Title

The Lazy, the Idle, the Industrious: Discourse and Practice of Work and Productivity in Late Ottoman Society

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Hafez, Melis

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The Lazy, the Idle, the Industrious:

Discourse and Practice of Work and Productivity

in Late Ottoman Society

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Melis Hafez

2012

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Lazy, the Idle, the Industrious:

Discourse and Practice of Work and Productivity

in Late Ottoman Society

by

Melis Hafez

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor James L. Gelvin, Chair

This dissertation traces the establishment of a binary between work and laziness from 1839 to

1920, the last century of the Ottoman Empire. Over this period, Ottoman society experienced an

epochal shift in the discourses and practices of work. This study examines this shift, first, by

exploring how concepts of work and productivity were moralized, socially practiced, militarized

and politicized in a non-European modernity project, and second, by demonstrating how this

emergent discourse, formulated as an issue of 'national' importance, became a constitutive

element of the general nation-formation process within the last Ottoman century. I examine the

configuration and development of the moralistic discourse of an 'Islamic work ethic' as an

integral part of creating productive citizens. To do this, I consult an underutilized source,

morality books, which display the connection between the mobilization for productivity, modern

conceptualizations of body and time, and nation formation. Emphasizing the role of social practice in emergent discourses, I investigate how the bureaucratic reforms of the state in the last Ottoman century played a pivotal role in the transformation of concepts and practices of work. By the time of the revolution of 1908, anxieties over work, laziness, productivity and the shaping of the industrious body became not only political but also militarized issues. Debates over the new concepts of self and the body of the political subject reveal the broader conflicts that took place within Ottoman society. Scornful portrayals of the dandy in works of fiction, the development of an exclusionist language in morality texts against the lazy/idle elements of society, and the polemics between various political agents that took place in the political journals signaled a vital debate on what sort of model citizen their standpoint proposed for the nation. By tracing the notion of laziness as a social problem in the last century of the Ottoman Empire, this study places the discourses and practices of work and against laziness, with all of their shared assumptions and conflictual standpoints, at the center of an Ottoman modernity.

The dissertation of Melis Hafez is approved.

Gabriel Piterberg

Mariko Tamanoi

Stephen Frank

James L. Gelvin, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

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2001	AA, Psychology (Summa Cum Laude) Los Angeles Mission College Los Angeles, California
2003	BA, Psychology (Summa Cum Laude) University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2006	MA, History University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2005-2006	Teaching Assistant Department of History University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2006-2007	Teaching Associate Department of History University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2007	C.Phil, History University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2010	Visiting Lecturer Department of History Rice University Houston, Texas
2010-2011	Teaching Fellowship Department of History University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2012-	Assistant Professor Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond, Virginia

PUBLICATIONS

Hafez, Melis. "And the Awakening Came as a Result of the Balkan War: The Changing Conceptualization of the Body in Late Ottoman Society" in *War and Diplomacy, The Lasting Socio-Political Impacts of the Balkan Wars*, Isa Blumi and Hakan Yavuz, eds. (University of Utah Press) *forthcoming in 2012*.

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__ (November 2010). "Time, Machine and the Body: Productivity and Nation-Formation in the Fin de Siècle Ottoman Society" Presented at Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA), San Diego.

__ (May 2011). *"And the Awakening Came as a Result of the Balkan War:* The Changing Conceptualization of the Body in Late Ottoman Society" Invited panelist. Presented at The Lasting Socio-Political Impacts of the Balkan Wars Conference, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

__ (July 2011). "Producing Productive Citizens in the Fin de Siècle Ottoman Society" Presented at 12th International Congress of Ottoman Social and Economic History (ICOSEH), Retz, Austria.

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Introduction

This dissertation traces the establishment of a binary between work and laziness in the last century of the Ottoman Empire, which stretches from 1839 to 1920. Over this period, Ottoman society experienced an epochal shift in the discourses and practices of work. This study examines this shift, first, by exploring how concepts of work and productivity were moralized, socially practiced, and politicized in a non-European modernity project, and second, by demonstrating, how this emergent discourse, formulated as an issue of 'national' importance, became a constitutive element of the general nation-formation process within the last Ottoman century.

Contrary to its geographic contraction, the Ottoman state experienced an expansion in its last century. Falling to the periphery of the new power centers of Europe, and being incorporated into the world market system, the Ottoman Empire implemented a series of reforms, simultaneously entering into a transformative period on levels beyond the state reforms. Discursive practices, embodied in knowledge production and pedagogical practices, formulated and sustained a moralizing language of work and productivity in the Ottoman Empire, at a time when the world was divided into nation-states, wherein productive powers of populations acquired vital importance. The following is an analysis of the modern binary between laziness and work which existed in the very nexus of state-and-nation formation process. This is carried out through a thorough examination of moralizing discourses, social practices, and public debates that mutated in various historical moments throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Analyzing the transformation of work and work ethos and their various articulations by different historic agents in Ottoman society during this period brings together Ottoman formulations regarding selfhood, subjectivity, and new concepts of citizenship.

This dissertation takes a historical-comparative approach to examine the discourses and practices of work ethic and productivity on multiple interwoven planes and themes. In the first plane, two basic questions are addressed: The first, how laziness came to be one of the most important social problems for the Ottoman reformists. Secondly, by the end of the nineteenth century, how positing work a moral and social duty achieved a hegemonic acceptance in the public realm. Social issues were expressed within the legitimizing grounds of religion, revitalizing and recreating the classical genre of morality books in a new social constellation over this period. The publication of a genre of morality books voiced new articulations of morality and duty aimed at the general public. The second plane of this study addresses the role of social practice in the spread of emergent discourses of the time. The bureaucratic reforms of the state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries played a pivotal role in the transformation of concepts and practices of work. The temporal and spatial implementations of this emergent discourse were engraved into almost all orders of the state addressing the bureaucracy. These reforms restructured offices and titles, regulated officials, and required them to engage in group practices that redefined their temporal and spatial experiences. The power of social practice and the expression of a new normative standard were demonstrated by the fact that, by the revolution of 1908, different political constituencies appropriated them to critique their rivals. The third plane of this dissertation, therefore, addresses how the anxieties over work, laziness, and productivity became political issues. The novels of the period articulated a language of difference that pitted the ideal hard-working citizen against its lazy/idle foil. In the debates that took place in journals, and pamphlets, the Ottoman intelligentsia employed this same exclusionist language to attack their adversaries, and used laziness as a political label. These

debates over the new concepts of the productiveness of the political subject reveal the broader conflicts that took place within the Ottoman society.

By the mid-nineteenth century, as the parameters of the market economy were in set, a moral prescriptive language directed against "idleness" in Europe was already well-established. This language played a major role in creating a modern binary between work and leisure and the transformation of the work ethics in Europe.[1] The dichotomy became so hegemonic that even occasional voices among the intellectuals, such as Paul Lafargue, who resisted this normative language of work by calling it a "disastrous dogma," at a conceptual level, subscribed to the antinomy.[2] As Zygmunt Bauman points out, getting the poor, the notoriously lazy and the nobility, whom Veblen called "the leisure class,"[3] to work was not only an economic mission but also a moral one.[4] The world of work, as William Sewell has shown, was a scientized, individualized, utopian projection.[5]

In Western Europe, starting with the eighteenth century, there was "a chorus of complaint from all the Churches and most employers as to the idleness, profligacy, improvidence, and

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[1] Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 32.

[2] Paul Lafargue, *Right to be Lazy, and Other Studies*, trans. Charles H. Kerr (Chicago: C.H. Kerr & Co., 1907), 8-9. Another critique came from the other side of the Atlantic: "'work, work, work' Henry David Thoreau lectured an audience in the budding factory town of new Bedford in 1854. "It would be glorious to see mankind at leisure for once." Daniel T. Rodges, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920*. (Chicago: Univeristy of Chicago Press, 1978), 1. These critiques should be situated in the larger socio-economic shift that was taking place in Europe and the United States in early twentieth century. Although anti-work ideas were not conforming with it in their entirety, the shift was accompanied by a change from productivity-based work discourses to consumption-based work discourses.

[3] John Kenneth Galbraith, *Introduction to Theory of the Leisure Class,* by Thorstein Veblen (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973). Interestingly, when this book was translated into Turkish, the word leisure was translated as *idle*. Thorstein Veblen, *Aylak Sinifinin Teorisi* (Istanbul: Babil Yayinlari, 2005).

[4] Zygmunt Baumann, *Work, Consumerism, and the New Poor* (Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1999), 10.

[5] Quoted in Rabinbach, *The Human Motor*, 7.

thriftlessness of labor."[6] Weber, who sought the roots of the industrial revolution in the Puritan beliefs, implied that the modern work ethic was the result of a linear succession of changes that were not only inevitable but also normative.[7] In his seminal article on work-discipline, however, E. P. Thompson describes how work time was solidified as time purely for "work," as opposed to the hitherto intertwined practices of work and what we define today as leisure. Contrary to Weber's teleological analysis, Thompson demonstrates that this change was not "neutral and inevitable … but also one of exploitation and resistance to exploitation..."[8] However, as Thompson points out, those workers who at the outset simply fought against the imposed time concepts were the same people who later, negotiated modifications in the work hours.[9] Similarly, as it will be explored in this dissertation, once the language for work and against idleness became hegemonic, politically and ideologically diverse Ottoman intelligentsia employed it as a critique of their adversaries.

By the turn of the twentieth century, a very modern concept of work ethics was in place in Ottoman society and the characteristics of the ideal citizen were already well known. These included the descriptive markers such as hard working, disciplined, and productive. Laziness was considered a social disease that the 'Ottoman nation' needed to eradicate. This study does not search for the origins of this shift, since searching for the origins may lead us thinking about the issue in terms of causation.[10] If we were to approach it in this way, we might see the emergence

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[6] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (UK: Vintage, 1966), 357.

[7] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

[8] E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism." *Past and Present* 38 (Dec.1967): 60 and passim.

[9] Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," 86.

of a new discourse as attributed to top-down state reforms, or to a handful of intelligentsia under the influence of the forms of European modernity.

The problem of reification of the state, and therefore viewing an indispensable gap between the state and society is one of the problems of historiography in general, and particularly of the Ottoman reform period. Works of many Ottoman historians read the state as the center from where power emanated.[11] This, of course, brings the issue of state-society relationships to the fore as a primordial binary.[12] Not viewing the state as the sole source of power and as external to these processes, as Dipesh Chakrabarty shows us, bears critical importance for this study, since in their formation both the state and the nation are under the same forces, namely the spread of capitalist market relations and of the system of nation-states as its political unit.[13] Studies have shown that engaging in certain activities, such as military exercises, mass education, population start to perceive the state as external.[14] By equating state formation with nation formation, historians try to avoid viewing state modernization as a unilateral activity. In this vision, the concepts of population, the modern state, the popular embrace of both are all connected. With this approach, historians go beyond the politics of incorporation and shift the

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[10] For a discussion of causation see Patricia O'Brien, "Michel Foucault's History of Culture," in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 37.

[11] Many recent scholarly works have attempted to complicate this view of power. See Dina R. Khoury for her contribution to understanding the eighteenth century debate and land tenure issues. Dina R. Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[12] Social sciences still try to answer the state-civil society conflict in the Middle East and try to pin down the problems of the region to the strength of the states, or civil society, or both. See Yahya Sadowski, "The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate." *Middle East Report* (July-Aug 1993): 14-21.

[13] Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Labor History and the Politics of Theory: An Indian Angle on the Middle East," in *Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East: Struggles, Histories, Historiographies*, ed. Zachary Lockman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 321-333.

[14] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (California: University of California Press 1991), 63-127. For an expansion of his ideas on the state-society binary, see Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics."*American Political Science Review 85:1* (March 1991): 77-96.

focus to a larger scale. We also gain a stance against the idealist-functionalist approaches to the emergence of specific nationalist movements, and their anachronistic favoritism toward the notables as the fledgling nationalist leaders, which has motly been informed with by modernization theory's elitist bias.[15]

In contrast to the rather comprehensively studied history of labor movements, the modern discourses of work and the social debates around laziness are not examined much in Middle Eastern historiography.[16] In the historiography reforms establishing new work practices are generally taken independent of the changing conceps of work, self, and citizenship.[17] In his pioneering monograph on the Ottoman bureaucracy in the nineteenth century, Carter Findley offers a detailed description of the work habits of the new Ottoman bureaucracy.[18] Employing a Weberian progression of the conceptualization of work, i.e. a passage from parochial to modern, Findley attributes the problems of the modernizing bureaucracy to the persistence of "traditional

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[15] See Hourani on the intermediary function of the Arab notables who allegedly disseminated ideas of nationalism in their respective regions. Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *Beginning Modernization in the Middle East,* eds. W. Polk and Richard Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 41-68. Also see Philip Khoury's addition of the intelligentsia and journalists to the "class" of elites. Philip Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For a critique of this approach, see Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Essays on Political Ideas and Movements* (London: I.B.Tauris, 1993), especially his chapter on class where he criticizes Khoury's usage of the term. For further critique see James Gelvin, "The Politics of Notables Forty Years After." *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 40:1 (June 2006). Dina R. Khoury presents the idea that the political incorporation of local elites is inseparable from their emergence. Dina R. Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire,* 1-22.

[16] On Middle Eastern labor history see D. Quataert and E.J. Zurcher, eds., *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic 1839-1950* (New York: Tauris, 1995); Joel Beinin, *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Yavuz Selim Karakisla, *Women, War, and Work in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archive and Research Center, 2005). Unlike the previous two, the latter book, although it is informative on women's labor history, does not offer an analysis of the issues of labor history.

[17] Consumption studies are not explored thoroughly as well. For a contribution to Ottoman consumption studies, see Donald Quataert, ed., *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire 1550-1922* (New York: SUNY Press, 2000).

[18] Carter Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: the Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 211-253.

faults of Ottoman administration."[19] Such approaches carry the mark of modernization theory's clear-cut division between the traditional and the modern (in the Ottoman case the conflict between them), without scrutinizing the binary. [20]

For modernization theorists, modernity was not only born in Europe, but could also only be achieved by following exactly in those European footsteps. Industrialization, rationalization, urbanization, secularization, capitalist relations, individualism, and division or labor are all sine qua non characteristics of being European, therefore being part of a universal modernity. In this vein then, modernity is universally applicable and following the experience of European societies with their protective guidance would lead these non-Western societies into modernity. Under this vision, modernity acquires an inevitable, universally applicable, and normative character, which is framed as desirable in all cases.[21]

The colonial nature of modernity, be it in Europe or in the Ottoman Empire, needs to be addressed. Ottoman society experienced a transformative shift in the discourses and practices of

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[19] Ibid., 252.

[20] For classical applications of modernization theory in the Middle East, see Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964) and Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968). For instance, Berkes sees a bifurcation in the responses to the Tanzimat, which was a problem caused by the adoption of Islam into modern civilization (p.137). Reading the Ottoman experience through such bifurcations is a constitutive element of an Orientalist narrative: the ulema vs secular intelligentsia, the ulema vs the ghazis, and for the later periods, Westernizers vs traditionalists. Separating the Ottoman state into two institutions that are in inherent conflict with each other goes back to the early, now outdated, works of H. Lybyer, and H. Gibb and H. Bowen. Albert Howe Lybyer, *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent* (AMS Press, 1978); H. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950, 1957). Whereas the former mainly took the wrongly perceived golden age of Suleiman the Magnificent as a comparison point, the latter compared the Ottoman experience to the success of Western 'civilization.' For a critique of such approaches, see Suraiya Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History: Introduction to the Sources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 174-177; Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 103-110 and passim.

21 For the general tenets and critique of modernization theory, see Gelvin, "The Politics of Notables Forty Years After." Also, see Dean Tipps, "Modernization Theory and the Contemporary Study of Societies: a Critical Perspective." *Comparative Studies in History and Society* 15 (March 1973): 199-226. For the critiques of British Marxists, see Harvey Kaye, *British Marxist Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995).

work, laziness, and work ethos. This study, by avoiding the positivistic and linear tendencies of modernization theory's rigid conceptualizations of change, employs a method that traces the historical moments and conjunctures within which changes occur. Such radical historical transformations require us to entangle numerous contingent events and concepts that contributed to their actualization. In order to comprehend the dynamics of Ottoman transformation, this study follow the curved routes that these socio-cultural issues took.

The first plane of this dissertation addresses the issue of how laziness came to be perceived as a social problem. Before the nineteenth century, the notion of laziness had a different set of cultural representatios. Yet by the nineteenth century laziness was conceived as a social disease that lay at the core of the empire's decline. While some Ottoman authors ascribed the perceived decline to the character (*ahlak*) of the people, the Orientalist discourse set the "indolent Orientals" with no sense of time and urgency as the opposite image of the hard-working/time-conscious Westerner. In Chapter I, I examine the formation and development of the moralistic discourse of an 'Islamic work ethic' as an integral part of creating productive citizens. To do this, I consult an underutilized source, the Ottoman morality (*ahlak kitaplari*) books. These are a useful source since they display the connection between the mobilization for productivity, modern conceptualizations of body and time, and nation formation. Through analyzing morality literature, two transformations are traced, one general and one specific. The general one is how a new knowledge was produced in the field of morality, which articulated the contours of new formulations of citizenship and subjectivity. An inquiry into these issues will inform us about the transformation of discourses of self during the nineteenth century. The fact that some of these books are used as textbooks in the middle schools throughout the empire points out their wide-spread dissemination to a captive audience and the attempt at the

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standardization of the field of ethics within the national borders. The more specific one, (which cannot be detached from the former), again looking to the normative nature of the morality texts, examines how work and industriousness became moralized, even Islamicized, as well as nationalized.

The second plane of this study addresses the larger issue of the role of social practice in emergent discourses. In Chapter II, I investigate how the bureaucratic reforms of the state in the nineteenth century played an essential role in the transformation of both concepts and practices of work. There are several reasons why bureaucratic reforms are important. First, the bureaucratic offices became one of the sites of the new work concepts. Work itself became the focus of attention as the government sought to improve bureaucratic efficiency. The bureaucratic reforms opened up new spaces requiring the practice of disciplined work on a daily basis. The confined environment of these offices made them a great venue where the spatiality and temporality of the new work experiences, (as distinct from the non-work activities), can be best studied. Second, bureaucratic reforms, along with the other reforms of the Ottoman Empire, address the issue of how a new discourse on the work ethics spread in the empire. The third reason why the bureaucratic reforms are important is that the bureaucrats were in the best position to articulate arguments about work/laziness. The bureaucrats/intellectuals, most of whom received their formal training in these government agencies, played an important role in popularizing, moralizing and politicizing the discourse of work and productivity as a 'national' project.

A mere tracing of certain epistemic changes does not leave room for the tensions internal to this increasingly pervasive work ethos. In the third and final plane of this dissertation, I address how the mobilization of work obtained political meanings. By the revolution of 1908,

the anxieties over work, laziness, productivity and the shaping of the industrious body became political issues among the general public. The debates over the new concepts of self and the body of the political subject reveal the broader conflicts that took place within the Ottoman society at this time. Chapter III analyzes how, in this context, the body of the political subject became an element of the reform agenda as a part of new articulations of the ideal citizen and ideal society. The Ottoman body, deemed as 'accustomed to slacking,' stood accused of a variety of vices, the failure of reform, and military defeat. By focusing on the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars, I trace the relationship between the new conceptualizations of the healthy and able body and the transformation of discourse on productivity.

Discursively constructed in the public sphere, the new forms of subjectivity that prioritized responsibility for productivity and emphasized the connection between individual and society appears consistently in the Ottoman novels. Chapter IV examines the scornful portrayal of the comical dandy as the Westernized character in works of fiction. The one characteristic that makes novels an invaluable source is the historic entanglement of novel as a literary genre with the modern age. The articulation of new forms of subjectivity, in the embodiment of the hard-working hero as well as the idle and unproductive anti-hero, presented different models of modernity, political propositions, and anxieties.

If the multiple values and accents were in their subtle forms in morality texts and in fiction, their most salient forms appeared in public discussions that took place in the periodicals. In Chapter V, I analyze how various ideological camps entered into a cultural struggle for different conceptualizations of who should be labeled useless for the Ottoman nation, and who were to be regarded as lazy and idle by being associated with either extreme-Westernization or anti-progressive (*irtija*, reactionary) mentalities. The polemics that took place in public sphere,

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signaled a vital debate on what sort of model citizen each reform project proposed for the nation. At the end of the century, different political constituencies, such as "Westernists" and "Islamists," used these labels to critique, and later attempt to eliminate, their political rivals. When the Ottoman Empire was dismembered, a moralist and exclusionist language toward laziness was already established. The epilogue raises several questions about how these issues were carried over into the Republican period. The manner by which work was moralized and politicized enabled the Kemalist regime to utilize notions of work and work ethics in the political struggles over Kemalist reforms.

Modernity is constituted through various dichotomies that order and produce the very experiences of human beings. This study argues that Ottoman nineteenth-century experiences were not external to the processes of modernity. Laziness as a social disease was a byproduct of perceiving a binary between work and non-work (leisure). By tracing the notion of laziness as a social problem and the establishment of this binary in the last century of the Ottoman Empire, this study places the discourses and practices on work and against laziness, with all of its shared assumptions and conflictual standpoints, at the center of an Ottoman modernity.

Chapter I

Laziness as a Social Disease:

Development of Modern Concepts of Work in the Ottoman Reform Period (1839 to 1908)

In 1843, just four years after the famous edict of *Gulhane*, with which the Ottoman Empire entered its long nineteenth century of reform and transformation, an unsigned article appeared in the official newspaper of the empire. This article offered an evaluation of the Ottoman Empire's position within the rapidly changing world, ascribing the empire's political and economic weakness directly to one reason: the laziness of the "Ottoman nation."[22] Laziness, as conceived by the author was a social disease that lay at the core of the empire's decline. Tracing the establishment of a binary between work and laziness in the last century of the Ottoman Empire, I investigate the modern concepts of work and industriousness as articulated, moralized, and formulated issues of 'national' importance, making this emergent discourse a constitutive element of nation-formation process of the last Ottoman century**.**

I. Laziness Before the Nineteenth Century

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[22] Anonymous, *Ceride-i Havadis* no. 141 (Receb 15, 1259/August 1, 1843).

Before the nineteenth century, the notions of work and laziness had a different set of cultural meanings than they did during or after it.[23] Although it is a challenging task to prove something not being a problematic in a given period in history, what follows is a brief inspection of how laziness was treated in normative narratives from the fifteenth through nineteenth centuries.

In the ethics treatises of this period, laziness was a frowned upon trait. However, what was loathed as laziness in early times was not quite the same of what a modern mind would perceive. In this subject we most often encounter the word in the textual realm of the medieval period as representing a hindrance to the good deeds and acts of worship a believer is required to carry out.[24] Laziness was associated with non-observance of religious rites, such as daily worship practices. As it was commonly addressed in texts dealing with morals and morality, namely *ahlak* books, laziness, based on the golden mean in virtue ethics, an Aristotelian approach appropriated by the medieval moralists, was a deficiency of "desire" (*shehvet*).[25] One of the early scholars who was known for the systematization of morality in the Islamic period was Ibn Miskeveyh (d 1030). Although there are many examples of these books, the following discussion will summarize this approach as it is reflected in Kadizade Ahmed bin Muhammed Emin Efendi's (d. 1783) commentary on Imam Birgivi's (d.1573) text on ethics.[26] Muhammad

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[23] For a good discussion of the anachronistic approaches to leisure in pre-modern Europe, see Peter Burke "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe." *Past & Present*, no. 146 (Feb, 1995): 192-197.

[24] This definition is tied to the two Qur'anic verses that accuse the hypocrites for being lazy about the required daily prayers. *Qur'an* 4/142; 9/54.

[25] For more on Virtue Ethics Theory, see Jarret Zigon, *Morality: An Anthropological Perspective* (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 23-25. Zigon argues that based on the work of scholars such as Alasdair MacIntyre, the virtue theory of morality "has made a comeback."

[26] *Birgivi Vasiyetnamesi Kadizade Serhi*, ed. A. Faruk Meyan (Istanbul, 1970). Kadizade Ahmed bin Mehmet Emin should not to be confused with the leading name of the Kadizadeli movement, Kadizade Mehmet (d 1635). Cf Kinalizade on *sehvet*: Kinalizade Ali, *Ahlak-i Ala'i*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Bulaq, 1248/1833), 137-143.

Pir Ali, also known as Imam Birgivi one of the most eminent names of the early modern period, penned books that remained influential for centuries. One of these was the above-mentioned book, on which Kadizade, an eighteenth century Ottoman scholar wrote a commentary.

According to Birgivi and his commentator, there are two extremes of *shehvet*. While the excess (*ifraad*) of desire is demonstrated in transgressing the boundaries of rightful behavior and committing sins, its deficiency, i.e. the other extreme (*tafreed*), is indicated by an inability to do anything, ranging from religious rites to things permitted by religion.[27] It is in this space where laziness occurrs; the space where one lacks any desire. Kinalizade 1510-1572), an eminent Ottoman moralist, in his seminal work *Ahlak-i Alai*, within the same scheme of extremes and deficiencies, divides laziness into either laziness in worldly activities or laziness in deeds involving one's hereafter. By worldly activities, earning one's own livelihood is the apex. While Kinalizade criticizes laziness in worldly activities, he allocates a larger section of his treatise to the laziness as lost opportunities for good deeds. For him, the latter laziness is one of the lowest vices because it represents a lost chance to have a good standing in the hereafter. Causing one to stay away from doing good work (*amel-i salih*), laziness is depicted as an abuse of the limited time one has in this temporary world.[28] In the moral world Kinalizade depicts, laziness is an abhorrent trait that costs a believer his/her eternal happiness. Although not a cherished situation, laziness in worldly activities would deprive an individual of the ability to sustain themselves in

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[27] *Birgivi Vasiyetnamesi*, 177-178. Compare Kadizadeli's remarks with the nineteenth-century authors on *kanaat* "Eger helalden kendine yetecek kadarindan cok mal ve nimeti olursa akilli olan o malin taat ve riza yoluna verip ahirette ebedi zevk ve sonsuz safaya kavusur" *Birgivi Vasiyetnamesi*, 196. For other related terms such as "fearing poverty" and "resignation" (*fakirlikten korkma, tevekkul*), see *Birgivi Vasiyetnamesi* 186-7, 196-199.

[28] Kinalizade Ali, *Ahlak-i Alai* (Istanbul: Klasik yayinlari, 2007), 223-226. For a contemporary scholarly analysis of Kinalizade's belittlement of the efforts of merchants as indicators of Ottoman attitudes against worldly work, see Ayse Sidika Oktay, *Kinalizade Ali Efendi ve Ahlak-I Alai* (Istanbul, 2005), 262-264.

this world, while laziness in preparing for the life after death would hurt the individual the most, by depriving them from all the gains of the hereafter.

Of course, these are treatises that depict a normative and idealized world. The poetic tradition of the Ottoman Empire, namely *divan* poetry, reflects another world. The concept of work in *divan* poetry, as opposed to the idealized world presented in the classical morality treatises, appears to be severed from its religious connotation. Whereas work (*amel-i salih*) meant practicing religious rites in morality books, in *divan* poetry, work (*kesb, emek*) was depicted as something belonged to the sublunary world. Conceptualizing work as a burden and something to be done in minimal amounts is a common trope not only in pre-modern Ottoman literature, but also in many pre-modern cultures. Much in line with the classical conventional images of work as a burden reflected in the oral and literary heritages of the Greco-Persian world, in Ottoman poetry work is mostly mentioned pejoratively, when the topic arrises. The excess of work was regarded as a sign of greed, and it was pictured as a struggle against fate (*felek*).[29] A poem by Cinani (d.1595) provides a good example:[30]

> *Cannot reach to the desired destination*
>
> *Neither humans nor angels by working*
>
> *Fate corrupts your entire endeavor*

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[29]For a discussion of pre-modern conceptualizations and a partly romanticized narrative, see Zygmunt Baumann, *Work, Consumerism, and the New Poor*, 5-22. For a more historical analysis, see Rabinbach, *The Human Motor,* 19-35.

[30]   *Bulmadi menzil-i maksuda vusul*
      Sa'y edup nev'i beser cins-i melek
      Akibet sa'yini berbad eyler
      Hasili akil isen cekme emek
Cihan Okuyucu, *Cinani, Hayati, Eserleri, Divaninin Tenkidli Metni* (Ankara, 1994), 210. Ironically, this stanza appears as evidence in an academic article to support the fact that Ottoman society was becoming more and more lazy and fatalistic. Emine Yeniterzi, "Divan Siirinde Osmanli Devletindeki Sosyal, Ahlaki, ve Iktisadi Cozulmenin Akisleri" (The Social, Moral and Economic Degeneration of the Ottoman state in Divan Poetry.) *SU Uluslararasi Kurulusunun 700.Yil Donumununde butun Yonleriyle Osmanli Devleti Kongresi, 7-9 Nisan 1999, Bildiriler*, Konya (2000), 361-377. http://turkoloji.cu.edu.tr/ESKI%20TURK%20%20EDEBIYATI/yeniterzi.pdf

In short, if you have intellect, do not labor[31]

Historically, laziness was tied to the necessity of earning a living (*kesb, kasb*). Earning a living has been a bone of contention between different schools of thought in Muslim societies, and many ethics books reflect these debates regarding *kasb*. For example, in a nineth-century book, which may or may not belong to al-Shaybani (d 805) as Michael Bonner points out, earning a living was formulated not as a duty, but as a right. Although there were scholars who argued that work was a *farida* (a religious duty), some scholars saw it under a different light. In his commentory on al-Shaybani, Sarakhsi, a medieval jurist (d.1096), argued that *kasb* is not a farida in and of itself.[32] His reasoning was simple: If it was a religious duty, then doing as much of it as possible (*al-istikthar fihi*) would be recommended, whereas working to make material gains in excess was condemned. The reasons why it was not a *farida* but a right was explained in terms of increased chances of redistribution: "Being indispensible for the performance of obligations, it is itself an obligation."[33] Therefore, for Sarakhsi, *kasb* is an obligation in as much as it allowed one to do charity.

A certain precaution should accompany the reader of the ethics books of the non-modern period. And the precaution is that these books should not be viewed through modern lenses. For example, take the term duty, which is the keystone of the deontological approaches seen in modern morality books. Duty, however, was not always a central concept in literature. Therefore, the reader of these non-modern texts, should keep other important concepts such as the concept

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[31] All translations in this work, unless otherwise noted, are mine.

[32] For more on Sarakhsi, see *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 3rd ed., s.v. "'Al-Sarakhsi,' Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Abu Sahl Abu Bakr, Shams al- A'imma." (Brill, 2011).

[33] Michael Bonner, "The Kitab-al Kasb, Attributed to al-Shaybani: Poverty, Surplus, and the Circulation of Wealth." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121 (2001): 410-427.

of right (*haqq*) in mind.[34] Take, for example, Ibn Kemal's (d.1534) treatise on laziness. Ibn

Kemal (also known as Kemalpashazade) served at the highest *ulema* post of the empire, as the

Chief Jurisconsult (*Seyhulislam*) during the reign of Selim I. Ibn Kemal wrote a short treatise

titled *Treatise on Praising Work and Condemning Laziness*.[35] In it, he criticizes Sufi approaches

that condoned begging. Starting his work with the oft-quoted Quranic verse "and that man hath

only that for which be maketh effort (*leys-el insane illa ma sa`a*)," he lays out an argument

against begging and for earning a living for oneself.[36] Pointing out this Quranic verse, he

actually makes the argument for engaging in trade stating that it is not only permitted but even

advised.

However, Ibn Kemal was responding to a more direct audience: an adversary in a sense.

Most of the heterodox/antinomian and mendicant Sufi groups of his time, such as the *Kalenderis*,

practiced begging, which was perhaps intended to show part of their opposition to the established

norms. *Kalenderis* challenged the worldly pomp of the *ulema* and ceremoniousness of the Sufi

groups, by begging in the streets.[37] Hence, begging receives a strong criticism from Ibn Kemal.

For Ibn Kemal, begging is outright wrong because, according to God's laws, every labor needs to

be compensated, however, while a beggar receives the fruits of someone's labor, he does not

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[34]Bonner has suggested the term in his analysis of a certain ninth century text, *Kitab-al Kasb*. See Michael Bonner, "The Kitab-al Kasb," 410-427.

[35]Kemalpaşazâde İbn Kemal Şemseddin Ahmed b. Süleyman (Ibn Kemal), "Risale fi medhi's-sa'y ve'z Zemm alel Bitale," in *Resail-i İbn Kemal*, ed. Ahmed Cevdet (Dârülhilâfetilaliyye: İkdam Matbaası, 1316). For his biography and a summary of his works, see Yekta Sarac, *Seyhulislam Kemal Pasazade, Hayati, Sahsiyeti, Eserleri ve Bazi Siirleri* (Istanbul, 1995).

[36] Qur'an 53:39. I used the translation of Muhammad Pikthall. Accesed at: http://web.archive.org/web/20071114044153/http://www.al-sunnah.com/call_to_islam/quran/pickthall/

[37]For the *Kalenderi* movement, see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550* (Utah: University of Utah Press, 2006). The denunciation of work has a long tradition; take, for example, the Karramiyya, who argued for "tahrim al-makasib," declaring earning a living forbidden.

reciprocate what he receives.[38] Quoting from a scholar from the eleventh century, he argues that the people who pose as Sufis, while depending on others for their livelihood, do not deserve the good treatment they receive from people, since they are not members of "people of knowledge," they cannot pay back the people by teaching them something in return. This, type of begging, for Ibn Kemal, was perceived as a form of deception by the *Kalenderis*. His argument rested n the act of taking something from a person and not paying them back as something that went against God's will, and therefore, was an injustice (*zulm)*. Thus, Ibn Kemal criticizes those whom he believes hide beneath the cloak of *tasawwuf* and live like parasites. Therefore, this treatise should be understood as a typical stance of a member of high ranking *ulema* of the sixteenth century against the heterodox practices of some Sufis that were becoming increasingly visible during that period. As it will be examined later, the treatise will get a second life during the reform period, when it was published in 1898/99 (1316) by Ahmed Cevdet, the editor of *Ikdam* newspaper.[39]

Mirrors to Princes to Reforming the Citizens

Searching for the causes of the weakening of the empire was not a new activity. In the early modern period, the *mirrors to princes* (or *nasihat*) treatises, similar to their early modern Eurasian counterparts, attributed the reasons for decline to certain policies or institutions of the ruling structure, holding them responsible of the problems of the state.[40] However, although the

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[38]For begging in the Ottoman Empire, see Zeki Tekin, "Beggars in the Ottoman Empire," in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization,* Vol II of *Economy and Society*, ed. Kemal Cicek et al. (Ankara, 2000), 669-673.

[39] Also, a Turkish translation of the text appeared in Abdullah Cevdet's *Ictihad*. In Mecmua-yi Funun, Ahmet Pertev introduced the treatise. Edhem Pertev, "Meth-i Sa'y ve Zemm-i bitail hakkında Meşahir-i Ulema-yı İslamiyeden Kemal Paşazade'nin Arabi Risalesi Tercümesi" in *Mecmuayi Funun (1281), 281-289.*

[40] For an example of how one of these treatises is analyzed as a verification of Ottoman decline, see Bernard Lewis, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline." *Islamic Studies* 1 (1962): 71-87. For a critique of the previous approach to these texts, see Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4 (1997-8): 30-75; and Roger Owen, "The Middle East in the Eighteenth Century - An 'Islamic' Society in Decline?

list of those who are responsible for the weakening of the empire's strength is far from short, ranging from the unruly janissaries, to the increasing role of the "meddling women of the place" to the affairs of the state, we do not see the population, as a cohesive category, being deemed as a source of decline. Let alone seeing people as a social problem, their ignorance (from politics) was seen as their key differentiating characteristic from the ruling elites.[41] Only the new narratives of nineteenth century began scrutinizing the social and "essential" characteristics of Ottomans and/or 'Turks,' (depending on the author and time). Thus, invoking Foucault, once the notion of population was conceived in the modern period, that population could then be accused of various social diseases.[42] What was new about the nineteenth-century texts was that that they did not merely hold the specific ruling elites accountable, as the early modern *mirrors* literature did, but rather placed the blame on the entire population.

Although the *mirrors* books of the early modern era differed from their nineteenth-century counterparts, subterranean currents contributed to a certain level of continuity between the two periods. The content of the *mirrors literature* was far from static in the early modern period. [43] Those who called for a mobilization for productivity using the concept of duty were not creating a language anew. For instance, as Virginia Aksan demonstrates, while the "circle of

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A Critique of Gibb and Bowen's Islamic Society and the West." *Review of Middle East Studies* 1 (1975). See Donald Quataert, "Ottoman History Writing and Changing Attitudes Towards the Notion of "Decline," *History Compass*, 1, ME 38 (2003): 1-9; Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy, History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley: University of CA Press, 2003), 135-162.

[41] For the *cahil – soz sahipleri* division in the Ottoman non-modern political world, see Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 34-35.

[42] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality" in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality,* eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87-104.

[43] Virginia Aksan, "Ottoman Political Writing 1768-1808." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25, no. 1 (1993): 53-69. See also Douglass A. Howard, "Genre and Myth in the Ottoman Advice for Kings Literature," in *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, eds. Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 137-166.

justice," or as Cornell Fleischer translates it, "circle of equity," a concept that was once a central tenet of these treatises, slowly disappeared from the writings of the Ottoman intellectuals, the concept of duty to *din u devlet* was increasingly emphasized in the political advice treatises that addressed the empire's political, social, and most importantly military position. This new emphasis on the service to the *din u devlet* comes full circle when in the nineteenth century the new conceptualizations of nation and society (*millet*, *cemiyet)* were brought into the role of carrying the burden of responsibility, paralleling a rise in the education of duty. [44] Although the early modern conceptualization of duty was limited in its scope, I argue that when the nineteenth-century Ottoman policies targeted the populace, the Ottoman authors found a new emphasis for the service to the *din u devlet*, which was compatible with the role they placed onto the people. When the population was brought into the role of carrying the burden of responsibility, the concept of duty took a different turn, which will be explored later.

II. Conceptualization of Work and Laziness in the Nineteenth Century

The 'Cousin' Narratives

"The Orientals are generally indolent… The Turks cannot comprehend the pleasure of commerce. Their greatest delight is to sit on their silken cushions, or to stretch themselves in indolent enjoyment, and repose under the shade of a tree, and smoke their pipes."

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[44] For a concept described in Ottoman political theory as the dependence of segments of society, such as subjects and soldiers, on the justice of the sultan, see Cornell Flesicher, "Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and Ibn Khaldunism in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters," in *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 46-68. Fleischer provides a translation from the historian Naima, who states that he adapted the schema, which is written around the circumference of a circle, from Kinalizade's *Ahlak-I Ala'i.* Fleischer argues that Kinalizade adapted it from Jalal al-din Davani's (d.1502) *Akhlaq-I Jalali*, not from Ibn Khaldun, as Naima believed. It was Davani who Islamicized the Aristotelian circle (also attributed to Sasanian Abushirvan and 'Ali bin Abi Talib) by incorporating the term *sharia*: "There can be no royal authority without military/There can be no military without wealth/The subjects produce the wealth/Justice requires harmony in the world/The world is a garden, its walls are the state/The Holy Law (*shari'a*) orders the state/There is no support for the sharia except through royal authority (Adldir mûcib-i salâh-ı cihân. Cihân bir bağdır, duvarı devlet. Devletin nâzımı şeriatdir. Şeriate olamaz hiç hâris illâ melik. Melik zapteylemez illâ leşker. Leşkeri cem edemez illâ mal. Malı cem eyleyen raiyyetdir. Raiyyeti kul eder pâdişâh-ı âleme adl)" Kinalizade Ali, *Ahlak-i Ala'i*, III (Cairo: Bulaq, 1248/1833), 7. Quoted in Flesicher, "Royal Authority," 49.

