turks were living in the Volga-Ural region from the earliest periods of history. It is clear that Turkic groups as the Huns, Pechenegs, Kipchaks and Bulgars were living in the region beginning from the first centuries.

The Volga-Bulgar Turks were the pioneers of Islamization in the region. They had founded the Volga-Bulgar Khanate between Idil (Itil-Volga) and Culman (Kama) rivers. In 922, Almish (Almus) Khan formally accepted Islam and thus the khanate was the first Turkish-Muslim state. In the thirteenth century with the invasion of Mongol-Tatar groups under the leadership of Chinggis Khan's grandchild Batu Khan, the Volga-Bulgar state was replaced by the new Golden Horde. In the Golden Horde state Islam was accepted in the reign of Berke (1257-1266) a short period after Batu Khan.

By the collapse of the Golden Horde at the end of 14th century and at the beginning of 15th century, a new period began in the region of Kazan, Astrakhan and Kasım khanates. The struggles among the khanates were used by Russia in her favor and these problems paved the way for the inclusion of this region under the Russian hegemony. Especially after the collapse of Kazan in 1552, a long period of Russianization and Christianization had begun.¹⁷

¹⁷ İbrahim Maraş, *Türk Dünyasında Dini Yenileşme*, pp. 17-18.

In order to understand the position of Volga-Ural intellectuals, one must comprehend the strong form of the Mongolian state tradition. This tradition defines the limits of thinking and reveal of thoughts in the area. This tradition both in state politics and in people's mind determines the confrontation of the state by the intellectuals.

3.1. A Glance on Central Asian State Traditions in Their Turco-Mongol Form

In the eastern and western end of Central Asia the Chinggisid legitimacy¹⁸ based on power-sharing –among the members of dynasty- had asserted itself firmly by the 16th century.¹⁹ The power-sharing could be witnessed both politically and economically as symbolized in the appanage system, the *ülüşh* of the princes.²⁰ Here is a survey on state traditions in a comparative perspective:

In the southwest of the Turkic peoples, the Ottomans started out as a dynasty of begs who within half a century began to call themselves khan or more often sultan.....The elite of the Ottoman state did not consist of begs, but was drawn from the conquered peoples in the Balkans or from those unconquered peoples of the Caucasus who were named *kul* men and women in the service of the state. By that token, competition among different contesting groups within the empire was more or less eliminated for some time. But in the 17th-18th century, we also see local notables among freeborn Muslim reasserting themselves as '*ayan* (notables) under the umbrella of the Ottoman Dynasty. As it can be seen from this short

¹⁸ "Chinggis Khan's empire was unique from the standpoint of bringing a separation between political and economic ideology. It was by this separation that redistributive rights benefited the common soldiers; they would acquire booty but no power.

This separation of the spheres of power from wealth or of politics from economics was an innovation that Chinggis Khan brought into system. The separation itself was not a novelty. All sedentary empires had resorted to this course. The novelty was in applying this principle to tribal populations and to redistributive economic practices that usually went hand in hand with a power-sharing ideology. In the steppe, power had been multi-faceted with an ideology of power-sharing, and wealth was to be redistributed as the nomadic lifestyle was not suitable for accumulation. Now, power could be concentrated in one hand, but wealth remained still to be redistributed. Chinggis Khan's power accessible to all". I. Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation*, pp. 143-144.

¹⁹ İsenbike Togan, "Altınordu Çözülürken Kırım'a Giden Yol", *Türk-Rus İlişkilerinde 500. Yıl-1492-1992*, (Ankara, 12-14 Aralık 1992), TTK, Ankara 1999, pp. 39-64.

²⁰ *Idem*, "Patterns of Legitimization of Rule in the History of the Turks", ed. Korkut Ertürk, *Rethinking Central Asia*, Ithaca Press, 1999.

overview the legitimation of the begs as rulers (Central Asia) and the rise of the notables (Ottoman Empire) in the 18th century paved the way for the rank and file in the 20th century.

The developments in the Idil-Ural region, on the other hand, followed a somewhat different path. Here the begs and tribal populations asserted themselves in the 14th century under Chinggisid legitimacy. Components (*khan* and the *beg*), which were in constant contestation in other regions, were in principle brought into harmony in this region.²¹

All of these shows the fact that Central Asia in general and Volga-Ural region in particular took their shape for political and cultural concepts in the context of traditional state. Kemal Karpat defines the traditional state in Central Asia as a status group as Max Weber would define it. A culture is composed of at least two years of values, identities and allegiances; the universal and the local²² or particular. The universal aspect of culture and identity in Islamic societies derived from the faith, while the local and the particular which gave the vitality and dynamism to the universal faith was nourished by a myriad of ethno-linguistic and social peculiarities.

According to Karpat, the state be it Islamic, Russian or communistic played a major role in defining the main group identity of Central Asian people. It was the key institution which allocated position, income and prestige.²³

3.2. Roots of Cultural Formation in Central Asia

Islamic culture and literature in Iran and Central Asia in the early modern times (from the early fifteenth century to the early twentieth) passed through several stages of change and development shared to a considerable extent by

²¹ Isenbike Togan, "Second Wave of Islam and Özbek Khan", *Islamic Civilization in the Volga-Ural Region*, An International Symposium, Kazan, 7-11 June 2001, pp. 3-4.

²² On universalism and localism in Central Asian history see: Isenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation*, pp. 1-16.

²³ Kemal Karpat, "The Old and New Central Asia", *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 12, no. 4, 1993, p. 417.

Islamic regions lying to the west (the Ottoman Empire and the Arab world) and to the east (Muslim India and Chinese Turkistan).

At the beginning of this period, dynastic states were established on the Iranian plateau and the Central Asian steppes by Turkmen warriors in the one, and Chaghatai-Uzbek chieftains in the other-both descendants of the great Turko-Mongol tribal groups who were pushed westward into the Muslim heartlands from the mid-eleventh century on. In both of these states, Muslim cultural traditions, the heritage of centuries of Islamic predominance, prevailed at the level of High Islamic norms and Folk Islamic popular beliefs. In Iran, Shi'ism of the *ithnâ'asharî* persuasion was officially proclaimed as the Islamic religion of the land, while in Central Asia the Sunni persuasion predominated. And whereas the Arabic and Persian languages retained their special place in matters of religion and administration, Chaghatai Turkish was gradually gaining ground as the literary vehicle in the Central Asian region. Also a common Turkish vernacular was the spoken language at court and among the military. A striking example of cultural uniformity in both regions are the Registan Square in Samarqand and the Meydan-e Shah in Isfahan-both containing Islamic architectural marvels that continue to impress and please the modern traveler. Islamic cultural and intellectual activity continued unabated until the end of the eighteenth century with discernable signs of further developments that would argue against unsubstantiated theories of decline and decadence adumbrated by many uniformed modern scholars.²⁴ The coming of the colonialist West towards the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century shook the entire region of Iran and Central Asia to its

²⁴ On these points see: Robert D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundations of Change*, Darwin Press, Princeton N.J., 1996.

foundations as it did the rest of the Islamic world. But in spite of political and other material changes imported from the West, Islam, the religion and culture, came out almost totally unscathed, thanks to a redoubtable group of Muslim scholars (the ulama) who protected the faith and the people from the heavy-handed encroachments of Western civilization.²⁵

The colonial powers in Central Asia and the resistance of ulama are interesting topics for research. The limits of resistance were usually defined by the power. The Volga-Ural ulama under Russian rule presents fruitful points. Before looking in detail to the position of ulama let's take a bird's eye view to Russian state politics in the region.

3.3. Russian State Politics in the Reign of Peter the Great (1689-1725) and Catherine II (1762-1796)

Peter I had been in a close relation with the "Germans" (Europeans) and passed the time with them during his childhood. Thanks to that, he found the opportunity meet their culture life styles of Europeans in the earlier ages. He learned the principles of the European type of military profession, fortification and maritime knowledge, the bases of mathematics and natural sciences from Germans, appreciated the importance of all these.

The church organization had also been shaped in a special manner. When Patriarch Adrian died in 1700, no new patriarch had been elected. The metropolitan of Ryazan, Stefan Yavorski, was appointed as an ephemeral patriarch. Peter approved of not electing any patriarch because of the hostile conducts of the chief people of the church in response to the renewals (shaving off

²⁵ Michel M. Mazzoui, "Islamic culture and literature in Iran and Central Asia in the early modern period", *Turko-Persia in Historical Perspective*, ed. Robert L. Canfield, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 100-101.

and clothing in a European style) of Peter. Along with the Stefan Yavorski's death in 1721, a pious foundation was established under the title of "Holy Synod" and an "ober-prukoror" was appointed as the leader of this branch who is not one of the spirituals. By this application the patriarchate that came into force in 1589 was dissolved. In 1724, Peter restricted the justices of the "monks" with a command. According to the Tsar, the church should have been under the direction and service of the state. By the establishment of "Synod", the Russian church was an agency that completely depended on Peter.

For the "Europeanization" of Russia, Peter wished to found schools of European style in Russia. Nevertheless, he only comprehended the technical aggregation of the Europeans, but not the culture and mentality. A maritime school was established in Moscow in 1700. Academies of "Engineer and Cannoneer" was constructed in Petersburg. "Digit Schools" were founded in the provinces basically based on mathematics; "Quarter Schools" were established in the villages under the surveillance of the churches. He dispatched so many "dvoryan" young people to the European centers in order to learn the European techniques in a broader context. So many technical works were translated into Russian.

Peter created a new Russia that was completely different from Muscovite mentality²⁶: He "Europeanized" Russia.

Peter acted in a fearless manner during his reign. The richness of Russia with regard to people and natural wealth allowed him to do so and also no feeling of endurance to the personality of the Tsar was of great importance.

Nevertheless, the politics of Catherine II followed a somewhat different path. Her politics were relatively more self-possessed according to Peter the Great.

²⁶ On Muscovite state mentality see: Donald Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols: Cross-cultural influences on the steppe frontier, 1304-1589*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Catherine II believed in the importance of centralization and a strong monarchic administration for the future of Russia. Her first applications were for the purpose of this aim. In the reign of Catherine, the Pugachev revolt (1773-1775) was a very important domestic mutiny. On account of the wars, the taxes were increased, the situation of the peasants were deteriorated because of the unconstrained behaviours of dvoryans. Then, the dissatisfaction of the people had been proliferated against state. The leader of the revolt was a Kossak named Pugachev. The Kossaks and Bashkorts in the Volga-Ural region participated in the group and raised the severity of the revolt. The revolt came to an end with various effects. The government of Catherine relented that they had taken measures against the Muslims in Russia to gain the approval and support of these groups; moreover allowed the foundation of mosques and madrasas that were obstructed previously.

Reaching consensus with the ruling class, which Muscovite rulers practiced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, continued to be the “secret” of successful rulers in eighteenth-century Russia, especially during the reigns of Elizabeth and Catherine II, so that decisions could be made and actions taken. Catherine herself described what happened when consensus could not be reached in response to a foreign policy initiative during the reign of Elizabeth: “In the year 1744...The German Empire offered the Empress Elizabeth the guarantee of the laws, liberties, and privileges of that Empire. Russia did not respond to this proposition because the Russian court was divided and neither side had a preponderant influence; sometimes the advice of one was followed, sometimes that the other, by fits and starts, according to who was more or less in favor on any particular day.

Since neither side could gain an upper hand, no decision could be reached and no action was taken. Catherine described this as a “missed opportunity”, but she likewise could not take the action during her reign when the court was similarly divided. The most prominent example of divisions within the ruling class stemming action was in regard to the Legislative Commission of 1767, for which Catherine wrote extensive, detailed *Instructions*. Despite 203 sessions, as well the setting up and meeting of nineteen special committees to deal with particular issues, and the transfer of its venue from Moscow to St. Petersburg, the Commission was disbanded after a year and a half without any practical results being implemented. Catherine was able to draw upon the materials gathered and draft proposals for subsequent individual reform measures, such as her guberniia and urban administrative reorganization, and her Charter to the Nobility of 1785, but its immediate legislative effect was inconsequential.

Catherine did introduce gradual reforms, most notably in administration, education, especially for women, and in granting the right of private property to the members of the ruling class. But when juxtaposed to the sweeping administrative changes Peter I had introduced, her measures seem timid in comparison.

When then was she apparently so easily thwarted by the nobility from making sweeping changes? To answer that question, we can look at her reign in the context of her having three potential political liabilities: she was German and raised Protestant (although she converted to Orthodoxy when she came to Russia in her teens); and she was a usurper. After the overthrow and death of her husband Peter III (who ruled for six months in 1762), their son Paul could have been made ruler by the principle of primogeniture, perhaps under a regent, who might have

been Catherine herself. Yet, Catherine was made ruler in her own right. At the time, to be sure, primogeniture was not the official principle of succession. Rulers, as defined in the decree of 1722, had the right to choose their successors. And to honor that stipulation, the captured Peter III was prevailed upon to abdicate and acknowledge her as ruler. Peter, however, did not formally designate Catherine as his successor and would certainly not have chosen her on his own. The actor was a small group within the ruling class. But they did so with the consent of the ruling class as a whole. Those in the ruling class who were opposed to Catherine could always threaten to establish the “rightful” succession. And we know of various conspiracies designed to restore the imprisoned Ivan VI (until he was killed) or to enthrone Paul. But these plots were isolated and did not amount to much within the court, owing in great part to Catherine’s own political skills. What was of more concern was the Pugachev Rebellion of 1773-1774 with the intention of restoring “Peter III” to the throne. Yet, Catherine survived Pugachev, as well as a dozen other pretenders, many of whom were the Old Believers, claiming to be her husband Peter. She had to be extremely careful, satisfying each court faction or family grouping in turn, always being sure to maintain a consensus. Her ability to do so neutralized her political liabilities.

Those who question why Catherine did not push reforms forcefully against the nobility, as Peter the Great was supposed to have done, can find their answer in the fact that Peter did not have Catherine’s political liabilities and thus, had more elbowroom for his activities. He was able to pursue measures forcefully against particular individuals within the ruling class but only because he maintained the support of the ruling class in general, most likely because there was no feasible alternative at the time.

Likewise, in the sixteenth-century Muscovy, Ivan IV, because of his own outrageous behaviour, would not have lasted long if he had not generally had the consensus approval of both the boyars as a group and the middle servitudes. And as was the case throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the process of changing status of powerful families was a slow one. They provided the continuity between regimes. Most of the same families remained in power at the end of Ivan's reign as had been in power at the beginning. Nonetheless, we know of various plots to get rid of Ivan IV. Besides the attempts to put his cousin Vladimir Andreevich Staritskii on the throne, some Muscovites were involved in a plan, according to Daniel Prinz, envoy of the Holy Roman Emperor, to replace Ivan IV with the Crimean khan. At the end, however, the lack of a feasible alternative, the sixteenth-century equivalent of a Catherine II or Alexander I (1801-1825), had probably saved Ivan IV from a fate similar to that of Peter III or Paul.

The patronage networks also operated in an informal manner rather than through any formal government-sponsored procedure. Before attempting the coup against Peter III in 1762, Catherine needed to be sure that she had support for herself among the ruling class. In so doing, she was careful not to tip her hand to the wrong people, even otherwise trusted friends.²⁷

The policy of "spreading science" of Peter in Russia yielded the first results in the reign of Elizaveta (1741-1761). For instance, a villager from Archangelsk region, Lomonosov came to Muscovy in his old age, began his education, then left to Germany to learn the exact sciences. When he returned to Russia, he was

²⁷ Donald Ostrowski, "The Façade of Legitimacy: Exchange of Power and Authority in Early Modern Russia", *Comparative Studies in Society and History: An International Quarterly*, 44: 3, July 2002, passim.

appointed to the Academy of Sciences and was promoted to professorship. Lomonosov was not only the first Russian scholar who engaged in chemistry, physics and natural sciences but also studied Russian grammar and history as an advance courier in Russia. The pioneer litterateurs also appeared in the reign of Elizaveta: Tred'yakovski and Sumarokov. The growth of Academy of Sciences (1747) and establishment of a university in Moscow (1755) were substantial scientific acts in this period.

Catherine was in a close relation with the ideological trends as a well-educated ruler. Her sovereignty paved the way for the scientific development. The empress wrote literary works and even published journals. The first representatives of classical Russian literature as Dervajin and Fonvizin appeared in this period. One of the preeminent personalities in this age was litterateur Novikov who published the old Russian historical documents as twenty volumes opened the first large bookstores in Russia. The developments in the age Catherine paved the way for the Russian cultural life to a great degree.²⁸

3.4. The Volga-Ural Ulama under Russian Rule

R. Stephen Humphreys has observed that defining the ulama is not an easy matter. He writes “they are neither a socio-economic class, nor a clearly defined status group, nor a hereditary caste, nor a legal estate, nor a profession”. “Yet”, he continues, “they seem to cut across every possible classification of groups within Islamic society-the one group which in fact makes it ‘Islamic’ rather than

²⁸ Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi: Başlangıçtan 1917'ye Kadar*, 2nd ed., TTK, Ankara 1987, pp. 247-296. The policies of Peter the Great and Catherine II are also partly evaluated in: Allen J. Frank, “Varieties of Islamization in Inner Asia: The case of the Baraba Tatars, 1740-1917”, *Cahiers du Monde russe*, 41: 2-3, April-September 2000, pp. 245-262.

something else...”²⁹ Humphreys’ description applies equally well to the Volga-Ural ulama, even though the most prominent peculiarity of this group is that it survived and developed without the benefits of living in a Muslim state. Rather, it suffered the hardship of inhabiting a Christian state that for the most part, until the end of the eighteenth century, refused to formally cede its authority in its traditional prerogatives, namely law. In addition, because the ulama were easily identified by an often hostile Russian state as the representatives of “Islam”, they were usually the first targets of anti-Islamic campaigns led by Russian Orthodox missionaries or military leaders.

Widely, because of this kind policies, our knowledge of the Volga-Ural ulama in the period between the Russian conquest of Kazan in 1552 and the accession of Catherine II in 1762 is severely restricted by two features of the region’s history. The first is that after the Russian conquest, the *shari’a* (Islamic law) was replaced for official purposes by the legal codes of the Russian state, thereby depriving the ulama of officially carrying out one of its primary functions in any Islamic society, the interpretation and administration of the *shari’a*. The second feature limiting our knowledge of this group and its activities is the fact that until the middle of the eighteenth century the Russian authorities did not recognize the ulama as any sort of corporate entity, and as a result references to the ulama as such seldom appear in Russian administrative documents. Compared to the ulama, we possess substantially more information on recognized social groups such as Tatar nobles (*mirzâs*), the “service” Tatars (*sluzhilye tatar*), the Bashkir târkhâns and bâys, as well as more humble groups, such as the “Iasak Tatars”

²⁹ R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Enquiry*, Princeton 1991, p. 187.