Toward the late nineteenth century, the cultural significance of laziness was no longer seen as part of the natural order of things, but as a social and national problem to be dealt with promptly. The goal was to encourage people to be economically-conscious citizens. If there was a disease, the cure could be found by reforming the subjects. The action taken by government officials and the debates culture-makers were engaged in shows that the concern about the character of the people was entwined with the anxiety surrounding the empire's perceived decline.

However, the Ottoman Empire was not alone in its attempt to control the resources of its people. In this regard, it would be a mistake to view the anxieties of the late Ottoman society as sui generis problems of the empire. The most distinguishing character of the states in the modern era is their desire and, most importantly their ability to harness the previously untapped resources of their populations. Through various channels and institutions, including mass education, mass conscription, mass transportation, medical and judicial regulations, modern nation-states produce and regulate the ideal national character.

In fact, notion of "character," is a major of the modern thinking. Subjects were turned into political beings; hence the people were no longer defined by their political ignorance. Governmentality, or in other words, the art of government, however, involves a wide usage of disciplinary powers and control mechanisms in the areas other than mere politics. Disciplinary powers, among various characteristics, differ from other forms of power not only by restraining human behavior but also producing the desired behavior. Mitchell calls this characteristic as

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[45]Georges-Bernard Depping (d.1853), *Evening Entertainments: Comprising Delineations Of the Manners and Customs of Various Nations* (Philadelphia, 1833), 174-176.

meta-physical: power in this sense works "not at the level of entire society but at the level of detail, and not by constraining individuals and their actions but by producing them"[46] and by shaping the individual mind.[47] Foucault's studies show that these powers were not only defined by their expansion and their depth, but also by their ability to infiltrate, penetrate and re-order.[48]

Similar anxieties were shared not only by the other polyglot empires such as the Tsarist Russia, but also in relatively homogenized nation-states, such as France. As Benjamin Eklof has shown, the Zemstvo officials blamed Russian peasants for being slothful and anti-education.[49] The French Pedagogue Demolins' seminal 1897 book *Anglo-Saxon Superiority: To What it is Due?* is a good example that demonstrates how reification, and subsequently, the necessity of its rectification was central for the many nations of Europe. [50] Some scholars, such as Frykman and Lofgren in the context of rural Sweden, [51] and Eugene Weber in the context of rural France, have argued that the practices and discourses of hygiene, time thrift, self-discipline, and efficiency are part of a process that is "akin to colonization."[52] This ideal national character stood in stark contrast to the assumed imperfection of lower classes, criminals, idlers and minorities within,

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[46] Mitchell, "The Limits of the State," 93.

[47] Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 94.

[48] Ibid.,, 35.

[49] Ben Eklof, "Peasant Sloth Reconsidered: Strategies of Education and Learning in Rural Russia Before the Revolution." *Journal of Social History* 14, no. 3 (1981): 362-366.

[50] Edmund Demolins, *À quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?* (Paris, 1897). Demolins' book was translated into Turkish, Edmund Demolins, *Anglo-Saksonlarin Esbab-I Faikiyeti Nedir?* trans. A. Fuad, A. Naci (Istanbul: Ketabhane-i Askeri, 1330/1914/1915); and the Arabic translation became a handbook for reformers. See Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt,* 110-111.

[51] J. Frykman and O. Lofgren, *Culture Builders: A Historical Anthropology of Middle Class Life* (New Jersey: Rutgers, 1987).

[52] Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: the Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 486.

and the colonial subjects outside the metropole. Often the characteristic infirmities of the "other"

as a major trope of the Orientalist discourse reflects the anxieties of colonialist endeavors at

"home."[53] Going further, it is essential to acknowledge, as Timothy Mitchell has shown in his

study on the colonialism-avant-"colonialism" in Egypt, with all its disciplinary practices, that

modernity itself is a colonial project.[54]

By the mid-nineteenth century, as the parameters of the market economy were already in

place, there was also a moralizing and prescriptive language was directed against 'idleness' in

most of the connected world. This language against laziness first appeared in the Ottoman world

in two narratives that drew from the same ideas behind modern thought: these 'cousin' narratives

appeared as a new element in the established discourses of decline narratives from within the

empire and the Orientalist narratives of the Western authors/travelers from without.[55] Whereas

the nineteenth-century Ottoman authors sought out the reasons of the military decline in the

social and cultural mores of the empire, [56] the Orientalist discourse set the 'indolent Orientals'

with no sense of time and urgency in opposition with the image of the hard-working/time-

conscious Westerner.[57] The Orientalist discourse is replete with the images of the indolent

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[53] For example, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's report on the Balkan conflict in 1914 which is laden with Orientalist discourse reflects the deep anxiety of the United States about its experience with Native Americans. See Jonathan Schmitt, "Whose is the House of Greatest Disorder?: Civilization and Savagery in the Early 20th Century Eastern European and North American Frontiers," presented in *Lasting Socio-Political Impacts of The Balkan Wars Conference* in Utah, May 2010.

[54] Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 95-127. See also Timothy Mitchell, "Introduction" and "The Stage of Modernity," in *Questions of Modernity*, ed. Timothy Mitchell (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), xi-34.

[55] See Footnote 40 for the critique of decline narratives.

[56] A similar reaction to the country's loss of prestige due to its place in the world economy comes from the Spanish Empire. According to Ruth Mackay the critique against the laziness of the guilds by the writers of Spanish enlightenment does reflect more of an inherited discourse of Western Europe's *otherization* of the Spanish experience than a social reality. Ruth Mackay, "*Lazy, Improvident People": Myth and Reality in the Writing of Spanish History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

Oriental. A Victorian colonial administrator who served the British Empire in India and in

Scotland, Sir Charles Trevelyan (1807-1886) articulated this perspective in his travel book: [58]

> The Turk is not a producer. He never appears as an appropriator or manager of a manufactory, or partner in a banking or mercantile firm. To keep a coffeehouse, or some of the commonest kind of retail shops, seems to be the limit of his capacity in this respect; and this he does in a such a lazy, sleepy way –spending most of his time in gossiping, smoking, and drinking coffee… [59]

The Ottoman version of this narrative emerged in the early nineteenth century, held laziness as

one of the major causes that lay at the core of the empire's problems. As the anonymous quote

cited at the beginning of this chapter from 1843 states, the empire's weakening position was

ascribed to the sole reason of 'the laziness of the nation.' [60] Our anonymous author argues that

the climate of the empire is one of the best in the world, referencing the former climate

paradigm, in which the influence of climate over the nature of people is accepted. However,

despite the accommodating climate, according to him, the laziness of the people prevented the

Ottoman Empire from advancing like Europe.

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[57] Orientalist discourse was not always derogatory. For example, Goltz believed that the Turks were disciplined and hard-working: "As a soldier, the ordinary Ottoman was spirited, fearless, enduring, disciplined, resourceful and self-reliant; as a civilian, he was frugal, hardy, respectful of authority, and simple in his manners. 'Plebs' and 'rabble' were scarcely to be found. The Turks' virtues, Goltz argued, were intimately connected with their traditional way of life, with its Islamic religious beliefs, consciousness of belonging to a ruling nation, patriarchal social relations, and agricultural and pastoral occupations." Feroz Yasamee, "Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz and the Rebirth of the Ottoman Empire." *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 9 (1998): 93. For how these ideas were actually formulated around a rural-urban binary, see Chapter III of this dissertation.

[58] Sir Charles Trevelyan was known for his infamous administration of the famines in Ireland and Scotland. "The greatest evil we have to face is not the physical evil of the famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the Irish people." Quoted in Woodham Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 156.

[59] Charles Travelyan, *From Pesth to Brindisi, being notes of a tour in the autumn of 1869 from Pesth to Belgrade, Constantinople, Athens, Corfu, Brindisi, and Naples* (London, 1876), 42.

[60] Anonymous, *Ceride-i Havadis* n. 141 (Receb 15, 1259/August 1, 1843). Mustafa Sami Efendi attributed European progress to science and the hard work of the people (*say u ikdam*). However, unlike the 1843 text from TV, his *Avrupa Risalesi* ends with a praise of the Ottoman "ahali," commending their natural intelligence and acumen:"fitraten ve zaten erbab-i zeka ve feraset." Mustafa Sami Efendi, *Avrupa Risalesi, Bir Osmanli Burokratinin Izlenimleri*, ed. Fatih Andi (Istanbul, 2002), 80. This book was published a second time in 1851 (1268 H) in Istanbul.

Both narratives, although articulated by distinctly different agents, were cousins, that is to say descendants of an Enlightenment-based understanding of the world. As products of the same episteme that subscribe to a linear and progressive version of history, both narratives borrow tropes and images from each other to bolster their arguments.[61] We often see that the concept of character (*mizac-i milliyye, ahlak*), both in the discourses of Ottoman reformers and the discourses produced in Europe on the lower classes and marginal groups as well as on the "Orientals" appears as an "explanatory force by representing the historically molded 'nature' of both the individual and society."[62]

This was part of a larger emergent narrative on work and productivity increasingly seen in the Ottoman textual and non-textual worlds. Once the notion of population was conceived, it became the culprit of various 'social diseases.' The key to the Ottoman success was to implement and imitate what Europeans did: hard work. A memorandum by Molla Kececizade in 1828, encouraging the population to engage in industry and commerce, is a good example of how a religious scholar took part in this campaign against perceived "lack of interest in worldly activities." [63]

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[61] For how laziness was seen as one of the factors that allowed Oriental Despotism to exist in the Ottoman Empire, see Asli Cirakman, *From the "Terror of the World" to the "Sick Man of Europe": European Images of Ottoman Empire and Society from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2002). For a study of images of native indolence in colonial knowledge, see S. Hussein Alatas, *The Myth of the Lazy Native: a Study of the Image of the Malays, Filipinos, and Javanese from the 16th to the 20th century and its Functions in the Ideology of Colonial Capitalism* (London: Frank Cass, 1977). Also see Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), 241-258.

[62] "The Egyptian is…lacking all initiative; his character is one of indifference and immobility, [without] the spirit of industry…" as one of these reformers, Edouard Dor, wrote in his book on schooling in Egypt. Quoted in Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt,* 105.

[63] Uriel Heyd, "The Ottoman Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmud II," in *The Modern Middle East*, eds. Hourani et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 30.

The accounts from both the Ottomans and the European travelers shed light on how the historic agents expressed the uncomforting presence of, what Afsanah Najmabadi calls, "another gaze."[64] As an investigative modality, travel literature suggested a "new classification into normal and deviant, natural and unnatural, moral and immoral, which were alien to the Ottoman Middle East."[65] According to Najmabadi, in the nineteenth century the sexual practices of the Iranian men became a subject of scrutiny by the Europeans. Cautiously avoiding a causal link, Najmabadi posits that, as "another gaze" entered the scene of desire, the Iranians who interacted with Europeans became highly sensitized about their desires being under scrutiny. As seen in the epigrams of this section, some European travelers and diplomats articulated, under a good or bad light, the oriental images of laziness.

The Ottoman subjects who visited and/or lived in the European countries, upon witnessing a very different work discipline, sought the reasons for the differences between those countries and their own in these very practices. In 1840, three years before our anonymous article highlighted laziness as a core problem, Mustafa Sami Efendi published his *Avrupa Risalesi* in the newspaper *Takvim-i Vekayi*, assessing that: "…Europeans are famous for, in general, their orderliness, organization and manufacturing and specifically in their economic, military and prosperity of their lands. They organize all their work and businesses like a clockwork."[66] This appreciative language then developed into a more self-criticizing language, where the ideal Western diligence was compared to the less than ideal Ottoman conditions. On

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[64] Afsanah Najmabadi, *Women With Mustaches, Men Without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 4

[65] Dror Zeevi, *Producing Desire, Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 164.

[66] Mustafa Sami Efendi, *Avrupa Risalesi*, 72-73.

November 11, 1872, Namik Kemal articulated this vision of the Ottoman society in the daily

Ibret:

> Everyone is wasting their lives in inertia and seclusion (*atalet ve inziva*). Besides, how can we reach to the [level of] modern nations in the path of progress, who divide their day and night between work and security, who found the ways to educate the mind and protect the health (*terbiye-i akl ve hifz-i sihhat*), who are flawless in body and in behavior, and intelligent and diligent; while our body politic --our women, contrary to reason and *shari'a* (*hilaf-i ser' ve hilaf-i akl olarak*), just like basil pots, considered to be an object of pleasure, in a state of semi-paralysis-- is hiding at nights and spending their lives in the condition of a half-unconscious epileptic?[67]

When examining the reasons of perceived decline by the Ottoman statesmen and

intelligentsia, we observe that considerable invective was being hurled at the "lazy, inactive, and

careless nature of the people" and their "life style that upholds resignation (*tevekkul*), patience

(*sabir*), and abhors 'work and ardor' (*sa'y* u *gayret*)." [68] By the turn of the century, these

accusations of the degenerate nature of the people only intensified. The 'Turkish national

morality,' as an Ottoman author in the early twentieth century lamented, was not based on

arduous work, but on military might, which was "long gone."[69] In 1914, an Ottoman intellectual

expressed his frustration in a book titled *Faith and Education* saying:

> A majority of us are weak-spirited and lacking perseverance. But how, I ask you, can we have perseverance in a culture like ours that endorses morbidity and immobility? How can anyone have a worldly ambition, in a country like this, where we see signs of mourning in every corner and the sound of a lazy beggar in every street? What kind of an ethical system can this ambitionless, motionless, dark, a-social environment offer, other than an ethical system that is just as lifeless, static, goalless, and lethargic? [70]

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[67]Namik Kemal, *Osmanli Modernlesmesinin Meseleleri I*, eds. Ismail Kara, Nergiz Y. Aydogdu (Istanbul: Dergah, 2005), 248.

[68] Ismail Kara, *Dinle Modernlesme Arasinda* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayinlari, 2003), 37.

[69] Celal Nuri (Ileri), *Ilel-i Ahlakiyemiz (Our Moral Diseases)* (Istanbul, 1916-1917), 61.

[70] Ismail Hakki (Baltacioglu), *Terbiye ve Iman* (Istanbul, 30 mayis 1330/12 haziran 1914), 35. Ismail Hakki, later Ismayil Hakki Baltacioglu (1886-1978), was an important figure in the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. For a short biography and list of his works, see *Encyclopedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., s.v. "Ismāʿīl Ḥaḳḳī Balṭadjĭoghlu (1886–1978)" (Brill, 2006). http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-8720. Also see Osman Kafadar, *Turk Egitim Dusuncesinde Batililasma* (Ankara: Vadi Yayinlari, 1997).

The twentieth-century Republican historiography of the socio-economic history of the

Ottoman Empire not only replicated these images, but also elevated them into an academic

language that still dominates the public discourse. Of course, the ideological underpinnings of

the Republican historiography placed these depictions at the heart of what the Republic was not:

an Oriental despotic regime that had no place in the modern world. Both academic and popular

worlds shared this hegemonic vision, especially of the late Ottoman centuries as filled with

indolence and laziness. The following remarks come from a relatively nuanced economic-

historian, Sabri Ulgener (1911-1983), and sum up the perspective of these views:

> When the Ottoman state's administrative and military powers were on the rise, perhaps at
> their zenith point, its socio-economic understanding was insisting at staying at a feudal
> mentality. A mentality that considers work as a despicable act that cannot be reconciled
> with superiority of lordship and keeps it away from himself … [A mentality that]
> attributes value to wealth only for the sake of reputation, nobility, and pomp! It is not a
> mistake to look for the roots of why an understanding of an active and lively concept of
> economy that takes commercial-mobile values to the forefront, which has been seen in
> the West since the early modern times, could not take root for a very long time in us can
> be found in these attributes: a mentality that is lumpish and bound to the land."[71]

These accusations that sought the Ottoman collapse in the intrinsic value-defects of the empire

became central to the most of social criticism voiced.[72]

The discourses against laziness and for industriousness need to be understood in the

context of Ottoman attempts at industrialization, at an age when Western European powers were

imposing liberal policies on the Ottoman economy. Ottoman manufacturing was a factor to be

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[71] Sabri Ulgener, *Iktisadi Inhitat Tarihimizin Ahlak ve Zihniyet Meseleleri (The Moral and Mental Issues of Our History of Economic Decline*) (Istanbul: Akgun Matbaasi, 1951), 109-110.

[72] In September 2007, in a talk delivered to the Employment Bureau of the City of Aydin, Mustafa Malay the mayor of Aydin claimed that the high rates of unemployment in Turkey were due to laziness and "our dislike of work." Yeni Safak Gazetesi, "Our Laziness: The reason for unemployment," September 27, 2007. http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/yurthaberler/?t=28.09.2007&c=30&i=71668

reckoned with in the international scene even well into the end of the eighteenth century. For example, in only 1788, while France imported a 2.3 million livre worth of cotton cloth from the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman import of cotton cloth from France was next to non-existent. [73] The state-led industrialization that took place in early to mid nineteenth century did not survive its infancy, the reasons of which can be sought in the liberal policies imposed by European powers by various means such as the Treaty of *Baltalimani* in 1838. However, as Donald Quataert's extensive work shows, first, the history of Ottoman industrialization should not be limited to the state-led industrialization, disbanding of the monopolies after the *Baltalimani* Treaty, or the weakening guild system as an economic power.[74] Second, Ottoman manufacturing did not go downhill forever, and it adapted to the new circumstances in the most creative ways, despite the heavy competition of the factory-goods coming from Europe.[75]

Still, the Ottoman perceptions of decline in manufacturing provide one of the immediate contexts within which one should position the social mobilization of work. The reformists criticized the liberal politics of the *Tanzimat* leaders and lamented the international policies imposed on the empire. The European protégés in the empire received a preferential status vis-à-vis their Muslim counterparts. The social and economic differentiation of the non-Muslim merchants in the empire was a process was not lost on the *Tanzimat* leaders either.[76]Ali Pasha,

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[73] Ömer Celil Sarc, "Tanzimat ve Sanayiimiz," *Tanzimat I* (İstanbul, 1940), 424. Quoted in A Zeki Memioglu, "Tanzimat Devri Sanayi Krizi." *A.U. Turkiyat Arastirmalari Dergisi* 20 (2002): 205-217. The latter, with nuances, follows the trajectory and the outlook of the former, which takes the state-led factories as the level of analysis and privileges the state's role in understanding Ottoman industry. For the critique, see Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of Industrialization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1-19.

[74] Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, 1-19.

[75]Donald Quataert, "Ottoman Manufacturing in the Nineteenth Century," in *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500-1950*, ed. Donald Quataert (New York: SUNY Press, 1994), 87-121.

one of the authors of the *Islahat Fermani*, stated in his political testament: "The Muslims, just like Christians, need to turn to agriculture, commerce, industry and arts. The only sustained capital is labor. Salvation is only possible by working." [77]

The reformists presented the human factor as one of the most important reasons for failure to advance in the international market --only if the population developed a love for work, a discipline to conduct the work with, and a belief that only through work that the empire could be saved. As Namik Kemal, after depicting the advancements of the Western European countries, forcefully stated:

> It is evident in the verses of the Qur'an, in wisdom, in consensus of the ulema (*icma'*), in the stories that came down to us, and experience (confirms) that 'man hath only that for which be maketh effort' and man can only reach wherever he reaches only by work…[78]

The reformists sought to mobilize the population by targeting several interconnected issues: cutting the link between Islamic practices and what they perceived as laziness, by claiming that the practices that caused laziness were not *originally* Islamic.[79] This involved a reassertion of a return to the original beliefs and practices. This reassertion also refuted the Orientalist claims that showed Islam as the cause of laziness and therefore the backwardness in

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[76] Bruce Masters, "The Sultan's Entrepreneurs: The Avrupa tuccaris and the Hayriye tuccaris in Syria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24, no. 4 (Nov 1992): 579-597.

[77] Muslumanlarin da hristiyanlar gibi tarima ticarete sanayi ve sanatlara yonelmeleri gerekir. Tek devamli sermaye emektir. Kurtulus yalnizca calismakla mumkundur," in *Ali pasanin siyasi vasiyetnamesi Belgelerle Tanzimat: Osmanli Sadrazamlarindan Ali ve Fuad Pasalarin Siyasi Vasiyetnameleri*, ed. Engin Deniz Akarli (Istanbul: Bogazici Uni Yayinlari, 1978), 31.

[78] Namik Kemal, *Osmanli Modernlesmesinin Meseleleri*, 220. Originally published in *Ibret*, no. 45 (Ramazan 3, 1289). The phrase in quotation marks is from Quran: 53/39. See footnote 33.

[79] As an Ottoman intellectual/poet versed:
İslam imiş devlete pâ-bend-i terakki
Evvel yoğ idi işbu rivâyet yeni çıktı
Ziya Pasha (1825-1880), *Terkib-I Bend* (Istanbul: Cidam Yayinlari, 1992),10. Translation: "So Islam was the shackle that prevented the state from progressing/There was none of this (argument) before, this rumbling came out recently."

the Muslim societies. Establishing a strong connection between industriousness, Islam, and the concept of civic duty, these streaks were later combined in the most forceful way in the *Ahlak literature*, which will be explored in detail in the following sections.

Work as a Civilizational Duty

While begging for Ibn Kemal was impermissible because everyone needed to earn their own livelihood, for a nineteenth-century reformist, not only begging but also working only to meet essential needs was wrong. Replete with new terms, such as society, progress, and civilization, the argument a certain Mehmet Sherif presents at *Mecmua-yi Funun* in 1863, a prominent journal that was published by The Ottoman Science Society, sets work as a civilizational duty one owes to their society.[80] In an article titled "The Necessity of Work" the author argued for the necessity to work based on two reasons. First, one should increase their own quality of living:

> As it is not permissible for anyone to beg and live on his fellows' earnings without a legimate excuse while he wastes his time, it is considered not fitting in the norms of civilization (*usul-i medeniyetce reva gorulemez*) to avoid labor that is necessary to earn goods that are beyond the immediate necessity and thus deprive himself from legimate pleasures.[81]

Of course, the author does not want be blamed for calling his readers to be wasteful. According to Mehmet Serif, consuming non-essential goods, or luxurious items, was not for self-pleasure. For Mehmet Serif, one needed to work more because the individual was a member of a society, where members worked hard to produce and maintain its level of civilization. The author

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[80]Mehmet Serif Efendi (*Mutercim-I Takvim-i Vekayi), "*Luzum-u Say u Amel." *Mecmua-yi Funun*, no. 8 (Sha'ban 1279/January/February 1863): 333-336. *Mecmua-yi Funun* is a publication of Cemiyet-I Ilmiye-I Osmaniye (The Ottoman Science Society), which existed from 1861 to 1882.

[81] Serif Efendi, "Luzum-u Say u Amel," 336.

encouraged his readers to target a life that went beyond surviving with bare necessities. The individual's payback to society depended on their ability to obtain non-essentials (buying power), therefore creating a surplus. Because only by "working and going through the troubles of earning," can one be able to consume non-essential goods, and thus not only serve himself but also serve to the "expansion of civilization" and contribute to "progress of civilization and prosperity." This vision of economy, instead of tolerating consumption of luxury, required it. For these reasons, not abstaining from work is necessiated by a duty to humanity (*mukteza-yi vezaif-I insaniyet*). [82] For everyone to achive this duty, people needed to develop themselves to their full economic potential, beyond their appearant abilities:

> Everyone needs to act shrewdly. This is not possible by merely depending on personal traits, but it can be achieved by training inner strengths that are only existent in human nature. Via these, everyone will achieve great works in what appears to be outside of their abilities and thus both help themselves and serve their own kind.[83]

The new economic man needed to reform their old ways of conducting business and have an eye on new discoveries. The ideals of self-sustainability that went in hand with the impermissability of begging was replaced with the ideals of going beyond self-sustainibility to sustaining the Ottoman nation and advancing its economy. "[Everyone] should increase the quality of their work, and strive to reform their trade," argued Mehmet Serif. Otherwise, it would be "more obvious than the sun," that if they do not change "what [they] have seen from their fathers and masters and strive harder to invent [new ways]" even if they worked harder than them, "they will never reach a better position than their predecessors." [84] Not only by working

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[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 336-337.

[84] Ibid., 335-337.

harder, but also by changing the mentality about work was how civilizational progress was going to be achieved.

The urgency of building up a national character that prioritized work and industriousness becomes much more evident during the 1870s. Even for standards of an Ottoman nineteenth century, the 1870s were extremely turbulant for the empire. By 1874, more than half of the state's total expenditures were being spent on services. In 1876, following crash of Viennese stock market, the Ottoman Empire declared to its creditors that it cannot keep up with payments.[85] On top of economic hardships the empire was going through, there were military debacles and subsequent territorial losses in late 1870s. Ottoman armies lost against the Russian Empire in the wars of 1877-1878. The subsequent treaty, Treaty of San Stefano, was signed when the Russian armies easily advanced until the gates of Istanbul. The Russian Empire was about to put an end to the Eastern Question single-handedly.

In this context, a very important text comes from the most prolific authors of the period, Ahmet Midhat Efendi. Coming from an underprivileged background, Ahmet Midhat became an important name in the Ottoman literary world. Read by a comperatively large segments of society, across denominational and gender divides, Ahmet Midhat authored a range of books and directed periodicals that addressed an array of issues.[86] In his *Sevda-yi Sa`y u Amel* (his translation of the concept *l'amour du travail*) published in1878, he not only articulated the vital necessity of developing a great love for industriousness, but also offered a unique summary of the history of l'amour du travail in the Ottoman world.

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[85] William L. Cleveland, A *History of the Modern Middle East,* 2nd ed. (Colorado: Westview Press, 2000), 86.

[86] For more information on Ahmet Midhat, see chapter 4. Also, for how his readership surpassed linguistic and denominational barriers and reached various Ottoman communities, see Johann Strauss, "Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire." *Arabic Middle Eastern Literatures* 6, no. 1 (2003): 39-76. Also see, Orhan Okay, *Bati Medeniyeti Karsisinda Ahmet Midhat* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayinlari, 2008).

According to Serif Mardin, Ahmet Midhat's *Sevda-yi Sa`y u Amel* was inspired by Samuel Smiles' ideas. [87] Samuel Smiles popularized the concept of self-help, and advocated improvement of the individual in connection with the improvement of the nation. In his most famous works, *Self-Help* (1859), Smiles laid down that very connection: "The worth and strength of the state depends far less on the form of its institutions than on the character of its men. For the nation is only an aggregate of individual conditions and civilization is but a question of … [their] personal improvement."[88] Although there is a high chance that Midhat read Smiles' books, and shared many of his convictions, this should not diminish the originality of the book and occlude the fact that his book reflected the urgency felt by the Ottoman authors, increasingly so in the1870s. Heavy criticism of the laziness of bureaucrats and his support for the policies that downsized the offices, following the bankrupcy of 1876 attests to the immediate problems Midhat addressed in this book.

But Midhat also does something very particular in this book. He engages in a discussion that can be called appropriation of the discourse of work. He presents "the love for work" not as a Western characteristic, but a universal love that has been dormant in the Ottoman world. For Midhat, this love cannot be seen as a unique characteristic of Europe. It exists in every human being. It is only because of established educational practices that Europe was able to develop this very love from its dormant state. Therefore, he posited that "if '*sevda-yi sa'y u amel'* is not known to be fully flourished in our society, it is because our national progress and cultivation has not reached the level of maturity, while its occurrence in Europe is because of the people of those

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[87] Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* was translated to Arabic as *Sirr al Najah* (Beirut, 1880).

[88] Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help* (London, 1859), 36. Also quoted in Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 108.

lands have more education than us."[89] These remarks attest to a few issues. First, Midhat

subscribes to the idea that industriousness is a characteristic that is seen in the West, while it

lacks in the people of the empire. However, he argues that this lack does not emanate from an

inherent quality that cannot be changed. Just as education awakened the dormant industrious

character in Europeans, it would produce the same results in the empire, if the necessary

educational measures were to be taken. Linear trajectory that places the people of the empire in a

historical lag aside, Midhat's argument makes industriousness a universal value and disconnects

it from its perceived Western mark.

According to Ahmed Midhat, the power to induce love for industriousness laid in the

endeavor of the Ottomans taking the orders of Islam to heart:

> It is befitting if we display all the [Quranic] verses, sayings of the prophet, and the
> sayings of important scholars (*kelam-i kibar*) on panels in golden letters and keep them
> always in front of our very eyes. Even more, it is suitable if we engrave them in our
> hearts. However, it is necessary to see… that, these mentioned counsels are not bestowed
> on us to create the love of work ex nihilo. On the contrary, they are given to us to bring
> out this sublime love from its potentiality. [90]

It is not surprising that, even if not in golden letters, the hadith "*Al-Kasibu habibullah*"

appears in an inscription at the inner entrance of the Ottoman Bank in Bankalar Caddesi, Istanbul

--ironically, an institution, established in 1863, that contrary to its name, was a symbol of foreign

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[89] "Sevda-yi say u amel Avrupa'ya has birsey degildir. Insan olan herkeste vardir. Avrupada daha cok olmasi egitim
sebebiyledir. Sevda-yi sa'y u amel memleket-i mezkure-i muterakkiyenin semere-i say ile dunyaca en mesud bir
halde bulunan ahalisi nezdinde yine semere-i sa'y ile vucuda gelmis bir sey imis gibi garib bir hukum anlasiliyor.
Halbuki alelade bir zat hakkinda hissolunan ask olsun yahut sevda-yi vatan ve sevda-yi hurriyet olsun hasili askin
her vechi esasen hilkat ve cibilliyet-i beserde mevcud oldugunu isbata hacet mi vardir? ... Su halde sevda-yi sa'y u
amelin bizce taninmis bir inbisata gelmis olmamasi henuz terbiye ve terakkiyat-i milliyemizin oyle mertebe-i
kemale takarrub edememesinden ve bu kaziyenin Avrupaca taayyun etmesi ise oralar ahalisinin bizden ziyade
terbiye gormus olmasindan neset eder." Ahmet Midhat, *Sevda-yi Sa'y u Amel* (Istanbul, 1978), 7-9.

[90] Ibid.

intrusion into the Ottoman economic sovereignty.[91] But how would the meaning of these inscriptions be carved in the hearts of people? The next section will explore how new discursive practices, embodied in knowledge production and pedagogical practices, were formulated, and how they sustained this moralizing language in the empire.

III. Moralization of Work

A majority of examples on how laziness was conceived in the early modern period is provided in morality books. Therefore, tracing morality books as a genre throughout the nineteenth century, one of the most transformative periods of the region, will provide a peek into an epistemic change. Morality books are an old genre,[92] but they had new incarnations in the late nineteenth century, offering emergent discourses on work, body and time, self, and citizenship.[93] Transformation of the content of these books was one way in which a new awareness regarding a changed approach to work and productivity became visible at a discursive level. The books illustrated how productivity and work were articulated in normative terms and how religious idiom played a role in establishing a normative and moralizing language on work.

Shifts in morality texts reflect new reconfigurations of morality and authority. Intertwining multiple sources of justification was not unique to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries either. Looking closely, the genre of *ahlak* books had its own shifts throughout history,

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[91] *"The Industrious isa beloved of God."* This phrase appears in the market places throughout the Middle East. But it is significant to remember that the same inscription on the Beyazid entrance of the famous Kapalicarsi (the Grand Bazaar) is a nineteenth-century addition. Composed by Hattat Sami Efendi, it was placed on the gate during the renovation that took place following the 1894 earthquake.

[92] Not all books that have *Adab* in their title are books on morality in the strict sense. Before the nineteenth century, some books titled *adab* involved the way a *munazara* (debate) should be conducted. Part of logic, this genre is known as adab-i bahth and munazara.

[93] According to an incomprehensive bibliography compiled by A. Faruk Ozturk, there are 49 original works, 54 textbooks, 20 translated works, and 15 unfound morality books published in the last decades of the empire. A. Faruk Ozturk, "Ahlak Kitaplari." *Kebikec* 6 (Istanbul, 1998), 31-39.

reflecting various knowledge basins of its time period. The genre, in this sense, can be traced to see how various pressing new currents entered --never in a merely intellectual sense-- and thus transformed and were transformed by the genre. Currents from Platonic and Neo-Platonic to Persian statecraft literature, for example, along with their practices, to the fable-based narratives of the Indian subcontinent can be named as a few examples.[94] Each of these currents made their way into the living practices and hence were absorbed into morality books. The first morality books produced in the Islamic era were translations, such as the Sanskrit work *Kalila wa Dimna* (translated by Ibn Muqaffa, d. 757) and Plato's works on morality (by Ishaq b. Huneyn, d. 910), both of which became foundational texts for the later periods. These should be understood as part of a discursive tradition where "historically evolving set of discourses, embodied in the practices and institutions of Islamic societies and hence deeply imbricated in the material life of those inhabiting them."[95] Therefore, it is not only ahistorical, but also dogmatic (hence against the nature of any field of knowledge) to expect that they entertained only one source of authority. The history of morality literature, in this context, did not display a monolithic and static nature, which was presumably broken only with the advent of modernity.

Even under this light, starting with the mid-nineteenth century, the genre displayed a great departure from earlier morality texts on various levels. Despite a nominal continuity and similarities, books dealing with morality in the nineteenth century and previous centuries, such as Kinalizade's, or even as late as Kadizadeli's eighteenth-century commentary on Birgivi,

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[94] For the history of the genre in Islamicate societies, see *Encyclopedia of Islam 1st ed.*, s.v. "Akhlaq." (Leiden: Brill,1960).http://www.brillonline.nl/public/LOGIN?sessionid=2ce3f8572a06fe1fd1ee79848ddf7413&authstatuscode=400

[95] Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Occasional Papers* (Washington D.C.: Ctr. for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown, 1986). Mentioned in Charles Hirschkind, "Heresy or Hermeneutics: the Case of Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd," *Stanford Electronic Humanities Review* 5:1 http://www.stanford.edu/group/SHR/5-1/text/hirschkind.html

differed from each other. Changes in content can be summarized by three intertwined issues. First, unlike the previous ethics books, in the nineteenth century, most of these texts offered discussions germane to the new concept of citizenship.[96] Ethics books before the nineteenth century were concerned with the ideal Muslim, with an otherworldly perfection. This does not mean that previous morality books were merely targeting the individual. They targeted a moral community. As Talal Asad pointed out about the role of *ulema* in advising the right way (*nasiha*), the virtuous Muslim was not an autonomous individual, "but as an individual inhabiting the moral space shared by all who are together bound to god (*the ummah*)."[97] Morality texts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries addressed a moral community as well, but this was a moral community that was overlapping with the Ottoman nation. Starting with the nineteenth century, moral space was also a political space, overlapping with a new set of practices and norms of citizenship and self. The nineteenth-century books addressed their readers not only as morally accountable individuals, but also as members of a nation, i.e. as citizens of the Ottoman Empire, at a time the world was divided into nation-states, where productive powers of populations became vitally important. In a paralleling phenomenon in the nineteenth-century Iran, as Afsanah Najmabadi points out, "the perfect man had changed from a Muslim believer to an Iranian citizen."[98] This was reflected in new ideas ranging from the duties of citizens, serving the state, paying taxes, and after the constitutional revolution of 1908, the duty of participating in the election system. Unlike their non-modern counterparts, once the citizen was in the frontlines

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[96] For the non-modern scholars who wrote on *ahlak*, see Mehmet Ali Ayni, *Turk Ahlakcilari* (Istanbul: Marifet, 1939).

[97] Talal Asad, *Genelogies of Religion* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 214.

[98] Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches,* 184.

of concern, some of the nineteenth and early twentieth century morality texts treated the character of the individual as degenerate and flawed, requiring rectification.

Second, the authorship of these books changed. While before the nineteenth century these books were written by members of *ulema* (such as Kinalizade, or earlier influential names, such as Ibn Miskawayh, Ghazali, Nasireddin Tusi, all of whom were trend-setters in the field of ethics), in the latter half of the nineteenth century, these books were written by *ulema* as well as high and low ranking bureaucrats, middle school instructors, doctors –virtually anyone that wanted to put their pen on the paper for the issue of strengthening individual and social morality. The fact that Maarif Nezareti (Ministry of Education) opened a contest for morality books attests to the encouragement educators received to produce this genre [99] Writers of these books, just as other culture producers of urban centers, were "subject to and cognizant of the same pressures as the state planners."[100] They offered a critique of society, which used to be predominantly the realm of the *ulema*. Although each author's primary audience differed, each addressed/imagined the Ottoman nation as a single entity, as sharing a homogenous culture, while, at the same time, simultaneously drawing contours of an ideal individual. Moreover, these popular texts were almost always directed at ordinary people and not a scholarly audience; therefore, they organized and presented the material in an easily accessible language that offered practical applicability.[101]

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[99] Ali Seydi, *Ahlak-I Dini* (1329 [1913-14]), Preface. Ali Seydi wrote his book in order to partake in this contest, but he was never contacted.

[100] James Gelvin, "Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc? Reassessing the Lineages of Nationalism in Bilad al-Sham," in *From the Syrian Land to the State of Syria,* eds. Thomas Philipp and Christoph Schumann (Beirut: Orient-institute DMG, 2004), 127-42.

[101] This is similar to the popular Islamic texts from twentieth-century Egypt that Mahmoud Saba examined. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005), Kindle Edition. However, it should be noted that writing for the common reader was not a nineteenth-century phenomenon, demonstrated by the popularity of books such as *Muhammediye*, written by Yazicioglu Mehmed (d.1451), which is centered around the self-discipline of the followers based on the model of the prophet Muhammed. Yazicizade Mehmed, *Kitab-I Muhammediye* (Istanbul, 1313/1895).

Third, in these books, a new awareness regarding work and industriousness was articulated. As part of social duties (*vazife-i ictimaiyye*) and duties to self (*vazife-i zatiyye*), these books constructed work in a moralizing language, making it not only an individual path to happiness and fulfillment, but also a social duty that would elevate level of the civilization and progress of the empire. Moralization of work contributed to identification of laziness and idleness not only as forms of moral corruption but also as social diseases. While addressing laziness, these texts contributed strongly to the development of an exclusionist language, at the most abstract level, by labeling those who perceived to be non-productive elements as lazy and idle, and therefore, as elements hindering progress. Morality texts, especially in the extremely polarized and ideologically heterogeneous context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, articulated an exclusionist language that, after 1908 and more so after 1923, had political ramifications.[102]

Readership

There was also a popular embrace of morality books. With more than 140 books published during the reform period,[103] morality books were a popular genre, some of them comparable to self-help pamphlets of Samuel Smiles and his ilk. Self-improvement as a social duty is the most common denominator of these two genres, however, the differences, which will be revealed in the coming sections, are distinctive.[104] Ottoman morality books, in that regard,

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[102] This issue is explored in Chapter V.

[103] Ozturk, "Ahlak Kitaplari," 31-39.

[104] Mahmoud, looking at the religious texts published in the second half of the twentieth century Egypt, dismisses the similarities between the two genres as superficial. These texts, and the whole gamut of new practices that made these texts available, share a common element. The fact that she is writing about a period that is one hundred years

were a new genre that transformed the elements of both, namely traditions of the genre as well as tropes of Western self-help books, hence becoming a distinctly nineteenth-century and an Ottoman literary practice.