(*iasashnye liudi*), Teptiars, “Tatars of the Yurt” (*iurtovye tatory*) and Bashkir nomads.

We possess virtually no information on the Volga-Ural ulama for the first hundred years after the Russian conquest of Kazan. Although we can assume that the destruction of mosques and madrasas, the expulsion of the Muslim population from the city itself, and the loss of official recognition following the conquest must have been severe blows to the ulama, our data on this group are so minimal that any speculation on its membership or activities during this period are conjectural. Our earliest solid information on the Volga-Ural ulama dates from the second half of the eighteenth century. The names and works of several seventeenth-century Muslim scholars appear in the biographical dictionaries of Shihabaddin Marjani and Rızaeddin b. Fahreddin.

We have other sources for the political activities of the ulama, primarily in the trans-Kama region, that is, in Bashkiria. Members of the ulama took part in the two major Bashkort uprisings of the seventeenth century. The first of these was the uprising of 1662-1664, in which the Bashkort tribal “aristocracy” sought, among other things, to form a Bashkort khanate headed by a Chingisid. According to Russian sources, the Bashkorts dispatched a member of the ulama named Kara-Duvani Bakaik Abyz (according to the Russian spelling) to the Crimea to get assistance from the Crimean khan. One of the negotiators for the insurgent Bashkorts was another *âbiz*³⁰ named Aktai Dosmukhammedov (again, according to the Russian spelling). In the other major Bashkort uprising of the seventeenth century, that lasted from 1681 to 1683, the role of the ulama was even more

³⁰ The term *âbiz* was a common title in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for a member of the ulama, and indicated a degree of education. It is probably derived from the Arabic term *hâfiz*, indicating someone who had memorized the Qur’ân.

conspicuous. This revolt was evidently undertaken in response to the imposition of a policy of forcible Christianization of local Muslims, and became a holy war (ghazwa) against the Russians. Little is known about the leader of the rebellion. In Russian sources he appears as Seit Sadurov or Seit Safirko, and in Islamic sources as Seyyid Ja‘fâr. It is likely that he himself was a member of the ulama since in the *Daftar-i Chingîz Nâma* he is described not only as a khan, but also as a Sufi, since he is accorded the epithet *sâhib-i karâmat* (saint) and is said to have “summoned” (*ûndâdî*) the Bashkorts to Islam. The ulama were also active in spreading the revolt. For example, one member of the ulama named Ilmetaika (according to the Russian spelling) was captured in 1682 in the village of Karakulino. He was charged being an instigator and sent to Ufa for punishment.

One of the few specific mentions of the Kazan ulama is to be found in Stenka Razin’s appeal, written in 1670, to the Muslims of that city asking their support for his rebellion. Razin’s letter not only confirms the existence of these figures, but also provides data on their titlature and functions. In the letter Razin appeals to all the Muslims of Kazan, including the “chief *abyzes*” who maintain the mosques; Razin also appeals to those Muslim administering charitable acts, such as caring for orphans and widows, and he mentions two members of the ulama by name, Ikshei Munla (i.e. mullâ) and Mamai Munla.

Over the course of the first half of the eighteenth century we begin to acquire a clearer picture of the position of the ulama in Volga-Ural Islamic society, and a more cooperative relationship between the Russian authorities and the ulama begins to emerge. At the same time, the first half of the eighteenth century was a period in which the Russian authorities, in particular the Church authorities,

carried out very destructive and repressive campaigns against the Volga-Ural Islamic establishment, such as it was.

The Russian administration in Bashkiria was essentially colonial and sought to profitably administer and control the local Muslims, rather than assimilate them; Russian-Muslim relations in that part of the empire were more complex and somewhat more cooperative than in the Middle Volga region.

Nevertheless, this more flexible attitude toward Islam was only relative, and the Russian authorities in Bashkiria still perceived the ulama as a potential threat to order, and introduced policies clearly hostile to Muslims and their institutions. In fact, according to D. Azamatov, the revolt of 1705-1711 was sparked by the imposition of new taxes not only on the Bashkorts' mosques, but on the members of the ulama itself. In fact during this revolt numerous Bashkort members of the ulama were active in its promotion, as a result, members of this group were often singled out by Russian punitive expeditions for humiliating and vindictive punishments. Nevertheless, until the 1730's there was no systematic and planned repression of Islam in Bashkiria. In fact, one of the most famous and influential madrasas in the Volga-Ural region was founded around 1720 in the Bashkort village of Sterlibashevo, and the first mudarris there was a certain Husayn b. Mullâ 'Abd ar-Rahman, the father of the first mufti appointed by Catherine II in 1788, Muhammad-Jân b. al-Husayn (i.e. Guseniöv).

In the middle of 1730's the State Councilor Ivan Kirillov, who was in charge of the Orenburg expedition, began to conceive of methods for regulating the ulama and establishing more control over this influential group. Kirillov's policies were continued by his successors in Bashkiria, and merit attention as they set the foundations for official cooperation between the Russian authorities and the

ulama; and it is likely these policies served as a model for the more permanent and consequential policies toward Islam instituted by Catherine II.

Despite their lack of official recognition, it appears that the ulama held considerable authority in the application of both property and criminal law within their communities before the 1730's throughout the Volga-Ural region, and that this authority was increased in Bashkiria with the migration of Muslims from the Middle Volga, where the tradition of sharia courts was more developed, despite being unrecognized by the Russian state, and Kirillov himself mentions the existence of sharia courts among the Bashkorts. Nevertheless, Kirillov felt that the ulama posed a great threat to the state because they were active in converting non-Muslims, such as Mordvins, Chuvash and Udmurts, to Islam, and he advocated exiling members of the ulama from Bashkiria, and even from the Kazan region, at the slightest pretext.

Akhûns were required to report all disloyal acts to the Russian authorities³¹ and Muslims in general were forbidden to convert non-Muslims to Islam, or build new mosques and madrasas without proper authorization. Finally, any person seeking to fill the position of a deceased *âkhûn* was obliged to present a petition testifying to his loyalty.

The regulation of the highest level of Muslim jurists in Bashkiria, and the formal recognition of the ulama and their integration into the Russian

³¹ It is possible to observe the similar situation in Ottoman case. Ottoman cities always had separate Muslim, Christian and Jewish quarters, the gypsies too having their own district, regardless of their religion. In each Muslim ward there was an imam, as religious head of community, and a *kethüdâ* as its secular representative. Priests and rabbis performed the same functions in non-Muslim quarters representing the community before the government: Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, 3rd ed., Phoenix, London 1997, p. 151. For a detailed analysis of the function and authority of an imam in a quarter and in Ottoman bureaucracy see: Kemal Beydilli, *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar ve Bir İmamın Günlüğü*, Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı, İstanbul 2001, pp. 1-76. For the social formation of Ottoman city and duties of various people in this form see: Fatma Acun, "A Portrait of the Ottoman Cities", *The Muslim World*, 92: 3&4, Fall 2002, pp. 255-285.

administrative system did not resolve the fundamental conflicts, based on taxation and land holding issues, between the Russian government and the majority of the ulama under Russian rule. In fact, Kirillov's reforms were closely followed by the Bashkort rebellion of 1736-1737, and members of the ulama played a major role in this uprising. Two such figures, Abyz Bepenia and Yoldash Mullâ (according to the Russian spelling) were the rebellion's chief organizers and political leaders. At the same time, some members of the ulama supported the Russians.

In the 1740's the Russian imperial authorities founded the Department of New Converts' Affairs (*Kontora Novokreshchenykh Del*) which embarked on a large scale campaign of Christianization in the Volga-Ural region. The campaign sought not only to convert Muslims and "animists" (*iazychniki*) to Christianity, but also to weaken the influence of Islam in general. The Batırshāh uprising of 1755 was the most important single event that led to the reevaluation of the Russian authorities' relationship with the ulama, and at least one historian has ventured to characterize the rebellion as the turning point in the relationship between the Russian authorities and their Muslim subjects.

Despite the rapid suppression of the revolt and the imprisonment of Batırshāh in Shlissel'burg Fortress, the Russian imperial authorities began to relax their suppression of Islamic institutions and the ulama. In 1756 Muslim villages in Kazan, Simbirsk, Voronezh, Astrakhan and Nizhnii Novgorod provinces with at least two hundred male inhabitants were allowed to build mosques, regardless of whether a previously existing mosque had been torn down. Upon her accession to the throne in 1762 Catherine II continued and accelerated the policy of cooperation with Muslims, that had begun after the suppression of the Batırshāh uprising in

1755, and one of Catherine's earliest acts was to abolish the "Department of New Converts' Affairs".

Relations between Catherine II and the Volga-Ural ulama were further improved when, during a visit to Kazan in 1767, she permitted local Muslims to build a stone mosque; and in 1773 Catherine issued her "Toleration of All Faiths" edict. As Alan Fisher noted, the purpose of the edict was mainly to institute a policy of toleration toward Islam; the most important result of this edict for the ulama was that it allowed the virtually unimpeded construction of mosques, stipulating that Church authorities could not interfere in Muslim religious matters or in mosque construction.³²

During the Pugachev rebellion of 1773-1775 many Muslims throughout the Volga-Ural region joined the insurgents, however, the ulama were in fact divided, and its members appear in the sources both supporting and opposing Pugachev. To be sure, many members of the ulama were active supporters of Pugachev, as were thousands of Muslim peasants and nomads. At the same time, many members of the ulama supported the Russian authorities.

³² Alan Fisher, "Enlightened Despotism and Islam under Catherine II", *Slavic Review*, XXVII, 1967, pp. 545-546.

In the Ottoman case, reforms which the state itself enacted, particularly through the two great reform decrees of 1839 and 1856, also made a fundamental difference, and they did so in a more positive sense.

To be more precise, the first of these documents, the Gülhane Decree of 1839, initiated the process of egalitarian reform but in terms which were not well enough elaborated to have material impact on government service. Including such specifics as guarantees for life, honor, and property, a demand for regularization of tax-assessment and military conscription, and a promise of due process of law, this decree added a general provision that "the Muslim and non-Muslims subjects of our lofty Sultanate shall, without exception, enjoy our imperial concessions." Some practical improvements followed the promulgation of this decree, but they do not appear to have included any dramatic change in the access of non-Muslims to official position, unless we so interpret the inclusion of representatives of the non-Muslim communities in the local administrative councils set up in 1840.

Carter V. Findley, "The Acid Test of Ottomanism: The Acceptance of non-Muslims in the Late Ottoman Bureaucracy", *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 341-342.

The Pugachev rebellion undoubtedly accelerated the ongoing policy to integrate the ulama into Russian imperial system, and this policy culminated in the far-reaching and consequential reforms of the 1780s, which were implemented by Baron Osip Igel'strom, whom Catherine appointed as Govenner General of Simbirsk and Ufa Provinces in 1785. Although Igel'strom is commonly given credit for founding the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Administration, the administrative structure for regulating the ulama was to some degree already in place in Bashkiria. As we have seen, the earliest attempts to regulate the ulama occurred during the rule of Kirillov in the 1730's. In fact, close cooperation between the Russian authorities and the Volga-Ural ulama began already before the governorship of Igel'strom, especially in Russia's relations with the Kazakhs. The Volga-Ural ulama had already been active over the course of the eighteenth century as intelligence sources and diplomats for the Russian authorities, and members of the ulama who were loyal to Russia formed a substantial part of the court of the various Kazakh khans.

The most enduring and consequential of Igel'strom's acts was without question the founding of the Orenburg Muslim Spritual Assembly (*Orenburgskoe Magometanskoe Dukhovnoe Sobranie*) in 1788.

The Muslims in the Volga-Ural region (Kazan Tatars, Bashkorts, Kazakhs) joined with Pugachev as a group against the government of Catherine. The main reason, of course, was the passionate pressure on Muslims of former rulers. Taking into consideration this process, Catherine constructed an institution for the religious needs of Muslims in 1788. The center of the institution was Ufa, but it was named as "Orenburg Muslim Spritual Assembly".³³ The first appointed *mufit* was

³³ For detailed information on this foundation see: Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte*, pp. 50-79.

Muhammed-jan Huseyn who was a trustworthy man for Russian government.³⁴ It was allowed the establish big mosques in some cities. By these policies, Catherine assumed to acquire adherents among Muslims.³⁵

In fact, the founding of the Spritual Assembly had a number of important and immediate consequences for the ulama, and its creation represented a radical departure from the previous administration of the ulama. Before 1788, there was regulation of the ulama by the Russian state except in the frontier areas of Baskiria. However, Catherine decreed that the new Muslim administration suggested by Igel'strom include not only the Muslims of Bashkiria, but also the Muslims of the Russian empire, except for the Crimea, which was to have its own Muslim administration.

From the ulama's perspective, by supporting the Spritual Assembly, the Russian authorities took upon themselves the traditional role of the Islamic state: the enforcement of the sharia. The second important consequence was that the ulama recognized by the Assembly, which must have been of a sizable proportion, were now formally part of the Russian state administrative structure, and the middle and upper levels, of the ulama, the muftî, the *qâdîs*, and the *âkhûns*, began

³⁴ After conquering of Istanbul, Fatih appointed a patriarch for the church in Istanbul. He was a person who is a reliable one for the government. His mission was to console the Christians and also obey to the government. The application of Catherine reminded that appointment: Halil Inalcik, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", *Essays in Ottoman History*, Eren Yayincilik, Istanbul 1998, pp. 195-214.

³⁵ In the Ottoman case, centralization, unified administration, and the reforms including the concept of citizenship, created a set of new relations between the individual subjects and the government and the *millets*. The new relations implied that the loyalty and the allegiance of the subjects belonged to the government which, in turn, would secure them rights, freedoms and services by conforming as much as possible to the subjects' cultural, political and ideological expectations. Obviously the new relationship called for a new organizational framework which ideally would have taken into consideration the corporate traditions of organization, that the millet system, under which the Ottoman peoples had lived for centuries. Kemal H. Karpat, "Millets and Nationality: The Roots of the Incongruity of Nation and State in the Post-Ottoman Era", *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, eds. B.Braude and B.Lewis, Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc., New York-London 1982, p. 166

receiving salaries from the Russian state. As a result, the ulama and the Russian authorities became partners in the administration of Muslim communities, in general well-being.³⁶ These two consequences, the formal definition of communal boundaries on the basis of Islamic legal jurisdictions and the partial integration of the ulama into the Russian administrative apparatus, were to have a profound influence on the ulamas perceptions of its communities and itself, and that “Bulgharist” historiography was to become an important method for articulating and spreading these new ideas.

One of these works was *Tawârîkh-i Bulghariyya*. The most fruitful and convincing discussion of the dating of a work called *Tawârîkh-i Bulghariyya* appears in Michael Kemper’s book. In discussing the khâtima, and the account of the dramatized religious debates between Timur and İstanbul ulama, Kemper has noted that the passages reflect a nineteenth century Volga-Ural interpretation of Ottoman Sufi pietism characteristic of the seventeenth-century Turkish Kadizadeli movement. However, in examining the debates recounted in the khâtima between Timur and the Bulghar ulama, Kemper has been able to pinpoint the dating of at least the khâtima to between 1818 and 1826. Kemper has keenly noted that in these debates, the character of Timur essentially defends some of the theological positions held by the Tatar theologian Abdunnasir Qursavi, but at the same time “reconciling” them with arguments made by one of Qursavi’s opponents, Abdurrahim al-Ûtîz Îmânî. Kemper notes that in effect in these sections the compiler of the *Tawârîkh-i Bulghâriyya* is harmonizing positions that at the

³⁶ The Ottoman ulama was also as a civil servant on the occasion of receiving their salaries from the state treasury. In this way, they were under state control strictly. For detailed analysis on state-ulama relationship see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, pp. 106-135. See also: Hans Georg Majer, “Sozialgeschichtliche Probleme um Ulema und Derwische im Osmanischen Reich, *I. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi*, İstanbul 1979.

beginning of the century had been the cause of very heated debate. As a result, he concludes that the khâtima was written after the intellectual atmosphere concerning these questions had cooled down, and probably after Qursavi's death in 1812.

One of the most curious aspects of the *Tawârikh-i Bulghariyya* are the repeated references to the great Persian theologian Sa'd ad-Dîn Taftâzânî (1322-1389), who did in fact associate with Timur. The compiler of the *Tawârikh-i Bulghariyya* tells us in the introduction that he studied in Taftâzânî's madrasa as one of his students. Taftâzânî also figures prominently in the khâtima. First, 'Alî Qôshchî and his friend Dâwud Efendî, who figure in the account of the conquest of İstanbul, are described as having studied together with Taftâzânî in Daghestan. After conquering İstanbul, Timur goes to Daghestan expressly to find Taftâzânî and become his pupil. Timur finds Taftâzânî in the village of Endirây, a large Kumyk village located in northern Daghestan where apparently many scholars from the Volga-Ural region studied at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Taftâzânî accompanies Timur to Bulghar and Russia, advising him on religious matters. The khâtima ends with a brief biographical sketch of Taftâzânî, and also mentions a number of his works, including the *Sharh al-'Aqâ'id an-Nasâfiyya*, as well as a number of commentaries on Taftâzânî's work. Dzhamaliutdin Validov, a specialist on Tatar literature, noted that the *Sharh al-'Aqâ'id an-Nasâfiyya* was an important textbook in Volga-Ural madrasas. Michael Kemper's discussion of the khâtima has shed considerable light on the otherwise puzzling presence of Taftâzânî. Kemper argues that the high esteem accorded Taftâzânî in the work in general, and the khâtima in particular reflects in part the

compiler's critique of, or at least ambivalence toward those positions of current scholars on various theological issues that brought Taftâzânî's works on bear.

3.5. Reformism and Traditionalism

Reformist movements in the Muslim communities of Russia and Central Asia, from the late 18th century, it is also noteworthy to analyze the question of the social and political cleavage between what is commonly called "reformism" (or "jadidism"), on one side, and "traditionalism" (or "qadimism") on the other one. From the late 1920s until the last years of perestroika, "jadidism" was indeed considered as intrinsically bad, as the ideology of the Muslim bourgeoisies of the empire (which were accused indeed of nationalism, and pan-Turkism, that anti-Russian mood). As for "qadimism", it represented the worst possible tendency: a sloughish mixture of feudalism, obscurantism and religious fanaticism.

As a matter of fact that, what we call "jadidism" and "qadimism" have both a common origin, which is the community reconstruction of the late 18th-early 19th centuries. In Russia, this renewal was focused on the recreation of local communities (*mahalla*), when the first imperial authorizations were given for the rebuilding of mosques in the 1760s, after half a century of harsh oppression of the Islamic faith.