The popularity of these texts was reflected in the fact that most of penmen of this era tried their hand in these books, and in the petitions that requested these texts along with such old-timers as alphabets (*elifba*). The genre was already known to people –it was read, and more frequently, listened to in its earlier formats among the public for centuries. The petitions attest to their demand from all over Anatolia and the Balkans.[105] While some morality books were written for the general public, mostly in small sizes, such as pocket books, formulating an ideal self for the enlarging reading community, others, as in Europe, were used as textbooks in primary and middle schools.[106] The fact that some of these books were taught as textbooks at the secondary schools all over the empire points to their widespread dissemination over a captive audience.

Morality text readership was not limited to the Muslim community of the Ottoman Empire either. Yehezkel Gabbay, an Ottoman journalist (1825-1898) translated (in the most lose sense of the term) *Risale-i Ahlak* into Ladino, a Sephardic language primarily spoken by the Sephardic Jews of the Ottoman Empire. *Risale-i Ahlak*, discussed in more detail later in this chapter, was written by Sadik Rifat Pasha (1807-1856), a Tanzimat leader, as one of the first modern morality books. Gabbay argued that this very style needed to replace the older and

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later than the period under study here may be the reason why Mahmoud declares the similarity as superficial. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*.

[105]BOA MF MKT 10/103 7 R 1290 03 June 1873

[106] For details about morality education and the curriculum, see Fusun Ustel, *Makbul Vatandasin Pesinde, II. Mesruiyetten Bugune Vatandaslik Egitimi* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2008), 33-55. For European morality education, see Phyllis Stock-Morton, *Moral Education for a Secular Society*: *The Development of Morale Laique in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York: SUNY Press, 1988).

according to him obscure texts of Judaic morality books.[107] It is significant that this book, titled

Buen Dotrino, was a nineteenth century formulation of a long tradition of ethics books, *Sifrut*

Musar in the Jewish tradition.[108] The transformed content was embellished with a prayer about

the Holy Temple, which was added to the end.[109] *Buen Dotrino* became a textbook in the primary

education of the Ladino-speaking community. Hence, shift in discourses of morality was not an

experience limited to one community of the empire: it transgressed communal lines.

Writing and reading morality books was a social practice that produced discursive spaces

that made different kinds of knowledge, action, and subjectivity possible. Through analyzing

morality literature, then, two transformations will be traced, a general and a specific one. The

general one is how a new knowledge was produced in the field of morality, which articulated

contours of new formulations of citizenship and subjectivity. An inquiry into these issues will

inform us about the transformation of discourses of the self during the nineteenth century. The

more specific one, which cannot be detached from the former, was through the normative nature

of morality texts, how work and industriousness became moralized, even Islamicized, and

nationalized. What follows is a discussion on how a new knowledge field, morality, was

discursively produced in the period that stretches between mid-nineteenth century and 1908. It is

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[107] For literature on *Sifrut Musar*, see Matthias B. Lehmann, *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005). For its review, see Julia Cohen, "King Merodakh's Telegraph: Ottoman Jewish Religious Modernity," Published on *H-Levant* (March, 2010), http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=26171. For a recent work on the nineteenth century Jewish-Ottoman voice from Salonika which critiqued the obscurantism of the Rabbinical establishment of the city, see *A Jewish Voice from Ottoman Salonica: The Ladino Memoir of Sa'adi Besalel a-Levi,* eds. Aron Rodrigue and Sarah Abrevaya Stein,. trans. Isaac Jerusalmi (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

[108] The author's next project will involve the *ahlak* literature and its implications for the new practices of subjectivity throughout the Middle East. A survey across "national" boundaries and religious communities, it will employ a comparative-historical approach in examining morality discourses in the Ottoman Empire and Qajar Iran, written in Ottoman, Arabic, Persian, as well as Armeno-Turkish, Ladino and Hebrew.

[109] Sadik Rifat Paşa and Yehezkel Gabbay, *From Ottoman Turkish to Ladino: the case of Mehmet Sadik Rifat Pasha's Risâle-i Ahlâk and Judge Yehezkel Gabbay's Buen dotrino*, ed. Isaac Jerusalmi (Cincinnati, Ohio: Ladino Books, 1990), 12.

within these new discourses and practices of morality books, through a survey of representative opinions, that the moralization of work as an ultimate national/religious act was accomplished.

Morality in the Age of Nation-States

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, issues regarding morality, as Benjamin Fortna puts it, became "a burning issue of the day" for the Ottoman society.[110] Indeed, even a quick look at popular press of the time reveals a beaten path when it comes to morality -- more precisely its bad condition and prescriptions regarding its rectification. As the empire faced more internal and external threats, the dosage of morally-prescribed solutions increased. Sheer numbers are sufficient to demonstrate the booming in the interest of morality. The number of morality texts published in the last century of the Ottoman Empire surpassed far beyond those published in the previous four centuries. Along with new morality texts, old morality texts were republished, especially during the 1860s.[111] Morality became one of expanding/transforming fields of knowledge in the nineteenth century.

One of the most important terms of morality discourses at this time period was duty. Whereas, as seen earlier, in the concept of earning a living (*kesb*, *kasb*), the morality languages did not use a duty-laden language, instead these languages were formed upon terms such as *haqq*, i.e. having a right. The concept of duty takes an elevated position in the hierarchy of morality discourses in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As one morality text declared, "duty is the soul of the science of ethics. Ethics is the science of duties."[112] It can be argued that

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[110] Benjamin Fortna, *The Imperial Classroom* (Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press, 2002), 203.

[111] Howard, "Genre and Myth in the Ottoman Advice for Kings Literature," 137-166.

[112] A. Kemal, *Ilm-i Ahlak* (Istanbul: 1330R), 3.

the virtue ethics approach that has been practiced for centuries, was partially shifted toward a deontological approach, which centered on duties.[113]

One way in which new morality discourses were spread was through the integration of morality books into the new educational institutions of *Tanzimat*. With the emergence of the concept of population as a 'national asset,' educating the population became one of the top goals of the reformers. As Foucault pointed out, "discursive practices (…) are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behavior, in forms of transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them."[114]

Universal education, undertaken by the modernizing states, acquired an additional layer of cultural importance in the Ottoman Empire: it came to symbolize a civilizational value. Educational reforms of the nineteenth century addressed the issue of education as a matter of civilizational progress. According to a story, in 1865, Yusuf Ziya Bey, a future minister of the Ottoman Empire, used to pass by coffeehouses where workers of the famous Covered Bazaar frequented, and was hurt by seeing them kill time every morning before the bazaar was opened for business. He developed a desire to teach them "literacy and some social principles," which made him pursue reforms in the field of education.[115] This story demonstrates how idle powers of the people became visible and problematic to the Ottoman reformists. As new formulations of duty of this era, education and raising the civilizational bar of the population was the duty of the

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[113] For a nineteenth-century articulation of duty in a different context, see Samuel Smiles, *Duty* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2011). For an example of deontological approaches in the Ottoman realm, see Mehmet Said's *Ahlak-i Hamide* (Istanbul, 1297/1879/1880). For different approaches to morality, see Zigon, *Morality*.

[114] Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* ed. D.F Boucard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 200. Quoted in Richard Terdiman, *Discourse, Counter-Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 56.

[115] This became the basis of one of the earliest pedagogical associations of the Ottoman Empire, *Cemiyet-i Tedrisiye-i Islamiye*. See Nafi Atuf Kansu, *Turkiye Maarif Tarihi, bir Deneme* (Istanbul, Muallim Ahmet Halit Kiraathanesi, 1931), 127.

state for its citizens. As Saffet Pasha (1814-1883), who is known for crafting the Educational Reform Bill of 1869 (now on *Nizamname* of 1869*)*, put it, "education of the public [is] the duty of any state and government." [116] It was the duty of the state to educate the pupils about their social duties (*vezaif-i cemiyyet*). As it can be seen, these notions and ideals were not only reinforced by the state reforms, but social organizations.

Integration of morality into modern, and in majority of Europe, secular education, was a concern of nation-states. The phenomenon of moral education was not unique to the Ottoman Empire, but it was observed in various parts of the world, such as in France, China, and Japan.[117] Concerned with the same issue, Durkheim gave series of lectures in 1898-9 on moral education to students of pedagogy, addressing the matter of integrating moral teachings into secular education. [118] Durkheim argued that morality's sources and objects must be a supra-individual entity. For Durkheim, this entity was society itself since "the domain of the moral begins where the domain of the social begins."[119] For Durkheim, there are various societies an individual belongs to, but there needs to be a hierarchy among these societies, since "the family is subordinate to the nation, and humanity has as of yet not organized itself into any one coherent group, the nation has priority in terms of being the ultimate authority and source of morality."[120] The unproblematic attribution of cohesion to society aside, Durkheim was articulating a concept of morality at the age of nation-states. Whether or not Ottoman morality authors attended and/or

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116 "Terbiye-i ammenin istikmali her devlet ve hukumetin ehemmiyetli vazifelerinden oldugu…" Quoted in Kansu, *Turkiye Maarif*, 130.

117 Fortna, *The Imperial*, 26-42.

118 Zigon, *Morality*, 33.

119 Quoted in Zigon, *Morality*, 35.

120 Zigon, *Morality*, 33.

read the Durkheim lectures is an irrelevant question. Surrounded with similar new practices, roughly around the same time period, the Ottoman authors addressed the similar set of problems in this novel field, which can be called morality at the age of nation-states.

The universal need of installing a national sense in the population, and the particular urgency of bringing together peoples of the empire, intertwined Ottomanism with educational reforms. Pedagogical discourses and practices involved in educational institutions present one of the largest channels of Ottomanist ideas and practices. Although Ottomanism's width and content changed throughout until the dismemberment of the empire after World War I, based on changes in the demographic nature of the empire, reformists regarded education especially vital for the Ottoman Empire, since education was seen as one of the most important channels that would bring the seemingly disparate religious communities of the empire together.[121] One of the leading names of the *Tanzimat* reforms, Âli Pasha (1815-1871) summarized the fear of disintegration and its solution: "Ethnic and interest-driven discord among various subjects will end up with disintegration. The state should work on bringing these differences together by education –this is doable. People seek prosperity and security, and the homeland is where these needs are met." [122] This goal was a most identifiable impetus behind educational reforms of the nineteenth century, such as the *Nizamname of 1869,* which reinforced morality education in grade schools (*sibyan mektepleri*), and introduced mandatory attendance.[123]

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[121] This role of education has been emphasized starting with the *Islahat Reformu* to the memorandums of Ali and Fuad Pasha. See *Belgelerle Tanzimat: Osmanli Sadrazamlarindan Ali ve Fuad Pasalarin Siyasi Vasiyetnameleri,* ed. Engin Deniz Akarli (Istanbul: Bogazici Uni Yayinlari, 1978), 15-39. For a summary of Ottomanism's flexible and incoherent nature, see Howard L. Eissenstat, *The Limits of Imagination: Debating the Nation and Constructing the State in Early Turkish Nationalism*, Unpublished Dissertation (UCLA, 2007), 65.

[122] *Ali Pasanin Siyasi Vasiyetnamesi*, 30.

[123] Cahit Yalcin Bilim, *Turkiyede Cagdas Egitim Tarihi (1734-1876)* (Eskisehir: TC Anadolu Uni Yayinlari, 2002), 170-202.

It is necessary to note that the matter of educating the public has not strictly been a nineteenth-century phenomenon. There have been royal decrees requiring parents to allow their children to attend *sibyan mektepleri*, at least for basic education. [124] However, reasoning behind educating the youth was not cloaked in a language that emphasized the betterment of society; in a world in which the term for society (*hey'et-i ictimaiyye*) had not made its debut yet, this was expected.

Education, as a project, cannot be reduced to the content of educational program. Pupils were disciplined in myriad of levels, perhaps the least of which was the content. Schooling, by its nature, involved an education on time, where a lack of punctuality was something to be punished. In the context of Russian educational reforms, Allen Sinel argued that the school "by the very regularity of its organization and assignments … can instill those attitudes to time, to work, and to discipline which are essential prerequisites for 'becoming modern.'" [125] A *talimatname* issued in 1860 by the General Education Council (*Meclis-I Maarif-i Umumiye*) for middle school (*rushdiye mektepleri*) teachers clearly shows how, very similar to the bureaucratic offices that will be explored in the next chapter, students were disciplined in punctuality, attendance, and the rules of workforce that they would join in near future:[126] "When a student

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[124] These decrees called parents to put aside the need to use the labor of their children. Since agriculture was the predominant way of making a living in the Ottoman Empire, as it was throughout the world until the mid-twentieth century, this meant employing children in agriculture or as apprentices. The royal decree of 1702 stated the need for children to learn the basic rules of faith, and discouraged parents from allowing children to engage in crafts before going through this basic education: "Itikada muteallik zaruri meseleleri ogreninceye kadar dunya sanayii ile ugrastirmaktan sakinmalidir." Nafi Atuf Kansu, *Turkiye Maarif,* 29.

[125] Allen Sinel, "Problems in the Periodization of Russian Education: A Tentative Solution." *Slavic and European Education Review (*1977): 54-61. Quoted in Ben Eklof, "Peasant Sloth Reconsidered." *Journal of Social History* 14:3 (1981): 362-366.

[126] It is interesting to note that Ottoman schools became targets of criticism by the proponents of Kemalist reforms just because they were not aggressive enough in installing an active lifestyle. In 1931, an educator since the last decades of the empire, Nafi Atuf Kansu placed the blame on the "lethargic" Ottoman system within which the schools were functioning: "[In the Ottoman Empire] it did not seem abnormal [to have] school[s] that suffocate the

does not show up on time or leaves school during one of the breaks a couple of hours before dismissal, or wastes his days by loafing, the student shall first be warned. If that does not change the said behavior, the student is to be punished by standing on [one] foot for the same length of time he was late. If he is still not disciplined, he is to receive a beating on the feet."[127] The *Rushdiyye* schools are especially important in establishing certain practices because, as Findley Carter puts it, they are "the lowest level of the new government schools. (…) Providing a few more years of education beyond the Quran school, these schools served as the highest education most literate Ottoman Muslims could get to in this period." [128]

An early example for the incorporation of morality into the new system of education during the *Tanzimat* period is Sadik Rifat's morality book, published first in 1847. Sadik Rifat Pasha, a key figure in the early Tanzimat period, was considered to be an influence on Mustafa Resit Pasha, author of the *Tanzimat* bill.[129] In 1847, when Rifat Pasha was head of the Sublime Council for Judicial Ordinances (*Meclis-i Vala-yi Ahkam-i Adliye*), he published a morality text titled *Mebadi-i Ahlak*, which was changed to *Risale-i Ahlak* in 1868.[130] Morality education first

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ever-evolving nature of children in lethargic and fatalistic environments, school[s] that suppressed life and activeness." Kansu, *Turkiye Maarif*, 112-113. Kansu, while narrating the last hundred years of educational reforms, repeatedly points out that all the reforms were done for appearance while maintaining a very medieval spirit; therefore, the reforms could not take hold. Of course, these critiques aimed to show that while there is a reform period that predates the Kemalist reforms, the real reforms took place only under Kemalism. Kansu, 92,113,114 and passim.

[127] Quoted in Kansu, 106-107.

[128] Carter Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism and Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 96.

[129] Ibid., 74. On Sadik Rifat Pasha, also see Serif Mardin, *Yeni Osmanli Dusuncesinin Dogusu,* trans. Mumtazer Turkone (Istanbul, 1996), 191-219. Also see Sina Aksin Somel, *Modernization of Public Education* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 61. For his collected works, see *Muntehebat-i Asar* (Istanbul, 1290 [1873]).

[130] He was later involved in the hallmark of Ottoman modernity project, the *Mecelle* (Ar. Majalla), which was a legal reform movement that worked with the premise that the source of the modern Ottoman legal system needed to be based on sharia. For a good analysis of how this was a transformative reform that trapped a "shoreless ocean" into the strict categories of the modern legal system, see Brinkley Messick, *The Caligraphic State, Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

became part of the curriculum of *sibyan* schools with a bill issued in 1847. As part of this, Sadik

Rifat's morality text was accepted by the Council of Public Education (*Meclis-i Maarif-i*

Umumiye) as a textbook for Quranic schools, as a second book after completing the Alphabet

booklet (*Elifba cuzu*), "as well as for government primary schools and was required in

instruction between 1847-1876."[131] The book was designed to be used as a reading exercise in

simple Ottoman Turkish, as well as introducing the students to moral values. It was widely

distributed to the Balkan and Anatolian provincial schools during the 1850s and 1860s.

Scholars disagreed on the novelty of content and format of this early Tanzimat book.

Some, such as Sina Aksin Somel, talked about *Risale-I Ahlak,* as containing authority of religion

and reason as a two-fold concept. The student:

> …was to comply with the existing social traditions (…) the notion of responsibility of the
> human being for his own life, in a rational sense, was represented in the *Risale-I Ahlak*
> only at a minimum level. The values of 18th century European enlightenment and the
> ideals of French revolution where individuals began to be perceived as having become
> mature by means of critical reasoning, and hence their independence from ancient
> traditions and values, were not among the main aims which the Tanzimat-statesmen
> strove for.[132]

For Somel, this attests to the fact that the book represented the dominant educational attitude of

the Tanzimat period. [133] Into this idea, he subscribes that secular education has little to do with

religion, and treats "religious" emphasis in "secular" education as an anomaly.[134] According to

another historian, Zeki Salih Zengin, the book placed Islamic principles at the core of ethics,

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[131] Somel, *Modernization of Public Education*, 58-62. According to Somel, the possible last date of publication was 1306/1888/89; the original remained the same through different editions.

[132] Ibid., 62-64.

[133] Ibid., 62.

[134] Though a secular body, the CPE was formed in 1846, still it stressed the great importance of moral education (tezhib-i ahlak) and correction of self (islah-i zat) in 'human education' (*terbiye-i insaniyye*)." Somel, 58

while at the same time attempting to show that religious requirements were rational requirements, thus "establishing a connection between social and religious life and intellect."[135] On the other hand, Isac Jerusalmi introduces Sadik Rifat Pasha's book as a departure from earlier books, and as a novelty. For Jerusalmi, the transition is clear: It is from "religious to rational." The book's emphasis on the laws of God and reason (*sher'i ve 'akli*) was treated by Jerusalmi as a sign of a rationalization process that closely followed an enlightenment-centered trajectory.

Some scholars have argued that the increasing dominance of morality over public discourse was a response to the perceived imminent threat and dangers posed by "Western" practices and modes of thinking.[136] Although this explanation has merits, Benjamin Fortna's argument that morality books were defensive in nature and that they were to maintain and amplify the influence of Islam, overlooks several issues. [137] First, it has to be acknowledged that morality was integral to new discourses of subjectivity, practiced within spaces created by the Ottoman reforms, what Maria Poovey calls the 'social domain,' and in congruence with new ways of imagining a citizenry. The Hamidian project, according to Fortna, wished to introduce an Islamic content to Western formats of education. This, however is only one aspect, an aspect that priviliges the state as the only agency and intent-setter. Moralization of the new self surpassed far beyond the Hamidian "corrective measure" for "combating negative effects of the

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[135] Zeki Salih Zengin, *II. Abdülhamit Dönemi Örgün Eğitim Kurumlarında Din Eğitimi ve Öğretimi* (Istanbul, 2009), 76-77.

[136] For this approach, see Fortna, *The Imperial Classroom*, 202-247. For a parallel historical process and approach similar to Fortna's, see Klaus Luhmer, "Moral Education in Japan." *Journal of Moral Education* 19, no. 3 (Oct. 1990): 172-182. Colonel Pertev, an Ottoman who joined the Japanese forces as an observer during the Russo-Japanese war, shows how the Japanese educational reforms were perceived by the Ottomans. He perceives the Law of Morals (kanun-i Ahlak) issued by the Emperor in 1890 as a protection against Western values. Miralay Pertev, *Rus-Japon Harbinden Alinan Maddi ve Manevi Dersler* (Istanbul, 1329/1913).

[137] Benjamin C. Fortna, "Islamic Morality in Late Ottoman "Secular" Schools." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 32 (2000): 369-393. Brian Silverstein argues similarly. Brian Silverstein, *Islam and Modernity in Turkey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 35.

Western penetration into the Ottoman Empire."[138] Perhaps, in terms of the intentions of the state reforms, this was a motive. However, trying to explain social changes "in terms of motives is always a doubtful business."[139] In this regard, rather than delimiting these discussions to a reactionary mode, anxiety about morality itself should be viewed as a novel condition, and hence should not be separated form the processes of nation-formation, which Fortna addresses in his work. These concerns were constantly formulated, reformualted, and practiced on many levels, and beyond the state reforms. Rather than seeing these public debates as a "Hamidian reaction...derived from the desire to ward off foreign enchroachment,"[140] they should be addressed as part of the debates surrounding moralization of the new self, and the Hamidian project being a subcomponent of this phenomenon. There is no doubt that loyalty to the caliph, and obedience to the *ululemr* are issues undeniably highlighted in most morality textbooks of late Ottoman and specifically Hamidian period.[141] Writing is a technology of power. This power should not analyzed without reducing the genre into textbooks and the textbooks into a function that rulers have putatively ascribed. It is necessary to look beyond textbooks in order to evaluate these new discourses. Morality texts should not be read as mere products of a paternalistic outlook, set to protect the authoritarian agenda of the state.

Another problem with the above-described approach is that it posits that morality provided an Islamic content to a Western-borrowed form, namely the school system. There are

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[138] Fortna, *Imperial Classroom*, 206.

[139] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 215.

[140] Fortna, *Imperial Classroom*, 203-205.

[141] See footnote 103.

multiple assumptions in this position. "The insertion of moral content into the curriculum,"[142] assumes two consolidated and differentiated fields, as form (Western) and content (Islamic). Consideration of Islamic knowledge as a static and monolithic field is ahistorical. However, one more step needs to be taken: the fact that considering Islam, or any "religion" for that matter, as a category, as addressed in the recent scholarship of Alasdair MacIntrye, Asad, and Mahmoud, is forgetting the fact that this category is a historically formulated and produced classification.[143] Under the light of these approaches, morality in the nineteenth century should not be seen as merely an Islamic *content* filling in the Western *forms*. By advancing arguments fortified with verses and sayings of the prophet (*ahadith*), these books made religion integral to the concepts of modernity. New conceptualizations of religious authority cannot be analyzed without historicizing this field and problematizing religion as a discursively produced category.

Morality books attest to a new way of knowledge production. The concept of self, and in this context, being Muslim had, as Talal Asad puts it, a new grammar. [144] Based on the knowledge produced by morality books, it can be said that self-regulation and self-discipline took a different role in the discourses of religion during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Subjective interiority is not a modern phenomenon. As Asad argued, it had always been one of the most recognized practices in Muslim worship and Sufi rituals. Rather, what can be called modern in these new productions is the fact that they introduced a *new* subjective interiority, as

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[142] Fortna, 206.

[143] See Asad, *Formations of the Secular;* Mahmoud, *Politics of Piety; Alasdair MacIntrye,* "Is Understanding religion Compatible with Believing?" in *Rationality,* Brian R.Wilson, ed. 62-77 (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991).

[144] Ibid., 225.

Asad puts it, "one that is appropriate to ethical autonomy and aesthetic self-invention." [145] The new subjective interiority was not only about the interior. Perhaps these should also be understood in the nexus of practices related to citizenship, where each citizen obtained a new social role that went beyond the older senses of loyalty in the Ottoman Empire, which was based on material goods, such as farming the land, and paying taxes. Loyalty in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire was formulated in a new way, which can be, in part, called politicization of the subjective interiority.

While this endeavor itself produced a specific tradition of a modernity project historically tied to the Ottoman experience, it also shaped and transformed dynamics of the knowledge fields as it has been produced in the Ottoman context. Through political dynamics of the Hamidian period, new conceptualizations of religious authority were produced. As these authors formulated, while it was Islam that should be the moral and authentic basis of modernity, it was definitely not the Islam "as presently understood and as presently practiced."[146] Borrowing from Baumann's analysis of culture, their articulation of religion represented a dual discursive competency. That is, while these culture producers were referencing religion as a separate and abstract category, at the same time, they were "aware of remaking, re-shaping, and reforming" it. [147]

Work as a Social and Moral Act

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[145] Ibid.

[146] Monica Ringer, "Rethinking Religion: Progress and Morality in the Early Twentieth-Century Iranian Women's Press." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24:1 (2004), 47-54.

[147] Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 214. Quoted in Maory Nye, "Religion, Post-religionism, and Religioning: Religious Studies and Contemporary Culural Debates." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 447-476.

"...that ethical rules designed and brought to their perfection today by the Europeans are completely in congruence with the exalted laws of the Sharia…"

Ahlak-i Dini, Ali Seydi Bey [148]

Morality books, in their multilayered formulations about notions of work and productivity, not only became an arena in which a new self was debated, but also a sketching ground for an ideal citizen and ideal society. New meanings of terms such as *sa'y u gayret* (work and ardor), *kanaat* (resignation), *meskenet/miskinlik* (tranquility/indolence), and others point to the emergence and proliferation of a very novel usage of Islamic terminology, with the goal of purging the 'irreligious attachments' they had gained throughout the centuries. Moreover, authors adamantly opposed beliefs and practices that are identified as handicaps for productivity and efficiency by declaring them un-Islamic and anti-progress, and thus anti-modern. Therefore, some morality books presented the campaign against laziness as one for the betterment of religious life, articulating a novel 'Islamic work ethics.' It is impossible, therefore, to overstate the strong contribution made by morality books to the moralization and even *Islamization* of work. These books made work the ultimate national/religious act. It is observable that an exclusionary language was developed against practices and conceptualizations, which they viewed unhealthy and unproductive and therefore against the nation.

Work in these morality books was a very modern calling: work had to be done conscientiously, in a disciplined way, and not merely as a means of subsistence but as an end in itself. It was given a central role on an individual level and on a civilizational level. Individual happiness and existential fulfillment was inseparable from the social order, however. In this sense, work was regarded as "the great cause of advancement that always leads human beings to

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[148] Ali Seydi, *Ahlak-I Dini* (1329 [1913-14]), Preface.

goodness and progress."[149] Progress, a key word that received adherence from all political camps, was a direct product of work and activeness.[150] Acquiring a level of civilization dictated by no less than a *social* law, the call for work was something everyone needed to follow. By the end of the century, it was a modernist truism that work not only opened up the path to progress, but also comprehension of the importance of work was regarded as a sign of how advanced the nation was.[151] Morality books, with their strong tradition and new incarnation, became the literary place to articulate these modernist truisms. In congruence with the above-mentioned shifts, these works displayed a transition of the concept of laziness, from an act that individuals committed (*tembellik etmek*), to the individuals with laziness (*tembel insanlar*) to the abstract concept of *ashab-i atalet* (*people of laziness*), which perceived lazy people not as separate individuals but as a social group. As it will be explored in detail, this social group will be receiving many social labels that will go beyond their alleged act of laziness.

How can we understand the conceptual world and knowledge produced by morality texts? It is by now an already established fact that Islam can neither be seen as a historical agent, or a cause.[152] In her work on popular Islamic discourses in Egypt in the second half of the twentieth century, Saba Mahmoud points out that using "the past as a reservoir of symbols, idioms, and languages to authorize political and social projects that are in fact quite recent in origin."[153] Some scholars argued that the Islamic themes were used in a manipulative way to

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[149] M. Adil, *Muamelat-I Ahlakiye ve Medeniye (Modern and Moral Conduct)* (Istanbul, 1914-15), 76.

[150] Ibid., 74-77.

[151] Abdurrahman Seref, *Ilm-I Ahlak* (1318 [1900/1901]), 75.

[152] For differentiation of Islam as a separate category under religion, see Brian Silverstein, "Disciplines of Presence in Modern Turkey." *Cultural Anthropology* 23:1 (2008): 118–153.

[153] Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety,* Kindle Location 3591-3594.

advance "modern" concepts.[154] The argument that the authors "used" Islamic discourses to advance their "modern agendas" involves various problems.

The assumption that Islam and modernity are mutually exclusive does not explain the wealth of Ottoman experience with regards modernity and Islam. Most Ottoman reformists understood/interpreted modernity through categories that were readily available to them. The utilitarian and functionalist undertones of the above argument not only assign intentionality without evidence, but also attribute agency to the actors only when they act in accordance with Eurocentric categories. Morality authors, in the midst of their experience of new practices that made them understand and re-conceptualize their knowledge categories, frequently referenced a symbolic universe, whose sources included Islamic knowledge. This does not exclude some attempts to use Islamic arguments to gain a specific legitimacy. Whether or not there is a "manipulation" that hinges on an exploitation of Islamic sources should be defined case-by-case depending on the author and the sources' context.

The revolutionary transformations, as Corrigan and Sayer noticed, "were accomplished (and concealed) through new uses of old forms and tracing of a thousand lineages from the past."[155] Some morality authors declared that they were mainly following the tradition of old-school texts, while a close reading exposes unprecedented conceptualizations of such certain concepts as resignation (*tevekkul* in Tr; *tawakkul* in Ar.) and laziness (*atalet, Tr; Atalah, Ar.* عَطَالَة).[156] New knowledges and practices of Tanzimat appeared in Yaglikcizade Ahmet Rifat's

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[154] These ideas, common to the earlier and now outdated historiography, are voiced by Bernard Lewis and his ilk. See Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*.

[155] Phillip Corrigan and Derek Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as a Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 92.

[156] One interpretation of *tevekkul* is the trust that one should have that they will receive *rizk* (*rizq,* sustenance), but that may or may not require earning it. Michael Bonner has suggested the term in his analysis of *Kitab-al Kasb*.

morality text, *Tasvir-i Ahlak* (*Depiction of Morality*), published in 1887/88. Born in Istanbul,

Ahmet Rifat (1842-1894) received his education in Istanbul and later in al-Azhar, while learning

French from private tutors. Yaglikcizade Ahmed Rifat spent most of his life serving the empire

as a bureaucrat, specificlly at the Ministry of Finance.[157] In the beginning of his book, Ahmet

Rifat points out the importance of his book in using a simple Turkish. Although previous

scholars had left nothing new to say, Ahmet Rifat argues, he wrote the book in simple Turkish

"so that even children can understand."[158] The format shows a unique change in accordance with

this concept of accessibility: the book, unlike earlier moralty books, is in the format of an

alphabetically organized list. In this sense, it looks more like a dictionary of terms related to

ethics.

Of course, the trope of not adding anything new to the heritage is not to be taken at face

value. There are multiple issues in this book that indicate the new role of morality books in the

last quarter of the nineteenth century, ranging from reasons of writing the book to the

articulations of normative concepts of homeland, society, and in the context of the latter two, the

problem of laziness. Ahmed Rifat articulates the new impetus in writing morality texts:

"Reaching spiritual and material progress that we all desire for in at Muslim society can only be

attained through the virtues of morality."[159] It is clear that the notion of the social is apperant in

Yaglikcizade Ahmet Rifat's discussions of love for the homeland. Whereas in the earlier sense

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[157] Mehmet Zeki Pakalin, *Sicill-I Osmani Zeyli, Son Devir Osmanli Meshurlari Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari, 2008), 105. He was employed at the Finance Ministry (Muhasebat-i Atika-i Maliye muhasebecisi) in 1874. This info is given in the introduction to his earlier morality text, *Berguzar*. *Berguzar*, later *Berguzar-i Ahlak,* was published in Hanya (in today's Greece) in 1874, and posthumously in Istanbul in 1315. Ahmet Rifat, *Berguzar* (Hanya, 1874).

[158] Ahmet Rifat, *Tasvir-I Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1305 [1887-88]), 2.

[159] Hey'eti islamiye icinde cumlemizin arzu ettigi terakkiyat -i maddiye ve maneviyeye vusul ancak fezail-i ahlakiye ile olur. " Rifat, *Tasvir-i Ahlak*, 4.

of the term, *vatan* meant a place someone's particular home was, Ahmet Rifat used it in a different and very abstract way: "The love [for *vatan*]… cannot be limited to where one lives, it extends to one's society (icinde bulunulan hey'et-I ictimaiyyeye dahi sumulu vardir)"[160] The author redefines the concept of homeland and urges his readers to leave behind the older sense of the term.

Despite his claim of following the footsteps of the classic morality books, Yaglikcizade Ahmed Rifat treats laziness much more than a personality trait one needs to correct. The author goes to a great extend to disconnect an assumed connection between religious ideas and practices of laziness (*betaet – betalet*).

> Some, based on sufi sayings, argue that "by only abandoning world[ly activities] can one perform the acts of worship that will gain God's grace. Although this is true, by this [saying] they do not mean to quit all transactions of worldly activities and [thus] sit in a corner and, with the facade of seclusion, choose laziness. In the sufi terminology, world is defined as something that makes one ignorant of God. If something does not estrange one from God, i.e. things that are approved by religion and considered decent, it will not prevent one from obtaining [God's] approval and [practicing] prayers. In any way it is interpreted, laziness and idleness can never escape vilification.[161]

By redefining *dunya* as anything that makes one neglect God (*gaflet*), the author in fact exculpates the term. For Ahmet Rifat, it is important to show his readers that one can engage in worldy activities, as long as they do not neglect God's will. Here, the author provides an anecdote that is narrated in the siyer books. The prophet, when some people around him praised a person by informing the prophet how he devoted all his time to praying, asked his audience: "who serves him while he is engaged in prayers?" The people responded that they took care of him. Upon hearing this, the prophet warned them that by saying this, they were causing him to be

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[160] Ibid., 107.

[161] Ibid., 83-84.

lazy.[162] Thus, not only does the author counter the arguments that Islam promotes laziness based on Islamic traditions, but also constructs a hierarchy in which acts of worship are no longer a top level activity.

Ahmed Rifat refuses the unexcusablitity of laziness as a dispositional trait. Laziness, according to Ahmed Rifat, cannot be excused because there is a possibility that it can be gradually abated or reduced. The author takes even a step further and connects a widespread social problem in the empire; poverty to laziness. It is not that poverty causes one to be lazy, he argues, on the contrary, laziness causes one to be poor. He notes that doing things in the old ways should no longer be considered valuable:

> Everyone should find work and effort (*say u gayret*) necessary, and take heed to increase the outcomes of work and leave the rest to God almighty. The times have changed and there is no value anymore in saying 'We saw our fathers doing this way, we found it this way.'[163]

In this regard, the author subscribes to an understanding that being poor is a result of not working properly and sufficiently. While bringing up this issue, he sees the necessity to talk about the rich and lazy as well. He criticizes those that are rich and lazy, who own a fortune without having labored for it (*emeksiz servete malik olanlar*). He mockingly adds that the pomp and gravity of being rich makes it harder for them to be identified as lazy. Regardless, then, of the social status, neither the rich nor the poor escapes the author's criticism of laziness.

As part of reinfocing a language that gives work and industriousness a new meaning, the term *kanaat* (contentment) recieved a make over.[164] Disconnecting the virtue of *kanaat* from

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[162] Ibid., 84-85.

[163] Ibid., 190.

[164] For earlier definitions of *kanaat*, see Kuseyri, *Kuseyri Risalesi* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayinlari, 1991), 299-301. For a nineteenth century example, see Namik Kemal, *Osmanli Modernlesmesinin Meseleleri, I*, ed. Ismail Kara and Nergiz Y. Aydogdu (Istanbul: Dergah, 2005), 219.

meskenet (apathy)[165] was part of this effort. The popular belief in contentment as an act of

worship was seen by many reformists to be at the core of the problem of laziness. Ahmed Rifat

introduces *kanaat* as a trait to be gained. But he defines it along the lines of not having an

unsatiated greed. After narrating prophet's *hadith* praising kanaat, he carefully warns his readers:

> It should not be gathered [from what has been said] that poverty and *meskenet* are prefered. *Kanaat* cannot be practiced with these. Abondanoning **…** work and leaving things to fate is not *kanaat*. These are all confusions of those who mix up laziness with resignation (*tevekkul*), and deficiency in work with *kanaat*.[166]

By the time of the Young Turk revolution, the concept of *kanaat* was one of the most criticized

concepts when it came to reforming citizens. A member of *ulema*, a certain scholar Mehmet

Tayyip, did not even need to redefine the term, as Yaglikcizade Ahmed Rifat did. Perhaps

because of the level of knowledge of his audience, Mehmet Tayyip argued that *kanaat* couldn't

be practiced as it was practiced before. The reasoning he provided, compared to Ahmed Rifat's

ambivalent voice, was much more defined:

> It is true that *Kanaat* is a virtue, but it can only be [practiced] after Muslim society attains to a secure economy and future. Otherwise, neglecting times that is moving ahead conditions of the other nations by the hour; retreating to the corner of seclusion in the name of *kanaat* and not benefiting your fellow Muslims; assuming indolence [thinking it] is in accord with God's consent, and waiting for a divine help … is nothing but an abhorrent thing to do. In brief, in today's day the direction (*qibla*) of our desires needs to be salvation of the state and the community of Islam.[167]

Here, a member of *ulema* highlights, in a forceful way, that traditional practices as they were

known, were no longer viable for the circumstances.

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[165] While I translate *meskenet* in the nineteenth-century texts as apathy and lethargy, it should be noted that the term did not always have these bad connotations.

[166] Rifat, *Tasvir-i Ahlak,* 298.

[167] Mehmet Tayyib (Fatih dersiamlarindan), "Sa'yin mesruiyeti." *Beyan'ul Hakk* 1, no. 13 (4 zilhicce 1326 [December 28, 1908]), 283.

It is important to note that not all morality texts articulated these new anxieties at all times. The terms that frequently appeared in morality texts reflect a mixed practice. As Asad noted, "It is not easy to shed attitudes, sensibilities and memories as though they were so many garments inappropriate to a singular historical movement."[168] Some morality books followed their literary precedents rather closely. Similar to Ahmed Rifat, Mehmet Said's (d.1921) morality book, *Ahlak-i Hamide* (1317 - 1879/1880) declared that his arguments were based on scholars such as Ghazali, Kinalizade, and Kemalpasazade.[169] Although not much is known about Mehmet Said, he is known for his knowledge of classical texts, expertise in the grammers of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian languages and as a translator of Arabic texts.[170] Unlike his declared models, at the beginning of the book, the author states that he is targeting a larger audience, and remarks that he is writing this book in a simple Turkish, so it can be read widely. Throughout the book, he itirates arguments of earlier discourses. Laziness, for example, is a vice because it prevents one from accomplishing several acts, such as "earning money in order to supply oneself the necessities to protect one's health" as well as "struggle to protect oneself from their enemies" and "gaining knowledge that will make someone reach the right path."[171] As is seen, these are reasons that showed up in the earlier texts. Mehmed Said quotes Kemalpasazade's sixteenth-century treatise when writing against laziness, on how there is no doubt that earning a livelihood is a legitimate cause of work. He continues his discussion by indicating that, not only legitimate

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[168] Asad, *Formations of the Secular,* 222.

[169] Mehmet Said, *Ahlak-I Hamide* (Istanbul, 1297 [1879-80]). For another example, see Ali Irfan, *Rehber-I Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1318 [1900/1901]), 22-24.

[170] According to the *Sicill-I Osmani* records, Mehmet Said learned his Arabic from Ahmed Fahir Effendi, who was one of the authors of al-Jawaib, an Arabic newspaper published in Istanbul. Mehmet Zeki Pakalin, *Sicill-I Osmani Zeyli*, *Son Devir Osmanli Meshurlari Ansiklopedisi,* vol. 16 (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari, 2008), 55.

[171] Said, *Ahlak-i Hamide,* 43.

is it, but also that work should be considered a religious obligation (*farz*). To strengthen this point, Mehmed Said brings evidence from a eleventh-twelfth century imam who argues that, since only by providing the necessities of livelihood can one accomplish necessary religious duties, earning a living is considered to be obligatory (*vacib*). [172]Although the wider audience was a stated concern of the book, the traditional discussions are borrowed in whole.[173]

Categorical instability, where categories defy any imposition of a strict definition became more visible during periods of transformation.[174] New anxieties surface in texts that openly declare an authentic connection to classical morality texts. Whether these different voices are a result of a simple act of copying from a source material, such as Kinalizade's *Ahlak-I Alai*, and hence an indicator of a residual or nascent nature is an issue of discussion. For example, Huseyin Remzi in his *Ahlak-i Hamidi* published in 1310/1892-93, Abdullah Behcet in his *Behcet-ul Ahlak* dating 1896, and Ahmet Rifat in his *Berguzar* published in 1897/1898 (1315H), all use the same definitions of *kanaat* with no mention of the problem of perceived resignation of people from worldly affairs. *Kanaat*, in these texts, is a virtue whose excess is stinginess, a vice that involves accumulating wealth and not spending it even when it is necessary. [175]

Abdullah Behcet, a bureaucrat coming from a merchant family of the city of Samsun, is not a very well-known figure. His resume, submitted to the *Sicill-i Ahval Komisyonu*, a governmental committee designed to gather biographical information of the bureaucrats, in 1890,

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[172] The mentioned book is *Ez-Zeri'a* by Imam Ragib (d.1108).

[173] A discussion of resignation (*tevekkul*) is very telling. Resignation cannot be practiced, he argues, if there is a danger posed to one's life, property and chastity; practicing resignation is even considered to be a sin. A lack of the now already established term *vatan* (homeland) in this list is particularly interesting. Said, *Ahlak-I Hamide,* 17.

[174] Michael Mckeon, "Generic Transformation and Social Change: Rethinking the Rise of the Novel" in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach,* ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: JHUP, 2000), 383.

[175] Huseyin Remzi, *Ahlak-I Hamidi* (Istanbul, 1310), 41; Ahmet Rifat (Yaglikcizade), *Berguzar* (Istanbul, 1315), 9; Abdullah Behcet, *Behcet-ul Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1314), 65-66, 104.

six years before publishing his only book, reveals that he spent most of his life serving at various bureuacratic posts, mainly under the Public Finance Ministry (*Maliye Nezareti*).[176] For Abdullah Behcet, laziness is a vice especially when it is practiced for otherworldy activities (*umur-u uhreviye*).[177] Behcet's take on laziness is not different from his sources. Furthermore, in *Behcet-ul Ahlak,* even a presumably already-established term such as *musavaat* is used in its classical meaning, i.e. as "sharing and having partners at during a beneficial event"," but not as political and social equality. [178] Another example would be Abdullah Behcet's definition of *tevekkul* (resignation). Behcet states that tevekkul is dereliction of working/struggling (terk-I sa'y) and should be practiced when one can no longer do anything to change course. Should these examples require one to be suspicious about the extent of the hegemony of new meanings? Although this is a valid question, there are multiple possible reasons in explaining such usages, and each has to be taken in a case by case manner.

In his introduction to *Behcet-ul Ahlak*, Abdullah Behcet indicates the immediate reason why he penned his book: The announcement of the Ministry of Education on the daily indicating that morality will be included in the curriculum of *Mekteb-I Mulkiye-i Sahane.* [179] Encouraged by this announcement, he enumerates his examination of Persian morality texts (such as *Ahlak-I Celali, Ahlak-i Muhsini* etc) and texts written in Arabic (such as *Risale-I ahlak*), and Turkish books (Kinalizade's *Ahlak-I Alai*). It appears that, all these titles strengthened his qualification as

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[176] M. Zeki Pakalin, *Sicill-i Osmani Zeyli*, *Son Devir Osmanli Meshurlari Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 1, ed. M. Metin Hulagu (Ankara: TTK Yayinlari, 2008), 22.

[177] Abdullah Behcet, *Behcet-ul Ahlak*, 144.

[178] Ibid., 72. For *Intifa'*, see Semseddin Sami, *Kamus-I Turki* (Istanbul, 1317), 172. Compare Behcet's definition of *musavat* with Semseddin Sami's: "*Musavat*: "bir hal ve derecede olma, beraberlik, farksizlik, birinin digerine imtiyaz ve baskalarina tefavvuku olmamak," 1334.

[179] Behcet, *Behcet-ul Ahlak*, 4-5.

a morality text author. But, Abdullah Behcet offers another reason, which he makes no secret of, for why his books should be chosen by the Ministry: accessibility to a general audience. The classical books, Abdullah Behcet argues, have a caveat: they were written for experts (*erbab-i ihtisas*) and cannot be used in education. Not only was this for his intended captive audience, the author presents his book as distinct by its appeal to a general audience. [180]

It can be argued that while publishing under the Hamidian regime, some authors played down the new meanings of the terms, as we see it with the word *musavaat*, by defining it as a completely non-political term. It is possible, given the author's intention of writing his text, that there is a likelihood that the non-political approach and referencig of earlier morality texts increased the chance of a book being chosen by the Ministry of Education as a textbook. If this is true, could this cautionary practice be extended to any terminology?

Nevertheless, it should be noted that these token occurances diminished greatly over a decade, and by 1908 they were close to non-existent. However, as the following discussion shows, while some usages were not in congruance with the other morality texts of their time in articulating new concerns, their authors, in the totality of their books, did not contionuosly follow classical templates.

Written a couple of years earlier than Behcet's text, Huseyin Remzi's (1839-1896) morality text, *Miss Teacher, Morality Lectures for the Young Girls* (1897)[181] presents a departure from other morality texts that have been mentioned so far. Huseyin Remzi is one of the most prolific authors of the second half of the nineteenth century. A military doctor who graduated

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[180] Ibid., 5.

[181] Some catalogues, based on the Rumi date (May 1313) given by Bekir Sidki, the author of the introduction, assumed that the date on the cover is Rumi as well. Since it is unlikely that the introduction was written 2 years prior the publication, I believe this book is published in 1315 H, which is 1313 R, 1897 M.

from the Imperial Medical School, he taught at various Ottoman schools, such as *Mekteb-i Mulkiye, Baytar Mektebi,* and founded such institutions as The Society of Ottoman Medicine. He was a distinguished doctor, who, in 1886, a year after Louis Pasteur's discovery of rabies vaccine, was sent to Paris to work with Pasteur in order to learn about the application of the vaccine and recent developments in microbiology.[182] Like most of his contemporary intellectuals, he was also an author who published many books, targeting a large audience on the issues of medicine, health, hygiene, zoology gynecology, family life, and morality. *Miss Teacher, Morality Lectures for the Lady Girls* was published in a periodical specifically targeting a female readership, namely *Hanimlara Mahsus Gazete,* which was the longest, and relatively widely circulated periodical targeting a female audience in the Ottoman Empire.[183] The articles were posthumously edited by his son Nureddin Remzi and published as a book. As it shall be seen, this is not where its uniqueness lay, since there are other morality texts that address a female audience, providing gendered discourses of work and laziness. Despite its title, the fact that there is only one edition might indicate that it was not used as a textbook.[184]

   Hocahanim Kizlara Durus-u Ahlak conveys a classroom effect through its format. It is in the format of a dialogue between students and a female instructor, where each chapter is a lecture session with students and an instructor. In every section, the instructor initiate a discussion by asking her students about certain terms, such as family, virtues and vices, such as cleanliness,

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[182] Ekrem Kadri Unat, "Muallim Miralay Dr. Huseyin Remzi Bey ve Tukce Tip Dilimiz," in *IV. Tip Tarihi Kongresi Kitabi*, *Istanbul, 1996* (Ankara: TTK, 2003), 239-252. Quoted in Dogan Ceylan, "A Military Doctor Pioneer of Preventive Medicine in Turkey: Colonel Dr. Huseyin Remzi Bey." *TAF Preventive Medicine Bulletin* (2008): 347-350.

[183] For this journal, see Elizabeth Frierson, *Unimagined Communities: State, Press, and Gender in the Hamidian Era,* Unpublished Dissertation (Princeton University, 1996).

[184] Perhaps because of its title, Kebikec author categorizes it as a textbook. Ozturk, "Ahlak Kitaplari," 31-39.

and lying. Each titled "lecture," the chapters are designed to look like an actual lecture that already took place. The chapters usually start with a question posed by the instructor, who addresses the all-girl audience. Another important aspect of this book is that, unlike the books of Mehmed Said or Ahmed Rifat, it does not declare its connection to classical ethics books, such as Kinalizade's. With chapters titled "Public Spirit," "Flag and Banner," and "Military Service," this work is not a list of virtues and vices.[185] Perhaps the fact that it was not specifically written to be used at schools allowed the author to have more room to choose.

In this work, Huseyin Remzi advances his arguments on the connection between work and social duty very clearly. In his earlier work, he emphasized an ontological aspect of work. Work was seen as the meaning of existence, since "just as birds are created to fly, human beings are created to work."[186] In this lecture-style book, Huseyin Remzi placed a great emphasis on laziness as a social disease. For an ideal citizen and ideal society, hard work and productivity were defined as forces able to counter laziness and idleness. For Huseyin Remzi, laziness was a disease that could destroy not only a single person but also an entire society: "Laziness destroys not only the individual, but even an entire population."[187] Huseyin Remzi's female instructor narrates about a tableau she saw while visiting Europe, which depicted the vices of laziness:

> The … [tableau] was about a woman who is walking very slowly because of laziness. [Her] coat covered with spiders, she is riding on sleep while leaning over the arm of hunger. Behind her are miseries –she was depicted as a woman who spent her springtime in bed, and her autumn in the hospitals. My children, there is no exaggeration in this tableau. Laziness destroys hard-earned talents and knowledge. [Lazy people] cannot escape poverty, [they become] the destruction of humanity. [188]

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[185] I analyze Huseyin Remzi's remarks on the military in the third chapter of this dissertation.

[186] Huseyin Remzi, *Ahlak-i Hamidi* (Istanbul, 1892-93), 51. Also see Ali Riza's work where the same bird example is given. A. Riza, *Ilm-i Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1316 [1898/1899]), 69.

[187] Hüseyin Remzi, *Hocahanım Kızlara Dürus-u Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1315 [1897/1898]), 92.

[188] Ibid., 93-94.

The fact that laziness was depicted as a woman perhaps meant to amplify the effects of this tableau over his targeted audience. The readers were warned that destruction caused by laziness was not only for the individual, but also for *humanity*, since it, as a concept that found more and more credence in these texts, was at stake. If laziness was the cause of humanity's destruction, work was one of the social duties. In his discussion, Huseyin Remzi connects industriousness and patriotism (public spirit) (*hamiyet*). *Hamiyet* is a term used to describe one's love for their homeland (*vatan*). *Kamus-I Turki*, the eminent Ottoman dictionary from the turn of the century, defines *hamiyet* as similar to patriotism: "the effort one shows to protect their homeland (*memleketini*), family and relatives from transgressions and assaults."[189] When explaining *hamiyet*, Huseyin Remzi references the role of the person in a society using a very modern and prevalent metaphor:

> Society is like a factory. Everyone works in a factory. Machines… work in an interconnected way. Just like it is impossible to separate them, the continuation of society depends on *hamiyet*. [190]

In this example, the connection between the work and love for one's country is refutable. Machines and factories became one of the most used tropes in the textual realm, especially in depicting the role of the individual in society. It provided the authors an explanatory power in which every individual shouldered a duty, while upon failing they were not irreplaceable. As one of the most prevalent metaphors for society and nation the trope of machines is explored further in chapter three.

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[189] Semseddin Sami, *Kamus-I Turki* (Istanbul, 1317), 559.

[190] Cemiyet-I beseriye bir fabrikaya benzer. Fabrikda herkes calisir. Makineler ve tazgahlar isler, temil alet birbirine merbut bulunur. Ayrilmak imkani olmaz, iste bu alem-I beseriyetin boylece devami hamiyetle olur. Basindan ayaga kadar cemiyet-I beseriye sefkat ve hamiyet ile is gorebilir. Herkes kendi menafiini taharriye kalkmis olsa kimse kimsenin hizmetinde bulunmaz." Remzi, *Hocahanim Kizlara*, 123-124.

Published a couple of years after Huseyin Remzi's book, Ali Riza, a governmental translator (*mabeyn-i humayun cenab-i mulukane mutercimi*), in his *Knowledge of Morality,* engaged in a discussion on work and work ethics in the nexus of homeland and citizenship. Given that it went through four editions between 1316 and 1323, this book can be considered a commonly used textbook. A. Riza is one of the few morality text authors that published both at the turn of the century and also after the 1908 revolution.[191]

For A.Riza, work is an obligation. In the third volume of the his morality book, A. Riza raised the issue of laziness. On the individual level, the motto of disciplined work was that it was a source of happiness, and even the elixir of life.[192] A person who did not work was necessarily unhappy and unable to get any pleasure from leisure.[193] Very similar to the remarks of Huseyin Remzi, Ali Riza emphasized the unquestioned role of work, by pointing out that work was "to human beings just as flying to birds."[194]

Moralization of work did not only involve an ontological language. Work's valuation could not be separated from the nation. Lazy, in this regard, was not only a disease but an epidemic: "Laziness is an infectious disease, and a single lazy [person] in a society will make all the members of that society stay away from work."[195] Ali Riza, under the title of *Adab-I Islamiye* (Islamic Morality), explains to his readers what a *vatan* is and how the role of its "children" should be: "… The soil of our country is like a mother that nurtures us. Just like *ehl-i islam* are

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[191] His later book, *Ibtidailere Malumat-I Medeniye ve Ahlakiye,* will be analyzed and compared to his earlier work in Chapter V.

[192] Riza, *Ilm-i Ahlak, Ucuncu Kisim*, 69.

[193] Ibid., 67.

[194] Ibid., 69. Also see Remzi's work where the same bird example is given. Remzi, *Ahlak-i Hamidi*, 51.

[195] Riza, *Ilm-i Ahlak, Birinci Kisim* (1316), 30-32.

spiritual siblings, the children of a country, which is just like a mother (to us), are brothers and sisters to each other."[196]

The author equates being citizens of the same country to being a member of the same religious community. The analogy is an extended one. The abstract notion of soil is a similitude of faith that connects a religious community, overriding the fact that whereas a community of Muslims, an *umma* is a non-political unit, being "the children of a country" is political, and therefore, requires allegiance to its state. It is interesting to note that this discussion takes place under the title of Islamic morality.

Even though the new grammar was expressed subtly, at times these new issues were conveyed explicitly. Abdurrahman Seref (1853-1925) analyzes morality and duty in his 1900 *Ilm-i Ahlak* (which is one of the most theoretical books written on ethics in this period), in a very novel way. Abdurrahman Seref was a prominent figure in the Ottoman intellectual realm. As statesman after 1908 and the last *vakanuvis* (court historian) of the empire, he spent most of his life in the field of education. He taught at such institutions as *Mahrec-i Aklam*, a school that educated future government officials, and *Mekteb-I Mulkiye-I Sahane* (Imperial School of Political Sciences) and served as a principle of the most prominent Ottoman Lycee, namely *Mektebi Sultani* (Galatasaray Lycee), his alma mater, between 1894-1908.[197] On the issue of defining and differentiating the sections of morality and duty, Seref analyzes approaches of the anterior and posterior scholars (*mutekaddimin* and *muteahhirin*). The distinction, with all its vagueness, is important. The *mutekaddimin* and *muteahhirin* are terms that have been used in

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[196] It is interesting to note that the adab-i Islamiye section starts with not only obedience for the caliphate, but the students were also asked to love him and pray for him. Ibid., 6-7.

[197] For more information on Abdurrahman Seref, especially his role in Galatasaray, see Kansu, 116-118; for a general biography, see Musa Duman's introduction in Abdurrahman Seref, *Osmanli Devleti Tarihi,* ed. Musa Duman (Istanbul, 2005).

ahlak books to denote differences between schools of thought.[198]Although Abdurrahman Seref does not inform his readers about who these philosophers/scholars are, the declared allegiance (lip service or not is another issue) noted by the earlier morality authors to the medieval scholars is missing in this text. Especially on the issue of "duties of the self," Seref evaluates the approaches of the earlier and the later scholars. According to the *muteahhirin*, Seref posits, the divisions of duty (*taksim-i vezaif)* started with "duties of the self," whereas other scholars argued that duty can only be for those other than the self, since it necessitates "one to be a debtor and indebted at the same time," which is not feasible. Seref here weighs in with the "*muteahhirin*." Even if one is "like Robinson [Crusoe], in total seclusion" they are still obliged to these duties of the self: "Even if one is secluded from his kind, considering that he preserves in his nature the attributes of humanity (*sifat-i insaniye*), he cannot escape the responsibility of fulfilling the goal of his creation."[199] Self is divided between corporeal and spiritual components, and the duty to *self* is defined as "protection and advancement of the self."[200] Besides, Seref reminds his readers, human beings, are never in seclusion --they live in a society. In this context, Sheref constructs levels of society; individuals live in families, families form villages and cities, and these cities are a part of states. Therefore, the individual is also obliged with duties to these structures.

> Man has duties to the state one belongs to, which are called civic duties (*vezaif-i medeniye*.) If country, government, religion, and nationality differences are put aside, human beings are all brothers. We can categorize them all under the category of humanity (*insaniyet*). One has duties in this category as well: they are called duties to humanity.[201]

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[198] See Agah Sirri Levend, "Ummet Caginda Ahlak Kitaplarimiz." *Turk Dili Arastirmalari Yilligi, Belleten* 1963 (Ankara, 1964): 89-115.

[199] Seref, *Ilm-i Ahlak*, 59.

[200] Ibid.

[201] Ibid., 58.

The duty as a self-reflective notion spirals into the other levels of society, reaching to the level of humanity. The concept of humanity was articulated as a concept that went beyond the religious communities: in a section titled "*Tecrube-i Nefs,*" Ali Irfan, a morality text author and an instructor of morality (more on him later), warned his pupils, saying one has to constantly watch for their behavior and contemplate on whether they are acceptable by "the laws of humanity and the laws of Islam," hence appealing to the authority of not only Islam, but also a very abstract notion of "the laws of humanity."[202] Here we see that morality authors, while using Islamic terminology, intended for an audience that went beyond the Muslim communities of the empire, establishing "humanity" as the largest common denominator. Even Seref's definition of *ahlak* is different than the previous definitions: "The discipline of morality discusses the [levels of] duties, hence … morality is called 'a discipline pertaining to the duties of human beings'" [203] It can be said that these authors had a clear idea that what was produced in the field of morality was not a replica of earlier ethics books.

Gendered discourses of work

The debates evolving around producing a productive nation were written into a gendered narrative. In 1896, in *Hanimlara Mahsus Gazete*, the poet Nigar Hanim, along with many other authors of the journal called her female audiences to industriousness. In her article titled "Work and Action" (*sa'y u amel*), poet Nigar Hanim expressed her disbelief at the idea that made work exclusive to the male members of society: "It is only natural that we are astonished by those

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[202] Irfan, *Rehber-i Ahlak*, 34.

[203] Seref, *Ilm-i Ahlak*, 58.

ideas that hold work and ardour as exclusively a male endavour."[204] She refused a passive role for females in society, and claimed their position through work.

Women of various classes were also targets of productivity debates. The established dichotomy of work versus laziness required categorization of women into one group.[205] One problem these reformists frequently addressed was the perceived spare time their female audiences had. Laziness as a cause of ennui for women was a common thread in these texts. Ali Irfan, addressing a female audience, paid special attention to this problem. In his textbook, *Guide for Morality* (1900), Ali Irfan argued that laziness keeps one in a constant ennui (*sıkıntı*).[206] The problem of having spare time is an anxiety displayed in modern morality books. The pre-nineteenth-century morality literature addressed sorrow (*huzn*), however, ennui in the modern texts have a different essence. [207] Boredom/ennui is discussed in the nexus of the new concepts of work ethos. The latter always causes boredom (*ic sikintisi*). Having spare time seems to be addressed frequently when it come to texts written for women. Ali Riza in his *Ilm-i Ahlak* for girls' schools addressed the above-mentioned two issues, right after declaring laziness to be an infectious disease:

> (…) By leaving everything to others and expecting them to do a perfect work is not permissible. You should do all your work with your own hands and be proud of the results. … To avoid getting bored when attending to a work, one should love work and action (*say u amel*). The soul suffers an eternal pain because of boredom in one's spare time. Conversely, work brings joy and prosperity to the spirit because there cannot be a more satisfactory thing then seeing the progress of a task. (…) When you leave school,

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[204] "Sa'y u ameli nev'i ricale mahsus zannedenlerin fikrine teaccubumuz tabiidir." Nigar Binti Osman, "Sa'y u Amel." *Hanimlara Mahsus Gazete* 61 (25 Nisan 1312 [7 May 1896]): 1-2.

[205] These debates appear to have ceased during World War I, when work became necessary for the survival of women. Yavuz Selim Karakisla, *Women and Work in the Ottoman Empire: Society for the Employment of Ottoman Muslim Women (1916-1923)* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2005), 49-52, 91.

[206] Irfan, *Rehber-i Ahlak,* 14.

[207] For how Huzn is conceptualized in early modern text, see Kinalizade, *Ahlak-I Alai I*, 155.

make it your business to accomplish things that are beneficial for your home, your parents, and your relatives, in short, for human kind. Work is an obligation for all, since society depends on one another's help. Since every individual in this world is obliged to work [not only] for themselves and [but also] for others, you should not let go of work and waste your time in vain. …The wise phrase of "Time is Money" is also one of the Islamic sayings (*kelam-I kibar-I islamiyedendir.*)[208]

The prescription here is multifold.The author invites future-homemakers to engage with their homemaking activities directly –without depending on servants. Perhaps one of the manifestations of laziness in women was their use/abuse of servants. While there are subsections about how to treat one's servants in most morality texts, young girls are encouraged to do their own work. The upper-status women in particular, and upper-status people in general, were criticized heavily because of their dependency on servants and lack of having a love for work.[209] Work ethos required one to do their own work, since work was how one attained a sense of fulfillment.As the home became a private domain relegated to females, and as the duty-centered discourses adavnced, the home became a place where a woman practiced disciplined work.[210] Dependency would cripple their abilities, and "in the future, they cannot be capable house wives."[211] Although it was written in this gendered narrative, the overarching argument about not being a burden on the state and society, and taking a proactive approach to success, is a common theme during this period. The authortops his argument with a saying that was presented as a *hadith*, emphasizing a putative connection between time and money.

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[208] Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak, Birinci Kisim*, 30-32. Ali Riza repeats these major arguments in the third section of his book, written for a higher class of students. Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak, Ucuncu Kisim.*

[209] Rifat, *Tasvir-I Ahlak*, 85.

[210] See Yael Navaro-Yaşın, "Evde Taylorizm: Cumhuriyet'in ilk Yillarinda Evisinin Rasyonellesmesi." ("Taylorism in the House: The Rationalization of Housewifery in the Early Republic.") *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 84 (2000): 51-74.

[211] Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak, Birinci Kisim*, 12.

While working is encouraged for the young female students, the range of work they were supposed to do did not represent a large pool. Other than housework, a designated work for women was tailoring. To be done primarily for the members of the household, and not for the general consumption, it was suggested to all girls, even if they were rich, because there was special pleasure in producing things. [212] According to Ali Riza, having these handy skills should not be reduced their material benefits. Noting that work is at once a materially benefiting activity as well as a spiritual one, he encourages girls to learn these skills, which will be their companion at times of distress and loneliness.[213] Resting, then, is presented as a time for recuperating for the next cycle of work and should not be exaggerated. [214] For him, the idea of not doing anything and that resting (*istirahat*) is a blessing, is only an illusion.[215]

Not everyone agreed that women's work needed to be in the privacy of their homes and essentially on a non-market basis. In the above-mentioned article, Nigar Hanim started her essay by acknowledging the maxim: "the most sacred of all duties for women are the household duties."[216] She however, advanced her argument in a different manner. She argued that if a woman has servants, this duty will not take most of her time, and that it would be done by noon. She rhetorically asked her readers: What would a lady be expected to do in the hours after the housework is done? She stated that, activities, such as visitations and invitations among friends are good, but how frequently can one do these activities? According to Nigar Hanim, going out

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[212] Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak, Birinci Kisim*, 32.

[213] Ibid.

[214] Ibid., 56. " Istirahati ancak yeniden say u amele elzem olan kuvvetin tedarik ve istihsaline bir vesile addederek vucudun rehavetini celb ve davet edecek kadar istirahatten hazzedilmemelidir."

[215] Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak, Ucuncu Kisim*, 68.

[216] Nigar b. Osman, "Sa'y u Amel," 1-2.

on leisurely outages are good for one's health, but again, she questioned the frequency these activities should take place in the life of a woman. Her following declaration in this argumentation is inline with the above-mentioned authors: "The most unhappy on this earth are those who waste their life killing time." In this regard, work was a necessity for happiness. "But it is known among the researchers that … every individual in their own capacity should work for the benefit of humanity."[217] As seen, the connection between individual happiness and work was not merely an individualistic goal. It contained a *scientific* truth and a universal goal, which encompassed all genders.

Conclusion

Morality books articulated, in a diverse and even chaotic manner, formulations of new knowledge fields that were, at times, in congruence, and more often at odds with older formulations. Through this genre, which had an unprecedented popularity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a new awareness regarding work and industriousness became visible at a discursive level. Unlike previous ethics books, most of the nineteenth-and-turn-of-the-century texts offered discussions about hard work and industriousness as issues germane to the new concept of citizenship. They became the strongest channel in which work, laziness, and industriousness were discussed in a highly moralized way, crowning work ethos as the center issue of the new political self. Ethics books of earlier periods were concerned with an ideal Muslim, with an otherworldly perfection, the nineteenth-century books addressed their readers not only as morally accountable individuals, but also as members of a nation, i.e. as citizens of

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[217] Ibid.

the Ottoman Empire, at a time in which the world was divided into nation-states, where productive powers of their populations became vitally important.

As it was argued in this chapter, the assumption that Islam and modernity are mutually exclusive does not explain the wealth of Ottoman experience with modernity and Islam. Work and industriousness were at once Islamicized in a manner they were not before, and placed in the center of being a good citizen and a good person. Morality authors, in the midst of their experience of new practices that made them understand and re-conceptualize their knowledge categories, frequently referenced a symbolic universe, whose sources included Islamic knowledge. The end product of these new formulations can be separated neither from the discursive traditions of Islamic knowledge nor from the discourses of modern discipline, and only should be understood in the context of nation-formation.

Chapter II

A New Ethos at the Work Site:

Practicing New Work Concepts in Late Ottoman Society

Historical change cannot not be located by merely examining the closed-circuit discussions that took place among a few ruling elites. Using the idea of hegemony as "a saturation of the whole process of living" rather than an external domination of the top-down orders, [218] one can see how ideas on laziness and work discipline were rooted in the social practices of the *Tanzimat* (re-ordering) period.[219] Rather than emphasizing the cultural models that Ottoman intelligentsia admired and acquired during their excursions to Europe, or emphasizing a process of internalization of the images of Oriental indolence, it is essential to stress the importance of the nineteenth century Ottoman reforms in establishing the modern work ethos. Cultured and educated members of Ottoman society helped disseminate ideas such as the duties of citizenship and industriousness they attained fom European models, but these ideas and ideals did not travel across a mysterious ether from the books they read to those they wrote. These men, who played an important role in popularizing, moralizing and politicizing the discourse of productivity as a 'national' project, exercised these notions in their daily lives. This

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[218] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 110-111.

[219] There are variations in the translation of this term. N-Z-M root in Arabic means order and discipline, and its derivative Tanzimat can mean regulations, orderings, and reorderings. For example, Mitchell prefers regulations for the word and rightly rejects the mistranslation, modernization. Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 82. The opposite of tanzim in the early modern Ottoman world was *ihtilal*, which is translated as decline as in "decline literature."

chapter explores the role of social practice in emergent discourses, by focusing on work practices through the analysis of the Ottoman reforms of the nineteenth century. Accompanied by urban reforms and discussions in the public sphere on the parameters of work, work-time, and work ethics, bureaucratic and urban reforms helped implement a new sense of work, reinforcing new conceptualizations of a work ethos.

As the Ottoman state entered the era of nineteenth-century reforms, the pervasive social issues of work and productivity became a focus of attention of the state. As the government expanded its bureaucracy and sought to improve bureaucratic efficiency, it played a pivotal role in the new conceptualizations of work. The examination of bureaucratic reforms and offices reveals the particularities of the discourse and practice of work ethos in the modern sense. Bureaucratic reforms constantly bombarded the governmental offices with new bills and regulations on the importance of being efficient and productive. By examining the regulations, one not only sees how new work concepts were implemented, but how they followed a rather ambiguous path. Although the practice of new work concepts could have been discerned from various other sites and historical processes, there are several reasons for studying the bureaucratic offices. First, offices as work sites were spread throughout the empire, conducting activities ranging from miniscule day to day red-tape to overall administration of the regions, and purviews. Even the most wide-spread work sites, whether factories or workshops, would not provide work practices at this breadth or depth controlled from one center. Although work hours and other regulations were not homogeneous throughout the empire, the concept of the work time as separate from other activities was not. Therefore, the confined environment of these offices makes them a great venue where spatiality and temporality of new work experiences, separated from the non-work activities, can be studied.

The second issue regarding the choice of bureaucracy is directly related to the nature of modernity. Bureaucratic expansion is one of the faces of state formation, which cannot be separated from nation formation. Bureaucratic practices and institutions reveal the destructive and productive nature of modern discourses, such as the discourse of productivity and work ethos. The fact that the foundational theory of bureaucratic organization of one of the first modern bureaucracies was first conceived for and implemented in India by the British in 1853, sheds light upon the colonial nature of bureaucracy in particular, and modernity in general.[220] In particular, the examination of the *Sicill-i Ahval* Commision, established as a control mechanism in 1879, and where the records of thousands of bureaucrats were kept and tracked, reveals the inner mechanisms of pervasive disciplinary techniques over the employed.

Third, the offices where the routinization of recently introduced work practices took place were not limited to the disciplining of the bureaucrats. New work concepts were made familiar and assumed a normative character to the general public. The petitions of the subjects from all over the empire, requesting the dismissal of "lazy" officers attest to this process. Moreover, it is not surprising that most of the authors of morality books (examined in the previous chapter) received their formal training, even if briefly, in these bureaucratic offices. Partaking in the administration of a new work ethos, bureaucrats were in the best position to articulate arguments about work/laziness. These men played an important role in moralizing and popularizing the work ethos. They articulated new work regulations and work ethics in their writings. While state orders specifically targeted bureaucrats in the governmental offices, the authors of morality books addressed the entire Ottoman nation. Ottoman society in general,

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[220] Hasan Sukru Adal, *Modern Devlette Memur* (Ankara, 1939), 130.

being subjected to these new work disciplines in public sphere, experienced this very transformation.

Tanzimat, the Modern State, and the Bureaucratic Reforms

Ottoman bureaucratic reforms gained momentum in the early nineteenth century and continued up until its disintegration between 1918 and 1920. In his pioneering monograph on the Ottoman bureaucracy in the nineteenth century, Carter Findley provides information on the various reforms in the bureaucratic arena as well as a description of the work habits of the new Ottoman bureaucracy.[221] However, before addressing the issue of the bureaucratic reforms, several issues that have been dominating the historiography needs to be identified.

The historiography of the analysis of specific Ottoman reforms have been marred by two major issues: first, the following of the neat transition models by subscribing to the tradition-modernity binary, and second, employing a confining approach to power that locates it in a single site, the state. For example, employing a Weberian progression of the conceptualization of work, i.e. a passage from parochial to modern, Findley attributes the problems of modernizing bureaucracy to the persistence of "traditional faults of Ottoman administration."[222] Such approaches carry the mark of modernization theory's clear-cut division between the traditional and the modern (in the Ottoman case the conflict between them), without scrutinizing the binary.[223] As Dipesh Chakrabarty warns us, it is of critical importance to avoid viewing the state as the

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[221] Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire.*

[222] Ibid., 252.

[223] For classical applications of modernization theory in the Middle East, see Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* and Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. For instance, Berkes sees a bifurcation in the responses to Tanzimat, which was a problem caused by the adoption of Islam into modern civilization. Berkes, 137.

sole source of power and external to these processes, since both the state and the nation, in their formation, are under the same forces, namely the spread of capitalist market relations and the system of nation-states as its political unit.[224]

The Ottoman reform period should be viewed under the light of these concerns. Contrary to its geographic contraction, Ottoman state experienced an expansion in the nineteenth century during the Tanzimat period (1839-1920).[225] The Tanzimat period is the period in which the Ottoman Empire fell to the periphery of the new power centers of Europe, and being incorporated into the world market system, implemented a series of reforms. These reforms, starting with the royal decree of 1839, were defensive and developmentalist in nature and were realized in various areas, including the military, bureaucracy, administration, education, and urban planning. The reforms brought great centralization and expanded the role of the state. The defensive developmentalist reforms that aimed to strengthen the administration by expanding sources of revenues needed to coordinate large imperial lands and their inhabitants. However, it should be noted that there was not only an expansion, but also a change in the roles and modes of the state.

The empire, one could say, was assuming the characteristics of a nation-state, being shaped by external treaties and pressures, internal challenges for reorganization, and demands for separation and independence. The empire responded to these challenges by establishing new educational institutions, rebuilding a new tax system, and abolishing the legal-customary differences between Muslims and other religious communities. As one of the most ambitious

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[224] Chakrabarty, "Labor History and the Politics of Theory," 321-333.

[225] Although historians end the Tanzimat period in 1876 with the inauguration of the first Constitution, the reform period mostly extended until the end of the Great War. For example, see Aksan and Goffman, *The Early Modern Ottomans*, 117.

imperial projects of the period, the Ottoman Empire was attempting to create a homogenized

Ottoman nation. The reforms inculcated a sense of unity in the people via the official ideology of

"Ottomanness," by engaging them in shared social practices.[226] The state reformed its entire

military apparatus and implemented related military measures such as universal conscription

(Islahat Fermani, 1856), where members were trained together with fellow citizens from places

they never heard before. The Land Code of 1858, which aimed at disabling intermediaries,

facilitated direct involvement of the state into its citizens' lives. Building infrastructure and

railroads connected remote provinces to the capital. The content of the nineteenth-century

reforms was saturated with the rights of citizens in regard to the state as well.[227]

The goal of the bureaucratic reforms was to form a professional and salaried bureaucracy.

State formation, as Corrigan and Sayer argue, involves development of lay "clerks in the

business of ruling routines.[228]" The professionalization and expansion of bureaucracy in this

nation-building period was only second to military reforms. The state restructured its existing

scribal service in the form of a modern state bureaucracy. It centralized the administration of

imperial lands over three continents by making all civil and administrative offices report to their

corresponding ministries, which were newly established in Istanbul. Administrative schools were

inaugurated in order to employ the graduates. Later, these schools took on a more general nature

and were extended to the larger public, producing more and more recruits for the expanding

bureaucracy. The reforms offered job security and retirement plans for those who passed through

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[226] On defensive developmentalism, see James Gelvin, "Developmentalism, Revolution, and Freedom in the Arab East: the Cases of Egypt, Syria, and Iraq," in *The Idea of Freedom in Asia and Africa*, ed. Robert H. Taylor (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002). Also see Gelvin, "Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc?"

[227] For notions of citizenship during the Tanzimat period from a legal perspective, see Cihan Osmanagaoglu, *Tanzimat Donemi Itibariyla Osmanli Tabiiyyetinin (Vatandasliginin) Gelisim* (Istanbul: Legal, 2004).

[228] Corrigan and Sayer, *The Great Arch*, 23.

a newly established exam system. Bureaucrats were also given the right to know the cause of their dismissal, and later on, the right to challenge these decisions at court. Most importantly they were given salaries.[229] In the pre-Tanzimat system, scribes and effendis were usually not paid in cash, but in accordance with the patrimonial-redistributive structure of the empire. There were a few methods of compensation, which included prebendal holdings, periodic gifts, and other ways of non-monetary payments.[230] Being paid in cash had great implications on the economy and urban life that I shall not dwell on here. With the expansion of a cash economy, the overflow of European products and new ways of consuming, conspicuous consumption became a trademark of the bureaucrats who were employed in great numbers.[231]

In order to evaluate the pervasiveness of the bureaucratic reforms, a clarification on the issue of the number of people who worked at these offices is necessary. Both the nineteenth-century sources as well as the historiography in the twentieth century reflect an inflated sense of the numbers of those employed, perhaps because of the heightened perception of the centralization of the state.[232] Assessing the number of people who worked for the state as bureaucrats and clerks is a difficult task to undertake, if not "inaccessible," as an earlier study

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[229] Receiving the salaries on a regular basis was sometimes a problem. For example, during the war with Russia in 1877, the officials were paid four years behind schedule. Huseyin Ozdemir, *Osmanli Devletinde Burokrasi* (Istanbul, 2001), 175.

[230] Gulten Sariyildiz, *Sicill-I Ahval Komisyonunun Kurulusu ve Islevi (1879-1909)* (Istanbul, 2004), 2.

[231] For the unique consumption habits of a turn-of-the-century bureaucrat, based on his own surviving notebooks, see Paul Dumont, "Said Bey: The Everyday Life of an Istanbul Townsman at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century" in *The Modern Middle East: A Reader,* eds. Albert Hourani, P. Khoury and M. C. Wilson (London: I.B. Tauris, 1993), 271-287.

[232] Celal Nuri, even after the 1900 and 1909 layoffs, talked about how inflated the offices were compared to France's bureaucracy. Celal Nuri, *Ilel-I Ahlakiyemiz* (1916-17), 140-141.

points out.[233] If one takes the 1894-95 Ottoman census under the section of "professions in the Ottoman state," there were 353,000 "government clerks" (*katip*), 185,000 "government officials" (*memur*) along with 583,000 Muslim religious functionaries, and 186,000 laborers. The Ottoman population in 1894 was given as around 29 million (excluding Egypt).[234] Although a perfect fit for the period's images as reflected in the literary sources, these spectacularly high numbers require scrutiny. At the very least, as Carter V. Findley puts it, they are hard to evaluate. Findley finds these numbers, which possibly include others besides civil officials, to be exceptionally inflated and proposes his assessment based on the numbers of the files surviving in the personnel records.[235]

As the Ottoman state was transforming, its knowledge of countable resources, i.e. statistics (*hulasatu'l kuyud*) expanded over an unprecedented purview. In order to expand its control over bureaucracy a commission was established in 1879. Titled *Sicill-i Ahval Komisyonu (Personnel Record Commission)*, this commission gathered information about each and every official who worked for the government.[236] A file was established for every member of the Ottoman bureaucracy (except the military, the police force, and the *sher'iyye*), containing

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[233] Walter F. Weiker, "The Ottoman Bureaucracy: Modernization and Reform." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 13, no. 3, Special Issue on Organizations and Social Development (Dec. 1968): 451-470.

[234] Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert, *Osmanli Imparatorlugunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi*, vol. 2, (Istanbul, 2006), 769.

[235] Carter Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom: A Social History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 11. Findley stipulated a different number in his earlier work. See Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire,* 65, 167-168.

[236] For further information, see Sariyildiz, 7-85.

information regarding the name, place of birth, ethnic origin, location and duration of official work, reasons of rank changes, and salary.[237]

According to the Prime Ministry Archive catalogue, as Findley states in his 1989 work, there were 92,137 records in the Interior Ministry archives, where all the civil personnel (i.e. excluding religious, military, and police personnel) files were preserved.[238] Since all "…these records –some of which belong to men already old in 1877 –obviously include several generations of officials [,]" assesses Findley, a highest number of civil officials in service at one time can be inferred as 70,000. [239] Findley further modifies the number by dividing it into two, pointing out that only about half of the special collection of the Foreign Ministry Personnel Records (a sub set created by this particular ministry later to be enrolled in the master set) displayed a career of more than 15 years. Many entered and exited the governmental offices for one or two appointment terms. This was due probably to the encouragement of the Sultan Abdulhamid II, who ruled between 1876 and 1908 and "pressured huge numbers of men into government service, where he thought he could control them."[240] Assuming a similar pattern in the master set, Findley argues that 35,000 officials were employed at a given time, which became the ballpark figure that most recent scholarship has come to use.