In the last decade of Peter the Great's reign, after 1713, the establishment of the conscription enabled the Russian army and the State to get rid of the Muslim aristocracy of their "Tatar" and "Bashkort" cavalries. From this moment on, the Muslim populations of the Volga-Urals were submitted to campaigns of christianization, whose severity was to culminate in the archdiocese of Kazan

during the 1740s. In the same time, the Russian colonization of the agrarian lands occupied by Muslim populations intensified. These populations reacted to such phenomena with endemic uprisings. Among them, Pugachev's revolt brought up a strong threat for the stability of the Russian State. In spite of the fact that the degree of Muslim participation in this movement remains an open question among historians, the revolt seems to have exerted a deep effect in the shaping of a new community consciousness among the Muslims of Russia.

Indeed, the *muftiyat* created in 1782, and the Spritual Assembly created in 1788 by Catherine II were supposed to unite the Sunni Muslim community of the whole growing empire under new institutions. The existence of such a unique spritual and juridical authority would rapidly allow the Volga Urals' Muslims of the Russian Empire. So many conflicts arose soon inside the community for the control of the institution. Endless debates about the utility and the role of the muftiyat resulted in the breakup of antagonistic factions. The opposition of the latter is one of those, which lie under the early 20th century ideological cleavage between the "jadids" and the "qadimists".

After all, in the social and intellectual history of Muslim communities in the Russian Empire, whether Volgian, Siberian or Turkistanian, the factors of consolidation of a communal identity seem to have prevailed for a long time on those of internal cleavage. Such a phenomenon can be explained by the pressure of Russian legislation and policy, and by the role of institutions like the muftiyat, or the Spritual Assembly. Another factor is the fact that the Islamic renaissance initiated in Russia and southernmost Central Asia in the mid-18th century has its origins in the renewal of Islamic ethics, which touched then all Central Asia, from the bazaar cities of northern Afghanistan to the Muslim shrines of Nijni-Novgorod.

The conflict between “reformists” and “traditionalists”, as exposed in the early 20th century Muslim press of Russia and Central Asia, seems to lie mainly on divergent interpretations of the functions and goals of the social and cultural institutions of the Muslim community. Another aspect of the same debate in the permanent polemics, between “reformists” and “traditionalists” about the role of local traditional communities, the quarters (*mahalla*) or the solidarity networks placed under the authority of an *îshân*, a community leader who took his prestige from his filiations from some holy figure. Such questions are of a great importance for an understanding of the sociological cutting-off and ideological cleavage, which were shaped between the “jadids” and the “qadimists”.³⁷

Central Asian intellectuals, after mid-nineteenth century, from Turgay to Andijan, were torn by a recognition of the need to acquire techniques and practical, modern information from Russians, while at the same time passionately wishing to be rid of the Christian influence and alien political domination which seemingly came hand-in-hand with these acquisitions.³⁸

The intellectuals were in an identity problem. They were under domination for long years. Maybe this dominative politics accelerated the intellectual awakening in the region. As İsenbike Togan pointed out intellectual awakening in the Volga-Ural emerged in earlier times than other places:

³⁷ Stephane A. Dudoignon, “*Qadîmiya* as a Historiographical Category: The Question of Social and Ideological Cleavages Between “Reformists” and “Traditionalist” among the Muslims of Russia and Central Asia in the Early 20th Century”, *Studies in Honour of Osman Khoja*, pp. 159-178; also see *idem*: “Djadidisme, Mirasisme, Islamisme”, *Cahiers du Monde russe*, 37: 1-2, January-June 1996, pp. 13-40.

³⁸ Edward Allworth, “The Changing Intellectual and Literary Community”, *Central Asia: A Century of Russian Rule*, ed. E. Allworth, Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1967, p. 362; for a general framework of Russian attitudes toward Central Asians see: *idem*, “Commensals or Parasites? Russians, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Other in Central Asia”, *Central Asia in Historical Perspective*, ed. Beatrice F. Manz, Westview Press, Boulder/San Francisco/Oxford, 1994, pp. 185-201.

Identity was increasingly asserted in intellectual forms rather than political forms. As a result, there was an earlier emergence of intellectual awakening in the Volga-Ural region than in Central Asia and Anatolia. Initially intellectual networks within the Islamic world, and subsequently (19th-20th centuries) interaction with the Russian intelligentsia were also further factors that contributed to this awakening.

Both merchants and mullahs who were the intellectuals in the Idil-Ural region were going to bring about changes in their own region as well as to influence and sometimes to dominate other regions.³⁹

3.6. Ulama as Reflected in the Historical Sources

The development of ‘Bulgharist’ historiography in the late nineteenth century among Volga-Ural Muslim was largely a result of historical processes experienced by the most educated segment of that society, the ulama. In Islamic societies the ulama, above all else, is concerned with the administration and interpretation of Islamic law.⁴⁰

Despite the paucity of sources mentioning the Volga-Ural ulama in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an examination of this group is crucial for understanding the history of Volga-Ural Muslim society and its historiography, since the continuation of the society’s Islamic traditions and its self-definition ultimately came to be the responsibility of the ulama.⁴¹

The emergence of shrine catalogues, and the more extensive genre of Bulghar-centred historiography, appears to reflect a re-evaluation of communal Islamic identity that was connected with the creation of the Spiritual Administration. Before its creation, despite a common religious bond, there was

³⁹ İ. Togan, “Islam in a Changing Society”, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Allen J. Frank, *Islamic Historiography and ‘Bulghar Identity among the Tatars and Bashkirs of Russia*, Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1998, p. 21. Another book of the same author entitled, *Muslim Religious Institutions in Imperial Russia: The Islamic World of Novouzenh District and the Kazakh Inner Horde*, 1780-1910, Leiden: E.J.Brill, 2001 deals with the village ulema in rural Russia.

⁴¹ Ibid.

no readily evident geographic or historical bond between the desperate Muslim communities that resulted in a regional sense of community. Politically, of course, Volga-Ural Muslims shared the experience of being under Russian domination, but in reality Russian administrative practices effectively broke the bonds between Muslim communities, in so far as they would identify themselves according to their corporate relationship to the Russian state. Thus, to protect privileges bestowed on them by the Russian authorities, Muslim communities, would become exclusive, and in their historical legends, genealogies, and other documents the legal relationship with Russia took on paramount importance.

In all likelihood, by the end of the eighteenth century the newly united Volga-Ural ulama would have considered this sort of communal fragmentation as undesirable, and it is precisely at this time that we see a new sort of historiography appear that stresses, through the inclusion of shrine catalogues, the historical, religious, and geographic basis of a unified regional identity for Volga-Ural Muslims.⁴²

As for the Bulgarian lands, the establishment of Muslim educational centers as a counterweight to the Christian ones was aimed at creating a balance and even overcoming the influence of the latter which not only maintained the spirit of the Bulgarians but could even incite them to revolt against the sultan. The

⁴² Allen J. Frank, "Islamic Shrine Catalogues and Communal Geography in the Volga-Ural Region: 1788-1917", *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 7:2 (1996), pp. 267-268; for a study dealing with a Muslim scholar in Astrakhan named Jahanshah an-Nizhgharuti and his evaluation of the 1905 Revolution from the perspective of a Sufi see: *Idem*, "Muslim Sacred History and the 1905 Revolution in a Sufi History of Astrakhan", *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, ed. Devin DeWeese, Indiana Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Bloomington 2001, pp. 297-317. For the problems of studying Sufism in Central Asia and some methodological issues see: Devin DeWeese, "The *Tadhkira-i Bughrā-khān* and the 'Uvaysī' Sufis of Central Asia: Notes in Review of *Imaginary Muslims*", *Central Asiatic Journal*, 40: 1, 1996, pp. 87-127.

presence of these educational centers probably led to attracting new converts to Islam and the expansion of the Muslim communities.

Additionally, one should also mention the fact that another conflict blossomed on the territory of Central Northern Bulgaria in the 17th century, in the regions of Lovec, Tarnovo and Nikopol. The conflict arose as a result of the desire of the Catholic missionaries, the Orthodox high clergy (particularly the metropolitans of Tarnovo) and the representatives of the Ottoman authority to attract the population of the Paulician villages to their respective religious communities. The parties involved in this struggle used not only the methods of persuasion, but also had resource to pressures and material inducements. As a result, by the end of the 17th century a large part of the Paulicians were converted to the Catholic faith, to Islam, and to Eastern Orthodoxy.⁴³

3.7. Revivalist Scholars in the Area

Tatar culture, both religious and secular, underwent significant changes during the nineteenth century. Reformism among Tatars began as early as the end of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with a reassessment of their religious thinking, then turned toward cultural and educational reformism, and finally reached the realm of politics at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Abdunnasir Qursavi (1776-1812)⁴⁴ was the first to break the pattern of subservience and dependence the Volga Tatars had shown toward the Islamic

⁴³ Stefka Parveva, "Urban Representatives of the Ulema in Bulgarian Lands in the Seventeenth Century", *Islamic Studies*, 38:1, 1999, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁴ On Qursavi see: Michael Kemper, "Entre Boukhara et la Moyenne-Volga: 'Abd an-Nasir al-Qursawi (1776-1812) en conflit avec les oulemas traditionalistes", *Cahiers du Monde russe*, 37: 1-2, January-June 1996, pp. 41-52.

scholastic centers of Central Asia. His ideas outraged the conservative ulama of Central Asia and prompted a strong reaction on the part of Emir Haidar of Bukhara, himself an Islamic scholar. Qursawi had to flee Bukhara for his own safety and returned to his native village of Kursa in the upper Volga.⁴⁵

Abdunnasir Qursavi criticized the immobility of Bukharan religious schools in his *Irshad ül-Ibad* (Guidance for God's Servants).

Shahabeddin Mercani (1818-1889)⁴⁶, another "Doctor of Islamic Law" and mosque *imam*, was the author of the first book of Tatar history written at the time, the "*Mustefad ul-Ahbar fi Ahval-i Kazan ve Bulgar*", the "first attempt to present the Volga Tatars with their own history in their own language". Merjani had established relations with both the teachers of the Russian high school (Gymnasium) and the professors of Kazan University, having taught for nine years in the Tatar-Russian Ecole Normale (i.e., "teacher training"). His *Wefeyat al-Aslaf wa Tahiyat al-Ahlaf* (The Legacy of the Ancestors and the Response of their Descendants), the first version of which was published in 1883, was a critique of the stagnation of Muslim education.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California 1986, pp. 48-49. For an evaluation of Abdul Nasir Qursavi's ideas see: Michael Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789-1889: Der Islamische Diskurs unter russischer Herrschaft*, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin, 1998, pp. 225-. For a review article that evaluates both Allen J. Frank's *Islamic Historiography and 'Bulghar' Identity* and Kemper's work see: H. T. Norris, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 63: 1, 2000, pp. 133-134. For a debate between Abdul Nasir Qursavi's *ijtihad* and Abdurrahim al-Bulgari's *taqlid* in theory and praxis see: Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte*, pp. 272-308.

⁴⁶ On Merjani see: Uli Schamiloğlu, "The Formation of a Tatar Historical Consciousness: Sihâbeddin Marcâni and the Image of the Golden Horde", *Central Asian Survey*, 9: 2, 1990, pp. 39-49.

⁴⁷ Şerif Mardin, "Abdurreshid Ibrahim and Zeki Velidi Togan in the History of the Muslims of Russia", *Rethinking Central Asia*, ed. Korkut A. Ertürk, Ithaca Press, 1999, p.113. For a debate between Abdul Nasir Qursavi's *ijtihad* and Abdurrahim al-Bulgari's *taqlid* in theory and praxis see: Kemper, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-308.

Musa Carullah (1875-1949) was writing articles in newspapers of *el-Asru'l-Cedid* and *Vakit*. He published the newspaper of *Ülfet* with Abdürreşid İbrahim. His articles both in *Ülfet* and in an Arabic newspaper *Tilmiz* accelerated the ongoing process of revitalistic thoughts in Kazan. The Russian government restricted the freedom of them and prohibited all their newspapers.

The last Ottoman Shaykh al-Islam Mustafa Sabri Efendi appreciated the activities of Musa Carullah. According to Sabri Efendi, Carullah both used European sources and Islamic sources as well. This point was his distinction from his predecessors:

Bu zat, şimdiye kadar malum ve merî olan ahkam-ı şeriyye'den pek çokları üzerine yürüttüğü fikirlerle açmak istediği tarik-i teceddüde rüfekâ-yı mesleğinin hatırına gelmeyen yenilikleri tervec ve iltizam etmekte olduğuna nazaran, nisbeten onların en müfriti addolunabilirse de, şurasını itiraf etmek lazım gelir ki, bu zât, ilmî sermayelerini asar-ı garbiye'den iktibas eden bizim müceddidler gibi ulum-ı İslamiye'ye bigânelikleri nisbetinde o mebhaslere dair beyan-ı mutalaa hakkını haiz olmayanlardan değildir.⁴⁸

Zeki Velidi Togan says that Musa Carullah not only had been affected by Russian and European scholars, but also from scholars of Endülüs (Spain) as Ebu-Bekir Arabî (d. 1148), İbrahim Şâtübî (d. 1388) and of India as Nimetullah Dihlevî (d. 1774). Zeki Velidi Togan reveals that Tatar people had deep cultural roots with as far countries as that.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Yeni İslâm Müctehidlerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi*, Dâru'l Hilâfe, İstanbul 1335/1919, pp. 5-6; quoted in Mehmet Görmez, *Musa Carullah Bigiyef*, TDV Yayınları, Ankara 1994, p. 56. On Musa Carullah see also: *Ölümünün 50. Yıldönümünde Musa Carullah Bigiyef (1875-1949): I. Uluslararası Musa Carullah Bigiyef Sempozyumu*, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, Ankara 2002.

⁴⁹ Zeki Velidi Togan, *Hâtıralar: Türkistan ve Diğer Müslüman Doğu Türklerinin Millî Varlık ve Kültür Mücadeleleri*, Tan Matbaası, İstanbul 1969, p. 143.

The debate embracing education, culture, and secularism marked a turning point in the Islamic revival⁵⁰ of the Volga-Ural Muslims, a revival which had begun as early as the end of the 18th century. Abdunnasir Qursavi, Shihabeddin Mercani, Rizaeddin Fahreddin⁵¹ and Musa Carullah made particularly valuable contributions to a reassessment of religious thinking. They declared war on established dogma and committed themselves to revitalizing Islam through a return to its pristine purity. Their efforts made possible an interplay of orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the reshaping of the Islamic identity of the Tatars and the Bashkorts.

Gradually, forces appeared which rejected the ideology of stagnation and pressed for social renewal. Tatars were in the front ranks among these forces. Among them Abdunnasir Qursavi and Shihabeddin Marjani have left their mark on the history of the Tatar people, and they served as a guiding light for those who were concerned for the future of their people and for public education. Their criticism of outmoded ideas served to free people's minds from the yoke of dogmatism and spiritual stagnation. It forced them to assess what was happening around them and prepared the ground for the arrival of the latest ideas.⁵²

The firm belief of the Tatar jadid (reformist) thinkers in the inner strength and potential revival of Islam seems to have fostered their interest in the Russian schismatic sects and their tolerant view of the Shiite Muslims. The Sunni Volga-

⁵⁰ On the concept of revitalizing Islam see: Ayşe N. Saktanber, *Islamic Revitalization in Turkey: An Urban Model of a 'Counter-Society', A Case Study*, Middle East Technical University, Unpublished PhD Thesis, 1995.

⁵¹ On Rızaeddin b. Fakhreddin see a contemporaneous writer's evaluation: A. Battal-Taymas, "Kazanlı fikir adamı ve tarihçi Rızaeddin Fahreddinoğlu", *Dergi*, no. 5, 1956, pp. 17-32; see also Zeki Velidi Togan, *Hâtıralar*, pp. 57-58.

⁵² Yahya G. Abdulin, "Islam in the History of the Volga Kama Bulgars and Tatars", *Central Asian Survey*, 9: 2, 1990, pp. 8-9.

Ural Muslims collected money which they sent to Bukhara to be distributed among all who had suffered during the violent clashes between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. The Volga Tatars did not extend the same toleration to the puritanical Sufi sect of the Vaisites, which refused to recognize the authority of the Russian state and claimed to be the only true heirs of the ancient Bulgars. The followers of Bahaeddin Vaisi, who had founded the sect in 1862, always used the name “Bulgar” instead of “Tatar”.

In fact, the Vaisites had merely stressed in a more dynamic and uncompromising manner that Tatar reformers had acknowledged all along: the need for a solution to the tension between Islam and its socio-political milieu. Political thought and political life, to the degree it developed among the Tatars and the Bashkortos between 1905 and 1917, were mainly the work of lay Muslims with a liberal education, most of them direct products of the *jadid* cultural revolution and education.⁵³

3.8. The Logic of Tajdid in the 18th and 19th Centuries

The term *tajdid* means renovate, to replace something old with something new. The *tajdid* movements were provoked by the extraordinary flourishing of the “alternative” forms of Islamic belief, worship and community in the period from the 13th to the 18th centuries. In this broad period, Shi’ism spread throughout the Indian ocean basin; the Safavids made Shi’ism the official religion of Iran. Sufism

⁵³ Azade-Ayse Rorlich, “Islam under Communist Rule: Volga-Ural Muslims”, *Central Asian Survey*, 1: 1, 1982, pp. 12-14. On these questions see also: Nadir Devlet, “İdil-Ural’da İslamiyet’in Durumu”, *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Prof. Dr. İbrahim Kafesoğlu Hatıra Sayısı, no. 13, 1987, pp. 109-122; Devin DeWeese, “Islam and the Legacy of Sovietology: A Review Essay on Yaacov Ro’i’s Islam in the Soviet Union”, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 13: 2, 2002, pp. 298-330.

also gained ever wider acceptance among Muslims. Magical types of Islam became ever more common. The conversion of new populations to Islam led to the spread of faith in saints as miracle workers and the veneration of shrines as Sufism formed syncretisms with the beliefs, rituals, and identities of non-Muslim or newly converted but unassimilated peoples. Among intellectuals, Sufi theosophy and gnosticism was a bridge between universal religious attitudes and the particular commitments of Muslims.

The internal struggle within Muslim societies to define the correct beliefs and practices of Muslims came to be closely tied to the “modernization” processes, the global political and economic transformation, of that era. In the course of the 18th century Islamic regimes everywhere collapsed or were in decline. The Safavid dynasty which had ruled Iran since 1500 was destroyed by Afghan and other tribal forces. The Ottoman empire was in course of disaggregation as Ottoman provincial officials, warlords, tribal chiefs, landlords, religious leaders, and other notables established their locally based authority and small scale independent governments. Mughal suzerainty, challenged in the 18th century by Sikh, Maratha and other provincial separatist movements, and by the rise of British power in Bengal, gave the way to British paramountcy and was liquidated altogether after the Mutiny of 1857.