A recent reassessment of the personnel files in the Prime Ministry Archives (Basbakanlik Osmanli Arsivi, BOA) makes it necessary to modify the original 92,000 files, on which Findley

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[237] For similar attempts to gather information, in this case about and from the sufi orders, see Brian Silverstein, "Sufism and Governmentality in the Late Ottoman Empire." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29:2 (2009).

[238] Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, 22.

[239] Ibid, 22-23.

[240] Ibid, 23.

based his calculations. The new personnel files leave us with original 62,000 files, which was obtained by eliminating repeated names from the 92,000 files. If we apply Findley's around $1/4^{th}$ reduction haphazardly to this new number in order to exclude the oldest generation, we would end up with around 47,000 serving under the Hamidian regime, which comprises the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Excluding half of this number as "in-and-out" bureaucrats, as Findley suggests, we have somewhere around 24,000 officials. However, to complicate the issue further, Findley's strong belief in the personnel records as verification of the numbers employed has to be reassessed, since some scholars express doubts about their comprehensiveness. According to Mubahat Kutukoglu's research, the archive in general contains scattered files on individual bureaucrats that could not make into these personnel record books.[241] Accounting for those bureaucrats who could not make it into these files, it might be safest to set 24,000 as the *minimal* number of persons working for the government at a given time at the end of the nineteenth century, until more thorough research is done at the Prime Ministry Archives.

Juxtaposing the numbers from the 1530s and 1790 demonstrates the extent of the expansion. While research shows that there were under 100 clerks at the financial offices in 1530s,[242] in 1790, according to a document in Topkapi Palace, this number goes as high as 1500 men in the scribal offices in Istanbul, including both the apprentices and the supervisors.[243] The number gets as high as 2,000, when the civil officials outside of the capital city are added. Therefore, from 2,000 at the end of the eighteenth century to 24,000 at the end of the nineteenth,

[241] Mubahat Kutukoglu, "Sicill-I Ahval Defterlerini Tamamlayan Arsiv Kayitlari." *Guney Dogu Avrupa Arastirmalari Dergisi* 12 (1998): 141-157.

[242] Cornell H. Fleischer, "Preliminaries to the Study of Ottoman Bureaucracy." *Journal of Turkish Studies* 10 (1986): 135-141.

[243] Ibid, 22.

yields a 12 fold increase in numbers working in non-military governmental bureaus. While this increase was unprecedented, these numbers pale in significance in comparison to contemporaries such as Russia, where the bureaucrats grew from 38,000 in 1800 to 114,000 in 1856.[244]

With the initial reforms to create a centralized bureaucratic system, overcrowding of the offices, issues of indolence, laziness, inefficiency, and absenteeism came to the fore as problems.[245] Further policies and regulations followed the reforms which, first and foremost, attempted to make the officials come to the offices. Once they were there, they prevented them from leaving the offices before the set work hours. Although politics of employment changed through the century, such as the Hamidian politics which attempted to incorporate his rivals to the system by employing them, the policies did not change in nature. Looking at the examples of the new policies and orders allows us to capture the state's involvement in the formation of new perceptions of work.

Laziness and Inefficiency - Work Time and Work Space

E. P. Thompson views clock towers as the intersection point between time and work discipline. The campaign for building clock towers by the Ottoman sultans in the *fin-de-siècle* Ottoman state, such as in Istanbul and Beirut, could be seen as an indicator of the emerging concepts of modern time and space which were spreading throughout the empire.[246] The configuration of the physical space produced what Foucault calls microphysical power, a power

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[244] Ibid, 23.

[245] Ibid, 212-221.

[246] For the clock towers erected in Anatolia during the last century of the Ottoman Empire, see Hakki Acun, *Anadolu Saat Kuleleri* (Ankara: Ataturk Kultur Merkezi Yayinlari, 1994).

that worked by ordering material space in exact dimensions and acquiring a continuous bodily

hold upon its subjects.[247]

It was during this time in the nineteenth century that the city itself was conceptualized as

a thing to be ordered. On the "colonization" of Egypt during the *Mehmed Ali* and his

descendants' reign, Tim Mitchell has noted the obsession of an "appearance of an order."[248] The

city began to be seen as a singular object. Concepts and words such as *nizam*, *intizam*, *insicam*,

muntazam, *heyet-i muntazama,* [249] and *tanzim* became key words in the discourse over of the

regulation of the capital city in the official texts. [250] In this discourse, beauty was equated to

orderliness and regulation.[251] It is in the same period, as mentioned, the idea of citizenship and

the roles of the ideal citizen became much more recognizable in the empire. The orderliness of

the urban space was inarguably connected to the disciplining of the modern, responsible, and

industrious individual. A strict application of a geometric plan, as Mitchell points out in his

analysis of rebuilding of Cairo, produces an effect that instills a sense of regularity and

regulation in the inhabitants. [252]

The level of productivity and industriousness was strongly tied to the lighting of the

public space.[253] The reformers, as it is pointed out in the 1855 charter of the City Ordering

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[247] Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 93.

[248] Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains, Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 31.

[249] Zeynep Celik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), 66.

[250] Order, regularity, coherence, orderly, orderly appearance, and regulating, respectively.

[251] Ibid., 128.

[252] Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, xxi.

[253] Ibid., 67.

Commission, saw the necessity of lighting the streets (*tenvir-i esvak*). An Ottoman intellectual, Şinasi, well aware of the connection between urban reforms and the shaping of the new individual, made the lighting of the city streets a public issue.[254] In his newspaper *Tasvir-i Efkar*, he urged Istanbulians to light gaslights in front of their houses. It is interesting that he not only connected the illumination of the city spaces with the metaphorical illumination of the minds of the citizens, but also argued that having well-lit streets makes it possible for the citizens to engage in activities during the dead hours of night. Şinasi pointed out that the illuminated streets would not only dispel crime, but also increase the working hours of the stores, thus boosting commerce. Şinasi's call was for the liberation of the individual city-dwellers from the "darkness" of traditional way of living and was deeply tied to the extension of the work hours. The lighting of the city would not only going to attract business, it would also change the work hours of the city inhabitants that, according to the traveler accounts,[255] would return home with the sunset.

Illuminated streets would reverse the habit of ending the working day with sunset, and consequently, as reformers perceived it, the innate laziness of the "oriental." Comparisons with the "Western" capitals are rampant among the Ottoman intelligentsia. Among them, London gets a special treatment, since "if a photograph of every work of progress on the face of the earth was taken, [these photographs] can show no more than what London reveals about the current civilization (*medeniyet-i hazira*)." [256] When the playwright Abdulhakk Hamid went to London as a diplomat, he envyingly wrote that it is because "the gas was lit" during the certain five dark

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[254] Bedri Mermutlu, *Sosyal Dusunce Tarihimizde Sinasi* (Istanbul: Kaknus Yayinlari, 2003), 521.

[255] "During the daytime, Istanbul is Europe's brightest city; during the nighttime, it is the darkest…That's why as soon as the night comes, the city becomes desolate." Edmondo Amicis, *Istanbul* (Ankara: Kultur Bakanligi Yayinlari, [orig.1874] 1981), 162.

[256] Kemal, *Osmanli Modernlesmesinin Meseleleri,* 212.

days in the city, "civilization was never silenced, progress continued… cars worked, [and] *chemin de fers* were everywhere."[257] Much before Abdulhakk Hamid, his 'patron' Sultan Abdulhamid II, while he was just a prince, visited London with the same expressed awe. The infamous pollution of the city was stardust in the eyes of Ottoman beholders: "In London, the mines and the factories darkened the skies. Activity was taking place in every corner. The ports were full of boats."[258]

An illuminated city might also welcome unwanted activities, but the advantages were far greater. In his article titled "Civilization," (published in 1871), Namik Kemal acknowledged the possibility of "unemployed persons" finding ground in the gas-lit public spaces to engage in unproductive leisure activities. However, he quickly points out that for the "laborious folks" (*ashab-i sa'y*) an illuminated city would mean that they would be engaging in "six or seven hours of extra work and commercial activity and thus adding one more life to their lives."[259] Turning nights into days, the city was going to nullify not only the old concept of sunset as the end of the day, but also the 'lazy nature' of the city-dweller, turning him/her into an industrious and productive citizen.

As the city spaces were shaped by these ideas, work time in the governmental bureaus was changing accordingly. The quality of the tasks performed in early-nineteenth-century scribal offices was quite different than how it was in the bureaucratic offices. Unlike their successors later that century, the scribes were not involved in the administration processes of a large empire.

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[257] Nevin Meric, *Osmanli'da Gundelik Hayatin Degisimi, Adab-i Muaseret, 1894-1927* (Istanbul: Kaknus, 2000), 86.

[258] *Sultan Abdulaziz'in Avrupa Seyahati* (Istanbul, 1944), 100-101. Quoted in Baki Asilturk, *Osmanli Seyyahlarinin Gozuyle Avrupa* (Istanbul: Kaknus, 2000), 456.

[259] Kemal, *Osmanli Modernlesmesinin Meseleleri,* 359-360.

One may argue that previously these offices were task oriented. Each scribe had to work on their files until they finished their daily work. The most important determinant of good work was not leaving a certain day's work to the following day. This is reflected in the documents even as late as 1812.[260] It is possible that the bureaucratic offices combined practices of a mixed usage of both time-oriented and task-oriented work. A document from 1815 addressing the *Reisulkuttab* reflects this, by stating that the clerks could leave by 10 o'clock only if they completed their daily task (*bugunku maslahat*).[261] Another document addressing the *Muhimme Kalemi* from 1873, reiterates the phrase. However, this time it is combined with a strong emphasis on showing up on time and not leaving early.[262] Just as the task-oriented farmers did, task-oriented office workers experienced the least demarcation between 'work' and 'life;' social intercourse and labor were blended together.[263] Officials and clerks spending most of their time socializing, eating and drinking, as Vambery observed in the nineteenth century, is not a unique picture for the reader of late Ottoman literature. The offices, where coffee sellers with their trays, *cubukcu*'s with their pipes, beggars and entertainers roaming in and out, seemed far from the ideal work space the reformists imagined.[264] Mehmed Murad (known as Mizanci Murad), an emigrant from Russia, describes the frustration of his novel's protagonist when entering a governmental office: "He felt dreadful (…) [He] thought that all the thirty clerks in the room were necessary, and each

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[260] Ahmed Lutfi, *Ez Tarih-I Ahmed Lutfi*, vol. 1 (Istanbul, 1302/1884-1885), 117. The 1812 document confirms the practice "…bilcumle ketebe ve memurin-I saire … erken gelip gece gitmeleri ve bugunku maslahati ferdaya birakmamalari…" BOA C.DH 47/2331 07.C.1227 [18 JUNE 1812]

[261] C.DH 69/3421 03.CA.1230 [13 MAY 1815]

[262] Tevfik Temelkuran, "Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Mühimme Kalemi," *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 6 (1975): 129-175, especially 167-168. Many thanks to Dr. Ismail Hakki Kadi for finding this article for me.

[263] Thompson, 60.

[264] Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, 215.

had a separate responsibility and duty. However, twenty seven of these effendis were 'salaried regulars' who were with no function and no responsibility. (…) His heart squeezed tight."[265] When the hero asks his superintendent what his job is going to be, the answer he receives is that there is no specific job for him until one arises:

> He waited until the evening. No one gave him work. He saw that those who had been in the office for a long time and who had titles were in fact doing nothing. He saw even more! In their official posts, recklessly eating puddings, drinking beverages and coffee, smoking tobacco, yawning in excessive amounts, sometimes strolling in the halls outside the office arm in arm with each other… their preoccupation was along these lines…. His mind was in terror. He thought that a man in these conditions can never progress and even more, he would lose much of his already gained knowledge. [266]

One has to, of course, read these descriptions critically by taking into account the observer's probable comparison point, where the binary between work and leisure had already been established. After all, for those accustomed to a labor discipline dominated by the clock, the above behavior "appears to be wasteful and lacking urgency."[267]

A student of late Ottoman history and literature will have no chance of missing the common image of the bureaucrats, portrayed as an army of men with their agonizing inefficiency overcrowding the offices. In his partly autobiographical piece, "How Did I Become a Novice at the Office," Refik Halit (1888-1965), who became a journalist after quitting his job at *Maliye Kalemi* (Office of the Finance Department) in 1908, depicted the bureau where he "worked:"

> The door kept opening frequently… [and] in came the beggars, mostly wounded, some invalid, carrying a *keskul* or a tray, and walking with the mannerism of inspectors; sometimes a black guy selling water; an immigrant baker; a *Rum* candy-maker… The seat that was not taken either by these or the effendis was occupied by a blind retired who brought his veiled 8-year-old daughter … four peasants, pouring their grievances at the same time. Meanwhile, the roll sheet appeared. As I was signing it, the youth to my left

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[265] Mehmet Murat (Mizanci), *Turfanda mi Turfa mi* (Istanbul, 2005), 87-88. The novel was written in 1890-91.

[266] Mehmet Murat, *Turfanda mi Turfa mi*, 87.

[267] Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, 60-63.

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said: 'Keep your signature simple, so we can sign it for you when you are absent. You will be saved from per diem cuts.' The second month, I skipped work for a week, and later I did not show up at all. Every month I used to send someone to pick up my salary, which was around 200, and I spent my time gallivanting here and there.[268]

Evasion of work, of course, cannot be viewed as a resistance to the disciplinary practices. As Mark Kingwell points out, "slacking is consistent with the work idea; it does not subvert it." [269] In 1914, Hasan Sermed, a contributor of *Ictihad*, pointed out in his article "From the Foreign Perspective: Turks" the importance of knowing what Europeans think about the Ottomans. He specifically quoted a foreign dignitary's impressions of the "Turkish" bureaucrat:

> Although [he does it] with deference and courtesy, the Turk exercises his official service by being too free and easy about it. Except a few conditions, he still could not gain the knowledge of swiftness and promptness in work. The mannerism and gestures of the Turk performing swiftly involves speaking fast and loud and displaying strong hand and bodily gestures.[270]

These accounts reflect how the bureaucrats and the governmental bureaus came to be seen as places far removed from a disciplined work environment. However, these descriptions also tell something else: the language of the new work ethos, the imperativeness of productivity, articulated in various ways through the reforms and the debates in the public sphere had turned their attention to the very offices. It was in these offices that the state was reconstructing itself along the modern lines. Therefore, failure of the work ethos there signified a failure of the social project.

Hitherto practices, such as the rule set by custom that did not allow the scribes to leave the office before the head of the office, (*kethuda* in the Sublime Port *[Babiali],* and *Defterdar* in

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[268] Refik Halit, "Kaleme Nasil Cerag Oldum," *Kirpinin Dedikleri* (Istanbul, 1910), 257-265.

[269] Mark Kingwell, "The Language of Work." *Harper's Magazine*, no. 1934 (July 2011), 19-24.

[270] Hasan Sermed, "Ecnebi Nazarinda Turkler." *Ictihad*, no. 93 (13 February 1329), 2083.

the Porte of Defterdar) no longer set the rhythm of offices.[271] As Foucault argues "time measured and paid must also be a time without impurities or defects."[272] A new sense of temporality accompanied a new sense of work, as the flow of time was divided into "rational" minutes and hours. Starting with 1839, attendance rosters were introduced to the offices. A document sent to the Foreign Ministry suggests that those who worked at the offices, the bureaucrats and clerks (*memurlar, hulafa ve katipler*) should start work at four o'clock until ten thirty.[273] According to an official order from 1845, salaries would be cut for those who were absent without a legitimate excuse, and even worse, this amount would be distributed to their colleagues in the office who took their attendance seriously.[274] Still, the system was a flexible one. A governmental order from 1853 allowed the officials whose residences were far from the office to leave half an hour earlier, while ordering everyone to arrive by four o'clock *or four thirty the latest* a la turca time (which was a measurement of time in the Ottoman Empire).[275] This loose sense of work hours that accommodated the specific needs of bureaucrats and clerks evolved into much stricter understanding of work time as the century progressed.

The flexible language seems to have disappeared in a decree (*buyuruldu*) from the Prime Ministry in 1878, which required everyone to be at work at six o'clock while not leave earlier than ten o'clock.[276] A later document from the Interior Ministry (*Dahiliye Nezareti*) placed

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[271] Huseyin Ozdemir, *Osmanli Devletinde Burokrasi* (Istanbul, 2001), 215. For more info on Babiali, see Ali Cankaya, *Yeni Mulkiye Tarihi* (Ankara, 1968-69), 9-13.

[272] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), 151.

[273] BOA HR.MKT 18/74 1263.Z.2 [11.11.1847]

[274] Basbakanlik Osmanli Arsivi (BOA, Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul) Cevdet Dahiliye N. 1518, June 1845.

[275] BOA C.Dahiliye N 1762, April 1853. A la Turca time was a time measurement used by the Ottomans, taking the sunset as 12 o'clock everyday.

[276] BOA MF.MKT 58/136 15.Z.1295 [10 DECEMBER 1878]

greater emphasis on the start and end times, starting off with an admonishment for "some of the effendis who do not attend [the work hours] in an orderly fashion" by coming in late and leaving early. In this order that was sent to the offices, the bureaucrats and clerks were ordered to show up "*right* at 10 o'clock" in the morning and leave "*right* at 6 o'clock" in the evening.[277] Lateness and no-shows would not only have an effect on the swiftness of the governmental work, as another official order sent by the Ministry of Interior in 1920 stated, but "also it will disturb the order of work (*intizam-i mesaiyye*)."[278] Note that the idea of work and work hours as an abstract order not to be disturbed was placed higher than the immediate benefits of swiftness and efficiency. As this sense of the concept of work hours strengthened, the punishment for absenteeism and tardiness only intensified.

Getting to work on time was the first step. While the effendis struggled to keep up with these new notions of time, they also were required to keep their focus on work during the work hours. Immediately after following *Gulhane Hatt-i Humayunu*, the Kanunname of 1256 declared that:

> All the officials of the *Devlet-i Aliyye*, regardless of rank, need to give priority to the management of the affairs that they were tasked for, [and hold it] above their personal affairs, with the exceptions of religious duties and human necessities. If it is proven that he [does not uphold these rules and] causes a stop in the affairs he is tasked with, at first instance, he is to be warned, and if he does not correct [his behavior], in order to make an example for others, he is to be punished with dismissal. [279]

An order from the Interior Ministry, for example, requested the bureaucrats to be present continuously at work (*mutemadiyen vazifeleri basinda*). Only if there were legitimate excuses

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[277] BOA DH EUM VRK 19/54. Undated, possibly turn of the century.

[278] BOA Dahiliye.EUM KLU 14/10 (28 R 1338/ 1 Jan 1920).

[279] BOA Hatt 48294. Cf. Resat Kaynar, *Mustafa Resit Pasa ve Tanzimat* (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu yayinlari, 1991), 295-313.

such as sickness and upon the permission of the ranking officer could one leave the office –with an added warning that most of the bills targeting the offices ended: those who behaved contrary to these orders were to be punished severely (*sedid-i ducar-i mucaazat edilmesi*). [280] A later bill addressing *Kalem-i Umumiye Muduriyeti* lays out the details of permissible absence, and punitive outcomes of not following a work code. The bill stated that if the excused absences exceeded three days a month, a petition to the necessary office was to be written explaining the situation. The petition had to include a hospital report, if the excuse was health-based. In order to prevent the late-arriving officer from signing the attendance-rosters, which were kept safe by the head officer, the signing spot of those who did not show up on time needed to be crossed. Those crafting the document cautiously added that the rosters of each branch were to be examined by the *muduriyet* at the end of each week. [281]

Alteration of temporal structures should not be limited to the quotidian notions of it, while it will not be a stretch to posit that it is the daily practices of measured time, be it in the bureaucratic offices, or in the neighborhood schools, or in the train schedules,[282] allowed the changes in the deeper sense of time. Progress (*terakki*) was the stated goal of labor and a natural outcome of civilization. The emergence and circulation of this concept, as Ismail Kara puts it, revolutionized the meaning of words like past and future.[283] As it is in the example of Cevdet

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[280] BOA DH.UMVM 89/42 25/Ra/1336. [09/01/1918]

[281] BOA DH.EUM. KLU 14/10 28.R.1338 [20.01.1920]

[282] For the connection between new conceptualizations of time and trains, see David S. Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983); Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986). For an account of debates surrounding railways and establishment of 'colonial time,' see Ritika Prasad, "Interrupted Narratives: Standardizing Time on Indian Railways" in *Tracking Modernity: The Experience of Railways in Colonial India, 1853-1947,* Ph.D. Dissertation, UCLA (Los Angeles, 2009), 311-373.

[283] Ismail Kara, "Turban and Fez: Ulama as Opposition" in *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy,* ed. Elizabeth Ozdalga (London: Routledge, 2005), 180. According to Ismail Kara, the notion of organic time was

Pasha's various historical works, the transition itself was not linear and smooth. It is very telling that while Cevdet Pasha's *Kisas-I Enbiya,* a work that narrates the history of prophets, employed a non-linear and therefore non-modern conceptualization of time, his book on the history of the Ottoman Empire (1774-1826) titled *Tarih-i Cevdet,* clearly differs not only from the latter, but also from the genre of history-writing in the Ottoman realm.[284]

While the work time of the effendis was monitored on a daily basis, the reformers filled the press with the critique of the notions of time. Particularly, the time of the officers seems to be such a social issue that it was associated with crimes such as theft and treason. A morality text designed for high school students warned the students that if an officer slacks in the office, it is stealing from the state and the people. Especially time that was paid by the state, therefore the people, was a time one ought not to steal:

> When a member of the community (*efrad-i ummet*) undertakes a public service, [in] a governmental office, they have to accomplish their duties that are entrusted to the bosom of their public spirit. This is because, in return of the service he accepted, the official receives a salary that comes out of the pocket of the members of the nation (*efrad-i millet*). If he does not fulfill his duty/service and display negligence and laziness in this matter, he cannot claim a right to that salary. Taking money without having a right [to take it] is nothing but stealing. Moreover, this is much more than a petty theft. Because a petty theft … only damages and abuses one person. However, by not ensuring [the duty] and taking (and from this perspective, stealing) the money that belongs to the people (*umum ahali*), that person, that officer, steals it from an entire society (*hey'et-i ictimaiye*).[285]

Not only bureaucratic time was a commodity that could be saved, wasted, and stolen from, wasting it was deemed as "treason against society:"

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replaced with "synthetic conception of time." While modern time concepts are clearly different from the previous non-modern conceptualizations of time, it is difficult to work with such loaded terms as organic time and mechanical time.

[284] For how this book does not fit into the genre of "traditional" style of writing chronicles, i.e. vakanuvislik, see Bekir Kutukoglu, "Tarihci Cevdet Pasa" *Ahmet Cevdet Pasa Semineri* (Istanbul, 1986), 112-127.

[285] Ali Seydi, *Terbiye-I Ahlakiye ve Medeniye,* (Istanbul: 1327/1911-12), 76-77.

Those who abuse their time [by wasting] should be held more responsible than those who waste other things. In brief, the greatest cause of success lays in believing that time is more valuable than all kinds of wealth and making use of every minute. Not knowing the value of time and wasting it, and not spending it in order to benefit ourselves, our families, our homeland is treason against society. [286]

The necessary attributes of an official were written into a very moralized discourse. Vahyi, a military man and an educator (1878-1957), argued that the officials need to know what they were doing very well:

It is necessary that officials know what they are doing very well and do it right; [they need to display] hard work, and accomplish their work as fast as possible. Of course, these officials are selected and assigned by us –their duty is to do what we tell them and what is most beneficial and progressive for us. (…) Therefore, those officials who do their work right, and can show the utmost justice to their work are the greatest human beings.[287]

What if an official has low morals, but does a good job in his post? "Being an official of the state does not mean being shrine keeper." [288] Vahyi here separates the personal from the professional, which is a distinction that emphasizes a new professionalism in the governmental offices. The job of an official is to do his job right.

To advocate a culture of industriousness, reformers criticized a formulation of time that they perceived as one of the sources of backwardness. In one his sermons published periodically in *Sirat-i Mustakim,* Manastirli Ismail Hakki, a prominent name among the "Islamists," carefully laid his critique of the prophet's sayings (a*hadith*) that warned the believers of the end of the days. For him, arguing against the authenticity of these *ahadith*, these sayings were inserted into the religious discourse, but on the contrary encouraged for world-oriented activity. He

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[286] M. Adil, *Malumat-I Medeniye ve Ahlakiye* (Istanbul, 1333/1914-1915), 76-77.

[287] Vahyi, *Hakiki bir Musluman Daima Mukemmel bir Insandir* (Istanbul, 1912), 283.

[288] Ibid., 285-6.

strengthened his argument by bringing up *ahadith* that promotes activity and calls the believers

"to work both for this world and the next."[289]

By the turn of the century, the association of laziness with the bureaucratic offices was so

well-spread that the connection made it into the renowned Ottoman dictionary, *Kamus-i Turki*.

Semseddin Sami provided one of the definitions of *tembelhane* (literally house of the lazy) as

"the office where its officials do not work." [290] The notion of laziness, which appears in almost

every official document involving the bureaucratic reforms, evolved from a very vague concept

in which the consequences of "committing" it not very clear, to a crime with strict punitive

results. Laziness, as it appears in a royal decree dating from 1830s is a problem but a very

ambiguous one. Related by a historian of the period, the language of the mentioned royal decree

is vague and the consequences of 'committing' laziness are not very clear.[291] In an 1873

nizamname specifically addressing *Muhimme Defteri*, clerks are warned that: "Those clerks who

display laziness in performing their aforementioned tasks, or are absent without a legitimate

excuse, or do not come and leave offices in a timely fashion, they were to receive a warning, at

the first instance from their superiors, and at the second instance, from the *Makam-i Beglikci*. If

not effective, they were to be removed from their offices."[292] While according to the 1911 Policy

Charter for bureaucrats decreed by the Ministry of Public Works (*Nafia Nezareti*), those who

displayed negligence and laziness were to be warned, and if they persisted, they were to suffer

from gradually increasing penalties, such as first minor then major salary cuts, change of place of

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[289] Manastirli Ismail Hakki, "Mevaiz, Ders 50: Hem Dunya hem Ahiret Icin Calismak." *Sirat-I Mustakim*, no. 23 (1324), 366.

[290] Semseddin Sami, *Kamus-I Turki* (Istanbul, 1901), 442.

[291] Ozdemir, 215.

[292] BOA Dahiliye Iradeleri 46122 18.Z.1289. Quoted in Temelkuran, 168.

appointment (the road expenditure to be paid by the official himself), and eventually termination of the employment.[293] After the Young Turk revolution in 1908, in an effort to reduce the number of officials who were seen as a burden on the economy, thousands were laid off. Although many of these layoffs were in fact a clearance of the previous governments' cadres, the official reason given to many was inefficiency.[294] Still, the authorities were so overwhelmed by the inefficiency during World War I that a request was put through parliament that called for a martial-court trial for those who displayed laziness and misuse in the Ministry of Post and Telegraph. Although the request was rejected, it indicates the level of anxiety over the bureaucracy's pernicious attributes.[295]

As a site solely devoted to work, the office also further articulated the demarcation between work and non-work. The Ottoman scribes previously worked in a room devoted to the state affairs, most famously in *Kubbealti* at the Topkapi Palace, and also under the roof of the vizier residences, most notably the residence of the *Sadrazam* (the Grand Vizier), also known as the Sublime Port (previously *Bab-i Asafi*), where the Grand Vizier resided with his family in the harem and held government business in the office section. During the reign of Mahmud II, the vizierate system was replaced with the ministries, leading to the relocation of the Grand Vizier's private residences outside of the Sublime Port.[296] Settling in the new governmental buildings took a while. However, by the end of the century almost all of the offices had a work space that was spatially segregated from residences.

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[293] BOA. TNF 3134/7 m 66 (18 Ca 1330/ 5 May 1912).

[294] Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 250-252.

[295] BOA MV 206/46/1335 (28/02/1917).

[296] Ali Akyildiz, *Osmanli Merkez Burokrasisinde Reform* (Istanbul, 1992), Dissertation, 3.

Just as workspace from home and work from leisure were separated, the officers, especially those who worked at the *Muhimme Kalemi*, where they processed papers related to foreign affairs, were asked to leave the paperwork in the offices. While we know that the high level clerks were able to work on the documents "at night in their homes,"[297] in the *Nizamname* of 1873, clerks are warned against taking the rough drafts of documents to their residences to make fair copies. If they could not finish making fair copies and the task had a certain level of urgency then, only with the permission of their superior (*mudir, ve kisedar veyahud mumeyyiz*) could they take the rough drafts out of premises of office. [298]

State officers were also disciplined outside of the offices. The work ethos combined with the state's desire to control its image required officers to behave even in their off hours. The salary was the weapon of discipline. In 1917, as indicated in the proceeding records of *Meclis-i Vukela*, officers and the staff members (*devlet memurlari ve mustahdemler*) were prohibited from gambling. If effendis were caught gambling they were to receive warning. At the second incident, their entire salary would be cut, while if the incident occurred the third time they were to be dismissed from their posts. [299]

Several issues were identified as the problems causing the inefficiency of the offices. Overcrowded offices slowed down the productivity. Even in the eve of great bureaucratic expansion, the offices were deemed as overcrowded. As early as 1797, a *nizamname* pointed out that the overcrowded offices hindered the clerks from doing their work: "Today there are more than necessary trainees (*sakirdan*) at the *Ruus* and *Divan* offices. Because of the presence of a

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[297] Temelkuran, 140.

[298] BOA Dahiliye Iradeleri 46122. Text quoted in Temelkuran, 167.

[299] BOA MV 210/78 19.S.1336 [05.12.1917].

large number of trainees, problems regarding completing a task arise at the work space." The *nizamname* suggested that no trainees should be hired for a given time.[300] As the bureaucracy expanded the issue became more complicated and difficult to deal with.

Another problem was accessibility of these offices to practically anyone. The ease of access to these rooms by foreign dignitaries and dragomans alarmed the state in late eighteenth century. Open access workspace that caught the Vambery's attention was considered to be a problem very early on. While previously all the clerks worked under the same roof, the *nizamname* of 1797 introduced the separation of spaces for each office based on their specialty and the level of secrecy of the documents the clerks were dealing with.[301] Not only agents of foreign states, but also anyone who did not work in the offices was prohibited from entering. Later in 1832, a decree called for an investigation of the clerks, so that the unqualified persons should be removed from the offices and the qualified should be placed where they were needed.[302]

Conclusion

In the historiography, the scarcely mentioned policies targeting absenteeism, laziness, and inefficiency were by and large placed within the limited narratives of administrative reforms. Those who viewed these reforms, along with the other nineteenth-century restructurings, through the perspective of modernization theory, portrayed them as an integral component of a process called "Westernization." Due to the reappearance of these reform attempts throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they were viewed as a constant failure. Instead, this

[300] BOA Dahiliye Iradeleri 46122. Text quoted in Temelkuran, 139-141.

[301] For an account of the establishment of the Muhimme Kalemi, see Temelkuran, 129-175.

[302] Temelkuran, 129-175. Also quoted in Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire,* 124-125.

chapter analyzed these reforms, and the public debates that ensued them, as part and parcel of a social and cultural transformation during which, "fundamental categories of thought became conventional."[303]

As the urban space was regulated in accordance with the new work ethos, the confined environment of the offices became a venue in which spatiality and temporality of the work experience, separated from the non-work activities, was solidified –regardless of whether or not reforms reached their goals in full. These policies, regardless of their level of implementation, affected the daily lives of the bureaucrats, who were continuously warned and attempted to be disciplined in the governmental bureaus all over the empire. It is very likely that by engaging them in a shared practice that redefined their temporal and spatial experiences, these policies helped create a (re)definition of work discipline and work time.[304]

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[303] James Gelvin, "'Modernity,' 'Tradition,' and the Battleground of Gender in Early Twentieth-Century Damascus," in *Traditional Scholarship and Asian National Identity,* ed. Michael Dodson (forthcoming).

[304] The involvement of the Ottoman state in the lives of its bureaucrats was not only a practice of modern times. This can be seen in the work of Karen Barkey, where she discusses the central authority's spatial and durational manipulation of the bureaucrats, during the seventeenth century. Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: the Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

Chapter III

The Ottoman Body "Abnormal, Amorphous and Accustomed to Slacking"

Producing the Productive Body

> *Arsonist mathematics, dim-witted grammar, castrated history,*
> *Yes, all these secretly organize and draw this axiom*
> *On our foreheads: having tuberculosis drops productivity.*
>
> "The Corpse in Between Our Teeth"
> Ismet Ozel[305]

In 1916, in his morality text, the Ottoman educator and bureaucrat Ali Seydi Bey blamed the empire's humiliating defeat in the First Balkan War on the physical infirmity and lack of agility of the Ottoman soldier. Ali Seydi Bey went further, saying, it was not merely the Ottoman soldier, but the *Ottoman body* in general that was responsible for the military defeat. "We have forgotten our duty to strengthen our bodies," he claimed: "and are so lazy that even our blood circulates languidly in our veins."[306] Was this bold statement a singular articulation voicing the bitterness of the humiliating defeat of the empire in the hands of its former subjects in 1912, and therefore, needs to be categorized as an anomaly, or was it a belief shared by many of the reformists after the Balkan Wars? If it was the latter, was such a belief an emergent or an established discourse on the body of the political subject in late Ottoman society?[307]

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[305] Ismet Ozel, *Erbain* (Istanbul: Cidam, 1993), 14.

[306] Ali Seydi Bey, *Musahebat-ı Ahlakiye* (Istanbul, 1332), 21-22.

[307] A book chapter based on this chapter is now under publication. Melis Hafez, *"And the Awakening Came in the Wake of the Balkan War"* The Changing Conceptualization of the Body in Late Ottoman Society" in *Lasting Sociopolitical Impacts of the Balkan Wars*, eds. Isa Blumi and Hakan Yavuz (Utah: Utah University Press, 2012).

Ali Seydi Bey's lament was neither a singular incident, nor a peculiar phenomenon. Rather, it was part of a larger narrative on work and industriousness that became increasingly visible in the Ottoman world after the mid-nineteenth century. It is clear that these caustic remarks are not marginal but central to the new discourses on the body of the political subject in conjunction with the new conceptualizations of work and industriousness. Taking the defeat of the Ottoman armies in the Balkans as a context, this chapter suggests there are some underlying indications of greater, long-term socio-cultural social processes and tensions in Ottoman society. In order to expose such fissures, this chapter specifically traces the relationship between the conceptualizations of the healthy, productive, and able body and the discourses on the formation of an ideal citizen, as articulated in morality books (*ahlak kitapları)*, articles in newspapers and journals, and in published memoirs on the Balkan Wars. The Balkan defeat thus serves as the historical moment that reformers identified as a wakeup call, using it to demand a rigorous examination of the physical condition of not only of the soldiers, but also civilians. However, although the defeat triggered the proliferation of reform calls and the actualization of some at the institutional level, the hard-working and able body of the political subject was discursively constructed as a national resource much earlier than the Balkan defeat. What the reformers presented as "awakening," therefore, was built on a half-century-long practice of disciplining the productive body for the betterment of the emergent Ottoman nation. In this regard, the following contributes to, first, an investigation into how through the establishment of specific binaries such as productivity/laziness, the relationship between body, work and leisure was reconfigured as a constitutive element of the Ottoman nation-formation process, and second, how, through the examination of the body-centered debates in the post-Balkan war period, the body and its productivity gained militaristic meanings.

Although becoming a national trope and an object of scientific and social experiments are unique to the modern period, the body has always served as a basis of political metaphors in various traditions. Mary Poovey, in her *Making a Social Body*, traces the ways in which modern domain of social was born through the metaphor of the body. While in the seventeenth century the term body politic meant only the political subjects of the English society, by the nineteenth century the term social body came to represent the English society as an organic whole.[308] The term body politic, a root metaphor that had a prominent place in the Ottoman political treatises has also gone through a major content-change, as the term used by Katip Celebi (d. 1657) has very little resemblance to the term used by Namik Kemal (d. 1888). Katip Celebi in his formulation of the body politic appropriated and combined Ibn Khaldun's biological analogy, where body-politic, just like a living organism, goes through stages of growth, maturity and decline, and Nasiruddin Tusi's identification of four classes of society with four humors. For Katip Celebi, the chief executive is like a physician who balances these elements. [309] Compare Katip Celebi's approach with Namik Kemal's piece in *Ibret*, published in1872:

> Everyone is wasting their lives in inertia and seclusion (*atalet ve inziva*). Besides, how can we reach to the [level of] modern nations in the path of progress, who divide their day and night between work and order, who found the ways to educate the mind and protect the health (*terbiye-i akl ve hifz-i sihhat*), who are flawless in body and in behavior, and intelligent and diligent; while our *body politic* (…) is hiding at nights and spending their lives in the condition of a half-unconscious epileptic?[310]

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[308] Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation 1830-1864* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 1-24. The second meaning of social body is also significant: social body also signified the poor.

[309] Cornell Flesicher, "Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and Ibn Khaldunism in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters," in *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 46-68.

[310] Namik Kemal, *Osmanli Modernlesmesinin Meseleleri, I*, eds. Ismail Kara and Nergiz Y. Aydogdu (Istanbul: Dergah, 2005), 248. Emphasis added.

Whereas in the Katip Celebi's idealized world every component has a role, the chief executive is the only element that has a political role –a right and duty to intervene and set the balance right. For Namik Kemal, on the other hand, the political action does not go through vertical lines. He criticizes the people by accusing them of seclusion, i.e. being apolitical, which is a wrongdoing equivalent of laziness.

Tracing the changing conceptualizations of the body of the political subject, both as a site of intervention and as a trope for the nation offers new understandings of the workings of modern historical processes. There was, invoking Weber, an 'elective affinity' between the mobilization for productivity, modern conceptualizations of body, and nation formation, when the empire was being drawn into the capitalist economy relations while reformulating its state structures. The body was one of many resources that needed to be harnessed to form a new society, where all members would shoulder the burden of advancing the nation-state. Ideal character was believed to be achieved by rectifying the body. Engaging in physical activities, as Bruce Haley has shown in the context of Victorian Britain, was a way to obtain the discipline and courage required in this endeavor.[311] In 1905, Louis Querton argued that progress depended on state intervention in the "construction, conservation, and enhancement of the efficiency of the human machine."[312] In fact, the motor as a metaphor for the human body is intertwined with the history of the modern era. As Anson Rabinbach has shown, in his pioneering work *The Human Motor,* conceptualized as a conduit of power, the body became the focus of scientific interests across ideological divisions in nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe.[313] Rabinbach looked at

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[311] Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 123-140.

[312] Louis Querton, *L'augmentation du rendement de la machine humaine* (Brussels, 1905), 4. Quoted in Rabinbach, *The Human Moto*r, 207.