What gave tajdid and affinity for so many and such diverse social and political environments? First is the appropriateness of the tajdid ideology for network formation, integration of diverse populations, and political mobilization. Most Islamic societies were divided among family, tribal, regional, and ethnic communities, but tajdid was a more universalistic and international form of Islam which could appeal to Qur’ân and Sunna, as opposed to local, particularistic forms

of veneration of saints and details of religious law. In fragmented societies tajdid provided the basis of commitment to a common cause, and helped transcend fragmentation in favor of religious and ideological unity.

In commercializing societies the reform movements served several purposes. One was the formation of new communities out of mobile persons on the basis of Islamic solidarity. These communities looked to a more standard universal and less parochial form of Islam. Reform also provided the motivation and justification for struggles against economic and political rivals whether Muslim or non-Muslim. In commercializing peasant societies reform Islam played a critical role in providing leadership, religious morals, ideological identity, and political motivation to populations involved in economic and political change.⁵⁴

3.9. The Volga-Ural Jadidis

Ingeborg Baldauf suggests that the comparison with similar phenomena outside the chosen scope of space and time to avoid the pitfalls and therefore help us to a better understanding of the nature and the specific character of Jadidism in Central Asia.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ira M. Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms", *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 40: 4, pp. 444-460. In the Ottoman Empire reform-minded religious scholars opposed popular ceremonies for the dead, Sufi dancing and singing, and the consumption of coffee and tobacco. The legists, supported by madrasa students and tradesmen, won political support for a narrow definition of Islamic learning and practice. Qadizade Mehmed Efendi (d. 1635) formed a party to exert control over religious endowments and to persuade the authorities to enforce a Shari'a-oriented form of Islamic practice. Under the influence of this party, sufi *tekkas* were closed, and Sufis were imprisoned.

⁵⁵ Ingeborg Baldauf, "Jadidism in Central Asia within Reformism and Modernism in the Muslim World", *Die Welt des Islams*, 41: 1, 2001, p. 72. For a general framework of revivalistic thought in Central Asia see: Mehrdad Haghayeghi, "Islamic Revival in the Central Asian Republics", *Central Asian Survey*, 13: 2, 1994, pp. 249-266; Ghoncheh Tazmini, "The Islamic Revival in Central Asia: a potent force or a misconception?", *Central Asian Survey*, 20: 1, 2001, pp. 62-83.

Adeeb Khalid has proposed a preliminary definition of who can be called a Jadidi, namely, “those individuals who took part in efforts to reform Muslim society through the use of modern means of communication (...) and new forms of sociability.”⁵⁶ In even simpler terms, it could be suggested that the common denominator that linked this otherwise loosely connected group of individuals could be their positive relationship of sorts with the cluster of enlightening and modernizing ideas that came together with the new method of schooling introduced by Ismail Gaspirali, the *usûl-i jadîda*, as it was called at first. Lazzerini has underlined that Gaspirali, when calling for reform, preferred to use the term *tanzîmât*⁵⁷, a word that had been applied to the reforms in the Ottoman Empire. Schools of the type Gaspirali suggested were in Turk called *muntaẓam maktablar*.

Modern Muslim apologetics have underlined the fact that some basic elements of the “new method” (*usûl-i jadîda*) had existed in the classical Islamic madrasa tradition prior to the period of decay anyway. However, if understood as a part of a whole that existed together with the physical setting of a school with all its appliances, the curriculum, and the methods of instruction, as well as the aims of pedagogy as such, Gaspirali’s method really was novel, *jadîd*.

The reformists’ tool was the pen rather than gun, although at times even the pen was powerless, since the Russian administration prevented Jadidis as well as

⁵⁶ Ibid; quoted in Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Tsarist Central Asia*, PhD Madison, 1993, p. 137. For a recent work on Jadidism mostly based on its theological roots see: İbrahim Maraş, *Türk Dünyasında Dini Yenileşme (1850-1917)*, Ötüken Yayınları, İstanbul 2002. For the program of Jadidis consisting nineteen items see: Zeki Velidi Togan, *Hâtıralar*, pp. 373-374.

⁵⁷ Edward J. Lazzerini, “Beyond Renewal: The Jadid Discourse to Pressure for Change in the Modern Age”, *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, ed. Jo-Ann Gross, Durham/London 1992, pp. 151-166; 162. For an evaluation of the questions in a broader context see: idem, “Volga Tatars in Central Asia, 18th-20th Centuries: From Diaspora to Hegemony”, *Central Asia in Historical Perspective*, ed. Beatrice F. Manz, pp. 82-100. See also: Ahmet Kanlıdere, “Kazan Tatarları Arasında Tecdit ve Cedit Hareketleri (1809-1917)”, *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 46, Summer 1997, pp. 89-96; idem, “XIX. ve XX. Yüzyıllarda Kazan Tatarları”, *Türkler*, ed. H.C.Güzel, K.Çiçek, S.Koca, vol. 18, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara 2002, pp. 415-426.

their opponents from attacking each other and censorship did not allow violent verbal assaults on the ulama to be published in the Central Asian press.

The Tsarist authorities would not permit severe attacks against the establishment of Muslim learned men (ulama), but they did not offer such protection to the leading figures of the mystic communities, let alone to mystics of lower ranks. There is a good reason to believe that Russian state officials were not averse to the idea that the Jadidis would fight the Sufi brotherhoods relentlessly, albeit for entirely different reasons from their own. Thus, the denunciation of mystics and spiritual leaders, often in the guise of lamentation and admonition, made up a large portion of Jadidi writing and went unchecked. Newspapers and journals abound with articles highlighting what their authors would call *bid'at*, i.e. illicit innovation that contaminated the *sunna* of the Prophet.

In fact, for the Muslims of the Russian Empire Gaspirali laid the basis of modern schooling when in 1884 he published his *Khoja-i Sibyân* followed by the teachers' guide *Rehber-i Mu'allim*. Elsewhere in the Muslim world modern pedagogics had been introduced well before that time. In the Turkish regions of the Ottoman Empire, Ahmed Midhat had published a primer *Khâje-i Evvel* in 1868, which was to earn him the honorary title of "First Teacher" among his fellow countrymen. While Gaspirali's primer and his model school in Baghchesarai had an enormous influence on Muslims all over Russia, and Ahmet Mithat's primer was re-issued twice in the two years following its initial publication, primers written by Central Asian enlighteners, among them those by Behbûdî, barely made it out of the classrooms of their authors-whether because of the distribution deficiencies of the inexperienced Central Asian book market or because of their lack of quality.

The “teacher of his nation” was obviously an important figure in Muslim enlightenment modernism. Gaspirali’s enormous success resulted from the excellent timing of his publications, and from Ismail Bey’s being familiar with European pedagogics, mass media and technology. *Tercumân* was founded when the Muslims of Central Russia and the Caucasus were just about to awaken from their *khâb-i ghaflat* and they needed a transmitter of modern knowledge and modernist thought. Along with *usûl-i jadîda*, the newspaper earned Gaspirali a prominent position among Russian Muslims that he held until his death, although the “first teacher”’s reputation suffered somewhat when he failed to associate himself with the political developments after the turn of the century. Ahmet Midhat, although an excellent popularizer of science, ultimately failed because the development of Ottoman society overtook him in too many respects.⁵⁸

To be sure, jadid discourse emerged in the context of empire, and the Russian presence in it was pervasive. Yet to see the jadids as mere imitators of Russian ways is to miss the complexity of the colonial encounter. The Russia of the jadids may have been just as imaginary as the Central Asia of Vereshchagin, but he uses that Russia were their own.⁵⁹

Education was, for Russian officials, an inherently political issue. Russian policy toward Central Asia had, reform the first days after the conquest, been premised on certain stereotypical assumptions about Islam and Muslims that Russian intellectuals and administrators shared with all Europeans. Foremost among them was the view that all Muslims, but perhaps especially Central Asians,

⁵⁸ Baldauf, “Jadidism in Central Asia, *passim*.”

⁵⁹ Adeeb Khalid, “Representations of Russia in Central Asia Jadid Discourse”, *Russia’s Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, eds. D.R.Brower-E.J.Lazzerini, Indiana University Press, Bloomington&Indianapolis 1997, p. 200.

were “fanatical” by nature, and thus quite dangerous to the security of Russian rule in the area. The antidote to fanaticism was “enlightenment”, and many Russians hoped that proper education might lessen the fanaticism of the “natives”. The aim of Russian policy was, therefore, to keep a wary eye on “native fanaticism”, while taking steps, resources permitting, toward the enlightenment of “the natives”.⁶⁰

Russian policy towards the education of Muslims in their own languages became more moderate after the opening of the Duma in 1905. Under the direction of Tatar intellectuals several ‘new style’ schools for the education of Muslim children were instituted at this time. The famous Tatar intellectuals Abdurreşid İbrahim and İsmail Gaspıralı were prominent in this movement. In the gubernia of Kazan, 1,088 schools started teaching in 1912, 90% of these were *tarz-i cedit*.⁶¹ Indeed, it seems that Turkic intellectuals like Yusuf Akçura, and Ahmed Ağaoğlu, went on to benefit greatly from the Russian education system. Ağaoğlu and Akçura were among a disproportionately large number of Russian Turkic intellectuals who figured prominently in the Young Turks and Kemalist periods.⁶²

The Muslims of the Volga-Ural region seem in general to have been highly disputatious people in religious matters, with their sense of orthodoxy easily outraged, at least in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Rızaeddin b.

⁶⁰ Adeeb Khalid, “Osman Khoja and the Beginnings of Jadidism in Bukhara”, *Reform Movements and Revolutions in Turkistan: 1900-1924. Studies in Honour of Osman Khoja*, ed. Timur Kocaoğlu, SOTA, Haarlem 2001, p. 292-293; See also about the literature of Jadidis: Büşra Ersanlı, “Highlighting Traditional Manners: Edep/Adab Lessons and Political Culture in Central Asia”, *Culture, Society and Politics in Central Asia and India*, ed. N.N.Vohra, Delhi, Shipra, India International Center, 1999, pp. 222-235.

⁶¹ Rorlich, *op.cit.*, p. 93.

⁶² Selim Deringil, “The Ottoman Empire and Russian Muslims: brothers or rivals?”, *Central Asian Survey*, 13:3, 1994, p. 413.

Fakhreddin records in his *Asar* numerous denunciations of alleged deviance that were made to the Spiritual Directorate.

Most historians believe that the aggressive propaganda of the resettled Tatar *mullas* was a decisive reason for the 18th century Bashkort revolts. The true reasons for the Bashkort uprisings were land expropriation, corruption of local authorities, and feudal yoke as well as religious motives. Muslim religious authorities took part in the popular uprisings.

Religious oppression was a reason for the Bashkort uprising of 1755. Its ideologist was Mulla Batirsah Aliev, called for Muslim unity in the struggle against enslavement by Russia. In his writings and sermons, he revealed the anti-Muslim colonial politics and urged his co-religionists to defend their violated rights with weapons.⁶³

Here, we should also notice on a different type of scholar: Zaynullâh b. Habîbullâh b. Rasûl. Omitting the detailed education process we will take care of the incomprehensible sides of him. He had also incompatibility with the authorities. A preliminary interrogation of Zaynullah took place at the house of a certain Iskandar b. Habîb al-Rahmân in the village of Elmet; numerous ulama participated including Ishnîyâz b. Shîrnîyâz, a scholar from Urgench of whom it was remarked that he used to issue some very questionable *fatwas*. It seems that the meeting failed to satisfy Zaynullah's detractors, for in 1872, joined by certain

⁶³ Danil' D. Azamatov, "Russian Administration and Islam in Bashkiria (18th-19th Centuries)", *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries*, eds. M. Kemper, A. von Küpelgen, D. Yermakov, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin 1996, pp. 94-98.

of the ulama of Isterlibash, they denounced Zaynnullah to the Spiritual Directorate in Orenburg for “heresy and distortion of Islam”.⁶⁴

We can evaluate these many-sided ulama-oriented problems in a wide extent. Sometimes, the sort of music also constitutes debate among scholars. “Mevlânâ’s *Fih-i mâ Fih* and Sultan Valad’s *Ma’arif* includes some chapters on *samâ’*, but these chapters, like many other sûfi treatises, were written for the purpose of defending *samâ’* against criticisms coming from the ulama.....Different type of *zîkr* were seen as a reason for conflicts.....Mavlânâ attributed the highest mystic values to the *rabâb* and this was a subject of conflict with the ulama.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Hamid Algar, “Shaykh Zaynnullah Rasulev: The Last Great Naqsbandi Shaykh of the Volga-Urals Region”, *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, ed. Jo-Ann Gross, pp. 119-120.

⁶⁵ İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Music and Samâ’ of the Mavlaviyya in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: Origins, Ritual and Formation”, *Sufism, Music and Society in Turkey and the Middle East*, eds. A. Hammarlund, T. Olsson, E. Özdalga, Swedish Research Institute in İstanbul, 2001, pp. 68, 72, 73. In the Ottoman case, Shaykh al-Islam Ebu’s-Suûd evaluated raqs, deverân, semâ’ as rituals of non-Muslim groups and blamed the Muslims who performed these kind of rituals as non-Muslim:

‘Ol qabâyihi ‘ibadet qabilinden ‘adeddüb âyet-i kerîmeyi ana delil getürmekle tekrar kâfir olur, bu i’tiqaddan rücû’ itmezse qatilleri vâcib olur (....). Ammâ şimdiki zaman sûfileri itdikleri raks filhaqîqa kâfirlerin horos tepmesidür ve bunların fiilleri kefereye teşebbühdür. Ve Resûl aleyhisselâm hazretine raks isnâd itmek küfürdür. Zirâ raks efâl-i süfehâdır (...). M.Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuûd Efendi Fetvaları*, 2nd ed., Enderun Kitabevi, İstanbul 1983, p. 86; quoted in: Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “Oppositions au soufisme dans l’empire Ottoman aux quinzieme et seizieme siecles”, *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies of Polemics*, ed. F. de Jong, B. Radtke, Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1999, p. 611. For a detailed analysis on Ottoman music culture with various sides see : B. Kellner-Heinkele, “Aus dem Osmanischen Musik und Theaterleben”, *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients: Festschrift für Bertold Spuler zum Siebzigsten Geburtstag*, eds. Hans R. Roemer and Albrecht Noth, Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1981, pp. 181-196.

CHAPTER IV

OTTOMAN INTELLECTUALS

4.1. Some Remarks on Ottoman Political Thought

From the earliest period, the Ottoman sultans had always appointed two authorities to administer a district- the bey, who came from the military class and represented the sultan's executive authority, and the kadi, who came from the ulama and represented the sultan's legal authority. The bey could not inflict any punishment without first obtaining the kadi's judgement, but the kadi could not personally execute any of his own sentences. In his decisions and his application of the sharia and kanun, the kadi was independent of the bey. He received his commands directly from the sultan, whom he could also petition directly. The Ottomans considered this division of power in the provincial government as essential to a just administration.⁶⁶

Ottoman administrative and bureaucratic practice originated from and continued the ancient traditions of pre-Islamic near-eastern states. The division of functions within the administration was in accord with these traditions. Islamic political theory recognized the 'Men of the Pen', beside the 'Men of the Sword' and the 'Men of Religion', as a pillar of the administration, and in pre-Ottoman

⁶⁶ Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age*, p.104.

Muslim states the head of the government, with the title of vizier, was usually someone who had achieved distinction in the state's Chancery or Exchequer.

In the Ottoman Empire, as in all Islamic states since the Umayyads and Abbasids, bureaucrats were required to possess an encyclopaedic knowledge, and for this reason they displayed an interest in all fields of practical and useful knowledge- literature, language, calligraphy, law history and philosophy or geography, the principles of the calendar, surveying and agriculture. The ulama had no direct interest in these subjects, and the most important Ottoman writings in these fields are the work of professional secretaries. Kâtip Çelebi (1608-57), the greatest Ottoman encyclopaedic scholar, was a secretary in the imperial council. It is the historical and political works composed by members of the bureaucracy which best express the near-eastern traditions of state, and these men, together with the slaves educated in the royal Palace, played a vital role in the creation of Ottoman culture.

The bureaucrats, however, did not always act in the best interests of the state. From the end of the sixteenth century bribery became widespread, even in the highest grades of the administration. Falsification of fermâns became punishable by amputation of a hand or by death, but despite these severe penalties a major cause of the disorder in the system was secretaries' granting, in return for bribes, several patents for a single fief. At the same time a steady decline in the value of the akçe, without a corresponding rise in wages, encouraged bribery. In 1595 two of the clerks to the Treasury were hanged and six dismissed for accepting bribes; and in 1598 the grand vizier castigated the secretaries, saying 'With your many treacheries, you aim to undermine the good order of the state'.

The ulama represented the greatest power within the state independent of the grand vizier. The kadiaskers of Anatolia and Rumelia were the government functionaries responsible for the administration of the religious law, possessing the power to appoint and dismiss kadis and religious dignitaries. They gave the final decision in lawsuits within the scope of sharia. The shaykh al-Islam –the head of the ulama- was not considered a member of the government; nevertheless, he came in time to exercise a great influence in affairs of state. For the appointment of a new shaykh al-Islam the grand vizier petitioned the sultan, who did not however have to accept the nomination. Thus in 1598, despite the grand vizier Yemişçi Hasan's strong pressure to appoint his own candidate, the sultan brought his tutor to the post. Hasan Pasha was in continual conflict with the shaykh al-Islams, successfully manipulating the dismissal of one of them, Sun'ullâh. On the other hand, the grand vizier, Cerrâh Mehmed, seeking to preserve harmony, consulted with the shaykh al-Islam on all important state matters. Accusations in a shaykh al-Islam's fetvâ brought about the deposition of sultans and, equally, the downfall of many grand viziers.

The shaykh al-Islam was the head of the ulama. He petitioned the grand vizier for the appointment, promotion and dismissal of medrese staff, and from the sixteenth century he acquired the authority to propose the nomination and dismissal of the kadis of important regions, thus effectively gaining control of the entire organization of ulama. In the same way as the grand vizier was the absolute representative of the sultan's executive authority, the shaykh al-Islam became absolute representative of the sultan's religious authority.

In the attempt to characterize the importance of the shaykh al-Islam, western observers have compared him with the pope. The Kânûnnâme of Mehmed

the Conqueror⁶⁷ placed his rank on a level with that of the grand vizier,⁶⁸ and protocol required that he should receive the greater respect. Until the second half of the sixteenth century the shaykh al-Islams were not customarily deposed. As representatives of the sharia they tried to act independently of the political authority. During the course of the sixteenth century, as the sharia became increasingly dominant in affairs of state, the influence of the shaykh al-Islams increased accordingly; but at the same time, and in the same proportion, they became more dependent on the political authority. The shaykh al-Islam's first taste of secular power came when he received control of the kadiships, an arm of the executive firmly attached to the political authority. From this time onwards the power to appoint kadis earning more than forty akçes daily, and kadis with the rank of molla, passed from the kadiaskers to the shaykh al-Islam.⁶⁹

In his *Asafname*, a sixteenth century source, Lütfî Pasha explicated the ilmiye class in an interesting perspective. He says, they are jealous between themselves and one should not believe their sayings against eachother:

Müderrişîn ve ülema ve kudât tâifesi ekserisi birbirine haset üzeredür.
Ânların biri birinin hakkında söylediklerine inanmayub reis-i ülema olanlar

⁶⁷ For the text of kanunname of Mehmed II see: Ahmed Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri ve Hukuki Tahlilleri*, vol. 1, Fey Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul 1990. On Mehmed II's kanunname see: Baki Tezcan, "The Kanunname of Mehmed II: A Different Perspective", *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation*, vol. 3, editor-in-chief Kemal Çiçek, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara 2000, pp. 657-665.

⁶⁸ "Ve Şeyhülislâm ulemanın reSIDir. Ve muallim-i Sultan dahi kezâlik serdâr-ı ulemadır. Vezîr-i a'zam anları riâyeten üstüne almak lâzım ve münâsibdir. Ammâ muftî ve hoca sâir vüzeradan bir nice tabaka yukarıdır ve tasaddur dahi ederler.", "Fatih Devri Kanunnameleri: Merkezî ve Umumî Kanunnameler", ed. Akgündüz, ibid, p. 218.

⁶⁹ Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age*, pp. 89-103. For an evaluation of scholarly activities of Ottomans before the reign of Mehmed II and his role on the developments see: Ramazan Şeşen, "İstanbul'un Fethine Kadar Osmanlılar'daki İlmî Durum, İstanbul'un Fethinin Türk İlim ve Kültürüne Katkısı", *Uluslararası Kuruluşunun 700. Yıl Dönümünde Bütün Yönleriyle Osmanlı Devleti Kongresi, Bildiriler*, Konya 2000.

ile müşavere ve taharri idüp menasib-ı ülemada gayet yoklamak gerekdür.⁷⁰

4.2. The Internal Dynamics of the Ilmiye Class

Suraiya Faroqhi dealt with the social mobility among the ulama in order to have some idea of the ease or difficulty with which people of different social backgrounds entered the religious career and advanced within the system once they were in it.

One of the main problems to be investigated is that of the role of heredity inside of the ulama hierarchy. According to Uzunçarşılı, the upper ranks of the ulama, in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, consolidated their position to such an extent that the Sultans were never able to dislodge them. Itzkowitz speaks of a ‘hardening of the career arteries’. Gibb and Bowen call the upper ranks of the ulama a ‘hereditary and privileged’ aristocracy and indicated that things were not the same in the heyday of the Ottoman empire. The results of Itzkowitz’ count, however, make one wonder whether the changes in the ulama institution were really as great as has been claimed, but comparing samples of different times might test this claim. What makes comparison difficult is that different authors do not always use the same criteria for the selection of the ulama

⁷⁰ Lütü Paşa, *Asafname*, Matbaa-i Âmedi, 1326, p. 15. For detailed information on the ilmiye class of Ottomans based on largely biographical sources see: Hans Georg Majer, *Vorstudien zur Geschichte der Ilmiye im Osmanischen Reich*, Dr. Dr. Rudolf Trofenik, München 1978; for some preliminary notes on Ottoman biographical sources see: Barbara Flemming, “Glimpses of Turkish Studies: Another Look at Lami’i and Ottoman Biographers”, *Journal of Turkish Studies*, Annemarie Schimmel Festschrift, vol. 18, 1994, pp. 59-73. And also a substantial Arabic source on Ottoman ulema: ‘Abd al-Hayy b. Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-‘Imad al-Hanbali, *Shadharad al-dhahab fi akhbar man dhabab*, ed. Husam al-Din al-Qudsi, 8 vols., Maktabat al-Qudsi, Cairo, 1350-1351/[1931-1932]. I owe this reference to Evrim Binbaş.

treated, and that one and the same author's criteria might vary from time to time, especially since information on contemporaries was much more readily available.

That the ulama institution was in crisis, however, revealed itself in medrese uprisings, while at the same time the dissatisfaction of the lower-ranking kadis broke out in protests and demonstrations. One phenomenon aggravating the crisis was the fact that the number of jobs available did not grow as fast that the number of medrese graduates. Vakfs were established all the time, since they enabled the founder to put his property out of the reach of confiscation and yet retain some measure of control over it. Since whoever endowed a medrese would also make provision for the material sustenance of the students, people from outside the ulema hierarchy could enter the system. But at the end of their long period of study they would find no jobs waiting for them. Whether the great medrese uprisings, which seem to have been largely limited to Anatolia and to that part of the Balkans in which there was no compact Turkish settlement, changed the social composition of the ulama.

The fact that the higher ulama usually sided with the Sultan and his administration against the medrese students and the lower-level ulama shows how much this layer of the hierarchy was a group by itself, singled out by the privileges of birth, family relationships, and patronage.⁷¹

Intensifying competition for limited numbers of religious, academic, and judicial posts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and shorter tenures,

⁷¹ Suraiya Faroqhi, "Social Mobility among the Ottoman Ulema in the Late Sixteenth Century", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 4 (1973), pp. 217-218.

must have forced the court officials to demand increasingly higher fees from their clients.⁷²

The emergence of problems is in a close relation with the social formation of the class. The Ottoman *‘ilmiye* class as a whole was a privileged group whose status and hierarchy was based on the level of certified knowledge in the Islamic sciences. Its members represented the spiritual authority side by side with the military-political authority whose status and privileges were based on professional skill and experience in military arts and government. The ruler, as the imam and the padishah, united in his person these two authorities (or *Din u Dawla*). The bureaucracy (*kalamiyye*) constituted an instrument to functionalize the ruler’s authority in the political domain. In the Ottoman Empire, the *ilmiyye* had its own autonomous bureaucratic machine, but in the last analysis, it was dependent on the ruler’s authority. As the one and only deputy of the ruler, the grand vizier supervised both the *seyfiyye* and the *ilmiye*. Within the *ilmiye*, the *tadrîs* (teaching) and the *kadâ’* (administration of the law) were two branches closely interrelated in their function. The second Ottoman Sultan Orhan (1326-1362) had founded the first madrasa chiefly for the purpose of training the *kadis* to be employed in his realm. The *kadis* were also authorized to execute the Sultan’s orders concerning public administration. Professorships and judgeships were classified according to the fixed daily revenue for each rank. Judges’s revenues were calculated as ten *akça* for each one thousand houses in the area of jurisdiction. As early as the reign of Mehmed II (1451-1481), judgeships were

⁷² Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Post Classical Age (1600-1800)*, Bibliotheca Islamica, Minneapolis 1988, *passim*; reviewed by Carter V. Findley, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 54: 1, 1995, pp. 75-76; Boğaç A. Ergene, “Courts of Court Usage in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Ottoman Anatolia: Court Fees as Recorded in Estate Inventories”, *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 45:1, 2002, p. 39.

divided into two main categories, those with a daily revenue of 300 akça and below, and those above 300 akça. The latter, distinguished by the title of *mawlâ* or *molla* (plural *mawâlî*), or by the rank of *mawlawiyyet*, made up a “noble” group (*ashrâf*) among the other status groups with privileges. However, ‘ilm had to be within every Muslim’s reach, and a student of any background had the opportunity to move up the ladder to the highest rank in the ‘ilmiyye pyramid.

At each stage of his studies, a student had to obtain a certificate (*tazkira* or *tamassuk*) from the professor under whom he studied. Later regulations required that the certificate specify the texts studied and the duration, as well as a detailed description of the student’s identity to prevent its fraudulent use by others.

It was *mulâzemet* (*mulâzama*), “attendance” of the *mawâlî*, which was considered a prerequisite for one’s candidacy to the *manâsib*; and candidates were carefully listed chronologically with their qualifications in the registers kept at the Shaykh al-Islam’s or the kadiaskers’ offices. Qualification was also determined by official tests when necessary. A third method for the selection of candidates from among his students, assistants (*mu‘îd*), or his own sons who were supposed to have their education from their father.

It is to be remembered that those members of the *ilmiye* who sought a *mansib* (plural *manâsib*) at a madrasa or a kadâ’ had to complete strictly defined degrees at the madrasas or to be in the attendance of the *mawâlî*, the authorities in Islamic sciences. Those who performed minor religious services for the people at mosques or similar institutions received only the *djihet* (plural *djihât*), not the *mansib*. The former were called *ahl-i manâsib* and the latter *ahl-i djihât*. But in reality, and particularly through patrimonial relationships, these rules and regulations were frequently overlooked, as contemporary critics have disclosed.

While the *mawâlî* formed quite a small, and in later periods practically a closed group (they numbered 296 individuals in 1883), small town cadis were quite numerous. At the bottom of the pyramid, the *imâms*, *mu‘azzins* and *khatîbs* serving in the mosque as well as the *dânishmends* and *sûhtes* constituted in fact large social groups.

The members of the *ilmiye* and of the *djihât* were all exempted from taxation, as were the members of the *seyfiyye* and the *kalemiyye* status groups.

4.3. The System of Rotation (*Dawr* or *Nawba*) and *Mulâzemet*

Pressures from the candidates waiting for a position must have imposed a rotation system (*dawr* or *nawba*, *nöbet*), to provide employment to as many candidates as possible, since the number of judgeships was limited and could not be increased at will. For example, a change in the regulation in 1127/1715 would have deprived of candidacy more than a thousand madrasa *dânishmends* who had been waiting for more than five years. On the other hand, since an *ilmiyye* career ensured social prestige and exemption from taxes, thousands of young men, particularly of peasant origin, flocked to the small town madrasas, or even created their own madrasa, in the Anatolian provinces during the sixteenth century. Appaling *sûhte* (*softa*) disorders of that period forced the government to shut down most of the provincial madrasas, and the reform rescript of 1006/1597 stipulated that “from now on, no candidate shall be admitted from provincial madrasas (*kenâr madrasa*) unless that was a rule from a long time ago”. Thus, *kadi* appointments and tenure periods concerned a large social group in Ottoman society, and the so-

called sûhte uprisings during the second half of the sixteenth century should be studied within this context.

The reform rescript of 1006/1597 described those groups which were responsible for further swelling the waiting list. The first group includes those employees of minor religious services who, by becoming clients of an influential person in the ilmiyye, or through other loopholes, find access to candidacy. Thus, Mustafa 'Âlî observes that "so many Turks of condemnable character of the randjbar class have been honored by the posts of kadâ". An ilmiye career was the only way left for a Turk of re'âyâ origin to climb on the social ladder and thus share the privileges of the military class in the Ottoman empire, when in the sixteenth century, the ruling group's monopoly over the positions of power became more rigid than ever, as a logical evolution of the political system. The graduates of the provincial madrasas flocked into Iç-il (the imperial core region composed of the İstanbul, Edirne and Bursa districts) from the provinces, accepting any religious position they could find, to later seek a mulâzemet (candidacy for judgeship). The second group of outsiders consisted of soldiers of the Porte, including the janissaries, sipâhîs, cannoneers, etc. Since the study of religious sciences was encouraged for every Muslim, a soldier, too, could attend free public courses at a mosque, and obtain some kind of certificate. We are informed that college professors without students admitted anybody regardless of his vacation and ability.⁷³

⁷³ İnalçık, "The Ruznamçe Registers of the Kadiasker of Rumeli as preserved in the İstanbul Müftülük Archives", *Essays in Ottoman History*, Eren Yayıncılık, İstanbul 1998, p. 129; for the introductory remarks on the Ottoman ulama see R. [Richard] C. Repp, "Ulema-3: In Ottoman Turkey", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, New Edition, vol. X, Leiden 2000, p. 805.

I am of the opinion that the main theme can be comprehended with this explanation. It is the point of the authority of *ulama*. As a consequence the *ulama* considered themselves higher than the '*umerâ*' in terms of dignity and rank. Since the '*ilmiye* career brought social prestige and many advantages, including exemption from taxes, even the high echelons of the military class sought the '*ilmiye* career for their sons.

Complaints and pressure from the lower ranks as well as their occasional revolts often forced the Sultan to replace the *ulama* in power with those favored by the reformist ones supported by the lower rank '*ilmiye* people, including the *danishmends* and the small town *kâdîs*. Thus, the reformist *ulama*, acting in the name of the *Din u Dawla*, attempted to suppress patrimonial and personal interventions in the *tarik* (the hierarchical line defined by the regulations) and the *atifet* (favor). It should be remembered that, in order to prevent the swelling of the number of the *kadi* candidates, the reformers insisted that the number of candidates to be admitted upon the *mawâlî*'s recommendation be restricted. However, the *mawâlî*, as the recognized authorities in the Islamic sciences, had always the prerogative of entering in the list of *mulâzims*, one, two or more advanced students (*dânishmends*). In fact, it was a ruler that to be a *mulâzim* a student had to have an assistantship under to be a *molla* for a certain period of time. This was believed to be a guarantee for knowledge and experience in the *ilmiye* thence a guarantee for the authority and privilege of the high *ulama* class. Their sons, as they were considered to have access to a good education, were recognized for candidacy without the formalities to which others were subjected. However, the regulation provided that the prerogative not be abused.

Shaykh al-Islâm Abû's Su'ûd is credited with introducing fundamental bureaucratic reforms including the *mulâzemet*, the 'ilmiyye system, and for assuming responsibility for the appointments of the *molla* judgeships. However, a report to the Sultan, apparently of an earlier date, provides evidence that basic features of the organization, including the *mulâzemet*, were established before him. The principle that kadi appointments should be made from among the madrasa professors (*mudarris*) was in force at the time the report was written. The reporter tells us that contrary to this rule, *nâ'ibs* with no regular madrasa education, or other inferior religious functionaries, had gained access to judgeships thanks to their bribed intercessors. It points out that in the appointment of judges, the most important criterion should be the mastery of the religious sciences, which could be acquired only through a regular madrasa education and by attendance (*mulâzemet*) on the authorities (*mawâlî*). He complains about the malpractice that "any candidate, whether qualified or not, enjoys the Sultan's favor if supported by an intercessor". Such intruders, he says, enjoy promotion without waiting for the *mulâzemet*. Thus, *mulâzemet* was considered to provide additional training under the *mawâlî* and enabled one to obtain a higher assignment. It is interesting to note that even in this early period, bribery and favoritism were indicated to be widespread malpractices resorted to, with the aim, of obtaining and keeping judgeships. Anticipating all the later critics, the reporter notes that under the circumstances those who were studying the religious sciences were no longer held in esteem, and adds that "no more serious failure can be imagined for a Sultan who is tolerant on the matters concerning the Shari'a, and does not bother to see whether his commands are executed."⁷⁴

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 133-134.

It is noticable that how a pure occupation as education results in a revolt. That is really important to note that two branches of science in Ottomans were in a close connection with state's politics and ideology: Law and theology.⁷⁵ Thus, we may say that, 'ulema were in a responsive position among the state politics and people.

4.4. Ottoman Justice and Dynastic Legitimation

The Ottomans based their claim to rule on the supposed justness of the public and administrative order they had established. Justice, in this context, clearly referred to the act of relieving the re'âyâ (urban and rural producers) of "wickedness and tyranny" and of "reconciling them through right and proper action". The Ottoman sultans possessed the ability to establish justice not only because justice is "bonded in the character of the Ottoman sultans, "who are the shadows of God's several mercies", but also because they promoted what is "canonically permissible" with reference to the holy law.⁷⁶

In his recent article, Boğaç Ergene investigates the ways the notion of "justice" as a mechanism of political legitimization in the early-modern Ottoman Empire. He claims that there existed alternative definitions of justice and that these

⁷⁵ Ocak, "Klasik Dönem Osmanlı Toplumsal Hayatında Dinî Akımlara Kısa Bir Bakış", *İslâmiyât*, vol. 2, n. 4, October-December 1999, Ankara, pp. 13-22; For a problematic approach and the basic sectors producing interpretations of Islam in the Ottoman Empire: cf. *idem*, "Perspectives on Islam in the Ottoman Empire: Conceptions, politics, problems, transformations, a paper delivered at the 2001-2002 Sawyer Seminar at the University of Chicago, *From Medieval to Modern in the Islamic World*, 26 February 2002; it is important to understand the views and rituals of Islam in two different geography: Ottoman Empire and Central Asia and the evolution of applications. For such a treatment: cf. İsenbike Togan, "As Culture Evolves into Religion: Pre-Islamic Notions of Cosmology and Orientation in Central Asian Islam", *Collection of Materials Unesco International Forum: "Culture and Religion in Central Asia"*, (Kyrgyzstan, September, 1999), 213-243.

⁷⁶ Boğaç A. Ergene, "On Ottoman Justice: Interpretations in Conflict (1600-1800)", *Islamic Law and Society*, 8:1, 2001, p. 53. On the basic principles of Ottoman law system see: Halil İnalcık, "Osmanlı Hukukuna Giriş: Örfi-Sultani Hukuk ve Fatih'in Kanunları", *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 13: 2, 1958, pp. 102-126.

were instrumental in the struggle between the central government and those official and unofficial power-holders in the administrative and geographical peripheries of the empire. According to the specialized terminology of the Ottoman administrative system, “justice” was the protection of the rural or urban producers against abuses of the military elite. This definition highlighted the personal benevolence of the ruler who claimed to be the sole protector of the weak against oppression. On the other hand, at least some segments of the ruling elite insisted on representing justice as the recognition of the mutual rights and obligations of the sultan and his “servants”. Justice, in this context, referred to the protection of privileges and entitlements of those who were thought to deserve them. While using a variety of sources-including treatises on the government and ethics composed by the Ottoman literati, documents from regional court records⁷⁷ and correspondence between the imperial center and officials in the provinces. Ergene hopes to interpret the Ottoman political legitimacy which acknowledges the ideas of “rebellious” elements within Ottoman history. He supplements Evliya Çelebi’s seventeenth-century travel book, *Seyâhatnâme*⁷⁸, with information in the *Târikh-i Na‘îmâ*⁷⁹, a well-known seventeenth century chronicle.