[313] Rabinbach, *The Human Moto*r, 45-68.

how scientific discoveries in the field of thermodynamics gave rise to a various scientific experiments about the human body, labor power, and fatigue. The productivist science that emerged out of these viewed the body as a motor and attempted to find the best balance between work and leisure, by maximizing productivity and minimizing fatigue. However, assuming causality between scientific discoveries and the shifting social meanings of the human body which led to a range of public policies is overly simplistic. The evolving conceptualizations of the body should not be viewed merely as products of scientific discoveries; both are products of changing cultural frameworks.[314]

When the empire began to employ modern state mechanisms, the body of the political subject entered the reform agenda as a part of the emergence of "the social" as a field of intervention and discipline.[315] In this chapter, I will analyze the body in the nexus of the Ottoman productivist discourse, which the idea of laziness as a social disease is a part of, by situating it in the larger processes of formation of the "social" and the "national." The new conceptualization of human body was reconfigured at a period when a series of modern binaries, such as industriousness/indolence and work time/leisure time were becoming hegemonic in late Ottoman society. It was during this time that indolent, lazy, and inactive became the adjectives that were associated with the common people, and industrious, productive and active became the target attributes that every citizen needed to gain. The concern about the body was ingrained in the anxiety of the perceived nature of the population and its role in "saving the state." [316]

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[314] Bryan S. Turner, *The Body and Society*, 3rd ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 11.

[315] For a discussion of how domains such as the social became sites of knowledge/power production, see Poovay, *Making a Social Body,* 1-24.

[316] There needs to be a study done on the term "saving the state," since it appears that historians of the late Ottoman period take this concept at face value and only look at it in the context of the turbulent times the empire was going

In this regard, the quest for modernity was (and still is) constituted through various dichotomies that order while producing the very experiences of human beings. Simply stated, the modern order separates the individual into two distinct realms, the body, which corresponds to the material world, and the mind, which corresponds to the moral world governed by "the moral order."[317] Once this separation was formulated, both domains became fields of intervention. This is most apparent in the Ottoman texts that appealed to "the education of the mind" and "education of the body."[318] While books on morality discursively constructed the body as the locus of the productive and hardworking ideal citizen, hence prescribing a moral order, the paralleling physical culture, including physical education and the culture of sports, attempted to strengthen the individual body, concomitantly introducing principles of order.[319]

But the body/mind of the political subject was not merely an educational project. The voices in the public sphere signal sustained anxiety about the bodies within the empire, making it an issue of the contested imperial public space. Therefore, the anxiety about the body in the nineteenth century should be placed within the matrix of creating a nation, by producing an ideal and its misfits, where the definitions of both were constantly contested. Unlike the state orders that specifically targeted the bureaucrats in the governmental offices as 'bodies at work,' as the

through. Although it cannot be subtracted from that context, the second term's historical development toward an elevated importance emerges not only from the reality of the imminent collapse, but also because the state is a site of modernity: "Who does not know what a poor and worthless creature man would be if it were not for the unity of human nature being preserved from age to age through the godlike form of the State." Samuel Taylor Coleridge, quoted in Corrigan and Sayer, *The Great Arch,* 24.

[317] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (California: University of California Press 1991), 95-127.

[318] See for example, Mehmet Refet, *Terbiye-i Dimağiyye* (Istanbul, 1312 [1894/1895]); Mehmet F. Şuenu, and M. Sami, *Kadin Jimnastğii yahud Terbiye-i Bedeniye* (Istanbul: Zerafet Matbaası, undated).

[319] For sports and physical culture in late Ottoman and early Republican Turkey, see Yiğit Akın, "*Gürbüz ve Yavuz Evlatlar*" *Erken Cumhuriyette Beden Terbiyesi ve Spor* (Istanbul: Iletişim, 2004); Atıf Kahraman, *Osmanlı Devletinde Spor* (Ankara: TC Kültür Bakanlığı, 1995); for a recent work that expands the scholarship on body and subject formation, see Wilson Chacko Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

previous chapter explored, the reformers addressed the entire Ottoman nation. The bureaucratic reforms, the emphasis on moral education of the public, and more specifically the moralization of work and industriousness were in a way displayed the same epochal shift that the nineteenth-century Ottoman society experienced in their everyday lives. Ultimately, the reformers attempted to make all Ottoman subjects' bodies 'bodies at work', bodies that work towards the same goal of advancing the nation. It did not happen overnight, nor did it happen in a linear way. Furthermore, once the body entered the national scene, it did not remain as a static concept. It acquired new implications as the social realities, such as wars, came to define the contours of specific formulations of the national body. In order to understand the anxiety about the body, and the various discourses and practices it produced, we have to place them within the context of contingent events.

Writing Body into a Moral Discipline

Parallel to the moralization of work and development of an exclusionist language against idleness and laziness, morality books tied the body to the national project. The reformers talked not only about the individual bodies, as in the tradition of the medico-ethics books until the nineteenth century, but also targeted the entire body politic.[320] Based on these texts, it can be argued that the body was both a social product, and a social producer. Many of morality books reflected a new conceptualization of human body with its relationship to the nation's salvation.

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[320] For the Ottoman medicinal world and its practices see Miri Shefer-Mossensohn, *Ottoman Medicine: Healing and Medical Institutions, 1500-1700* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009). For how a non-modern morality book addresses the issue of health, see Kınalızade Ali, *Ahlak-ı Alai* (Istanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2007).

In his book *Modern Ethics Detailed*, Ali Irfan emphasized that the future of the homeland and salvation of the nation dwelled on the bodily health.[321]

> Laziness damages the body in many ways, both in material and spiritual. Primarily, it induces a certain heaviness on the body. Whereas the satisfaction gained by working provides health.[322]

Just as examining morality books as cultural products enables us to see how ideas on productivity and hard-work were moralized, they reveal how the body of the individual became a trope for the Ottoman nation as a whole as well.[323] For the reformers, it was the body where the good forces of work and productivity fought against laziness that had taken root for centuries. A lazy person fails to improve their corporal and spiritual strengths.[324] As Huseyin Remzi pointed out the importance of work for bringing together the body and the soul:

> The duties of the self that have been discussed until now were either regarding the body or they addressed the soul. But the duty that will be discussed now, [called] human activity and work (*mesai ve a`mal-i beseriye*), is pertaining both to the body and the soul and belonging to both. For instance, work not only is beneficial for the protection of health and life, but also it is responsible for the perfection of our spirituality.[325]

The books detailed how the ideal Ottoman, or Muslim or Turk, depending on the author and time, must regard his/her body as a valuable entity, practice good personal hygiene and eat a

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[321] Ali Irfan, *Mufassal Ahlaki-I Medeni* (Istanbul: 1328-29/ 1912-1913-1914), 4.

[322] Ali Riza, *Kizlara Mahsus, Birinci Kisim,* 12.

[323] Books that particularly address gymnastics and sports are not examined here, since the emphasis of this chapter is on how the body became a subject of morality books. Examples of the former genre include, Ali Faik (Üstünidman), *Cimnastik yahud Riyaziyat-ı Bedeniye* (Istanbul, 1866); Nazım Şerafeddin, *Bahçe ve Salonlarda Cimnastik Talimi, yahud Bi't-tedric Cümle-i Adliyenin Neşv u Nemasına Mahsus Tecarib-i Bedeniye Eğlenceleriyle Her Yerde İcrası Kabil Bila Echize Talimat-i Makuleden Bahis Sıhhatnüma* (Istanbul, 1302 [1884/1885]).

[324] Şeref, *İlm-i Ahlak*, 77.

[325] Huseyin Remzi, *Ahlak-i Hamidi* (Istanbul: 1310 [1892/1893]), 50-51.

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healthy diet. Laziness caused bodily harm,[326] whereas work not only strengthened the body, it also elevated a Muslim's morality. [327]

As one of the most important characteristics of these books, the authors dedicated chapters to the protection of bodily health, i.e. hygiene and sanitation (*hıfzıssıhha*),[328] making it a *sine qua non* of morality. The sanitary idea, as Mary Poovey argues, constituted one of the crucial links between the regulation of the body and the consolidation of the controlling apparatuses associated with the modern state.[329] There was a dual process about constructing the body as a field of intervention, which morality literature embodies only one aspect. While the first focused on the particular member of the society to be enlightened about its health and hygiene, a process of *individuation*; the second took the nation as a whole body that necessitated organizing and curing (*totalization*). The two were intertwined and inseparable. The ideas and practices emerged from these two processes were articulated in morality literature.

While in the previous ethics and jurisprudence literature, the body has been formulated as a domain of divine will, as a trust (*emanet)* given to the individual, morality books of the nineteenth century, not only placed more emphasis on the individual's will to keep it healthy and able, but also introduced the third element, the social and national element, to the equation.[330] While the ritualistic meaning of cleanliness did not disappear, the meaning of cleaning the body

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[326] A. Riza. *Kizlara Mahsus Ilm-I Ahlak*, *Birinci Kisim* (Istanbul: 1316/1898-99), 30-31. This book is specifically written for the girls' schools.

[327] Huseyin Remzi, *Ahlak-i Hamidi* (Istanbul: 1310 [1892/1893]), 51. For similar remarks, see Abdurrahman Şeref, *İlm-i Ahlak*, 76.

[328] Literally, protection/preservation of health.

[329] Poovey, *Making a Social Body*, 115.

[330] See Fusun Ustel's discussion on mind, body, and soul in Fusun Ustel, *Makbul Vatandasin Pesinde* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2004), 74-94.

and keeping a good hygiene was no longer tied to the rituals. As it will be discussed in greater detail around the issue of the child's body, the individual's will to keep it healthy was guided through the notion of "civilizational rules" and regulated by the nation's will. For example, in his introduction of the subject of hygiene and the protection of health, Dr Huseyin Remzi said that *hıfzıssıhha* was the most important body of knowledge for morality education; noting that in "modern countries" (*memalik-i mütemeddine*) education in hygiene precedes education in morality. According to him, health would improve only when the laws of hygiene were known better by the people.[331] In his *İlm-i Ahlak*, Abdurrahman Şeref explained the three components of one's duty to their body as taking care of their hygiene, practicing gymnastics, as a method to fight against body's fatigue, and observing moderation (*itidal*).[332] For him, not taking care of the body is conflicting with the science of morality.[333] Ali Rıza, author of multiple textbooks on morality, sub-positioned the religious law of keeping one's body clean under the vague notion of "laws of hygiene" in the section "the duties of the self" and advised students to exercise daily.[334]

Inattention to one's health made one susceptible to various diseases, which were no longer seen as a cause of demise of a single person, but of the entire nation. Just as the individual was responsible toward the nation, the nation was also responsible of the misguided actions of the individual. "If we are committing crimes against our health," Ismail Hakki argued, "not only

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[331] Hüseyin Remzi, *Ahlak-ı Hamidi* (Istanbul: 1892/1893), 43.

[332] Abdurrahman Şeref, *İlm-ı Ahlak* (Istanbul: 1318 [1900/1901]), 62-63.

[333] Ibid., 63.

[334] A. Rıza, *Kızlara Mahsus İlm-i Ahlak*, *Birinci Kısım* (Istanbul, 1316 [1898/1899]), 24-25. This book is specifically written for female students.

the family and the schooling system but also society" was responsible for supporting it by not condemning these acts.[335]

In the normative language of morality texts, the contours of the ideal Ottoman were discussed based on its embodied national qualities. According to Ali Seydi, the ideal Ottoman was a lost treasure, which needed to be found. "History is a witness," he argued, "our ancestors were our superiors in terms of their bodies and bodily constitutions. Because of this [superiority] they surpassed us in terms of being successful in their endeavors:"[336]

> Our forefathers attributed great importance on such practices that strengthened the body, as horsemanship, playing *cirid*, wrestling, and hiking. That is why during the times of those respectful people, our country progressed in sciences, knowledge, business, craftsmanship, military and morality. It was only later these aspects were abandoned. The bodies were not taken care of. Our race (*irkimiz*), our nation (*milletimiz* [337]), has fallen into a great lethargy and laziness.[338]

The characteristics of the ideal Ottoman, in that sense, were familiar for many. "In the past," Ismayil Hakki argued in 1914, "we [as a nation] used to have great love for activeness as equal as we loved our religion."[339] Of course, this was not an uncontested past. Some authors, such as Baha Tevfik, argued that there was never an ideal Ottoman "character" to begin with. For him, the laziness, immorality, and barbarity that came to determine the contemporary "national character" was a continuation of "yesterday's pride, nomadic lifestyle, and janissary

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[335] Ismail Hakki (Baltacioglu), *Terbiye ve Iman* (Istanbul, 1330/1914), 34-35.

[336] Ali Seydi, *Terbiye-I Ahlakiye ve Medeniye* (Dersaadet, 1326 /1910-11), 32.

[337] It is necessary to understand the ambiguity the term millet contains in this time period. Millet, in its non-modern usage meant an ethno-religious community (as in Yahudi milleti, Islam milleti etc). However, when there was a need to respond to the fundamental changes in the basic categories of thinking about social groups shifted during the reform period, and the culture of nationalism started to take deeper roots, the term was at times used to correspond nation, however, at other times, used in its now older meaning, a community.

[338] Ali Seydi, *Musahebat-I Ahlakiye* (1332), 21.

[339] Ismail Hakki (Baltacioglu), *Terbiye…*, 49-50

infighting."[340] Paradoxically, the elevation of the "Ottoman character" to an ideal level and its equal and opposite denigration shared the same narrative of historical essentialism necessary to create a nationalist discourse.

Through the prism of the body discourses and politics, one can also shed light to the constant reconstruction of the 'modern' and the 'traditional.' Knowledge was organized based on this very binary, not only among the Ottoman intellectuals, but also among historians who work on this time period, especially those adhered to the modernization theory.[341] Both placed this very binary as a social reality at the core of their outlooks. The activeness of the modern body was situated against the traditional indolent body. Of course, the binary of modern vs. traditional was not produced in a politically void space. The Hamidian regime was labeled the embodiment of traditionalism by the members of the opposition, which was replicated in the better half of the twentieth century historiography.[342] The traditional, which was incessantly attacked and criticized by the authors of morality books and alike, was, then, an all-purpose political weapon.

The past was not all together reduced to a tradition that needed to be eradicated and/or erected. The "tradition" was constructed as a Janus-faced phenomenon. While one face was looking backwards, pulling the nation into indolence and inactivity, the other face was elevated to the position of "classical," therefore as an ideal to be emulated. The bad tradition, a useless weight, was believed to be corrupting the "classical." The reformists, in their writings, carefully separated the two, and constructed an ideal-classical typology for the Ottoman nation. The ideal

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[340] Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* (Konya, 1966), 230. Quoted in Haluk Harun Duman, *Balkanlara Veda, Basın ve Edebiyatta Balkan Savaşı 1912/1913* (Istanbul, 2005), 83.

[341] For a brief discussion of this theory, see chapter I.

[342] Niyazi Berkes's work is a good example of such approaches. See Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*.

Ottoman and its ideal body were at once a project of future and a projection of the history. While the former set a "national goal" to be achieved in the near future urgently, the latter formulated and produced a selected history for the nation. Ottoman reformers, no doubt, in the progressivist trajectory of the ideology of nationalism, needed to create an ideal not only in the future but also in the past. History, in the Hegelian sense, was about crafting the future.

Those who shirked their duty were categorized as social misfits, whose inactive and lethargic bodies would cause the demise of the empire from within. Ali Rıza Bey's *Morality for Girls* reflects this notion. Employing a medical language, Ali Rıza Bey, argued that laziness spread from one body to another in society.[343] The individual body was a trope for the body politic, and laziness was not an individual problem but an epidemic.

The Body Machine

Do not run away from work
There is no need to beg
Suffice it to have two hands
If you are not swinging lazily

Hammer, scissors, hatchet, we work them - proud!
Let the machines feed our souls with their sweet sound!
Kazim Karabekir Pasha [344]

Many of pedagogical books presented machines as models. The body was envisioned as a machine. Rabinbach argues that the metaphor of the machine was one of the most prevalent

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[343] A. Riza, *Kızlara Mahsus*, *Birinci Kısım*, 30.

[344] Kazim Karabekir, *Sarkili Ibret* (Trabzon, 1338/1922). The other stanza is as follows: *With the sweat of my brow/With the light of my eye/I have travailed/And won over successfully.* The book contains directions to the motions that children are supposed to do while singing the song. Kazim Karabekir, one of the leading commanders of the War of Independence wrote many educational books for children. One of them is dedicated to children of "this sickly and ignorant nation." Kazim Karabekir, *Ogutlerim* (Baku: Hukumet Matbaasi, 1336 /1920). The other stanza is as follows: *With the sweat of my brow/With the light of my eye/I have travailed/And won over successfully.*

metaphors in the nineteenth-century, which "fused the diverse forms of labor in nature, technology, and society into a single image of mechanical work…"[345] In its similarity to the human body, a machine was the ultimate hard-worker, devoid of fatigue and laziness. The images of machines frequently come up in the discussions regarding mobilization of the population for progress.[346] Vahyi argued that one needs to view factories with respect. While Huseyin Remzi likened the individual body to a machine and the human society to a factory,[347] Ahmet Midhad explored the connection between machine, the human body and the nation. He invited his readers to contemplate on the machines, especially, the printing press. The ink, the paper, and the apparatus worked so harmoniously without creasing a single paper or smudging the ink, which made Ahmed Midhat envious. Alas, he exclaimed, that our society does not *yet* function like a printing press. For that kind of a harmonious work, argued Ahmed Midhat, it is necessary to have a singular force, a national goal, and able bodies --all of which the Ottoman nation lacked.

The imagery of the machine brought in the question of who played what role, or no role at all in society. Ali Riza Bey, in his *Science of Morality*, idealized a machine-like nation, where each and every body worked for the same goal and produced harmoniously:[348]

> Work provides happiness of all sorts… a person obtains honor and prosperity in as much as they work. A lazy person [on the other hand], cannot be honored. Such person is like an unnecessary cog in a magnificent machine.[349]

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[345] Rabinbach, *The Human Motor,* 25.

[346] For how machines and mastery over nature became a marker of civilization, see Adas, *Machines As the Measure of Men.*

[347] Huseyin Remzi, *Ahlak-I hamidi* (Istanbul, 1310 [1892/1893), 52-53.

[348] Ali Riza, *Kizlara Mahsus Ilm-I Ahlak* (Istanbul: Karabet Matbaasi, 1316), 66.

[349] Ali Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak*, *Ucuncu Kisim*, 68.

In this depiction, it is obvious that those who did not produce, already labeled as lazy and

unproductive, had no role to play. Carrying the metaphor to an extreme level, the author stated

that these useless cogs had no place in the nation:

> By stating in his Quran "And that man hath only that for which be maketh effort,"
> *Cenab-I Hakk* made it clear for his servants that there are no other ways than work for
> earning a living, and cause of prosperity and happiness and work for this goal
> encompasses everything [without discriminating]. Then, everyone without exception
> must work. Lazy people do not have a right to live (*tembellerin yasamaya istihkaklari
> yoktur*).[350]

Later in a post-Balkan War world, this line of exclusionist thinking was expressed by

Celal Nuri when he placed those who "corrupted the body" at the top of the list of country's

enemies. In 1913, he warned his readers against excessive idleness, and unemployment, and even

against idly strolling along the *Cadde-i Kebir* in Beyoğlu. These were the main causes of the

corruption of the Ottomans and "a far greater enemy than the [Bulgarian] General Mikhail

Savoff," who defeated the Ottoman armies and nearly reached the gates of Istanbul during the

first Balkan War.[351] It is only ironic that Savoff himself was a product of the Ottoman education

reforms. More specifically, he was one of the first graduates (class of 1876) of *Mekteb-i Sultani*,

otherwise known as *Galatasaray Lycée,* the first non-military school to introduce physical

education into its curriculum.[352]

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[350] Ibid., 67.

[351] Celal Nuri (İleri), *Kadınlarımız* (Istanbul, 1331H [1913]), 181.

[352] Nafi Atuf Kansu points this out as a failure of Ottomanism, refuting Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi's belief that
Galatasaray Lycée was a success for Ottomanism. For Kansu "[T]he only way to explain … [Savoff's Ottoman
background] is to admit that Ottomanism was only an empty illusion." Nafi Atuf Kansu, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi, Bir
Deneme* (Ankara: Muallim Ahmet Halit Kıraathanesi, 1931), 118. Mikhail Savoff, twice appointed as the Minister
of War in Bulgaria, served as the head of the Military Academy of Sofia. He was regarded as the reformist to whom
the Bulgarian army owed its modern organization. See Joseph Thomas, *Universal Pronouncing Dictionary of
Biography and Mythology, Vol II, New Fourth Edition Thoroughly Revised* (Philadelphia and London: Lippincott
and Co., 1915), 2135.

"And the Awakening Came in the Wake of the Balkan War":

War as a "Moral Revolution" [353]

In a 1932 book addressing the educators of the recently established Republic of Turkey, Ismayil Hakki stated that wars, whether lost or won, cause moral revolutions. He argued that the Ottoman trenches brought together the kindred spirits of the "naïve" Anatolian youth and the educated urbanites. These soldiers with disparate backgrounds, while fighting together against the enemy, exchanged ideas, thereby empowering each other. Thus, the Balkan Wars, he argued, despite their sad legacy, helped *awaken* the Turks.[354] It was not merely hindsight of a distorted nationalist narrative that provided this perspective to Ismayil Hakki. Rather, the idea that the Balkan Wars led to a national awakening was prevalent right after the wars and by the time it was voiced in 1914 in the Chamber of Deputies, it seems like it was already an established narrative.[355] Arguably, the increased urgency and calls for implementation of reforms to produce a healthy and able body can be attributed to the "revolutionary effects" of the Balkan War.

In the First Balkan War, the Ottoman armies were soundly defeated by the Balkan League of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro. As a result, the last Ottoman lands in the Balkans, including Macedonia, Albania, and Thrace, were lost. These lands constituted a core area of the empire, home to the 16% of the population. Edirne, a former Ottoman capital, fell to the Bulgarian army after a long siege that became both a symbol of defiance and a symbol of

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[353] İsmail Hakkı (Baltacıoğlu), *Terbiye ve Iman* (Istanbul, 1330 [1914]), 43.

[354] Ismayil Hakki, *Murebbilere* (Istanbul: Suhulet kutuphanesi, 1932), 39-41.

[355] "Meclis-i Mebusan Reisinin Nutku [The Speech by the President of the Chamber of Deputies]," Tanin, May 20, 1914. Quoted in Mustafa Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War, the Ottoman Empire and the First World War* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 19.

defeat. Thousands of refugees flocked into Istanbul, devastating the city. The fact that the Bulgarian army came very close to the capital was a sign for the majority that the empire was under imminent threat.

Both the preparation for war and war itself are sources of state and societal transformation.[356] Wars are not merely events, but social processes whereby the interdependency of war-making and nation-building becomes evident. In this case, the Balkan defeat shaped the thoughts of the political elites by showing them that the empire was engaged in a life-or-death struggle. The recent historiography on World War I confirms that there was a saturation of the social issues with military undertones even before the Ottomans became a warring side in the World War. Handan Nezir Akmese's generational analysis of the Ottoman military personnel of the empire clearly shows the increasing prevalence of the ideas that envisioned society as an army, through the trope of "nation in armes" (*millet-i muselleha*).[357] However, Akmese limits her arguments based on men who are in one way or another affiliated with the military. Reformers and political elites called for all-out mobilization in every aspect of life, which, as Mustafa Aksakal has shown, "converged with the ideas of waging war and gaining independence from the imperialist powers."[358] As early as 1908, a discussion on the issue of population in *Beyanu'l Hakk* tied it to *millet-I muselleha*: "At a time every government is taking the shape of *millet-I muselleha, it is only possible to keep the independence of the country by the number of soldiers*

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[356] For comments on war and societal change in the Middle East, see Steven Heydemann, ed., *War, Institutions, and Social Change in the Middle East* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

[357] Handan Nezir Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey, Ottoman Military and the March to World War I* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 168.

[358] Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War,* 29. Aksakal's argument is important for understanding the political thinking of the pre-World War I era. Contrary to most Turkish nationalist historiography, Aksakal argues that Enver was not a single-minded dictator who decided to join the world war on the side of the Germans; rather "the public, or, at least, the broader elite, supported an alliance with Germany and saw war as a desirable path to reclaiming the empire's independence and economic stability." See Aksakal, *Ottoman Road*, 190.

who would be sent against the enemy."[359] The same sentiment was voiced by another author, in a

book that came out right in 1913, but in a different military context. Miralay Pertev, in his

Lessons Learned from the Russo-Japanese War, emphasized the role of physical education in the

most coveted success of the Japanese against the Ottoman's arch-enemy the Russian in 1905.

> If we, like the Japanese, starting from the primary school, teach our children 'love of homeland' and 'martial spirit,' and if, in the army, we train them as heroes who are ready to die for the sultan, homeland, and nation, then the Ottoman Army will fear no-one in the world except Almighty God. [360]

In this immediate context, the half-century-old concern for the body and laziness of the

Ottoman citizen became overwhelmingly visible in the cultural production. As a morality text

indicated: "The Muslims who entered to the realm of ignorance and stupidity, oppression and

laziness have been thrown out of these pristine, fertile lands so hard that the history of humanity

will eternally shed tears about this atrocity." [361]More importantly, after the Balkan defeat, the

moralistic prescriptive language employed against the body of the political subject took on an

accusatory tone. The body, which was previously formulated as the battle ground of laziness and

industriousness, came to be perceived more and more as a military body, while productivity was

tied to the activities of wartime.

Take for example, the remarks of Vahyi, the author of *Muslim is Always the Ideal*

Person, published in 1912. Vahyi (Olmez) was an instructor of "*Ilm-i tevhid*, morality, literature,

and logic" at the Edirne Military School, which was opened in 1846 and closed in 1908, during

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[359] "Siyaset nokta-i nazarindan herkes muttefiktir ki bir hukumetin kuvve-i askeriyesi mikdari nufusuyla mutenasiptir. Alelhusus her hukumetin millet muselleha seklini aldigi su zamanda istiklal-i memleketin muhafazasi dusmana karsi sevk edilecek asker nufuzuyla mumkundur." Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, "Nufus meselesi," *Beyanu'l Hakk* (23 Ramazan 1326/6 Tesrinievvel 1324/19 October 1908), 20-22.

[360] Miralay Pertev, *Rus-Japon Harbinden Alinan Maddi Manevi Dersler* (Istanbul, 1329), 133. Quoted in and translated by Handan Nezir Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 79.

[361] Vahyi, *Hakiki bir Musluman Daima Mukemmel bir Insandir* (Istanbul, 1912), 143.

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the political turmoil of the era. Vahyi's book is not titled as a morality text, however, it contains the elements of morality books. The subsections of the book resemble *ahlak* books closely.[362] The real importance of the text comes from the fact that it can be considered a long diatribe against the practices of Muslims using Islamic evidence against them. First, the author established that work was a religious duty.

> The first of the continuous obligations [*farz-i daimi*] is work (*sa'y u amel*). The low side of our selves, which we call *nefs-i emmare,*[363] dislikes this good deed the most: because, within the circle of faith, matching the proprieties of being Muslim, warring (*savas*) and working hard is much difficult than sitting on a hide and recite [prayers]. This is why, when praising someone we say 'a person of [hard]work.' By this we want to tell that *say u amel* and warring is the primary duty and obligation (*vazife ... farz u vacip*) of humanity and Islam. (…) [364]

It appears that the author here is conceptualizing work as a spiritual act that one has to put against one's lowly tendencies. In the following pages, the author equates work with *jihad-ul ekber*, the greater jihad against one's urge to be lazy, with a reference to a hadith that placed the spiritual fight against one's lowly side over a military war. "In truth, nothing can be more brave and matching the ranks of a veteran (*ghazilik*) [than work]. Nothing can take the title of "jihad-i ekber" (greater struggle) than this one."[365] However, all this militarized language did not merely indicate a spiritual fight. The militarized language continues:

> There is no need to worry for a Muslim as long as he works, because having hardship in one's work, as long as its goals are right, does not leave him at the stage of struggler/fighter (*mucahid*) but elevates him to the level of martyr (*shehid*).[366]

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[362] Ibid. See for example sections *Iman ve Itikadat/Amel ve Ibadat/Idare ve Muamelat* etc.

[363] A spiritual term used in Islamic literature. Literally, the commanding self. This is the lowest of the selves.

[364] Vahyi, *Hakiki bir Musluman*, 124-125.

[365] Ibid., 126.

[366] Ibid., 155.

The word choice of war is important. The author is using the word *savaş* rather than the usual term *cehd* (or its cognate *cihad* [jihad]), which means striving and have religious connotations, and may indicate a spiritual meaning of war. The author's use of the verse from Qur'an, "O believers, protect yourselves," needs to be noted as well.[367] The verse is quoted as a call for Ottomans to safeguard themselves against the enemy. It is not a surprise that, unlike how it was quoted in the text, the complete verse has a meaning that emphasizes the afterlife.[368] Work, therefore, seems to be inclusive of military work, i.e. defending the homeland.

The addition of warring, however vague it is, into the ancient work theme of "making a living" reflects how the concepts of hard work and productivity gained a militarized meaning in the years leading up to World War I. This new shift, the paralleling phenomena of the militarization of the body and militarization of work was neither limited to the male members of society, nor limited to the military discourses but was articulated through various genres, such as morality literature.

The defeat of the Ottoman armies opened the flood gates of the internalist explanations. In the wake of the defeat, several voices can be discerned from the chorus of explanations why the Ottomans lost the war. Some reformers noted the dysfunctions observed in the military. The political fissures and disputes among the army's commanders and the inadequate training of the soldiers were considered major causes of the defeat.[369] The reforms of the Young Turks had not

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[367] The verse is from Surah 66/ 6. *The Noble Quran*, trans. Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali, Ph.D. & Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Online access: http://www.dar-us-salam.com/TheNobleQuran/surah66.html

[368] "O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded." Ibid.

[369] Genelkurmay Baskanligi, ed., *Balkan Harbi Tarihi (1912/1913), Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar, ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbe Girisi,* vol. I (Ankara, 1970), 92-132.

yet taken root in the army, and there were deep divides between the recently assigned and older cadres. Other contemporary sources, as it was the custom with many of the deficiencies of the empire, laid the blame on the Hamidian regime. According to Ahmed Izzet Pasha,[370] Sultan Abdulhamid's policy of eschewing field exercises rendered the army useless in real-time maneuvering. He attributed this policy to the Sultan's fear that an army that could maneuver might topple him. The training in the military academies, Pasha said, emphasized theoretical education in mathematics, cosmography and literature, but not on military praxis. If the Ottoman army had any success, it came from their "natural warrior qualities *(tabii cengaverlik hassalari)*," not their training.[371]

Izzet Pasha was not alone in decrying the Ottoman army's lack of military training. Because of the perceived deficiency in the training of the military body during the Hamidian period, new practices had been introduced after 1908. The military field exercises that took place in the summer of 1908 made the "sad" condition of the army even more salient to the reformers.[372] But these exercises were interrupted upon the Italian occupation of Tripoli in 1911 and did not resume until the First Balkan War. The problem surfaced in a report written by Colonel Cemal,[373] which was later published in Mahmud Muhtar Pasha's memoirs. The colonel reported that the lack of proper training cost the Ottomans the war: "The reason for the army's scattered behavior is not because of any want of their weakness in spirits, but the lack of training

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[370] For more information on Ahmet Izzet Pasa, see Isa Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire: A Comparative Social and Political History of Albania and Yemen 1878-1918* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2003), 171-191. For autobiographical information, see Ahmet Izzet Pasha, *Feryadim I* (Istanbul: Nehir Yayinlari, 1992).

[371] Quoted in Genelkurmay Bask. ed., *Balkan Harbi*, 128-129. For Izzet Pasha on Abdulhamid and field exercises, see Ahmet Izzet Pasha, *Feryadim*, 175.

[372] Genelkurmay Bask. ed., *Balkan Harbi,* 130.

[373] Future Cemal Pasha. Many thanks to Dr. Feroze Yasamee for pointing this out.

and education."[374] The belief that the defeat was caused by insufficient military praxis did not go uncontested, however. In 1914, Ismayil Hakki argued the opposite in his *Terbiye ve Iman*: "If we have been immobile for centuries, it is not because of our ignorance about hygiene and training the body, but because of our hatred of worldly affairs of life. Losing faith [in worldly affairs] is the greatest cause of laziness and indolence."[375] Whereas the Colonel's report reflect an approach that viewed training and material conditions as the cause of the defeat, Ismayil Hakki represented the view that assigned blame to character faults.

The representation of the reserve officers (*redif*) in the writings of the commanders is completely contrasted to that of the graduates of the empire's military schools. Reserve army, created during the military reforms of 1843, was manned by those who went through their service with the standing army (*Nizamiye*).[376] Certain essentialist characteristics, such as laziness, undisciplined and even bestial behavior, were attributed to the common people, i.e. the reserve officers. Mahmud Muhtar Pasha, the commander of the Third Army Corps, said in his memoirs that the *redif* were first to dissert the army. When the pasha tried to stop them, the "animal-like creatures did not even looked at [his] face" but kept running.[377] Their bestiality, it appears, was not caused by their frightened state but was innate. The pasha, elsewhere calling the *redif* "gnarled and bent, old and disorderly,"[378] said that in comparison to the trained soldiers,

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[374] Mahmut Muhtar Pasha, *Balkan Harbi, Ucuncu Kolordu'nun Ikinci Dogu Ordusunun Muharebeleri* (Istanbul, 1979), 45.

[375] Ismayil Hakki, *Terbiye ve Iman*, 49-50. These remarks can be multiplied. Lieutenant General Izzet Fuad Pasha, for example, argued that the Turks lost their martial ability by being mentally and physically lazy. Ahmet Izzet Pasa, *Serdar*, 1970, quoted in Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 32.

[376] For more on the reserve army and the gap between the reserve and the Nizamiye, see Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 108-114.

[377] Mahmut Muhtar Pasa, *Balkan Harbi*, 158.

[378] Ibid., 101.

they were like "beasts in their villages!"[379] The "animal-like" *redif* army was depicted as killing time in the coffeehouses and failing to keep a respectful distance from higher and lower ranking soldiers.[380]

Sifting through the texts produced for the popular readership, it is easy to fall into the trap of accepting a skewed representation of the "causes" of the defeat. More specifically, the issues of character, ignorance, and bodily weakness occlude the real problems of the Ottoman army. The organizational reforms that were going on since 1908 resulted in "The Regulation for the Reorganization of the Ottoman Army" (*Devlet-I Aliyye-I Osmaniye Ordusunun Teskilat-I esasiye Nizamnamesi*), which was accepted in 1910. As Akmese noted, the new organizational changes were not implemented at once because of insufficient manpower and equipment. Especially reforms concerning the training of the reserve army needed several more years to make a significant impact upon the balance between the trained and the untrained soldiers.[381] As Feroz Yasamee has shown, the Ottoman army suffered from a plethora of problems, ranging from deployment errors, slow mobilization, an inadequate number of soldiers, deficient field transport, and supply shortages, most importantly of food.[382] Some soldiers identified cholera as their most important enemy.**[383]** A report by the Ninth Field Artillery Regiment to Mahmud Muhtar Pasha said the following:

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[379] Ibid.*,* 159. For a strikingly similar description of the peasants, see Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 149.

[380] *Harb Tarihi Arsivi*, D1, G.21, Ds 187. Quoted in Genelkurmay Bask. ed., *Balkan Harbi*, 150.

[381] Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 112-114.

[382] Feroze Yasamee, "Armies Defeated Before They Took the Field? The Ottoman Mobilisation of October 1912." Unpublished Conference Presentation, University of Utah, 2010.

[383] Mahmut Muhtar Pasha, *Balkan Harbi*, 138.

> For 21 days the soldiers were given warm meals only when they were situated in Kirkkilise. At other times, they were given half a meal, consisting of hard biscuit and bread. (…) It is normal for the commanders, officers, and soldiers (…) who were deprived of food for 21 days to lose strength and thus be unable to fulfill the duty they owe to their homeland. (…) Their health has been worsened by the above-mentioned deprivation, [and it is] known that one cannot expect service and success from unhealthy, feeble bodies. [It is] difficult to stand the cries of the soldiers who ask for bread and to see the cannon hauled by [not two but] four animals stuck on the road because of hunger and weakness. If any service is still expected from our regiment, its commanders, officers and soldiers, it should be striven to fully give them their rights regarding the assurance of protection of their health and life, which are protected under the law.[384]

Although these and similar explanations by lower ranking officials appeared in the reports/writings of the commanders, texts with public readership placed considerable importance on the character traits and/or the lack of bodily training.

The critique of the military body did not remain within the confines of the barracks. In their writing, the reformers made the population at large equally responsible for the defeat. The perceived infirmities of the national body became a common thread in social critiques calling for a mobilization. Authors emphasized moral corruption, not only of the army but the entire nation as the reason for the defeat. Even Mahmud Muhtar Pasha, who offered extensive analysis on the military shortcomings and strategic mishaps, eventually, argued thusly: "It is apparent that, because we are really behind in terms of scientific knowledge and *morality*, the defeat did not belong to the army alone, but also to the entire nation."[385] In his book on the Balkan defeat *Debacle*, Hafiz Hakki Pasha compared the "reality" with his ideal:

> Let's think about a nation in misery: its rural population is perishing because of famine and lack of air, while its urbanites are getting paler at opium cafes, and sheltered [from reality], becoming more effeminate each day. And now let's think about a nation that can live like a human being, its rural people owning homes and food (…) and its urbanites

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[384] Ibid., 124-125. The date of the report is 21 Ekim 1328. Another reason provided for the unwillingness of the *redif* was the rumor that the soldiers from Anatolia spoke against fighting for the Balkans, allegedly saying "the four *vilayets* of Anatolia are sufficient for us." Ibid., 125-126.

[385] Ibid., 179. Emphasis added.

spending time on riding horses, playing *cirit*, and engaging in sports, and by doing so, becoming agile and fully masculine. Undoubtedly, the [former] will be defeated a thousand times more than the latter.[386]

Note that city people suffered from a moral corruption and effeminacy, while peasants only lacked the basic necessities of life, and hence possibly remained masculine. Whereas property and wealth increased the likelihood of a peasant's success on the battlefield; city people required character-improving activities like sports. The essentialist differentiation between the "corrupt" urbanites and the ignorant but able peasants, has less to do with Ibn Khaldun, than the modern binaries, perhaps rooted in the social imagination of Romanticism.[387] Similar ideas were advocated by Baron Von der Goltz, a German commander who taught at the Ottoman military school and is known with his interaction with a specific cadre of Ottoman military men: "The Stambul Effendi whose father held a well-paid sinecure, rewarded by sultan Hamid for his faithfulness, and who enjoyed to the fullest."[388] Goltz believed in the 'martial character of the Turks,' formed by "a hard rural life," along with religious conviction and imperial pride.[389] In a private correspondence with Pertev Pasha, who was a Harbiye graduate (1892) and a protégé of Goltz, he contrasted these characteristics with the weakening martial spirit in Europe, due to factors such as urbanization.[390]

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[386] Hafiz Hakki Pasha, *Bozgun* (Istanbul: Tercuman, 1972), 68.

[387] For how these visions played a role in the colonial policies of Britain in Iraq, see Toby Dodge, "Rural and Urban: The Divided Social Imagination of Late Colonialism," in *Inventing Iraq, the Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 63-81.

[388] Quoted in Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 23.

[389] Feroz Yasamee, "Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz and the Rebirth of the Ottoman Empire," *Diplomacy and Statecraft,* vol. 9 (1998). Quoted in Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 26-27.

[390] Quoted in Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 27.