An analysis of some significant examples of post-classical Ottoman political writings indicates that a majority of these works recognize justice as one of the most important characteristics of a legitimate government. Works which are

⁷⁷ For an evaluation of the value of sharia court records as a source for history see: Dror Ze’evi, “The Use of Ottoman Shari‘a Court Records as a Source for Middle Eastern Social History: A Reappraisal”, *Islamic Law and Society*, 5: 1, 1998, pp. 35-56.

⁷⁸ *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, Der Saadet, İkdâm, 1314.

⁷⁹ Naima Efendi, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1281.

most outspoken on this issue- such as *Kitâb-ı Müstetâb*, *Hırzû'l Mülûk*⁸⁰ and *Usûlü'l Hikem*- consider the disappearance of justice as one of the main reasons for the ongoing social, political and military problems of this era. Accordingly, the reemergence of a just rulership and the re-introduction of the principles of just government to the Ottoman administrative structure were considered as the necessary remedies to reestablish the strength of the empire.

Although the demand for justice was one of the most common wishes of contemporary political writers, we assume that these people were less than clear regarding the principles of “just governance”. While frequent references to the Quran, Sunna and the exemplary deeds of earlier Muslim and non-Muslim sovereigns provided clues for the definition of just political action, the common use of these sources seems to be related more to the rhetorical-discursive concerns of the authors (in order to be in conformity with the contemporary traditions of religio-political thought) than to the conceptual benefit these sources might provide in formulating certain understandings. Most of these works are substantially aphoristic and anecdotal in nature, and paralleling earlier examples of the *adab* tradition (literary works on morality and good government), are more concerned with providing a discussion of the proper acts expected from the ruler than with offering a theoretical deliberation of the principles of proper government. We can, nevertheless, hope that a careful reading of Ottoman examples of political philosophy will provide some valuable insights.

Justice was generally conceptualized more as a personal quality of an ideal ruler than as a definitive characteristic of a legitimate social order. For example, in Hasan Kafi's *Usûlü'l Hikem fî Nizamı'l-'Alem*, justice is specifically characterized

⁸⁰ Yaşar Yücel, *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatına Dair Kaynaklar: Kitab-ı Müstetab, Kitab-ı Mesalihi'l-Müslimin ve Menafii'l-Müminin, Hırzu'l-Mülûk*, TTK, Ankara 1988.

as the ruler's personal benevolence towards the re'âyâ, whom he protects from excessive taxation and the oppression of the military elite. İdris Bitlisi, a prominent member of the sixteenth-century Ottoman literati, explicitly identifies justice with those virtues which the ruler has to possess. Benevolence (*şefqat*), devotion (*sadâqât*), fidelity (*vefâ*) and beneficence (*hüsn-ü mükâfât*) were the definitive characteristics of just government, and, although Bitlisi considers the observance of the dictates of religious law as a fundamental obligation for the legitimate government, nonetheless he differentiates between justice and sharia. *Kitâb-ı Müstetâb* is equally explicit about the strong relationship between the well-being and happiness of the taxpayers, and the personal responsibility of the ruler to sustain justice.

Although the Ottomans were definitely not the first Muslim sovereigns to utilize ancient Persian political traditions to characterize the nature of their government, the perception of justice as a personal quality of a ruler seems to have a special relevance for understanding the Ottoman conceptualization of legitimate rulership. According to Bitlisi, justice is directly related to certain innate, God-given (*vehbî*) qualities of the ruler, such as wisdom, courage and temperance. These strictly personal qualities can provide a justification for an autonomous and even arbitrary rule, which is occasionally praised in certain sources. The anonymous author of *Hirzî'l Mülûk*, for example, argues that because of their superior personal qualities, the Ottoman sultans are not bound by the Ottoman laws (*qânûn-ı 'Othmânî*), and "whatever they choose to do, becomes Law."

The pragmatic nature of Ottoman claims to legitimacy is demonstrated in the ruler's attempts to portray himself as the caliph as defined in the classical theory of Hanafî law, on the one hand, and to appropriate more charismatic

principles of government, on the other. And although these two discourses of just rulership were radically different from each other in terms of defining the sources of political authority, they nonetheless shared an emphasis on defining political legitimacy as the protection of the re'âyâ from oppression.

Defining just government as the preservation of the stratified social order and keeping people in their places may carry some important implications for Ottoman claims of legitimacy. Roy Mottahadeh has argued that this definition of just government became prevalent in the Middle East after the tenth century, as the moral responsibility of government for society lessened. Because they could not pose as instruments of spiritual salvation, the political successors of the Abbasid caliphs could not invite subjects to identify with their rule in this way.⁸¹ This, of course, represented a divorce of religious salvation from political domination, that is, a separation of dîn from devlet. In such a situation, defining justice as putting things where they belong implied a restraint on the political autonomy of the ruler, as a legitimate Muslim polity had to acknowledge the ultimate privilege of the religious rules and the traditional order of the community of believers to determine what belongs where, when it cannot justifiably attribute to itself a spiritual authority. In other words, when the rules of religion and the traditional order of the community gain precedence over political authority, justice is transformed into a variable independent of the charismatic claims of the ruler, and therefore into a potential means to challenge the legitimacy of the political authority.⁸²

⁸¹ Roy Mottahadeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1988, chapter 4.

⁸² It should be emphasized that the official documents of this period make no mention of the separation of state and religion. Many scholars believe that the status of religion and the emphasis on Islamic legitimacy increased during the post-Suleymanic era. This, of course, does not mean that religion could not be used to challenge state authority. Madeline Zilfi argues that the Ottoman state suppressed the Kadızadeli movement in the seventeenth century precisely because its interpretation

One certainly finds signs of the divorce of dîn from devlet (and, hence, a major challenge to the proclaimed Ottoman [re]synthesis of dîn-ü-devlet) in the voices of some of those who had conflicts with the center.

Ergene demonstrated in his essay that Kınalızade's⁸³ definition of political justice and legitimate rulership found a certain reception among those who were struggling against the absolutism of the imperial center. For these people, justice meant the protection of the legitimate order and the proper stratification of a society in which the mutual rights and obligations of interacting parties are recognized. Accordingly, political justice had nothing to do with the benevolence of the ruler or the state, but depended upon the acknowledgement of the authority of the holy law and the eminence of the hierarchical social authority of the holy law and the eminence of the hierarchical social order. The emphasis on the sharia was instrumental in enabling dissidents (and those fortunate members of the ruling elite who were able to appropriate state power) to approach the sultan as equals under the laws of God, rather than impotent slaves subject to the absolute control of the state. In such contexts the metaphorical relationship between the self-sacrificing lover and the disinterested beloved loses its definitive validity: the sultan is no longer regarded as an object of absolute loyalty but as another Muslim who has to obey the rules of the Muslim community and has to take into consideration the legitimate claims and rights of other believers.⁸⁴

of Islamic principles of legitimate government threatened to undermine the "Sultan-centered order" of the Ottoman state; see Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety*, pp. 201-202.

⁸³ For Kınalızade see: Baki Tezcan, "Ethics as a Domain to Discuss the Political: Kınalızâde Ali Efendi's Ahlâk-ı Alâî, *International Congress on Learning and Education in the Ottoman World*, ed. A. Çaksu, İstanbul 2001, pp. 109-120.

⁸⁴ Boğaç A. Ergene, "On Ottoman Justice", *passim*.

4.5. Points of Complaint by the Ulama

With the complaints of the scholars one can follow the tragedies in his life as in the case of Fuzûlî. It is possible to comprehend the hopings from the patrons.

As Franz Rosenthal so eloquently demonstrates in his book, complaint was a constant and prominent theme for reflection throughout history.⁸⁵ In Ottoman case, one can follow various complaint cases in the registers: individual complaints, group ones, from non-Muslim peoples, from spouses⁸⁶, from employees; complaint about the times⁸⁷ and applications of rulers/administrative class, center-periphery relations, the hopes and wishes etc. The disgruntled inhabitants raise their voices by different ways. Sometimes it is limited by a local notable (*'ard-i mahdar*)⁸⁸, but it is also possible to result in a revolt. What are the

⁸⁵ Franz Rosenthal, *Sweeter Than Hope: Complaint and Hope in Medieval Islam*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983.

⁸⁶ For the complaints of spouses not based on complaint registers (*Şikayet Defterleri*), but based on judicial records see following study which argue that the manner in which oral testimony was shaped for the written record was controlled not only by the requirements of legal procedure but also by the broader goal of preserving individual and communal well-being: Leslie Peirce, “‘She is Trouble...and I will Divorce Her’: Orality, Honor, and Representation in the Ottoman Court of Aintab”, *Women in the Medieval Islamic World: Power, Patronage, and Piety*, ed. Gavin R.G.Hambly, St. Martin’s Press, New York, 1999, pp.269-300. For explanation of some notions of Ottoman gender studies reflected in the registers see: idem, “Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society”, *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi, Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1997, pp. 169-196.

⁸⁷ ‘Complaint about the times’ is a main part in Rosenthal’s book. He considers on the matter by pointing out a large scale of examples from Islamic historiographical sources, pp. 1-58; see also idem, “The Study of Muslim Intellectual and Social History: Approaches and Methods”, *Muslim Intellectual and Social History: A Collection of Essays*, Variorum 1990, p. 7.

⁸⁸ For a research on complaints and *ard-i hal*, *ard-i mahdar* in Ottoman history see Halil İnalcık, “Şikâyet Hakkı: ‘Arz-i Hal ve ‘Arz-i Mahzar’lar”, *Osmanlı’da Devlet, Hukuk, Adâlet*, Eren Yayınları, İstanbul 2000, pp. 49-75. For the events in a register of complaint of 1675 see: Hans Georg Majer, *Das Osmanische “Registerbuch der Beschwerden” (Şikâyet Defteri) vom Jahre 1675*, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 1984; reviewed by Şinasi Tekin, *Journal of Turkish Studies, Turks, Hungarians and Kipchaks: A Festschrift in Honor of Tibor Halasi-Kun*, vol. 8, 1984, pp. 296-297; Kemal Beydilli, *İ.Ü.E.F. Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 13, 1987, pp. 607-611.

preparatory figures of this process in history?, What are the roots of the problem and its results?, The viewpoints on people's mind? In addition to these, we should also notice the natural leaders of people. We will concentrate on the 'ulema class as leaders of the revolts or any other problematic situation. So as to realize the general framework, it is necessary to have a bird's eye view throughout history. The 'ulema class in history indicates a transitive structure. For instance, the Ottoman 'ulema both traveled to Middle East and Central Asia for education.⁸⁹ Thus, aforesaid class has many connections in every region that they travelled. It is possible to determine traces of various cultures on them. My main attention is on the similar characteristics of the class in different geographies. Scholars' activities as social diagnostic among people and administration.

The problems of scholars were not only external ones but also internal: The struggles in hierarchy, competence and equality on appointment. There were complaints about the Ottoman *kâdîs* of all periods. That is why a generalization could not be brought on the intensification of abuses. The organization of 'ilmiye was also affected from the Ottoman corruption after the second half of the sixteenth century. "That is why various sources have been written in which the malpractices are mentioned. In the book *Hırzu'l-Mülûk*, assumed to be written in Sultan Murad III's time in the sixteenth century by an unknown author, the corruption in 'ilmiye class is dealt with. The bribed *kâdîs* and their unjust treatment were severely criticized in the book.....Koçi Beğ⁹⁰, Selâniki⁹¹, and the author of *Kitab-ı Müstetâb* also emphasized the necessity of two basic principles:

⁸⁹ For an investigation of travels of Ottoman ulema in a statistical way see: M. Hulusi Lekesiz, *Osmanlı İlmi Zihniyetinde Değişme: Teşekkül, Gelişme ve Çözülme (15.-17. Yüzyıllar)*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Hacettepe University, History Department, Ankara 1989.

⁹⁰ Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risalesi*, ed. Yılmaz Kurt, Ecdad, Ankara 1994.

⁹¹ Selaniki Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selaniki*, ed. Mehmet İpşirli, TTK, Ankara 1999.

Competence and equality on appointment. All *kâdîs* should be chosen from among *madrassa* professors and candidacy should be spent in education on religious sciences.”⁹²

A young Ottoman *müderriş* Sıdkı Mustafa also mentions the early struggles of an ‘ilmiye career in his diary. We are able to learn the official life in İstanbul in this term, the education of a *müderriş* and his domestic life via this source.⁹³ The complaint components of a *müderriş* give the tools of social formation in Ottoman İstanbul. As Mustafa discussed these discomfiture remarks in his diary, these would be substantial matters for people in that period.

By investigating ‘Abbâs Agha’s waqf inventory, Jane Hathaway offers a portrait of an Ottoman courtier-businessman. The two parts of the document present ‘Abbâs’ career: the book list testifies to his Palace education while the property list speaks to the formidable wealth and commercial power he amassed in Egypt while serving as Kızlar Ağası. The book list is, admittedly, the more intriguing part of the inventory. Although it consists in large part of the Palace line on Muslim praxis, it also offers some inkling of ‘Abbâs Agha’s personality and tastes—the sort of inkling that is all too rare in a society that did not leave behind many diaries or personal letters. In addition to the puzzle of the medical texts,

⁹² Feriha Karadeniz, *Complaint Against the Kâdîs and Abuses of Their Authority*, Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara 1996, pp. 56-57. For some another complaint remarks against qadis see: Ulrich Rebstock, “A Qâdî’s Errors”, *Islamic Law and Society*, 6: 1, 1999, pp. 1-37. One can see sample conflicting cases in the courts in the *Sükûk Mecmuas* which is as a formula book of kâdîs: *Mecmua-i Sükûk*, İstanbul no date. I am grateful to Professor Halil İnalçık who allowed me to take a copy of this source from his private library.

⁹³ Madeline C. Zilfi, “The Diary of a Müderriş: A New Source for Ottoman Biography”, *Journal of Turkish Studies*, I (1977), *passim*; now available in Turkish: “Bir Müderrişin Günlüğü: Osmanlı Biyografi Çalışmaları İçin Yeni Bir Kaynak”, trans. Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Doğu Batı*, n. 20, 2002, pp. 184-194; for an evaluation of education activities among Muslim peoples in a broad context by social historical perspective cf. Jonathan P. Berkey, “Tradition, Innovation and Social Construction of Knowledge in the Medieval Islamic Near East”, *Past&Present*, no. 146, 1995, pp. 38-65.

‘Abbâs’ sûfî leanings raise consistent with those of other Ottoman courtiers or other Palace eunuchs.

The issue of ‘Abbâs Agha’s religious beliefs looms particularly large given the religious climate of İstanbul at the time of the exile. The Kadizadelis had reached the height of their powers although it seems unlikely that they could have been solely responsible for ‘Abbâs’ exile. Under the circumstances, however, the sûfî sympathies of the Kızlar Ağası, who was one of the most powerful officials in the realm, cannot have been overlooked. His connection to the eunuchs who guarded the Prophet’s tomb would have made him particularly odious to the Kadizadelis.⁹⁴

Let me, view the members of the ilmiye class in a different milieu, in the course of a festival. In addition to more a dozen European accounts, several imperially commissioned festival books-the first examples of the genre in Ottoman literature-document the celebrations in detail. The two most important of them the anonymous *Sûrnâme-i Hümâyûn*⁹⁵ (Imperial Festival Book) and the *Câmi’ ül-Buhûr der Mecâlis-i Sûr*⁹⁶ (Gatherer of the Seas in the Gatherings of the Festival) of the noted historian Gelibolulu Mustafa ‘Ali (d. 1600)⁹⁷. In the year 1582 Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-95) celebrated the circumcision of his son Prince Mehmed with a festival that lasted fifty days. The two sources approach the festival differently.

⁹⁴ Jana Hathaway, “The Wealth and Influence of an Exiled Ottoman Eunuch in Egypt: The Waqf Inventory of ‘Abbâs Agha”, *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol. XXXVII, 1994, pp. 315-316.

⁹⁵ Gisela Prochazka-Eisl, *Das Surname-i Humayun: die Wiener Handschrift in Transkription*, mit Kommentar und Indices versehen, Isis Verlag, Istanbul 1995.

⁹⁶ Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli, *Cami’u’l-Buhur der Mecalis-i Sur*, ed. Ali Öztekin, TTK, Ankara 1996.

⁹⁷ For detailed information on ‘Ali see: Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)*, Princeton, 1986.

In the *Câmi' ül-Buhûr*, 'Ali organizes his narrative around a rather neat classification of festivities, while in the *Sûrnâme* the festivities are recounted in the order in which they took place each day. In contrast to 'Ali's meticulous descriptions of state protocol, the *Sûrnâme* glosses over the solemn ceremonials and elaborates on the colorful spectacles. Far more than any other source, it documents not just the festival itself, but the mery-making that went along with it.

The festival also served as a vehicle for various groups to convey messages to the public and to the sultan. Among the performers were the coffee sellers. The *sûhtes*, lower-level students of the religious sciences, were, at least in theory, a socially much more respectable group than the coffee sellers. A great number came from the countryside and, when they failed to gain admission to the higher-level madrasas, became a potentially disruptive social element. Two thousand of them showed up for the festival to complain of the poverty which afflicted them. Both 'Ali and the *Sûrnâme* with its accompanying miniature depict this crowd as particularly miserable. Some of them showed up dragging their mattresses behind them. In it they appear as diligent students expending all their energies on leaning, a far cry from reality and from their presentation of themselves. 'Ali says that they took part in three separate processions. In the first, they observed proper decorum, prayed, and left; in the second five days later they performed various drolleries and displayed their skills and "made light of religious learning" (*itdiler 'ilm-i şerîfi tahfîf*), which 'Ali thought disclosed the true state of the ulama; in the third, they appeared dressed all in paper and put on a performance which 'Ali found "strange".⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Derin Terzioğlu, "The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation", *Muqarnas*, vol. 12, 1995, pp. 84,87. On the nature of an Ottoman festival see: Esin Atıl, "The Story of an

Steve Tamari investigates the Ottoman educational institutions in Syria. In 1910, the qadi, or chief judge, of Damascus asked Badran and three associates to evaluate the status of all of Damascus' functioning Islamic schools. Badran⁹⁹ was moved by the dismal state of these schools, and the dozens that did not function at all, to undertake a complete update of the work of Nu'aymi, his sixteenth-century predecessor. He found that most of these either no longer existed, had been reduced to rubble, or had been converted to uses-often private homes-for which they were never intended. More than anything, Badran lamented the loss of generous waqf endowments that supported students and teachers in their intellectual endeavors.¹⁰⁰

He looked back to a time when:

There was not a madrasa where the students did not focus on their studies day and night, where space was limited because of the numbers of students. Each had a special place for valuable books...each madrasa had its own teacher...and these teachers sat and without exception gave lessons at the pointed hour...and the 'ulama present would debate the issue at hand in the manner of disputation.¹⁰¹

In contrast, Badran found that in his own day, those responsible for Islamic education were negligent at best and downright corrupt in most cases. In his day, teachers were only interested in their meager salaries and they simply regurgitated what they memorized. Students, for their part,

Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival”, *Muqarnas*, vol. 10, Essays in Honor of Oleg Grabar, 1993, pp. 181-200.

⁹⁹ ‘Abd al-Qadir Badran (d. 1927), a Damascene teacher and *salafi*, a member of the Islamic reform movement of the late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century.

¹⁰⁰ Steve Tamari, “Ottoman Madrasas: The Multiple Lives of Educational Institutions in Eighteenth-Century Syria”, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 5: 2, pp. 103.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, quoted in ‘Abd al-Qadir Badran, *Munadamat al-atlal wa-musamarat al-khayal*, Beirut 1986, p. 105.

[have] neither financial support nor housing, so interest in learning has declined to the point where knowledge in our time has become nothing more than a name without substance and words without meaning. ‘Ilm in our day is nothing but a turban and pretention. No appointments are available except through inheritance....¹⁰²

Badran reserved his harshest words for the custodians, nazirs and mutawallis, who routinely abused waqf provisions, turned madrasas into homes and gardens, sold and thus dispersed whole libraries, and made nepotism the norm in hiring decisions. In a digression on the reasons for writing his book, Badran accused those who abused their positions not only of mismanagement and corruption, but of encouraging and profiting from the superstition and unorthodox practices of the “simple folk” who seek cures and miracles at the shrines of saints.¹⁰³

4.6. State-Ulama Confrontation and Patronage

It is generally agreed that the Ottomans placed high value on an Islamic identity for their dynasty and realm. Far less appreciated is how the precise content of that identity varied according to the interests and needs of individual sultans. Availing themselves of the diverse, even conflicting inspirational strands of Islam, different sultans were able to cultivate or set aside symbols and rites to suit their needs. In the eighteenth century, Mustafa III (1757-74) and his successors recast the image of the sultan as “scholar-master” of the Ottoman religious institution (*ilmiye*)¹⁰⁴ with the invention of a new tradition, the *Huzur Dersleri*. The *Huzur Dersleri* were classes on Koranic commentary (*tefsir*) offered in the sultan’s

¹⁰² Ibid, quoted in Badran, *Munadamat*, p. 112.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 104.

¹⁰⁴ For the position of *ilmiye* class in the Ottoman bureaucratic mechanism see: Cornell H. Fleischer, “Preliminaries to the Study of the Ottoman Bureaucracy”, *Journal of Turkish Studies, Raiyyet Rüşümü: Essays Presented to Halil İnalçık on his Seventieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, vol. 10, 1986, pp. 135-141.

presence and at his command, during the month of Ramadan. This “palace medrese” served a number of interrelated purposes having to do with the vulnerabilities of the Ottoman dynasty, the predilections of the sultans who sponsored the Huzur Dersleri, and the socio-economic pressures besetting the personnel of the ilmiye in the eighteenth century.

The Huzur Dersleri offered public, collective and regular encounters between the sultan and Muslim scholar-jurists. Furthermore, the Huzur were not to be passive, single-version lectures. Embodied in the lecture-response format is debate, confrontation based on intellectual difference. Among the ulama, as in society, there was more than one interpretation of right thinking, right practice and the right ways to bend society to those ends.

The presenting of gifts, from the sultan’s own hand, session after session, year after year, to hundreds of mid-level ulama was a ritual of incorporation, symbolically merging medrese and palace.¹⁰⁵

A sixteenth century source, *Usûlü’l-Hikem fî Nizâmi’l-Âlem* of Hasan Kâfi el-Akhisarî, one can realize the logic of confrontation of state and ulama:

...Müşaverede ve rey’ü tedbîrde terk vâkı‘ olup, ihmal olunduğudur. Bu müsamaha ve ihmâlün sebebi, ekâbir ve a’yânda kendüsin görmeklik ve mütekebbirlikdür, dahi ulemânun ve ukalânun müsâhabetlerinden arlanduklarıdır. Ya‘ni, zamâne ekâbîrinün meclislerine ulemâ ve ukalâdan bir kimse gelse ana hakâretle nazar idüp, anunla müsâhabet ve mükâleme eylemeden âr iderler, kande kaldı ki ekâbir-i selef gibi ulemâ ve ukalânun ayaklarına ve meclislerine varup re’y ve tedbîr ve hikmet öğreneler.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Madeline C. Zilfi, “A Medrese for the Palace: Ottoman Dynastic Legitimation in the Eighteenth Century”, *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 113:2, 1993, pp. 184-191.

¹⁰⁶ Mehmet İpşirli, “Hasan Kâfi el-Akhisarî ve Devlet Düzenine Ait Eseri Usûlü’l-Hikem fî Nizâmi’l-Âlem”, *İ.Ü.E.F. Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 10-11, 1981, p. 249-250.

Madeline C. Zilfi analyzes Huzur Dersleri, as imperial ceremony and patronage, she focuses primarily on how this institution-representing legalist Islam and displaying to advantage the Empire's working juridical scholars-both bolstered the dynasty's moral claims and gave the sultans direct access to crucial urban allies. If one looks in another way, scholars also need patronage in various aspects. A noted poet of sixteenth century, Fuzûli is a noteworthy sample. In his Turkish *Divan*,¹⁰⁷ he praises the Ottoman sultan with exaggerated words:

Pâdişâh-i bahr u barr Sultân Süleyman ki hast
Dar hilâfet câ-nişînân-i Nabî-râ câ-nişîn.

He was telling these words for the Iranian Shah before 1534. In his fist parts of his Şikâyetnâme he clearly reveals his need for patronage:

Kim mukîm-i makâm-i 'uzlet iken,
Sâkin-i gûşe-i kanâ'at iken,
Başıma düştü câh sevdâsı
Zevk-i ehl-i tamâ' temennâsı
.....

İstedim kim 'uluvv-i kadr bulam
Mazhar-i lutf-i Pâdişâh olam
Bilmedim kim şikeste-hâl oluram
Hased ehline pâyimal oluram.

Again in his Şikâyetnâme: “tokuz eflâke pây-i istiğna urur iken evkâfdan tokuz akça vazîfeye kanâ'at kılub 'arz aldum ve berâtı için dergâh-ı 'âlem-penâha irsâl edüp vusûlune mutarassid oldum...bana bir misâl-i meymûn ve berât-i hümâyûn getürdiler...hâtir-i fâtire bir mevc-i meserret sirâyet etti.”¹⁰⁸

4.7. The Logic of Rebellion

Mutiny was equated with fitne, the tumult, chaos, and disruption of social and political order that condemned states to dishonor and defeat. The chronicler

¹⁰⁷ Fuzuli, *Külliyat-ı Divan-ı Fuzuli*, Matbaa-i Ahmed Kamil, İstanbul 1328.

¹⁰⁸ Halil İnalçık, “Sen Olasan Kaleme İ'tibar İçün Hâmî”: Fuzûlî ve Patronaj”, *Cultural Horizons: A Festschrift in Honor of Talat S. Halman*, ed. Jayne L. Warner, Syracuse University Press-Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001, pp. 308-315.

Na'ima portrayed the Ottoman Empire, in 1603, as afflicted with conditions of “rebellion and insurrection”. Indeed, Na'imas's chronicle is full of instances of mutiny, taking place in the capital and in the provinces, as well as on instances of mutiny, taking place in the capital and in the provinces, as well as on the battle front.

Mutiny was more than an event, it was an idea which expressed divergence from the ideals of righteous exercise of authority and loyal obedience. Commentators expected mutinies to occur, even though they condemned them. These acts of rebellion signified the gap between expectations and realities in the Ottoman hierarchy. They served to illustrate the degree to which the state could tolerate rebellious behaviour and the degree to which that behaviour to put the state at risk.

Not surprisingly, our sources give us military and administrative men as the primary participants in mutiny. But ulama, merchants, and other classes of people sometimes rebelled as well. Troops rebelled against their commanders, pashas rebelled against the sultan, and various segments of society engaged in rebellious behaviour to get the government to meet various sects of demands.

The study of mutiny reveals the levels and limits of Ottoman authority. Mutiny can be measured at the level of the central government, at the level of armies, of provinces or villages, and at the level of the individual authority figures and their subordinates.

A common Ottoman response to mutiny seems to have been to sacrifice a few officials when necessary to avoid more serious and more generalized violence against the government and against the capital city.

Rhetorically, of course, Na'ima was in a position to craft who played the roles of good and bad guy in his history. The mutineers are not entirely without justification, although their behaviour is disreputable. They are accused repeatedly in the narrative of “*fitne* (rebellion)” and “*fesad* (sedition)”. The real blame, however, for Na'ima, rests with the officers of state who are guilty both of failure to control the troops and stirring up mutiny to advance their own personal interests, without regard for the interests of the state. This incident not only links mutiny to the chronic problem of failing to pay troops in a timely fashion, it also illustrates the direct association of mutiny and factional politics.

Mutiny was a chronic phenomenon and the threat of mutinous behaviour¹⁰⁹ routinely affected Ottoman decision making at all levels of state power. Mutinies were often declared, or proceed by a series of demands linked to threats. Often they were the culmination of a series of complaints and negotiations. As often as not, mutiny produced negotiation and compromise rather than punishment. Mutiny was a reflection of disorder in government, an accusation against the ruler or his subordinates, a meditation on the imagined better conditions of a past era.¹¹⁰

Explaining the coercive power of the state is crucial if we are to understand the limits of consensus, and by implication legitimacy, and the meaning of rebellions as vehicles of change in political culture. In the Ottoman case, the state

¹⁰⁹ On mutinous behaviours and some notions related with mutiny see: Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “Türk Heterodoksi Tarihinde ‘Zındık’, ‘Hâricî’, ‘Râfîzî’, ‘Mülhid’ ve ‘Ehl-i Bid’at’ Terimlerine Dair Bazı Düşünceler”, *İ.Ü.E.F. Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 12, 1982, pp. 507-520.

¹¹⁰ Palmira Brummett, “Classifying Ottoman Mutiny: The Act and Vision of Rebellion”, *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 22: 2, Spring 1998, pp. 91-107. For an evaluation of rebellions as reflected in the contemporaneous historical sources see for example: Baki Tezcan, “The 1622 Military Rebellion in Istanbul: A Historiographical Journey”, *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 8: 1&2, Spring 2002, pp. 25-43. *Fetawa* records also contains rich material on mutinous behaviours, see for example the transcriptions by Mehmet İpşirli, “Şeyhülislâm Sun‘ullah Efendi”, *İ.Ü.E.F. Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 13, 1987, pp. 209-256. In many cases the men who spoils the presence were punished by ‘*kürek cezası*’: *idem*, “XVI. Asrın İkinci Yarısında Kürek Cezası İle İlgili Hükümler”, *loc. cit.*, no. 12, 1982, pp. 203-248.

was engaged in an almost continuous battle not only with its external enemies, but also with its subject populations. Karen Barkey has viewed rebellions as vehicles by which groups outside the Ottoman political “system” negotiated their way in. Various local leaders rebelled in the interest of obtaining or retaining economic and political entitlement from the state in the early modern period. Ultimately, however, such rebellions, unlike their counterparts in France and China,¹¹¹ were negotiating ploys. As ploys, they did not change the nature of the state’s hegemony, clearly articulated in the series of laws set in the sixteenth century. It is only in the nineteenth century, when the Ottoman government began a series of reforms with a massive and violent effort to liquidate localized forms of rule, that the legal and administrative culture of the Empire was transformed in fundamental ways.

Thinking of the relationship between the center and local power elite as a series of bargains struck-dependent on the power of each party in the contract-allows us to take into account the divergent ways in which Ottoman control was exercised across the Empire. At another level, the emphasis we place on the distributive power of the state, its ability and readiness to make concessions to its various subjects through negotiations, moves our attention away from the active and often crucial role localities played in the articulation of the political culture of imperial rule. What gets glossed over in this schema is the extent to which local understandings and challenges to state hegemony circumscribe and define both administrative law and its legitimization through sharia.

¹¹¹ On state traditions of the Ottoman and Qing Empires see: Huri Islamoglu, “Modernities Compared: State Transformations and Constitutions of Property in the Qing and Ottoman Empires”, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 5: 4, 2001, pp. 353-386.

How did negotiation between center and local groups affect administrative laws imposed at the provincial level? What were the vocabularies used by the state and/or local claimants to legitimate and/or contest this administrative practice? Finally, in what ways did the imperial center adapt the realities of frontier provinces of Basra in the south and Mosul in the north.¹¹²

Popular movements and protests as direct confrontations between the central administration and the rural population constitute an important aspect of Turkish social history. The analysis of these movements would enable us to better grasp the Ottoman social structure. Usually, the political, social and economic reasons behind these movements are emphasized but there is also the need to look at social and religious background of the leaders and groups around them and especially at the charismatic identity of these leaders. Every sufi leader who claimed a messianic identity saw himself as a *kutb*. The role of within these movements is also analyzed with reference to particular cases.¹¹³

Barbara Flemming first drew attention to the fact that at least one of Süleyman's contemporaries ascribed to him a saintly identity, conferred by his eschatological role, in her studies of Mewlana 'Îsâ's and his *Câmi'ül-meknunat (The Compendium of Hidden Things)*¹¹⁴. Süleymanis here described as the *sahib-kıran* (literally, Lord of the auspicious Conjunction), the ruler of the Last Age who

¹¹² Dina Rizk Khoury, "Administrative Practice Between Religious Law (Shari'a) and State Law (Kanun) on the Eastern Frontiers of the Ottoman Empire", *Journal of Early Modern History*, 5: 4, 2001, pp. 305-330.

¹¹³ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "Kutb ve İsyân: Osmanlı Mehdi (Mesih) Hareketlerinin İdeolojik Arkapları Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler", *Toplum ve Bilim*, Osmanlı: Muktedirler ve Mâdunlar, Winter/83, 1999/2000, pp. 48-56.

¹¹⁴ Barbara Flemming, "Der *Câmi'ül-Meknunât*: Eine Quelle 'Alis aus der Zeit Sultan Süleymâns", *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients: Festschrift für Bertold Spuler zum Siebzigsten Geburtstag*, pp. 79-92.

is either the mahdi (*messiah*) or his world-conquering commander (*ser-'asker*), divinely designated to establish the millennial empire over which, once it has been purified of false religion, the messiah will preside.¹¹⁵ The *sahib-kiran* incorporates a series of identities, but also in the conjunction (*kiran*) of these with chronographic, astrological, and prophetic evidence.¹¹⁶

Sahib-kiran is a Timurid usage presumably meaning to invoke Timur's destiny as world conqueror without encroaching overtly on Chinggisid legitimacy, the title by the late sixteenth century was still remembered as signifying the universal sovereign undefeated in battle.¹¹⁷ Temür took care to underwrite both Islamic and Turco-Mongolian traditions and ideas of legality. Since he was not himself eligible for supreme office, he allowed his puppet khan to carry the major titles of both worlds, *padshah-i Islam*, *sultan*, *khan*, which were associated with earlier Chinggisid rulers in the Middle East, while contenting himself with the modest title *amir*, or commander. The nominal precedence given to the legal holders of power was balanced by statements of extraordinary personal achievement. Temür's chroniclers did not exalt the official position he held, but rather his person. He projected himself as an almost superhuman figure, and used the title *Sahib-kiran*, "lord of the fortunate conjunction".

¹¹⁵ Barbara Flemming, "Sâhib-Kırân und Mahdî: Türkische Endzeiterwartungen im Ersten Jahrzehnt der Regierung Süleymân's", *Between the Danube and the Caucasus*, ed. György Kara, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest 1987, pp. 43-62; for the Uzbek Shaybani Khan's claims to the title, see: Andras J.E. Bodrogligeti, "Yasavî Ideology in Muhammad Shâybânî Khân's Vision of an Uzbek Islamic Empire", *Journal of Turkish Studies, Annemarie Schimmel Festschrift*, vol. 18, 1994, pp. 41-57. On Uzbek Shaybani Khân see: Nurten Kılıç, *Siyasal Kültürde Değişim: Şeybani Han ve Özbek Siyasal Oluşumu (1500-1510)*, Ankara University, Unpublished PhD Thesis, 1999.

¹¹⁶ Cornell H. Fleischer, "Seer to the Sultan: Haydar-i Rammal and Sultan Süleyman", *Cultural Horizons: A Festschrift in Honor of Talat S. Halman*, ed. Jayne L. Warner, Syracuse University Press-Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001, p. 291.

¹¹⁷ *Idem*, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 279-280.

Temür accompanied his greatest shows of destructive force with displays of learning, piety, and care for the arts. Craftsmen he spared and deported, as Chinggis Khan had done. He further invited out the learned classes-the ulama-and debated with them; the masters of chess he challenged and defeated. His ability to hold his own in learned conversation was attested by the famous historian Ibn Khaldun, with whom he talked outside Damascus. Temür was well known for his patronage of religious figures. In his campaigns he demonstrated both respect for them and his ability to compete with them successfully. At his court in Samarqand he collected some of the greatest religious and scholarly talents of the age, whose works remained central to the madrasa curriculum for centuries after his death.¹¹⁸

As reflected on the architectural institutions of the sultans, despite their striking structural similarities, the complexes of Mehmed II and Süleyman were built to serve different ideological functions. When the Conqueror declared himself the successor of the Byzantine emperor by assuming the title *sultân-i Rûm*, he was still surrounded by a Christian population. But after Selim I's conquest of the Arab lands of Asia and Africa and Süleyman's subsequent conquest of central Mesopotamia, the Ottoman frontier state could be transformed into an Islamic empire, and Sultan Süleyman could claim to be its supreme caliph. That claim, however, required the reinforcement of the Islamic imperial tradition. In Süleyman's law code (*kânunnâme*),¹¹⁹ which was adapted to his predominantly Muslim empire, the earlier title of sultan-ı Rûm, used by Mehmed, is replaced by *pâdişâh-ı İslâm*, and the absolute sovereignty (*'urf*) of the sultan stressed in

¹¹⁸ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Tamerlane's Career and Its Uses", *Journal of World History*, vol. 13, n. 1, 2002, pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁹ For the text of kanunname of Süleyman see: Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri*, vols. 4-7.

Mehmed's code of laws is subordinated in Süleyman's law codes to Shari'a. In this new context, Süleyman established the religious law of Islam as the basis for his administration, which explains the growing interest of jurisprudence and the elaboration of the orthodox Islamic apparatus of law during his reign. This strongly institutionalized orthodoxy becomes the ideological support of the Ottoman state against both the Shi'ite Safavid dynasty and the heterodox movements in Anatolia.