The connection between the defeat and the call to strengthen the Ottoman body is a curious one. The debates surrounding this connection revealed greater fissures of the Ottoman society. When with an official announcement *Bab-i Meşihat* (The Office of the Sheikhulislam) invited people to the mosques for a special prayer (*Salat-i Tefriciye*) to be recited during the war the authors of *Ijtihad* journal made it a cause célèbre in their attack against what they perceived to be the enemy of reforms, i.e. the religious establishment and the ulema. Kiliczade Hakki, a harsh critique of the ulema, penned an article that blamed the *Meşihat*:

> While *Meşihat* should know better that gaining victory against the enemy through prayers is against the laws of divine, by issuing an official call to the people and making them recite an Arabic prayer for 4444 times, they are creating one more encouraging reason to be lazy and languid for a population that has already lost, due to [lack of] education, the trait of vigor and public spirit.[391]

Apparently, the *Meşihat*'s call for prayers mobilized the *Ictihad* authors. Abdullah Cevdet, an ardent modernizer, ridiculed *Bab-i Meşihat*'s mode of prayer. In his view, the Bulgarians were "praying" with their actions, by working hard, and strengthening their nation. Likening the nation to a diseased body, he lamented: "Our skulls are empty. No meat is left under our skins, no bone, nor blood. (..) Anatolia is sick, and it is dying." [392]

Erasure of the lazy tendencies of the self, and erection of an able body was a goal that could be achieved through war. "If there is no war," Lieutenant Omer wrote in 1909, "nations become lazy and miserable."[393] It is during the war that the ideal individual citizen sacrifices his

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[391] Kiliczade Hakki, *Itikadat-I Batilaya Ilan-I Harb* (Istanbul, 1332), 53-54.

[392] Abdullah Cevdet, *Ictihad,* no. 54 (14 Subat 1329 [27 February 1914]): 1221. Kiliczade Hakki, *Itikadat-I Batilaya Ilan-I Harb* (Istanbul, 1332), 53-54.

[393] Lieutenant Omer, "Anti-Militarism." *Silah*, no. 3 (10 August 1325/ 23 August 1909), 3. Quoted in Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 72.

own body for the larger body, i.e. the nation.[394] Morality books of the era reflected the putative

relationship of the individual body to the nation's salvation. In a 1911 book *Modern Morality*

Detailed, Ali Irfan emphasized that the future of the homeland and the nation's salvation

depended on the future generation's physical and spiritual life (*hayat-i bedeniye* and *hayat-i*

ruhiye).[395] Moreover, the nation was imagined as a body, but much to the chagrin of the

reformers, it was sick, feeble, and corrupt. As seen earlier, Ali Seydi Bey, who wrote extensively

on the work-body relationship, blamed the defeat on the Ottoman soldiers' lack of agility: "Our

soldiers were not able to march or hold a gun for long periods of time; thereby they lost the war

to the vulgar Bulgarians."[396] In other words, the Ottoman body –as a whole- was accused of

committing the high crime of causing the defeat.

The book *Why We Were Defeated at the Balkan War* is representative in its approach that

it takes the burden of defeat outside the barracks and lays it on the shoulders of the people in

general. The book was published in 1913, immediately after the war, by an anonymous author

known only as "Elif" ((ا.[397] Written from a military perspective, it contains harsh and realistic

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[394] See Meira Weiss, "The Body of the Nation: Terrorism and the Embodiment of Nationalism in Contemporary Israel." *Anthropological Quarterly* 75, no. 1 (2001), 37-62.

[395] Ali Irfan (Egribozi), *Mufassal Ahlak-i Medeni* (Istanbul, 1329H -1327R [1911]), 4.

[396] Ali Seydi, *Musahebat-i Ahlakiye*, 22. Here, of course, the author omits the fact that some sections of the army were deprived of food, and there was a wide-spread famine. Genelkurmay Bask. ed., *Balkan Harbi Tarihi*, 148.

[397] Elif, *Balkan Harbinde Neden Munhezim Olduk*. Tuccarzade Ibrahim Hilmi, publisher (Istanbul, 1329 [1913]). There is no concensus on the identity of the author. According to Ali Birinci, the book was written by Ali Ihsan (Sabis) Pasha: "Osmanlı Devletinin en büyük kaybı olan Rumeli'nin kaderini tayin eden Balkan Harbi'nin en dikkate değer ve erken tenkidi olan bu kitabın tam bir değerlendirilmesi ve araştırmalarda lâyıkıyla değerlendirilebilmesi ancak mahrecinin tanınmasıyla mümkündür. Metnin, Erkân-ı Harbiye Mektebi'nin 1905 (11 Ocak) mezunları birincisi Ali İhsan Sabis Paşa (1882-1957) kaleminden çıktığının tespitinden sonra daha açık bir mânâ ve ehemmiyet kazanacağı gerçeği her türlü izahtan vârestedir. Ali İhsan Paşa bu eserin kendisine ait olduğunu açıkça ifade etmektedir." Ali Birinci, **"**Sultan Abdülhamid' in Hâtıra Defteri Meselesi," *Divan-İlmî Araştırmalar*, no. 19 (2005-2): 177-194. Although some historians argue that it is written by Asim Gunduz, I believe the evidence supports Ali Birinci's claim. Moreover, in his voluminous memoirs, Ali Ihsan Pasha claims the authorship of the book: "In 1913, (…) I published two booklets titled *Why Are We Defeated in the Balkan War* and *The Reasons of Our Military Defeats*. The reason I published these books, which only contained the initial of my first name, was to

criticism of the Ottoman military leaders. The book enumerated several reasons for defeat in the

First Balkan War, including political disputes among army leaders, lack of sea power, and a lack

of connection between the commanders during the preparation for war. However, the book had a

chapter devoted to a single issue, titled "The Failings of the Nation." The author argued that war

is waged not only between the material aspects of two nations but also between their morals.[398]

In this formulation, as we have seen before, the body becomes a symbol of both fronts.

Admonishing the nation for being lazy and indolent, the author brought up the issue of physical

training, heatedly asking the nation: "Where are your training clubs? Where are your

marksmanship clubs? Don't you have any national ideals?"[399] Based on these activities one

earned the right of entrance to the "nation." Those who refused to contribute to their nation

through hard work and activity were criticized:

> Everybody, according to his abilities, should work for the betterment of the nation; those
> who do not comply with this, should simply declare that they have nothing to do with this
> nation, and then keep their mouths shut and sit on the side.[400]

This example clearly bridges the individual citizen's body to the body politic. Another

exclusionary remark came from Ibrahim Hilmi, who wrote the preface of this anonymous book.

When narrating impressions from his tour of Anatolia and Syria right after the Balkan Wars, he

decried that more defeats were imminent, "[i]f we do not weed out the invalids and those who

are malicious, and not leap to a life of productiveness and order." [401] According to this

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show that we needed to work [hard] in order to erase the stain of the defeat." Ali Ihsan Sabis, *Harp Hatıralarım*, vol. 1 (İstanbul, 1943), 19.

[398] Elif, *Neden Munhezim Olduk*, 85.

[399] Ibid., 86.

[400] Ibid., 88.

[401] Tuccarzade Ibrahim Hilmi, "Nasirin Ilavesi [Addendum by the Publisher]," in *Neden Munhezim Olduk,* 96.

argumentation, those who did not contribute to the nation were not only denied the right to "speak" on behalf of the nation but should be weeded out.

The meaning of the defeat was interpreted by Ottoman intellectuals in different ways. Some, like Ibrahim Hilmi, regretfully asserted that the defeat did not change anything. The people of Anatolia, Syria and Egypt lived as if nothing has happened, "just as calm and languid as ever" in their sluggish sleepiness, feeling no need to awaken. The people returned to their "age-old quiescent and pleasures," while a handful of educators, instead of teaching and training, were "playing cards in the coffeehouses." [402] Others greeted a new horizon. Unlike Ibrahim Hilmi's bleak sense of defeat, Ali Seydi saw a glimmer of hope in the defeat. As seen earlier, Ali Seydi was among those who claimed that the reason for the defeat was the unhealthy body of the Ottomans. For him, it constituted a watershed moment, as after the Balkan defeat, recruitment for the Boy Scout programs kicked off, and the Ministry of Education started to offer classes in physical education in middle and high schools. In his view, this was a crucial shift. In a dialogue appearing in *Musahebat-i Ahlakiye*, the teacher declares to his pupils: "The awakening interest in boy scouting will turn you into able-bodied (*kaviyy-ul vucud*) and undaunted fellows for the homeland."[403] Boy scouting, in fact, spread in the Ottoman Empire almost simultaneously with its spread in Europe –an issue which will be discussed shortly. Of course, as has been shown, the enthusiasm for scouting came after a struggle that lasted more than half a century to make the healthy body a national goal and part of the national curriculum.

Whereas Ali Seydi saw a glimmer of hope, Ismayil Hakki went further, celebrating a *fait accompli* and rejoicing that the Balkan defeat, although unfortunate, loosened the grip of the old

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[402] Ibid., 92-93.

[403] Ali Seydi Bey, *Musahebat-i Ahlakiye*, 21.

culture that "denigrated this world, this life, and action and promoted a culture of cemeteries, and nothingness." He argued that the defeat "awakened the belief in and the enthusiasm for exercise (*idman*), which has been accumulating for years," thereby paving the way for auspicious developments: "Games, sportive activities, boy scouting have started to spread even to the obscure corners of Anatolia." He noted that a life based on action and struggle had emerged as the goal of the nation, as the old culture was buried in a graveyard –a time for mourning for the "old culture."[404] Reflecting the new ideas on the body, in an essentialized way, the author saw certain aspects of life as "traditional" and therefore unhealthy; thus, justified to cast them outside of the boundaries of the modern.

Female Body and Producing the Nation

The debates evolving around producing a productive nation were written into a gendered narrative. The disciplinary techniques combined with emancipatory promises, 'the double move' as Afsanah Najmabadi calls it, were the general feature of modernist gender discourses. As Najmabadi puts it quite parsimoniously, nation formation began with the womb.[405] The motherhood's crown-jewel position should be understood in an increasingly prevalent literature of *the duty*.[406] An Ottoman educator, Edhem Nejat, argued "it is the mothers who carry the most important and profound duty in the nation."[407] More specifically, the mothers raise the nation's

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[404] Ismayil Hakki, *Terbiye ve Iman*, 43-44.

[405] Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches,* 184.

[406] The concept of duty and its modern formulations in the ethics genre was discussed in Chapter II.

[407] Edhem Nejad, "Cocugun terbiyesinde valide," *Sirat-I mustakim* cilt 7 s 157 (1327/1911-1912), 13-15. Edhem Nejat is a very colorful personality, who reflects the fluidity of the ideologies in early twentieth century Ottoman Empire. The pieces quoted in this chapter are his earlier works. In the 1910s he mostly published pieces on terbiye in *Sirat-I Mustakim*, a journal known for its dedication to Islamism. In the later years of 1910, he was viewed as advocating Turkish nationalism. Then, we see him taking a part in the German revolutionary movement in 1918-

soldiers. In a book titled, *Ethics for Lady Girls*, Huseyin Remzi argued that "a duty-knowing

mother longs to raise a child who can give his/her life (*efna-yi vucud*) for the sake of his religion,

state, and country; and [the mother] educates them to do so."[408] Of course, a mother cannot raise

the desired child with a military absconder husband, who is, according to Huseyin Remzi, is "an

apostate" and cannot be married with.[409] Mobilizing the disciplinary and emancipatory forces,

the production of healthy and able bodied children was regarded as one of the most important

duty of the nation's women.

As a part of this duty, women of various statuses became target of productivity debates.

The established dichotomy of work versus laziness required the categorization of women into

one category.[410] Our nation is degenerating, argued Celal Nuri in 1912, the year Balkan war

broke out. "Our women by not going out to work and by incessantly sitting, prevent the

physiological development of their body." In the streets of Istanbul "seldom we encounter a

woman with a body we can call normal." According to Celal Nuri, if there is a survey of the

body types in the country, it will become obvious that "many of the Turkish females have

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1919. When he returns to Turkey, he becomes active in the Turkish Labor and Farmer Socialist Party (Türkiye İşçi ve Çiftçi Sosyalist Partisi). He died, according to the unofficial accounts, murdered in the cold waters of the Black Sea when he and Mustafa Suphi were trying to go back to Soviet Russia, after being rejected by the Turkish authorities.

[408] Huseyin Remzi, *Hocahanim, Hanimkizlara durus-I ahlak* (Istanbul, 1310 [1892/93]), 61-166. The discussion takes place in the section on "Military Service." The author expressed his wish that all his lady students become a mother of a martyr or a veteran one day.

[409] Huseyin Remzi, *Hocahanim, Hanim Kizlara*, 166.

[410] Whether or not women should work like men outside the home is one of the most debated issues. Karakisla argues that this debate ceased during World War I, when work became necessary for the survival of women. Karakisla, 49-52, 91.

amorphous and abnormal shapes." The women who did not work, thus, not only hindered the development of the nation, but also aesthetically disturbed the male gaze.[411]

No doubt, the amorphous ladies gave birth to useless children. According to Edhem Nejat, the Turkish children were sickly, feeble, lazy, and even dim-witted, their bodies were rotten from immobility, and their complexion was always a variation of pale. Anyone who toured Anatolia, he argued, would see these children of the "once sublime Turkish nation" in this condition and understand that it is a social problem far beyond the borders of the capital. For Nejat, the world of Ottomans (*Osmanlilik cihani*) was collapsing because of the lack of good education of the children. The blame, according to Nejat, was on the shoulders of none other than the Ottoman mothers.[412]

The anxiety of the reformers was about how the mothers who subscribed to the backward looking face of the 'tradition,' the face that the reformers of all colors condemned, passed it along to their children. The Ottoman mothers were not only ignorant, but also their superstitious practices "poisoned" the new generations of the nation. Nejat assessed that the greatest danger that the children faced was their mothers' ignorant practices, but especially practices pertaining to maintaining a healthy body. The discipline, he argued, should start with the room where birth takes place. The visitors that fill up the room not only tire the mother, but also they "corrupt the air" of the newborn. No one, even the threat of the microbes could stop "the spitting ritual" practiced by the elderly ladies. Hence, poisoning, as Nejat saw it, literally and metaphorically continued until the child either dies or becomes an adult, who is weak in body and mind.[413]

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[411] Celal Nuri, *Kadinlarimiz*, (1331/1912-13).

[412] Edhem Nejad, "Cocugun terbiyesinde valide," *Sirat-I mustakim*, cilt 7 s 157 (1327/1911-1912), 13-15.

[413] Ibid., 15.

The Ottoman literature contains ample amount of images of idleness as a cause of corruption of one's bodily health. But looking at the production during a war will show how the anxiety about the idle body was played out in the literary realm through the roles of masculinity and femininity. The idle body was embodied in a literary character, as we see in Suleyman Sirri's theatrical play that was published during the Balkan Wars.[414] The hero, who spends his days reading European novels, is criticized for wasting his days by reading novels in a reclining position, as opposed to the prescribed duty of fighting a war against the enemy. The conversion or channelization of the idle energy of the hero from a paralyzing admiration of European lifestyles to the activeness of a believing soldier comes only at the end of the novel. The sister of the (anti)hero, recently back from the front where she worked as a nurse, exposes his laziness and uselessness by calling him on his duty to act. Thus, ironically being encouraged and dared by a non-fighting factor, a female, male hero converts his *masculine* mental and physical abilities into the service his homeland. By working as a nurse, the ultimate vocation that brings the "nurturing female" to the work space, but also by working at the front, helping not the regular folk, but the wounded soldiers, the female character represents the *perfect* female citizen embodying the militarized work ethos of the period.

Conclusion

> In this country, educating the masses should not mean making them read the alphabet and recite excerpts. More than anything, it should mean giving them these several things: a body that would allow to lie in an ambush regardless of how snowy the weather is; a mind that can apprehend the world (…), work the mines, not get scared of the airplanes; and a heart that can appreciate its own flag, detest foul smells; and courage to die for the Rumeli… [415]

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[414] Alemdar Yalcin, II. *Mesrutiyette Tiyatro edebiyati Tarihi* (Ankara, 2002), 145.

[415] Ismail Hakki (Baltacioglu), *Terbiye-I Avam* (1914), 9.

Admittedly, the link between the Balkan defeat and the newfound enthusiasm for physical education, sports and physical activity was exaggerated by the authors examined here. The Balkan defeat was not the start they presented it as. Rather, the discourse on the body, as shown earlier, had been developing for some time in various ways. Along with the normative authority of morality books on the body and its role in the emerging nation, publications on gymnastics and physical education gained increasing popularity throughout the nineteenth century. Translated works that appeared during early *Tanzimat*, such as the 1847 *Treatise on Gymnastics* (*Risale-i Cimnastik*), and the 1867 *Manual for Gymnastics (Cimnastik Talimnamesi)* were soon replaced by the works of *bona fide* Ottoman physical education enthusiasts, such as Faik Ali (Ustunidman) (1859-1942) and Selim Sirri (Tarcan) (1874-1957).[416] Physical education (*beden terbiyesi*) had long been established starting with the military schools in early 1860s. In 1869, it became mandatory in the middle schools, which quickly spread to the other civilian schools. As mentioned earlier, *Galatasaray,"*[417] established to train bureaucrats in 1868, was the first non-military school to offer physical education to its students.[418] In 1869, physical education became mandatory in the middle schools. By the turn of the century, there were classes on physical education in the *Asiret Mektebi, Muhendishane, Mulkiye* and the *idadis* of Istanbul and Izmir.[419]

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[416] Ismail Pasha, trans. *Risale-i Cimnastik* (Istanbul, 1847); Mustafa Hami, trans., *Cimnastik Talimnamesi* (Istanbul, 1283 [1866/1867]); Selim Sirri (Tarcan), *Isvec Usulunde Jimnastik, Terbiye-i Bedeniye*, *Musavverdir* (Istanbul, 1326 [1910]).

[417] Galatasaray was regarded by Tevfik Fikret as "the first window of the east opening to the western horizons." Quoted in Nafi Atuf Kansu, 116.

[418] Nafi Atuf Kansu, 119. See also Yigit Akin, *Erken Cumhuriyette Beden,* 49-55.

[419] T.C. Maarif Vekilligi Beden Terbiyesi Umum Mudurlugu, ed. *XX. Cumhuriyet Yilinda Beden Terbiyesi ve Spor,* (Ankara, 1943), 14.

When Selim Sirri, who in 1909 participated in Stockholm's physical education congress and was a pioneer in physical education both during the imperial period and the republican period, was appointed as an inspector general of the education Ministry in 1911, he saw to it that physical education was thoroughly applied in every school, including girls' schools. [420] According to Selim Sirri, in order to revive the phrase "strong like a Turk" laziness needed to be defeated through gymnastics.[421]

Although the authors exaggerated the shift that happened with the defeat, they were right about a new interest in a militarized physical activity, namely boy scouting. Boy scouting was first established in 1908 by Lieutenant General Baden-Powell as a military project to train British boys. Powell observed that British soldiers were not prepared to navigate the fields of Africa in the Boer War; nor were they experienced in fighting in difficult conditions. The Ottoman reformers also drew their examples from the Prussian paramilitary youth organization *Pfadfinder*.[422] Boy scouting activities almost simultaneously spread to the Ottoman capital. By 1910 the *Sultani* schools, and by 1911 the *idadis* in Istanbul were organizing boy scouting activities. [423] Still, except for a few locations such as Manastir (where Edhem Nejat was the high-school principal) and Edirne Muallim Mektebi (where Nafi Atuf [Kansu] was principal), boy scouting was limited to certain schools in the capital. After the Balkan Wars, boy scouting gained prominence among the reformers. As early as June 1913, boy scouting was

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[420] Ibid., 15-16.

[421] Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 168.

[422] Ibid., 166.

[423] Ismail Guven, "Osmanli'dan Gunumuze Izligin Gelisimi ve Turk Egitim Tarihindeki Yeri*" Ankara Universitesi Egitim Bilimleri Fakultesi Dergisi*, vol. 36, no. 1-2 (2003): 65-73. The first practitioners of boy scouting were Ahmed and Abdurrahman Robenson brothers, who were employed as physical education instructors in Galatasaray and Kabatas Lycee, respectively. For more information and biographies see Gokhan Uzgoren*, Turk Izcilik Tarihi* (Istanbul, 2000), 1-13.

institutionalized in the empire under the first paramilitary youth organization, Turkish Strength Association (*Turk Gucu Cemiyeti*), which was established by Cemal Pasha. The goal of this association was to convert the physically degenerate people into a robust nation.[424] The Turkish Strength Association was followed by Enver Pasha's Ottoman Strength Club in 1914, an organization that had wider goals, as it was made an obligation for each school and *medrese* to have branches of this organization.[425] It is telling that in 1914, when the Ottoman strength Clubs were established, its subdivision Boy Scouting (*Izcilik,*) under the name of *Izci Ocagi* (previously *keşşaflik)*, was severed from the Ministry of Education and was reassigned to the Ministry of War. As one of the most prized youth programs, The War Minister Enver Pasha was declared the Chief Scout. The parameters of the new subjectivity that had been developing in Ottoman society were put to work in these militarized organizations: sacrifice, hard-work, and readiness for duty. [426]

Accordingly, when 262 educators from various cities of the empire attended the Boy Scout gathering in April 1914, boy scouting was no longer a phenomenon limited to the capital.[427] The body, first part of the curriculum in the military schools, was now subjected to militarization outside the barracks. The militarization that became the marking characteristic of the last decade of the Ottoman Empire and the first decades of the Turkish Republic cannot be

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[424] Akmese, *The Birth of Modern Turkey,* 168.

[425] Ibid., 171.

[426] The three items of the Boy Scout Law have a very close resemblance to the divisions of many Ottoman morality texts: duty to God and country, duty to others, and duty to self.

[427] When World War I started, according to the journal *Kessaf* in 1923, the youth marched from Maltepe to the ferries, then crossed the bridge to the Harbiye Nezareti Meydani in Beyazid in order to volunteer as soldiers. Quoted in Uzgoren, *Turk Izcilik*, 8-9.

understood without taking into account the process by which the body of the citizens became a site of *national* anxiety.

The transformation of the conceptualizations of the body, as a project of nation-formation, was not a new-comer on the scene at the time of the Balkan Wars. As the building block of a nation, the body became a *topos* from which the nation's perceived infirmities, including laziness and lethargy, had to be removed if a productive, healthy, and able nation were to be established. With the transformation of the discourses on the body in morality books, this new awareness became visible on a discursive level and integrated into the education system. Morality books demonstrate that the deployment of bodies for greater social change was a popular theme long before 1912.

The nature and organization of these youth organizations, where physical training hand in hand with character training, were militaristic. The increasing militarization of the body in the post-1908 Ottoman and even more so in the early republican period should not be abstracted from its nineteenth-century roots. But it was during these wars, which were taking place at the conjunction of political turmoil and independence movements, the connection, as it was envisioned by the modernists, between the particular body and the national body became more salient and imperative. The Ottoman body deemed as "accustomed to slacking," and accused of harboring social vices was now accused of causing the Balkan defeat. The shift that occurred with the Balkan defeat was not only built on a century-long practice that made the body part of the nationalist discourse, but also made an emergent narrative visible on the national level in an undisputed way, and hence an indication of this discourse becoming hegemonic.

An important aspect of these debates is how the anxieties over productivity and reshaping the industrious body became political issues. The power of social practice and the articulation of

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a new normative standard demonstrated by the fact that at by the end of the century, a new category was introduced: the social misfit. While, as we saw in this chapter, the soldiers and mothers represented the parts of the body that could be trained, corrected and strengthened, some segments of society could not even be attempted to be saved. The social misfit was that person who could not be made into a cog in the "glorious machine" of the nation and therefore had no place in the body politic. In the next chapter, I look at the representations of heroes and anti-heroes in the Ottoman novels, where industrious heroes with their success stories were represented as models, while lazy and unproductive became labels to cast certain visions of modernity outside of imagined boundaries of the Ottoman nation. The derisive portrayal of the comical dandy as the main Westernized character in works of fiction, and the paralleled polemics that went on in the political journals signaled a vital debate on what sort of model citizen their standpoint proposed for the nation, while the definitions of the model citizen was constantly contested.

Chapter IV

The Lazy and the Dandy in Ottoman Literary Imagination

The appearance of novels coincides with a certain form of subjectivity, which has been discursively constructed in the public sphere. This new form of subjectivity prioritized responsibility for productivity and emphasized the connection between individual and society. The one characteristic that makes novels an invaluable source is the historic entanglement of the novel as a literary genre with the spread of practices that are associated with modernity. Much like the genre itself, the Ottoman novels cannot be understood without taking into consideration the greater social transformations taking place during the nineteenth century in the empire.[428]

The rise of literature as a modern discipline is concomitant with the socio-cultural processes of nation-formation. Therefore, the world of reforms and literature should not be treated as discrete discursive fields. Similar to what Joseph Slaughter shows in the interconnectedness of the development of human rights discourses and novels, they "mutually reinforce[d] producers of the contemporary consensus," and in the Ottoman case, they displayed the importance of new modes and categories of thinking and doing.[429] Histories of "reality" are

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[428] For an analysis of the emergence of the novel from a historical perspective, see Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). Mckeon criticizes Watt for his treatment of the early modern historical context through a teleological perspective, thus leaving out the question of aristocracy and romance in this period. Michael Mckeon, "Generic Transformation and Social Change: Rethinking the Rise of the Novel," in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: JHUP, 2000), 382-399.

[429] Joseph Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 55.

themselves ordered within a discursive field, therefore the binary of fiction and "reality" should no longer dominate historiography.[430] Fiction, in this regard, can have a double role; it can reinforce the hegemonic discourses.[431] Novels may also offer alternative visions from without the hegemonic discourses of the time, i.e. expressing dissent. In this regard, political interpretation of literary texts, as Fredric Jameson argues, is not a supplementary reading method, but an "absolute horizon."[432] Insofar as novels are where contemporary consensus' play out, they are expressive of dissent and contestation. LaCapra draws on Bakhtin to argue that great novels often portray internal contestations more profoundly than other texts because the literary form sets language free and therefore challenges the categories that reign elsewhere in culture.

> Bakhtin's emphasis upon dialogization directed attention to the more ambivalent or undecidable dimensions of texts… and highlighted the importance of the border or the threshold where seeming opposites entered into an exchange and possibly coexisted.[433]

Bearing these in mind, Ottoman novels offer a mostly unmined source for comprehending the dynamic nature of the Ottoman experience with modernity, mirroring a transformation while simultaneously transforming, and creating a possibility for various strains of reform visions becoming publicly identifiable.

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[430] Lynn Hunt, "Introduction," in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 109.

[431] For a discussion of how fiction can reinforce the dominant discourses, see Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993).

[432] Fredrick Jameson, "From the Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act" in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: JHUP, 2000), 400.

[433] Lloyd Kramer, "Literature, Criticism, and Historical Imagination: The Literary Challenge of Hayden White and Dominick LaCapra," in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 114.

The connection between literary practices and nation-formation has been explored in historiography. As Benedict Anderson explored the connection between nation formation and print capitalism, novels revealed the conceptual nature of imagined communities. Sami Zubaida, elaborating on Benedict Anderson's account on literature and national imagination, argued that:

> Two modern literature forms illustrate the national imagination: the novel and the newspaper. The old fashioned novel shares a world with its readers, in which different characters, not necessarily known to one another, move simultaneously or in clocked, calenderical time, in social locations and spaces familiar or imaginable to the readers.[434]

Ottoman novels seldom appear as a focus of analysis outside the field of literary criticism. Established narrative in the literary world has been along the terms of when and what Western forms of literature made their debuts in the Ottoman literary realm, and how authors "imitated" various schools of European (mostly French) literature. In an approach that Nurdan Gurbilek calls a "criticism of lack," novels were judged based on their counterparts in French and English literature.[435] Once viewed as an imported genre, Ottoman novels were seen as a foreign element in which the authors were never sufficiently good and the Turkish novel was regarded as a "patchwork."[436]

The facile Eurocentric comparisons placed Ottoman novels on the margins of modernity and under the linear spectrum of either good or bad imitations. Therefore, the modernness and the Ottomannes of these novels need to be emphasized. The Ottoman novel, just as morality texts of the nineteenth century, was borne out of social practices and new categories of knowledge of

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[434] Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State,* 147.

[435] Nurdan Gurbilek, "Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102: 2/3 (2003), 599-623.

[436] Robert P. Finn, *Turk Romani* (Istanbul, 1984), 15. In this regard, Finn has a more nuanced approach. Although his comparison point is the trajectory of the European novels, Finn argues that the novels incorporated unique elements of the "Turkish" culture.

its period. Similar to morality texts, trappings of the genre withstanding, they articulated new conceptualizations of subjectivity and the self's position vis-à-vis the nation. Situating the Ottoman novels as such refutes the Eurocentric narrative, which views the Ottoman novel as merely an imported genre.

The dominant paradigm, formulated in the early-republican period, trapped Ottoman reforms in general and Ottoman literature in particular, and in that category specifically the novels, into the imitation-originality discussions. Drawing a similarity between the "failed" reforms and the practice of novel writing, they were rendered as frail attempts of transporting "foreign" genres into a new and unready literary world. They accomplished only superficial success by merely being the first "Turkish" novel, the first realistic novel, the first historical novel etc. Novels were reduced to their functions, such functions that identified these novels' as introducing a "less convoluted" language (read less Arabic and Persian originated vocabulary), and/or addressing social problems such as arranged marriages and slavery. But they were hardly original: that Ottoman novels were presented as barely peaking into a new world that would become actualized only during the Republican period.

Discourse of imitation served as an ideological function as well. The modernity project of the republican period was presented as the only path to modernity. The republican official ideology ridiculed the Ottoman experience of modernity as not genuine, comical, and incomplete at best. The analysis of the Ottoman-period novels was no different. It was only during the republican period the real novel appeared, hence elevating the republican literary practices as products of real modernity.[437] For example, Guzin Dino in her account of novels in Turkey, *The*

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[437] Seyda Basli, *Osmanli Romaninin Imkanlari Uzerine* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2010), 18.

Birth of Turkish Novel posited that the Ottoman novel was marred by inexperience, and not until

the republican period, the Turkish language saw a novel in the fullest sense.[438]

The novels, or any literary work, cannot be reduced to its function as a social mirror, but

it should be understood as a social agent. As Lynn Hunt argued, "political language could be

used rhetorically to build a sense of community and at the same time to establish new fields of

social political and cultural struggle – that is make possible unity and difference at the same

time." [439] Novels, therefore, should be viewed as possessing this dual function.

Not only is a thematic reading of novels of the period, but also an analysis is necessary in

showing how these literature pieces became the forum in which social debates were

articulated.[440] In this chapter, saving Ottoman novels from teleological approaches and the

margins of modernity, emphasis will be placed on how Ottoman novels articulated the dynamic

nature of transformations of the nineteenth century in general, and how they described and

prescribed the new form of subjectivity through the perspective of work ethos and productivity

of the new self.

Novels offer moral worlds that are comprehensible and cohesive in their own right.

Contours of the new self that we are familiar with through morality texts were articulated in this

genre. One of the functions of these moral worlds, or the moral realism of novels as Per Gedin

puts it, is to activate the readers to probe themselves.[441] It is important to note that, very early on,

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[438] Guzin Dino, *Turk Romaninin Dogusu* (Istanbul, 1978), 185.

[439] Lynn Hunt, "Introduction," in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 17.

[440] The work of Jale Parla on the generational conflicts among the characters of Ottoman novels should be mentioned here. Jale Parla, *Babalar ve Ogullar Tanzimat Romaninin Epistemolojik Temelleri* (Istanbul: Iletisim Yay, 1990). Also see Ahmet Evin, *Origins and Development of the Turkish Novel* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1983).

[441] Per Gedin, *Literature in the Market Place* (New York: Overlook Press, 1977), 145.

the connection between genre and morality it brought with itself was apparent to those who engaged in translation of the novels to Ottoman world. The presentation of Fenelon's *Telemaque*, one of the first translations into the Ottoman language, which, not surprisingly centered on diligence and industry, attests to this awareness. Yusuf Kamil Pasha (d.1875) in his preface presented the book as not merely a story (*hikaye*) but a "morality book whose essence is wisdom."[442] Then, popular embrace of the modern notions of work ethos in building the new self and the new nation owed a great deal to novels. As Franco Moretti noted:

> …as a "free individual", not as a fearful subject but as a convinced citizen, one perceives the social norm as *one's own*. One must *internalize* them and fuse external compulsion and internal impulses into a new unity until the former is no longer distinguishable from the latter. This fusion is what we usually call "consent" or "legitimation."[443]

Reading Ottoman novels provides several perspectives into the social and moral world intersected by the authors and their readers. The articulation of new forms of subjectivity, in the embodiment of the hard-working hero as well as the idle and unproductive anti-hero, presented different models of modernity, political propositions, and anxieties.

Readership

Novel writing and reading stand in the middle of a network of social practices. Novels as consumption items brought with them a specific culture while incorporating age-old customs, such as being a part of communal reading practices. Reception and consumption of Ahmed Midhat's work, two of which will be discussed later, is a good example for these new/old practices. Halit Ziya (1867-1945), an eminent novelist, mentions that novels of Ahmed Midhat

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[442] Mentioned in Cevdet Kudret, *Turk Edebiyatinda Hikaye ve Roman* (Ankara: Varlik, 1965), 11.

[443] Franco Moretti, "From the Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture," in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: JHUP, 2000), 562.

were read in communal gatherings. This practice came together with other new sets of practices,

such as the newspaper. Authors who started out with serialized novels and pieces in the daily

soon hit the book markets with complete books when they believed they achieved a literary

following. The twentieth century literary critique (and an eminent novelist himself) Ahmed

Hamdi Tanpinar notes that, it is only after this transition, with the comfort of having achieved a

readership, the authors "approached real literature."[444] If the newspaper was a "one-day best-

seller," as Benedict Anderson puts it, these novels were an important factor of the undivided

continuation of newspaper readership.[445] According to Tanpinar, "Ahmed Midhat's entire oeuvre

is a public reading room:"

> A time devoted to reading. This is what [Ahmed Midhat] brought to this society. And the
> lives of the common people changed with it. The hours spent next to the lamp in the
> wooden houses gained a different identity and meaning. The entire family gathered
> around the literate one among them and started discussing what is read. [446]

The novel readership, especially those of Ahmed Midhat, was widely practiced. As a

twentieth-century literary critique posited "The Turkish reader [sic] first tastes the novel's

pleasures through Ahmed Midhat's works."[447] This readership, as Johann Strauss notes, cuts

across religious communities. Ahmed Midhat's *Felatun Bey ve Rakim Effendi*, a novel that is

important in understanding the centrality of work ethos in the new Ottoman subjectivity, was

published in Armeno-Turkish in 1879, just four years after its publication in Ottoman-Turkish.

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[444] Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar, *XIX Asir Turk Edebiyati Tarihi* (Istanbul: Caglayan, 1997), 287.

[445] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006), 35. See Talal Asad's discussion of the novels in Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 15. He argues that Benedict Anderson's discussion of print capitalism does not take into account serialized novels published in the periodicals and the enormous expansion in the market for imaginative "literature" both prose and poetry. This imaginative literature "mediated people's understanding of 'real' and 'imagined.'"

[446] Tanpinar, *XIX Asir Turk Edebiyati Tarihi*, 459.

[447] Mehmet Kaplan, *Turk Edebiyati Uzerine Arastirmalar 2* (Istanbul, 1987), 93.

The editors of *Mamul*, an Armeno-Turkish paper, asked Ahmed Midhat's permission to serialize some of his other works, which he accepted.[448]

Female readers, who at times were directly addressed by Ahmed Midhat within the text of the novels, were a sizable audience. Tanpinar, quoting another prominent novelist Huseyin Rahmi, describes the reading practices of female gatherings: "Huseyin Rahmi considers Ahmed Midhat's books as the top list [activity] of women's gatherings … People read his books that are written in clear Turkish and in an easy to understand manner with great enthusiasm and even admiration."[449]

Of course, all this does not mean that novel reading was celebrated all around and did not assume negative social meanings. Perhaps, even stronger than the perspective that viewed novels as channels strengthening the moral mores of society, there was the contention that novels corrupted the morals. On theory, this critique seems to be accepted by most novelists, but many denied the applicability of it on their own work. Ahmed Midhat, for example, takes on the responsibility of informing his readers that even in Europe it is forbidden for young girls to read novels.[450] In principle, then, the novelists absorb the criticism, but in a way subvert it: There is a beneficial and moral way to read novels, even the bad ones, they argue. Mehmed Murad, author of *Turfanda mi Yoksa Turfa mi* self-consciously inaugurated the "national novel," while dismissing most previous novels. Ahmed Midhat introduces a female hero, Zehra, in his novel *Karnaval*, which is discussed in the coming pages. Zehra is an ardent novel reader, but unlike her peers, instead of taking "the immoral characters" as models, she takes lessons from the mistakes

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[448] Johann Strauss, "'Kutup ve Resail-I Mevkute'Printing and Publishing in a Multi-Ethnic Society," in *Late Ottoman Society,* ed. Elizabeth Ozdalga (Oxford: Routledge, 2005), 227-256.

[449] Inci Enginun, Zeynep Kerman, *Yeni Turk Edebiyati Metinleri III* (Istanbul, 2011), 31.

[450] Ahmed Midhat Efendi, *Karnaval*, ed. Kazim Yetis (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu, 2000 [1881]), 55.

of the heroes and heroines --a clear example of moral probing applied by the novel-reading hero through novel reading.[451]

Ottoman novels feature an oft-portrayed character, which in historiography is invariably called a "super-westernized" character or a dandy. As Serif Mardin has noted, one of the two major themes of Ottoman novels was the "super Westernization" of the upper-class urban elite.[452] Dandy is the rough translation of the Turkish term, *zuppe*, whose etymological origins are vague. The word does not appear in novels where this character features, nor in the dictionaries of the time period, not until 1924.[453] While the word *zuppe* may be a latecomer to the scene, the character displaying characteristics of *zuppe* has been around since the earliest Ottoman novel. The first known Ottoman *zuppe,* which will be discussed soon, appeared in the first Ottoman novel that was published in 1851, namely, Vartan Pasha's *Akabi Hikayesi.*[454]

Felatun Bey ve Rakim Effendi (FBRE) is one of the best works that featured the *zuppe* character. Rakim Effendi is an orphan brought up by a black slave. This lady put Rakim through school by going out to work as a cleaner. Rakim Effendi finished his education with honors, mastered the French language, and educated himself in various sciences, such as law, medicine, and poetry. He turned his educational achievements into financial success by hard work and persistence. Rakim Effendi is a model of productivity and thrift; while Felatun is just the opposite of Rakim Effendi. Unlike Rakim, he inherits a fortune. Felatun is the ultimate

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[451] Ibid., 42-43.

[452] Serif Mardin, *Turk Modernlesmesi*: *Makaleler,* vol. 4 (Istanbul: Iletisim Yayinlari, 1997), 44. Also on the satirical novels sketching the Europeanization of Istanbul society, see Palmira Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press* (New York: SUNY Press, 2000), 150-189.

[453] Mehmet Bahaettin (Toven), *Yeni Turkce Lugat* [1924] (Ankara: TDK, 2004). Quoted in Sevan Nisanyan, *Sozlerin Soyagaci*, Accessed on July 1, 2012 http://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=z%C3%BCrriyet. I have checked the 1927 version (by Evkaf-I Islamiye Matbaasi) of *Yeni Turkce Lugat*, however, *zuppe* was not listed.

[454] Vartan Pasha, *Akabi Hikayesi, Ilk Turkce Roman, 1851,* ed. Andreas Tietze (Istanbul, 1991).

nineteenth-century *zuppe*: he spends his days in leisure, frequenting fashionable spots of *Pera*, the European quarter Istanbul, where he gambles and womanizes at his pleasure. The contrast between the two characters is obvious: Rakim Effendi frequently disparages his friend Felatun Bey's superficial knowledge.