These policies allow us to surmise that Süleyman intended his complex what to serve an ideological function rather different from Mehmed's. The complex what sponsored by Mehmed II was built to turn the fallen and half-deserted city into a center of learning and of monumental buildings to support his imperial claims to the Byzantine succession. Its endowment deed expressly states that its numerous madrasas were built "to repair and fill with light the house of knowledge, and to convert the imperial capital to a realm of learning". But those madrasas also suggest an attempt to impress state control over education by placing the ulama in institutions centrally controlled by the state. On the other hand, because they were built in a different context, the Süleymaniye madrasas represent the growing political role of the ulama in legitimizing Süleyman's rule through the Sunni doctrine of the orthodox state.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Gülru Necipoğlu-Kafadar, "The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul: An Interpretation", *Muqarnas*, vol. 3, 1985, p. 96. see also: Hakan T. Karateke, "Interpreting Monuments: Charitable Buildings, Monuments and the Construction of Collective Memory in the Ottoman Empire", *Weiner Zeitschrift für die Kunder des Morgenlandes*, 91(2001), pp. 183-189.

4.8. The Kadizadelis as Discordant Revivalists

In the seventeenth century, Istanbul's pulpits were shaken by denunciations of Ottoman religious leaders and of the pliant bounds of orthodoxy. In 1656, the historian and thinker Katib Çelebi (d. 1657) was moved to warn against the overzealousness of Istanbul's mosque preachers. He cautioned that preachers would best fulfill their charge "if they gently admonish and advice the people to turn towards the Sunna and to beware of innovation." They "must not spread extremist notions and so provoke the people and sow dissension among the community of Muhammad. Despite the efforts of Katib Çelebi and others fearful of the divisive extremes promoted by the so-called Kadizadeli disputes, religious conflict raged in the Ottoman capital throughout much of the seventeenth century. More than once between 1630 and 1680 the message of Istanbul's Friday sermonists erupted into bloody confrontations not only on the streets, but within the sacred precincts of the mosque.

The Kadizadeli offensive against innovation (*bida*)¹²¹, and against popular religion generally, was an outgrowth of the uncompromising hostility of Istanbul's premier Friday mosque preachers, led by Kadizadeli Mehmed b. Mustafa (d. 1635), toward certain of the empire's major Sufi orders, symbolized in Kadizadeli's day by the Halveti shaikh Ebülhayr Meceddin Abdülmeccid, known as Sivasi efendi (d. 1639). The debate that Kadızade and Sivasi stirred in Istanbul during their lifetimes continued to spill over to other Ottoman cities and to subsequent generations long after the original antagonists were dead.

¹²¹ On the complaints concerning "*bida*", "*tagayyur ve fesad*" see: Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlı Klasik İdare Sistemi'nin Bozuluşu", *Emin Bilgiç Hatıra Kitabı*, İstanbul 2000, pp. 127-140.

On the face of it, the dispute recalled chronic tensions between holy law-defined “orthodoxy” and the methods and claims of Sufism, Islamic mysticism. The issues that shaped religious discourse in the seventeenth-century Istanbul indeed those that had arisen in Islam in earlier toward pantheism, syncretism, and emotive religiosity spokesmen who claimed to uphold Islamic law and, therewith, “true” Islam, against innovation and deviation. In the Ottoman case, however, there were factors at work that were peculiar both to the way in which Islam was practiced in the empire as well as to the specific religio-bureaucratic structures which the Ottomans had erected to oversee the direction of the faith. Although rhetorical lines were often drawn between “Sufism” and sharia-guided “orthodoxy”, the conflict embraced a wider spectrum of protagonists and sympathies than the “Sufi-orthodox” dichotomy implies. The “Sufi” side of the dispute included any number of dignitaries who were not Sufis at all. The “orthodox” side, meanwhile, was directed by a leadership so narrow that it seldom represented the official guardians of sharia orthodoxy, the principal *ulema* of the realm.

In the three major Kadızadeli episodes in the century, the Sufi orders bore the brunt of Kadızadeli rhetoric and violence. Notwithstanding the centrality of the Sufis, the seriousness of the Kadızadeli challenge owes much to the underlying struggle between Kadızadeli puritanism and pragmatism of ulema decision-makers. The clashes between the Kadızadelis and the ranking ulema in the course of the century point up the complexity of conflict within the Ottoman religious establishment. Along with-indeed refining-the “Sufi-orthodox” split, the heart of the religious establishment, representing mosque and medrese, was divided against itself. The estrangement of the two principal groups of official Ottoman religious-

the one, as mosque preachers, members of the less remunerative, less prestigious subhierarchy that also comprised provincial judges, professors, and jurisconsults, and the other, the true Ottoman ulema, medrese-trained jurists holding the most lucrative professorships and judgeships in the realm-became even more acute as the Kadızadelis added career rivalries to ideology.

Kadızedeli efforts to seize the spiritual and moral initiatives in Ottoman society were only temporarily and sporadically successful. In the end, their austere ethic proved impossible to implement. Sufi sensibilities were too profoundly a part of society to be easily suppressed, and the empire itself had been founded on confessional diversity. Moreover, the faith's chief exponents, the ulema, declined to accept Kadızadedeli efforts to systematize inquisitional activism. Although there were prominent ulema among the Kadızadelis just as there were among the Sufis, in general the ulema-statesmen of the highest *ilmiye* ranks continued to represent the empire's Sufi-leavened theological center.¹²²

We also perceive the anti-ulema, anti-establishment interpretation put by Egyptian ulema on the declamations of a Kadızadedeli-like Ottoman preacher in Cairo in 1711, who read aloud from Birgivi Mehmed's writings and railed against the Sufis.¹²³

¹²² Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Kadızadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul", Reprinted from *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 45: 4, 1986, pp. 251,252,269. See also: idem, "Vaizan and Ulema in the Kadızadedeli Era", *X. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, TTK Basımevi, Ankara 1994.

¹²³ Barbara Flemming, "Die Vorwahhabitische Fitna im Osmanischen Kairo 1711", Reprinted from the *Festschrift für İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı*, TTK, Ankara 1975, 55-65.

It is Birgivi Mehmed Efendi, who was the innovator of puritanism in Ottoman lands. He was under the deep influence of Ibn Teymiyye and organized a vigorous movement that attract attention of various opponents.¹²⁴

The Ottoman official ideological structure rests, in turn, on a highly developed state religious bureaucracy. By gradually engaging the ulema in a pattern of state service and state patronage, a process seen to have culminated with the institution of the shaykh al-Islam as the top religio-judicial functionary in the late sixteenth century, the Ottomans could build an ideology that equated their being with Islam itself. Yet the Islamic quality of this official ideology was not so much an end in itself as a medium of achieving the degree of centralized social control that was the hallmark of Ottoman power in the early modern period.

In contrast to the Shi'ite clerical hierarchy, the scholars of Sunni Islam were not possessed of any particular spiritual authority, and a Sunni clerical class developed only over time and incidentally to their specialization in religious and legal learning. A scholar's prestige even depended in large measure on his independence and freedom from official patronage, but this began to change with widespread institution of state-sponsored *medreses* in the Seljuk period. Under the highly centralized Ottoman system, a scholar's career depended not on the quality of his learning, but on his intisap in Istanbul and ability to land lucrative appointments in the state bureaucracy. The result, as first argued by Tayyib Gökbilgin and since reiterated by numerous Turkish historians, was an excessive

¹²⁴ M. Hulüsi Lekesiz, *XVI. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Düzenindeki Değişimin Tasfiyeci (Püritanist) Bir Eleştirisi: Birgivi Mehmet Efendi ve Fikirleri*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Hacettepe University, History Department, 1997. For the activities of Birgivi in Volga-Ural region, and its effects see: Michael Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte*, pp. 147-172.

concentration such administrative disciplines as *fiqh* and *kalâm*, and a critical decline in the natural and philosophical sciences.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler (15.-17. Yüzyıllar)*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul 1998, pp. 106-119; reviewed by Stefan Winter, *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 24:2, Fall 2000, pp. 117-125.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the Ottoman Empire the evolution of relations between state and religious elites led to the direct control of the state over religious institutions. The Ottomans brought ulama judicial and educational activities under bureaucratic control. In the course of their expansion, they created a sequence of colleges in Anatolia and the Balkans which they organized into a teaching hierarchy.

In the Ottoman system, an interlocked hierarchy with a defined career course for both judges and teachers, supported by state salaries and endowments, brought the whole of the religious establishment under state control. At the same time, the Ottomans suppressed independent Sufism. Sufis were either attached to the court or dispersed. Shiism was proscribed. By defining the limits of religious autonomy narrowly, the Ottomans transformed the system of state patronage of religious activities and informal religious acceptance of the state authority into a state-dominated version of Islam.

Ottoman administrative and bureaucratic practice originated from and continued the ancient traditions of pre-Islamic near-eastern states. The division of functions within the administration was in accord with these traditions. Islamic political theory recognized the 'Men of the Pen', beside the 'Men of the Sword' and the 'Men of Religion', as a pillar of the administration, and in pre-Ottoman

Muslim states the head of the government, with the title of vizier, was usually someone who had achieved distinction in the state's Chancery or Exchequer.

The ulama represented the greatest power within the state independent of the grand vizier. The kadiaskers of Anatolia and Rumelia were the government functionaries responsible for the administration of the religious law, possessing the power to appoint and dismiss kadis and religious dignitaries. They gave the final decision in lawsuits within the scope of sharia. The shaykh al-Islam –the head of the ulama- was not considered a member of the government; nevertheless, he came in time to exercise a great influence in affairs of state. For the appointment of a new shaykh al-Islam the grand vizier petitioned the sultan, who did not however have to accept the nomination. Thus in 1598, despite the grand vizier Yemişçi Hasan's strong pressure to appoint his own candidate, the sultan brought his tutor to the post. Hasan Pasha was in continual conflict with the shaykh al-Islams, successfully manipulating the dismissal of one of them, Sun'ullâh. On the other hand, the grand vizier, Cerrâh Mehmed, seeking to preserve harmony, consulted with the shaykh al-Islam on all important state matters. Accusations in a shaykh al-Islam's fetvâ brought about the deposition of sultans and, equally, the downfall of many grand viziers.

The ulama institution was in crisis, however, revealed itself in medrese uprisings, while at the same time the dissatisfaction of the lower-ranking kadis broke out in protests and demonstrations. One phenomenon aggravating the crisis was the fact that the number of jobs available did not grow as fast that the number of medrese graduates. Vakfs were established all the time, since they enabled the founder to put his property out of the reach of confiscation and yet retain some measure of control over it. Since whoever endowed a medrese would also make

provision for the material sustenance of the students, people from outside the ulema hierarchy could enter the system. But at the end of their long period of study they would find no jobs waiting for them. Whether the great medrese uprisings, which seem to have been largely limited to Anatolia and to that part of the Balkans in which there was no compact Turkish settlement, changed the social composition of the ulama.

The fact that the higher ulama usually sided with the Sultan and his administration against the medrese students and the lower-level ulama shows how much this layer of the hierarchy was a group by itself, singled out by the privileges of birth, family relationships, and patronage.

The emergence of problems is in a close relation with the social formation of the class. The Ottoman *'ilmiye* class as a whole was a privileged group whose status and hierarchy was based on the level of certified knowledge in the Islamic sciences. Its members represented the spiritual authority side by side with the military-political authority whose status and privileges were based on professional skill and experience in military arts and government. The ruler, as the imam and the padishah, united in his person these two authorities (or *Din u Dawla*). The bureaucracy (*kalamiyye*) constituted an instrument to functionalize the ruler's authority in the political domain. In the Ottoman Empire, the *ilmiyye* had its own autonomous bureaucratic machine, but in the last analysis, it was dependent on the ruler's authority. As the one and only deputy of the ruler, the grand vizier supervised both the *seyfiyye* and the *ilmiye*.

The problems of scholars were not only external ones but also internal: The struggles in hierarchy, competence and equality on appointment. There were complaints about the Ottoman *kâdîs* of all periods. That is why a generalization

could not be brought on the intensification of abuses. The organization of *'ilmiye* was also affected from the Ottoman corruption after the second half of the sixteenth century. That is why various sources have been written in which the malpractices are mentioned. In the book *Hırzu'l-Mülûk*, assumed to be written in Sultan Murad III's time in the sixteenth century by an unknown author, the corruption in *'ilmiye* class is dealt with. The bribed *kâdîs* and their unjust treatment were severely criticized in the book.....Koçi Beğ, Selâniki, and the author of *Kitab-ı Müstetâb* also emphasized the necessity of two basic principles: Competence and equality on appointment. All *kâdîs* should be chosen from among *madrassa* professors and candidacy should be spent in education on religious sciences.

It is generally agreed that the Ottomans placed high value on an Islamic identity for their dynasty and realm. Far less appreciated is how the precise content of that identity varied according to the interests and needs of individual sultans. Availing themselves of the diverse, even conflicting inspirational strands of Islam, different sultans were able to cultivate or set aside symbols and rites to suit their needs. In the eighteenth century, Mustafa III (1757-74) and his successors recast the image of the sultan as “scholar-master” of the Ottoman religious institution (*ilmiye*) with the invention of a new tradition, the *Huzur Dersleri*. The *Huzur Dersleri* were classes on Koranic commentary (*tefsir*) offered in the sultan's presence and at his command, during the month of Ramadan. This “palace medrese” served a number of interrelated purposes having to do with the vulnerabilities of the Ottoman dynasty, the predilections of the sultans who sponsored the *Huzur Dersleri*, and the socio-economic pressures besetting the personnel of the *ilmiye* in the eighteenth century.

Thinking of the relationship between the center and local power elite as a series of bargains struck-dependent on the power of each party in the contract-allows us to take into account the divergent ways in which Ottoman control was exercised across the Empire. At another level, the emphasis we place on the distributive power of the state, its ability and readiness to make concessions to its various subjects through negotiations, moves our attention away from the active and often crucial role localities played in the articulation of the political culture of imperial rule. What gets glossed over in this schema is the extent to which local understandings and challenges to state hegemony circumscribe and define both administrative law and its legitimization through sharia.

The position of ulama in the Ottoman Empire was somewhat different from the early Islamic states. There was no much state interference in the previous Islamic states. There was no so clear *ilmiye*-bureaucracy connection as in the case of Ottomans. *Ilmiye* and bureaucracy were separate mechanisms. The close relationship of *ilmiye* and bureaucracy had various effects in many cases. The *ilmiye* class constituted a severe bureaucratization in itself. The hierarchy in the class was a means for the bureaucratic mechanism on its own. Moreover, holding the position at the top of this hierarchy was a means of being a substantial component of the administration.

In order to be appointed as a kadi-a substantial job for Ottoman judicial bureaucracy- one must complete the whole procedures of *ilmiye* hierarchy. The conflicts and debates among the ulama and also state interference in the Ottoman Empire were the results of this close relationship between *ilmiye* and *kalemiye*. Some groups of Ottoman *ilmiye* class were not willing to change their mind out of context of traditional role of Muslim ulama in any case.

All these problems are also in a close contact with the status of Ottoman emperor. The personality of the emperor as the unity of *din u dawla* resulted that so complex problems.

In Ottoman history, ulama was functioning as a “mediator” between state and society. Thanks to that the state could be able to control both ulama and society. In other words, ulama was functioning as a “consultative authority”; but actually the “consultative authority” was the state itself.

In the Volga-Ural region, ulama cannot be considered in a position as mediator; because they were not in an organic relationship with the state, and based on the religion difference, ulama could not be the spokesman of the state in any case.

Even when ulama was connected to the state in the age of Catherine II, they did not function as legitimators of state politics as in the Ottoman case. They had been taken under a tight state control with the foundation of Orenburg Spiritual Muslim Assembly in 1788.

Catherine II was very careful to maintain a consensus in the region. Her efforts to pacify rebellions and try to administer in a peaceful manner reveals this anxiety of consensus. The relatively flexible attitude towards Islam in the age of Catherine II had not ensured to consider ulama as a potential threat. Rebellions present fruitful tools for these remarks.

This flexible attitude and relative support were really means of undertaking the traditional role of Islamic state for Russian authorities. In other words, henceforth ulama were a part of Russian administrative mechanism and they were receiving their salaries from the state. Thus, Russian authorities and ulama were partners in directing the Muslim community and themselves. From this time on,

ulama who integrated with Russian authorities were comprehending the Muslim community and their own heritage in another way. This was clearly reflected in the historical sources.

Catherine II had to be extremely careful, satisfying each court faction or family grouping in turn, always being sure to maintain a consensus. Her ability to do so neutralized her political liabilities.

Nevertheless, this more flexible attitude toward Islam was only relative, and the Russian authorities in Bashkiria still perceived the ulama as a potential threat to order, and introduced policies clearly hostile to Muslims and their institutions.

From the ulama's perspective, by supporting the Spiritual Assembly, the Russian authorities took upon themselves the traditional role of the Islamic state: the enforcement of the sharia. The second important consequence was that the ulama that the Assembly recognized, which must have been a sizable proportion, were now formally part of the Russian state administrative structure, and the middle and upper levels, of the ulama, the muftî, the *qâdîs*, and the *âkhûns*, began receiving salaries from the Russian state. As a result, the ulama and the Russian authorities became partners in the administration of Muslim communities, in general well-being. These two consequences, the formal definition of communal boundaries on the basis of Islamic legal jurisdictions and the partial integration of the ulama into the Russian administrative apparatus, were to have a profound influence on the ulamas perceptions of its communities and itself, and that

“Bulgharist” historiography was to become an important method for articulating and spreading these new ideas.

Discussions among ulama and their activities vary greatly in two regions. The ulama in the Ottoman Empire were an important component of statecraft, especially after the participation of shaykh al-islam in the diwan. The ulama were active participants of decision-making process in the Ottoman Empire. That is to say, ulama was strongly represented in state affairs. Their efforts coincided with state politics in many cases.

In the Volga-Ural region also the state, Russian or Islamic was the main composer of people’s identity; in the region, the efforts of ulama under Russian authority followed greatly a different path. Their efforts were a struggle for existence in one respect. Even though the disadvantages on their side, historians may have many advantages regarding their works. Actually, before 1788 we do not encounter a vigorous effort by the ulama to produce works representing their views. The real formation of Islamic discourse in the region is to be seen after the foundation of the Assembly. Historians’ advantage in this case is related with the broad perspective of the region’s ulama. Volga-Ural ulama were not concerned with the legitimization of state politics. In this sense, their efforts were not means of practical reasons but of theoretical ones. I claim that the works of ulama of the region should be evaluated in this way.

The writers in the Ottoman state maybe could not have a chance to observe people of various regions or evaluate various issues in a broad perspective in the

sense of world power; but the scholars of the Volga-Ural region were more successful in this case.

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