FBRE is a good example of how the educated, productive, and socially mobile character is always juxtaposed to the idle, self-absorbed, and squanderer character of the *zuppe*. For Ahmed Midhat, Rakim is no doubt an embodiment of the ideal Ottoman, which was voiced by a hero of another Ahmed Midhat novel, *Musahedat*, by being referred as the ideal novel hero, and "a perfect and fictive human being."[455] Felatun Bey, on the other hand, is the ultimate fob, a dandy, and arguably, with hindsight, a full-blown consumer who arrived in the wrong century:

> If you ask about Felatun Bey's attire, we are incapable of description. Let's say this much: do you ever see those pictures drawn on cartoon plates showing the latest fashion, hanging on clothing stores and tailors in Pera? You see, Felatun Bey has several hundreds of these. Holding these pictures at his hand, he stands in front of the full-length mirror, and he works on his outfit until he exactly resembles one![456]

The *zuppe* character, especially in the character of Felatun bey, has been at the center of interest for approaches that viewed the Ottoman novels as commentaries on Westernization. While it is easy to label the *zuppe* as an extremely Westernized prototype, the understanding of these literary pieces should not be narrowly drawn by looking at these characters as commentaries on extreme and/or wrong westernization. According to Serif Mardin, the *zuppe* character reflects the shock Ottoman society experiences with the encroachment of Western civilization, but even more deeply, the need of craft groups (*esnaf*) in Ottoman society of

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[455] Ahmed Midhat Effendi, *Musahedat*, (Ankara: Akcag, 1997), 41.

[456] Ahmet Midhat Efendi, *Felatun Bey ile Rakim Efendi* (originally published in Istanbul, 1876) (Istanbul, 2007), 31-32.

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ridiculing the ruling classes.[457] Tying this tradition to popular uprisings against the rulers of the

Tulip Era in the early eighteenth century, for Mardin, the critique emerges from the lower

classes, and from their communitarian, austere, and deeply traditional world-view, which felt

threatened by the market-oriented economy-world that encouraged individualist consumption.[458]

Serif Mardin argues that Ahmed Midhat's *esnaf*-oriented world-view shines through the

character of Rakim. "His own values," points out Mardin, "were those of Ottoman craftsmen (the

esnaf class): thrift, avoidance of conspicuous consumption, honesty."[459] For Mardin, Midhat's

"values are a successful blend of western cultural baggage and the views of the Ottoman lower

middle classes."[460] The lower and upper class paradigm in Mardin is rooted in his dichotomous

view of social reality as state versus civil society. Just as Mardin sees the state as a separate

reality than society, he views the Ottoman society divided between "upper" and "lower"

classes.[461] The one-dimensional approach to Midhat's position can be traced back to the mid

twentieth-century literary critic, Ahmed Hamdi Tanpinar, who even denied that Midhat had a

"specific moral approach" in its own right. For Tanpinar, Midhat's approach emerged out of

necessities: "the needs of the bazaar that he hailed from along with the desire for stability drives

him. The bazaar is always after stability."[462] The transformative element of this novel, however,

has been unnoticed in these interpretations. This novel cannot be viewed as an attempt to protect

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[457] Serif Mardin, *Religion, Society, and Modernity in Turkey* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 143.

[458] Ibid., 135-163.

[459] Ibid., 145.

[460] Ibid., 138.

[461] For a discussion of the state-society binary, see introduction. For a critique of understanding the upper and lower cultures in conflictual terms in a different historical period and context, see Carlo Ginsburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

[462] Tanpinar, *XIX Asir Turk Edebiyati Tarihi,* 458.

a "tradition" that is fighting against "the modern," a battle between lower-class sensibilities against luxury, and communitarian approaches to economy and capitalist/consumerist prodigality.

Although he incorporates the values of *esnaf*, Rakim Effendi is not an *esnaf* --just like Ahmed Midhat Effendi was not. Ahmed Midhat's employment at the Spice Bazaar in Istanbul's Eminonu has been highlighted frequently, sometimes at the expense of other components of his life.[463] His political conservatism, edging on opportunism, and more importantly his loss of prestige after the fall of Abdulhamid and the consequent portrayal of him as a collaborator, mislead his twentieth-century critics to argue that Midhat was a proponent of craft-class sensibilities, denying him the status of "the modern." As a protégé of Midhat Pasha earlier in his life, Ahmed Midhat was a product of the Ottoman reforms in education, a graduate of *Nish Rusdiyesi*, where Midhat Pasha was a governor. Midhat Pasha was an educational pioneer, who established the first modern (and model) schools for the poor and the orphaned, namely *Islahhane* (Reform School) and *Sanayii Mektebi* (Industrial School) where the pupils would not only learn sciences but also an occupation. Ahmed Midhat, after being initiated into minor official posts in the Balkans, quit his post in order to leave for Baghdad with Midhat Pasha in 1869. There, along with founding a publication house where he published the daily *Zevra*, he got involved with the Midhat Pasha's educational reforms. His first short treatise was on the *Sanayii Mektebi* of Baghdad. It is time for Ahmed Midhat to be seen in the middle of Ottoman reforms and transformative practices, then delimiting his work in *esnaf* sensibilities and in the anachronistic state-society binaries, where lower classes despise the upper classes.

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[463] For how Nurdan Gurbilek, a contemporary literary critique, views Ahmed Midhat, see Nurdan Gurbilek, *Kor Ayna Kayip Sark* (Istanbul: Metis, 2004). Gurbilek also seems to accept that Midhat had *esnaf* sensibilities.

It would be a mistake to read this novel, and novels featuring *zuppe*, as products of conservative approaches to reform in the empire. Clear indicators show that there is a rupture in literary description and prescription of the Ottoman experience. Most of the critiques are right about the existence of the major contrast these novels are based on, between a hero and an anti-hero. The ideal mode of subjectivity in these novels is not one that possesses the "traditional" characteristics, but represents a new mode of earning a membership in the emerging nation, i.e. the position of responsible citizenship, through an ethical existence, the most salient contributor of which is work for work's sake. Then, that Rakim effendi is called to be a work machine is not a coincidence.[464] Productivity is the central touchstone in every character of the novel.

Putting together all the *zuppe* characters as critiques of one issue or another may blind us to the historicity of these characters. A good example of how each *zuppe* character reflects a different set of realities is *Akabi Hikayesi*.[465] Written in Armenian script in the Turkish language, *Akabi Hikayesi* is one of the earliest novels in the Ottoman literary realm, but remained unknown until recently.[466] In this novel, Hovsep Vartan Pasha (1813-1879), who worked as a translator in *Bahriye Nezareti* for 25 years and earned his title, narrated a love story between two Istanbuli Armenians. These two main characters were coming from different religious communities (Catholic and Orthodox), and therefore could not marry, the latter constituting the main plot of the novel. Vartan Pasha, himself a Catholic, in the backdrop of Tanzimat reforms that abolished the differences between religious communities, showed the absurdity of clinging on to religious differences, particularly in the Armenian community in Istanbul. The novel's hero, Hagop, is

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[464] Ahmet Midhat, *Felatun Bey ile Rakim Efendi*, 44.

[465] Vartan Pasha, *Akabi Hikayesi*.

[466] For an analysis of the novel, see Seyda Basli, *Osmanli Romaninin Imkanlari Uzerine, Ilk Romanlarda Cok Katmanli Anlati Yapisi* (Istanbul, 2010), 190-224.

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educated and enlightened enough to surpass the imposed divisions between the religious communities. The novel character with a European-style outfit, Rupenig Aga, on the other hand, displays a narrow-minded approach by subscribing into the traditional enmities between the communities. The *zuppe* figure here hence is different from the *zuppe* of *Felatun Bey ve Rakim Efendi*. He is not only represented here as an enthusiast of European clothing, but also as someone who is politically irrelevant in the early and hopeful days of Tanzimat. The novel therefore, reflecting a specific problem of the Armenian-Ottoman subculture, politically marginalized a character that viewed his European appearance as very important but showed no understanding of political developments of his time.

As recent scholarship shows, there are multiple levels of meaning in each of these novels.[467] In this regard, every *zuppe* needs to be read and analyzed in their immediate socio-political contexts. Just like the Ottoman novels, the character of the *zuppe* should not be imprisoned into an imitation-originality binary. The *zuppe* was not merely a person who imitated. The discussion should leave the preoccupation with imitation-wrong imitation paradigm and advance to variation in the practices of modernity and in each case, how a certain vision of modernity is developed while criticizing the other.

Regardless of the specifics of each novel they appear in, the *zuppe* accounts indicate the establishment of difference. As Tom Lutz noted, "…the slacker appears in print and on the screen sometimes as a social pariah, but more often than not over the last 250 years (…) the slacker has been a figure of fun, a cultural farce."[468] In *Felatun Bey ve Rakim Efendi*, Midhat castigates deviance by ridiculing it. In this case, ridicule does not serve a "function of preserving

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[467] See, for example, Basli, *Osmanli Romaninin Imkanlari Uzerine.*.

[468] Tom Lutz, *Doing Nothing: A History of Loafers, Loungers, Slackers, and Bums in America* (NewYork: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 13.

social norms," as Jameson noted in his *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, but it serves as a promotion of a new set of mores that have been more and more ubiquitous in the social sphere.[469] Felatun bey's problem does not lay in his super Westernized behavior –the problem of him or any *zuppe*, the idle, and the hopeless lazy is that he/she does not produce, does not contribute to the nation, not at least in the way the emergent norms of citizenship requires of them. That their both mental and physical laziness in filling their good citizenship roles is the root of the problem. More than his preoccupation with his appearance, the fact that Felatun only shows up in the governmental bureau for the sake of appearance is the problem with that character. Felatun only goes to the governmental office to kill time there. By creating a dandy-like, idle figure as an anti-hero, then, these novels not only articulated what was a social reality, but also disarticulated from it by prescribing a certain ideal citizen type and ridiculing others to an audience they helped create by targeting them as interlocutors of their texts.[470]

Two novels

Novels that feature the *zuppe* character thematize the period's preoccupation with the work ethos as an element of character-and-nation-building. By analyzing two novels of the period, Ahmed Midhat Efendi's *Karnaval* (1881) and Mehmet Murat's *Turfanda mi Yoksa Turfa mi* (1891), a few questions will be addressed. First, through these novels, how did the Ottoman literary practices articulate new conceptualizations of subjectivity in connection with the nation? The

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[469] Jameson, "From the Political Unconscious," 404.

[470] Robert Wuthnow, *Communities of Discourse: Ideology and Social Structure in the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and European Socialism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 1-22.

popular novel articulated a moral world that placed a great emphasis on productivity. Second, while similar to morality books, the novels articulated the ideal self by juxtaposing it to a new typology in the literary realm, the anti-hero. By examining this very juxtaposition, the novels reveal dialogical aspects of Ottoman novels, by demonstrating various interpretations of modernity, and taking positions against them. Moreover, these discussions will prove the point that the novel as a genre, although not originated in the Ottoman world at first, was a genuine product of the nineteenth century Ottoman experience.

Karnaval (The Carnival) was a novel first serialized in *Tercuman-I Hakikat* (1878-1921), and later it was published as a book in 1881 (1298). The novel centers around two main characters, Resmi Effendi and a Zekai effendi. Resmi Effendi is a hard-working character that casts a charming effect on people through his diligence, hard work, and good nature. Resmi "although born in Istanbul" grows up in "relative poverty," but he "does not remain ignorant."[471] On the other hand Zekai, coming from a prestigious Istanbuli family, living in an old family mansion, is a playboy and a person with no real vocation. He was brought up in a very preserved way by his prominent and hypochondriac father, and becomes friends with Resmi Effendi, since he is a friend his father approves off.

There are similarities between the two opposing main characters. However, however, even in their similarity, they differ from each other. Having a good education is emphasized as important, but if it does not induce hard work, sense of duty, and productivity, it is regarded as useless knowledge. Resmi Effendi, the novel's hero, presented as smarter than Victor Hugo, through hard-work turns his unlucky start around. The petty inheritance Resmi was going to receive from his deceased father was spent away by his brother in wining and dining (`*iysh u*

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[471] Ahmed Midhat, *Karnaval*, 19.

nush). Resmi's enthusiasm and diligence is narrated through his skill to learn anything that is useful and productive. When he was a child, he learned Greek "from the streets" and "instead of listening to the old lady tales" during long winter nights, he spent his time watching a medical student memorize his lessons written in French, and thus Resmi learned French. Later in his life, Resmi added Russian, German, English, and Armenian to his languages. [472] A man of skills, he is at once a carpenter, an artist, a painter, and an engraver.[473] Resmi's house is described as a factory.[474] Resmi's skill in making and fixing machines is a theme that runs through the novel. He makes a sewing machine all by himself.[475] It is by fixing a very old piano of an Armenian Church, that this person of humble beginnings entered a sort of a bourgeoisie life, being part of the saloon of an Istanbuli Armenian notable, Monsieur Hamparson Efendi.

It is productivity that makes Resmi a hero. Education, however, is not the differentiating point between a productive member and a non-productive member of a society. In terms of having an education, Zekai is no Felatun bey, who is the *zuppe* character of Ahmed Midhat's earlier novel, FBRE. Unlike Felatun Bey, Zekai receives private education in his prominent father's mansion in Sehzadebasi, Istanbul.[476] Evident in the meaning of his name (Zekai: intelligent), Zekai's character lacks neither education nor intelligence. Zekai, unlike Felatun Bey is educated, and as his name indicates, intelligent and therefore arrogant. [477] These attributes

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[472] Ibid., 22, 59.

[473] Ibid., 20, 23. With carpentry, perhaps Ahmed Midhat is paying homage to Abdulhamid II, who was a master carpenter.

[474] Ibid., 23.

[475] Ibid., 22.

[476] Ibid., 18, 19.

[477] Ibid., 18-19.

highlight Zekai's choices even more. If Zekai engulfs himself in carnivalesque activities, and not attempts to earn his position in society through his hard work and productivity, like Resmi bey does, it is by choice. The differentiating point between the characters is their productiveness and sense of duty they had for society.[478]

The carnival is a multilayered metaphor in the novel *Karnaval*, and it does not remain to be a mere mise-en-scene, but an extended allegory. The author starts his novel with a historical assessment of carnivals. He informs his readers that balls are the modern day replicas of carnivals, which used to be pagan practices. In the Roman Empire, regular folk, usually suffering under the suppression of their kings, were given full/absolute liberty (*hurriyet-i mutlaka*) to act as they wished during these carnivals. The carnival culture was so resilient that even Christian rulers could not get rid of them, and allowed their subjects to subvert roles and rules during these limited periods.

> Let's say that carnivals are great carousing congregations. As the events of this party can happen before [the carnival], its hangover [results] will become obvious after it. Carnival events are just like that. That is, the prelude to the mentioned events happens before the carnival, the greatest event happens during the carnival. The results and their effects appear after the carnival.[479]

As he explains in the introduction, the author divides the storyline into three sections: before, during, and after the carnival. While during the carnival even the most productive and morally high characters are engulfed in leisurely and carnal activities, in the post-carnival period/section, all the productive characters of the novel end up in relatively good positions

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[478] Even the minor characters are contrasted in their sense of duty and productivity. See, for example, the female characters, Hasna and Shehnaz. Ahmed Midhat, *Karnaval, 20, 52*.

[479] Ibid., 15.

compared to where they started, while the un-productive prodigal characters end in worse positions.

Still, the carnival is not portrayed as a pernicious event that needs to be avoided. But, as the author indicates in his prologue, carnivals take place in limited periods, but they are meant to end, and not last. The imagery of the carnival represented the up-side-down-ness of the social and cultural structures in the Ottoman Empire. The transformation that was experienced in daily life was not smooth or in anyway near the ideal. As the author points out, the carnivals are where the societal norms are turned around. This is apparent in most ideal characters; when a hard-working and decent bachelor of the novel, Resmi Efendi after hours of dancing and drinking, follows his true feelings for a married but lonely beauty, Madam Aslanyan. The Carnivals and balls, and to an extent, the saloons of the Europeanized families, provide a space for the low-class but self-taught individual to explore his sexuality and social importance among the members of a greater society.

> Carnivals are seasons of mystery for every country. Because every class wants to engage in leisure it could not do so because of limitations, [but] by hiding themselves in masques and veils, [this is possible]. This means that if [those attendants] were to be publicly unveiled in a ball, so many things would be uncovered that if the novelists wrote [these stories], they would not be able to finish this material.[480]

Could the reference to absolute freedom (*Hurriyet-i Mutlaka*) have political connotations? The novel was published right after the abolition of the constitutional rule. Sultan Abdulhamid treated the emergency situation that arose with the Russian Empire, which turned into a long and trying war for the Ottomans, as an excuse for the closure of the parliament. It was a commonly provided reason by the Abdulhamid supporters, one of whom was Ahmed Midhat himself, that the times did not allow to have a multi-voice, hence divided, political scene, when

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[480] Ibid., 15.

the empire was facing a life threatening situation with its enemies. The carnival may well be a

reference to the short moment of absolute freedom that came with the inauguration of the

constitution in 1876, where authority, as Midhat described in his introduction, was temporarily

lifted and everyone equally had access to the carnival ground. Ahmed Midhat is not known for

his political dissidence –the major critique that was leveled against him was about how he

worked, depending on perspective, in subordination or in harmony with the Abdulhamid regime.

The constitutional rule was going to abolish the authority, and the empire was not in a situation

to have fun with the carnivals in its political realm, as it did freely in the literary realms. The

metaphor might be a reference to the perils of having an extended carnival period -- the problems

of freedom and upheaval that constitutionalism might bring. But interpretation should not limit

the readers.

Carnival, however, can be read as a metaphor of an Ottoman version of modernity. The

author insightfully indicates that the origins question is overrated, and hence opening the doors

to authenticity of the Ottoman modernity experiences. After voicing his readers' belief that

Istanbul carnivals and balls are not even comparable to the "original" carnivals in Europe,

Ahmed Midhat challenges this assumption:

> No! Do not say that! The only difference between the brightest carnivals of Europe and
> ours may be the outfits and clowning. Otherwise, from other aspects our carnivals and
> balls are not subordinate. It should be thought that Venice and other European lands are
> also imitating some other far-away peoples through their outfits. Istanbul, on the other
> hand, is the congregation (*mecmua-yi umumi*) of the far-away peoples. Here are all those
> mentioned peoples including the ball-goers.[481]

One of the most important significant aspects of *Karnaval* is the fact that it presents a

very different *zuppe* character from the earlier novels. The character that possesses the *zuppe*

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[481] Ahmed Mithad, "Mukaddime," *Karnaval*, 14-15.

characteristics in *Karnaval* has a leisure-oriented and unproductive lifestyle that cannot be forgiven out of feeble-mindedness or ignorance. In this sense, Zekai Efendi is no Felatun Bey. When this carnivalesque lifestyle is chosen despite having education and necessary intelligence, the crime of spending this capital without a service to society becomes more of a crime. Here, 16 years after publishing his *Felatun Bey ve Rakim Efendi*, Ahmed Midhat develops his *zuppe* character to the fullest.

Mehmed Murad's *Turfanda mi Yoksa Turfa mi?*

Published a decade after *Karnaval*, the novel written by Mizanci Murat (1854-1917) *Turfanda mi Yoksa Turfa mi (1891)* introduces the reader to a different politico-moral world. Although it does not feature a very strong *zuppe* character, *Turfanda mi Yoksa Turfa mi (now on TYT)* deserves attention for several reasons. As mentioned earlier, the novel claims in its title and introduction to be a national novel (*milli roman*), a grand declaration that differentiates the novel from its predecessors. The title of this novel, unlike most other novels of the period is formed as a question, which is not a random choice, since the author presents his book as a question for the "nation." The title is roughly translated as "Primeurs or Freaks?"

> The characters told in this story, Mansur, Zehra, Fatma, Mehmet, Ahmed Sunudi, are new products of their times. We are asking the readers, [based on] the responses that will reflect from their hearts, so that we will know the extent of our influence: Are they primeurs that are to be multiplied in the future, or are they social freaks, namely *turfa*'s, that no one will approve of? [482]

This question is a telling display of the novel's ambivalence about the future of the national character and national salvation, which is posed in the introduction.

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[482] Mehmed Murad, *Turfanda mi yoksa Turfa mi* (Ankara: Akcag, 2005), XV.

TYT has been featured in literature and historiography as voicing a critique of bureaucratic offices of the Hamidian period.[483] The novel is very clear about this critique, which is offered on multiple layers.[484] The protagonist claims that those who do not serve the state properly are considered to be animals: "…There is no difference between a person who has no service to the state and society and an animal."[485] The monetary aspect of employment is what the hero of the novel emphasizes frequently. Salary should not be seen as a charity given by the state to its beneficiaries. Receiving a salary has to induce worries in the bureaucrats:

> One of the [bureaucrats] had no shame to tell [me] that he sees no hope in carrying out his duty in his given position. When I said "then, how dare can you take the money from the national treasury every month?" he stared at me with surprise. He could not grasp what I was saying.[486]

The book describes the necessity of hard-work and diligence even if it is contrary to the immediate benefits of an individual in a given situation. It is a world where connections trump hard-working qualities that keeps Mansur, the protagonist, sleepless at nights. Mansur wants to achieve a social status without the networking skills of his uncle advancing connections for him. He refuses the uncle's help in unequivocal terms. Contrary to his stated desire that he "wishes to see himself as a penniless person with no connections and wants to achieve a status by working with my own labor and efforts (*say u gayret*)," Mansur ends up in the Foreign Affairs office, his chair being placed next to the head of the office, undeserved for what he knows.[487]

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[483] See, for example, Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom.* Also see Nader Sohrabi's *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 47-48. Also see Dumont, "Said Bey," 271-288.

[484] The novel's description of the offices were discussed in chapter II, especially his initiation to the office (kalem) in pages 74-75, and the description he provides on the place in pages 87-88.

[485] Mehmed Murad, 143.

[486] Ibid., 146.

[487] Ibid., 57.

> But, unbeknownst to him, the hero was already in the middle of networking, a subject to favoritism: there was going to be no trace of favoritism in his work. Poor boy! Favoritism had already taken place, in a format that he never wished for! [488]

When his pleas for having an assignment duty to accomplish in the hours he killed in the office are turned down in disbelief by his superiors, despite his dreams to serve the state in the Foreign Office, Mansur resigns from his post. For Mansur, nepotism and structured laziness in the office renders the salary he receives unlawful for him. This is contrasted with an evil character in the novel, Rashid, who plots to kill and eliminate the members of his brother-in-law's family, so that he can inherit wealth through his nephew. Rashid Bey's portrayal of evil could not be complete without showing how he never failed to receive governmental positions through nepotism, even though he was fired from each for bad behavior. [489]

But TYT is not merely about a critique of the bureaucratic offices and reforms. Although most characters are also government officials, the duty to work is not only applicable to them. Characters are divided by their understanding of the duty of work ethos, regardless of whether they hold a position in the government or not. The protagonist identifies duty as something one cannot/should not be free from: "In fact, for human beings, from the day one can walk to the day of final rest, one cannot be free from duty, not even for a day"[490] "Stopping is not permitted," says Mansur at one point. [491] Mansur was contrasted with a set of characters; some of them display the *zuppe* characteristics similar in previous novels, some not. The most obvious reference to the *zuppes* were made by Emin Bey, a high-ranking government representative,

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[488] Ibid., 73.

[489] Ibid., 117.

[490] Ibid., 20.

[491] Ibid., 227.

portrayed as a person who has no zeal to improve the condition of the state. Emin bey complains about the students sent to study in Paris:

> We are sending students to Paris each year. But none of them come back to us the way we want them to. With their corrupted morals and manners, they cannot be benefited from anymore. What they learn is limited to dressing up excessively, wasting money on leisure activities, and we see nothing but that they are losing their religion and becoming *frenks*.[492]

For the hero of the novel two characteristics hinder the natural and expected progress of the Ottoman Empire, namely ignorance and laziness.[493] The two, connected in a pernicious cycle, are reasons why nothing functions as the idealist Mansur desires. Mansur Bey, for example, agonizes over the fact that an official at the Istanbul custom is not doing his job by going through Mansur's material (to search for illegal publications).[494]

The opposite of Mansur is Ismail Bey. The contrast between leisure-oriented Ismail bey, son of the household, and the newcomer Mansur is well displayed in the dialogue below. Ismail Bey, seeing Mansur bey buried in work in his room asks:

"My dear brother, don't you ever get tired? What would be the end of this? …Should not you get out and have some fun?" [Mansur replies:]
"What can I do brother? I have a lot to do."
[Ismail:] "Just take it easy! No one is burdening you with these works, right? You are coming up with them yourself!" [to which, Mansur:]
"It is my conscience, my brother, that burdens them on me, I cannot help it!"[495]

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[492] Ibid., 225. Emphasis added.

[493] Ibid., 223.

[494] Ibid., 12. For a similar event, see the section where the police officer (*zaptiye memuru*) does not show up in a brawl on page 14.

[495] Ibid., 240.

With the insistence of Ismail Bey, Mansur Bey takes an excursion to the leisure spots of Istanbul, especially to green parks in the shores of Golden Horn, *Kasimpasha*. There the diligent and uptight Mansur goes through a shock by witnessing the manners in which young girls and boys are interacting with each other. While Murad warns his companion of the wrongness of these excessive leisurely activities, for Ismail bey, these critiques make no sense. He spends his time in *Kagithane*, in the clubs of Pera, and in the chariots. [496]

In the nineteenth century, new leisure sites spread throughout the city. New consumer practices that had been introduced by the bonmarche's of Pera were reflected in the popular press, and hence they were reinforced by turning themselves into items of literary consumption. Popular novels transformed the interrelated act of consuming and being seen consuming from a limited time-and-space experience to a shared/imagined experience in the national imagination. Ironically, the literary experience of the consumer *zuppe's* life, more often than not, was an issue of ridicule.

TYT is unique in that it is one of the rare semi-dystopic accounts of a hard-working protagonist of early Ottoman novels. While Ahmed Midhat's industrious characters, through hardship and toil, achieve worldly happiness and/or contentment, Murad's idealist Mansur, accused of being a Russian spy, inflicted with self-exile in a provincial town of Anatolia, dies in Africa at a young age, away from his Anatolian home, survived by his educated and beautiful wife and his baby boy. However, this is not a completely dystopic story. The protagonist accomplishes establishing a school and a factory in an attempt to reverse ignorance and the empire's core-periphery relations with the European capital. The fact that the factory he founds is in Anatolia and the school is in Beirut, countering the core-periphery relations in the former,

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[496] Ibid., 163.

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and the missionary activity in the latter is important to note the optimistic message of the novel

about the center of hope not being in Istanbul but in the provinces, which will be discussed

later.[497] Although the protagonist cannot see it for himself, he reflects a hope in the ultimate

sense, tied to the hard work of each member: "Brother, the future is ours. To reach that level a

day earlier, it is necessary to devote all work of the state and people to education."[498]

It should be noted that, politically, Ahmed Midhat and Mehmed Murad occupied opposite

poles on the political realm: Midhat collaborated with the Abdulhamid regime, and most

importantly, he was seen by the CUP leadership, as divided as they were, as a sell out and

spokesperson of the Hamidian regime.[499] Ahmed Midhat enjoyed the support of the palace, even

received funding directly from it. [500] He held official posts, and was even sent to participate in

the Orientalist Congress in Stockholm in 1889, as opposed to Mehmed Murad who, until the late

1890s had to live in Europe (first in Paris, then in Geneva) and Cairo, his publications being

censored in the empire. He returned to Istanbul in 1897, upon entering a bargain with the Palace,

which turned out to be a disappointment.

Similar to Ahmed Midhat and his heroes such as Rakim and Resmi Effendis, there are

autobiographical resemblances between the author, Mehmet Murad and his protagonist, Mansur.

However, in TYT these autobiographical references are stronger. Mansur, just like Murad

himself, is not from the center --they both come to the capital of the empire from the periphery,

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[497] Ibid., 282-283, 304.

[498] Ibid., 163.

[499] Ahmed Riza engaged in polemics with Mehmet Murad on the liberal goals of the revolution and accused him of lacking inclusivism of the "minorities" in the Empire, which were denied by Murad. For his dispute with Ahmet Riza, see Sukru Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 71-109.

[500] Tanpinar, *Yeni Turk Edebiyati Tarihi*, 454.

the former from French-occupied Algeria and the latter from Dagistan under the Russian rule.

Mansur, just like Mehmed Murad, goes through an education that is not Ottoman, studying

medicine in France. However, these characteristics do not prevent the author from presenting his

protagonist identifying himself as the ultimate Ottoman: "You could see me as the purest

Ottoman."[501] The Ottomanness of the hero is based on the way he fashions himself as, and how

he behaves, along with a weak claim to his Algerian family being originally from Anatolia. The

concept of Anatolia and its industrious folk vis-à-vis the lazy urban elements play an important

role in TYT, which will be explored later.

To Inherit or Not to Inherit

The theme of inheritance is a central component for work ethos the novels suggest.

Characters of these novels can be divided based on either receiving or not receiving inheritances,

and the responses they gave in relation to inheritances. It was mentioned that Resmi Effendi of

Karnaval and the Rakim effendi of *Felatun Bey and Rakim Effendi* came coming from humble

backgrounds. Consequently, they did not receive any substantial material capital from the

generation before them. On the other hand, Zekai (*Karnaval*) and Felatun (*FBRE*), the two

zuppe's, and Ismail bey (*TYT*) are subjected to inheriting large sums of property and capital from

their fathers. Both *Karnaval* and FBRE feature the *zuppe* characters spending their money on

foreign women. However, social standing of each character is inversely proportional to the sum

of inheritance they receive and directly proportional to their hard work. While Resmi and Rakim

--against all odds-- obtain a social position and personal state of happiness, neither Zekai and nor

Felatun can. The hero of Mehmed Murad's TYT, as expected, fits into this paradigm in a

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[501] Mehmed Murad, *TYT*, 54.

different way. There, heir to the large inheritance sums both from the Algerian and Istanbul branches of his family, the hero chooses to spend all of his inheritance on establishing educational and industrial enterprises, while making a living with his own occupation, medicine, and living with limited means.

The trope of inheritance is important insofar as to explain the vision of the novelists. The fact that Felatun spends away his father's riches is a metaphor for spending the old away, but not gaining the new in the right way. Rakim, on the other hand, does not inherit any material gains, but he appropriates the old values, and transforms them into a new set of values and practices, thus creating a new culture. Rakim evolves out of the governmental offices and becomes an entrepreneur, symbolizing new bourgeoisie characteristics that do not clash with the norms of culture but inherit them and transform them in new ways. The novelist constructs a literary world in which the ideal Ottoman (with many un-ideal behaviors that humanizes them) does not need to have any material inheritance. The amalgamation of good aspects of the "tradition" (personal morality, though it collapses at times as we see Resmi in a relationship with a married woman) dissolve into modern concepts of productivity for the completion of self and elevation of the nation (which may or may not bring social status, as seen in the contrasting stories of Resmi Efendi and Mansur Bey). Not having an inheritance or simply refusing to inherit (as Madam does in *Karnaval*, and Mansur, in a way, does in *TYT*) is an emphasis on individual productivity and a glorification of the work ethos of the modern world, and hence constitutive in bringing out completeness of the individual: his/her robust standing as a productive member in his nation.

Drawing Boundaries

These novels, by contrasting their protagonists' ideal characteristics with the *zuppe* and idle characters, drew boundaries of who is included into the nation and who is not. In TYT, those who belong and those who do not is more complex than the clear-cut productiveness emphasized in FBRE. In FBRE the *zuppe* character's consumerism and his disinterest in contributing to the nation in a way endorsed by the dominant discourse was what made Felatun bey unworthy of the nation and hence a subject of ridicule. In TYT, the *outsider*, Mansur, positions himself as the *insider*. Although coming from a polyglot family from the outer layers of Ottoman geo-space, Algeria, it is Mansur who, through his words and actions, qualifies as the Ottoman. On the other hand, characters that would be naturally seen as Istanbul-residing Ottomans, i.e. insiders, were portrayed as unworthy of being insiders, because of their lack of sense of duty and their unwillingness to devote their labor to the nation. Whereas the outsider qualifies himself as an insider because of his work ethos and moral qualities, the insider loses his rights to be one, by not assuming their duties and becoming a consumerist dandy.

Mansur, who fashions himself to be a Turk and an Ottoman, displays an exclusivist Ottomanism, compared to the heroes of Ahmed Midhat. He was born in Algeria to a Turkish-speaking Circassian mother and an Anatolian-origined Arabized father. The upper identity of Ottomanness plays a strong component in Murad's novel, where he even engages an Arab-anti-colonial Algerian activist with the hero Mansur in a long discussion about Ottoman role in the world of the *umma*.[502] However, this upper-identity is not as inclusive as is seen in Ahmed Midhat's *FBRE*. Depictions of non-Muslim minorities differ greatly, which may reflect colonial experiences of the hero. While Ahmed Midhat's Madam in *Karnaval* is praised as a productive

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[502] Ibid., 153-164, 289-290. At the end of the novel, this character, Ahmed Shunudi, submits to the ideas of Mansur, and hence becomes an Ottoman. While the door of Ottomanness is open to the non-Turkish speaking members of the Muslim community, there is no similar story about acknowledging/confirming the Ottomannness of a a non-Muslim Ottoman, which provides the contours of Mizanci Murad's political outlook.

individual who can produce and contribute by selling her own handicraft hats (she also refuses to inherit her husband's inheritance, much in par with Murad's Mansur), in TYT there are no "minority" characters described as contributors to the nation by producing. Moreover, Mansur, during his time in the office, beats up a "hat-wearing" (*sapkali*) petitioner who, frustrated with the slow pace of governmental offices, starts to loudly complain about the conditions.[503] Ironically, the hat-wearer is frustrated for the exact same reasons Mansur is frustrated throughout the novel, which are lack of work ethics and lazy paper-pushing customs of the governmental bureau. However, the foreignness of the hat-wearer divides Mansur, the ultimate insider, from him.

Emphasis on the provincial as the original Ottoman also plays out in Murad's description of the Anatolian characters. Their productivity and openness to be educated, is contrasted with the Istanbuli leisurely classes. The most prominent Anatolian character in TYT is a Muslim doctor from Cankiri, who, realizing the qualities of Mansur, devotes his time and capital to work with him, perhaps not alongside, but under him. Depiction of this character is not flattering at all. This Effendi does not understand much, but he helps out Mansur. He is a hard-working and naive Anatolian, who lacks not only leadership skills, but also initiative, and an elaborate world-view. It is clear that, similar to views of Ahmed Midhat in his *Sevda-yi Sa'y u Amel*, Murad also believed that work discipline is not a European attribute.[504] While for Ahmed Midhat everyone had a potentiality to have a love of work and produce in a very disciplined way, which would come out by education, Mehmed Murad presented these characteristics as an inherent quality of the Muslim Anatolian. Here, given this exclusivist approach, Mehmed Murad is very different in

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[503] Ibid., 97.

[504] See Ch I for Ahmed Midhat's ideas.

his conclusions compared to his contemporary Ahmed Midhat. Mansur refutes his opponent Emin Pasha, who tells him that one should not look for European orderliness of work in Ottoman bureaus, informing him that these qualities have been there in the character of Ottoman people all along.[505] The only corrupt element in Anatolia was "some of the administrative institutions that almost turned into a laziness and embezzlement company"[506] Untainted by "Western" influence, all the Anatolians needed was strong leadership.[507] This new emphasis on Anatolian character along with the subtle exclusivism against non-Muslim elements in the novel foreshadows a political perspective of most émigré Ottoman intellectuals, such as Ahmed Agaoglu, who will become an advocate of a specific nationalism that highlighted the Turkishness after the turn of the century.

Conclusion

Ottoman novels open windows to the understanding of politico-moral worlds of the Ottoman reform period. Placing them at the center of Ottoman experience of modernity, this chapter showed that Ottoman novels articulated the dynamic nature of transformations of the nineteenth century in general, and how they described and prescribed new forms of subjectivity through the productivity of the new self and his/her work ethos, in particular.

The *zuppe* character was one that practiced a modernity not endorsed by dominant discourse. Contrasts between the lazy and *zuppe* characters in novels indicate the establishment of difference through literary practices. The problem of the *zuppe*, the idle, and the hopeless lazy

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[505] Ibid., 223, 284.

[506] Ibid., 303.

[507] Ibid., 284, 299.

was that he/she did not produce, did not contribute to the nation, not at least in the way the emergent norms of citizenship required them to. These novels not only articulated what was a social reality, but also disarticulated from it by prescribing a certain ideal citizen-type and ridiculing others to their audience. Mental and physical laziness in filling their good citizenship roles became a target of ridicule. Ridicule, as a social intervention, was used to denigrate the consumerist dandy and idle, while promoting a new set of mores that had been increasingly ubiquitous in the social sphere.

Chapter V

Exclusionism at Work:
Tensions within the Language of Mobilization of Work

Since the general prosperity is an accumulation of the efforts of each member of society, those who choose to live in utter laziness while they are capable of work and productivity, will cease to be a legitimate organ of society and at that instant lose the right to consume society's production
Abdullah Cevdet [508]

I.   Exclusionist Language

By the time of the 1908 Young Turk revolution, reformists in various

political camps were already sharing, with nationalistic undertones, the idea that laziness was an

endemic social disease, and only through work could it be eradicated. A common social enemy

was popular beliefs and habits perceived to inhibit productivity and promote laziness. Although

they were sharing basic assumptions, reformists attached competing political meanings to

idleness, laziness, and productivity, making them the intersection points of various value accents.

Although 1908 is usually taken to be the watershed for a political shift, exclusionist

language had been in the making toward the end of the nineteenth century in the most

unexpected genre, morality books. Morality books employed a language that was demonizing,

socially excluding and marginalizing a certain, at times abstract, group of people who were

regarded lazy and useless. This language, which will be called in this study the exclusionist

language of work ethos, was developed in simple ways. Around and after the political shift of

1908, this language's tone increased, its accusations widened, and it became more specific.

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[508] Abdullah Cevdet, *Ictihad,* no. 343 (15 nisan 1932): 5706.

Morality books, as mentioned earlier, presented work as an ultimate goal.[509] On an

individual level, work's archenemy, laziness, was not only equated with animalism but also tied

to Satan. For example, Ali Irfan in a dialogue between an imaginary teacher and his pupil, the

pupil asks why human beings have to work. The teacher, after enumerating the benefits of work,

such as how it causes an illumination of mind, and strengthens the body, argues that it is God

who ordered human kind to work. The student asks his/her instructor about laziness. The

instructor responds:

> Those who do not work can never reach any of their goals and any status. Second, the intelligence of those who are lazy is weak[ened], their comprehension becomes inadequate. In the long run they remain ignorant, who are seen as subordinates and they are considered to be no different than animals among people. (…) Because Satan-the-cursed wants to dominate over those who wonder idly and [he] encourages them to go into various evil paths. [510]

In this formulation, then, work's archenemy, laziness, was not only equated with animalism but

also regarded as an open invitation to Satan. The lazy is not only ignorant, but he/she enters into

a special relationship with the Satan.

However, exclusionist language went beyond the level of the individual. At the turn of

the century, A. Riza accused lazy people as those who were left behind in the avenue of

progress.[511] The same author in another book claimed that lazy people had no right to live:

> Work provides happiness of all sorts… a person obtains honor and prosperity in as much as they work. A lazy person [on the other hand], cannot be honored. Such person is like an unnecessary cog in a magnificent machine.[512]

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[509] See Chapter I.

[510] Ali Irfan, *Rehber-I Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1318/1900-1901), 16-17. This book is designed as a textbook for the second year of the middle schools.

[511] A. Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak Birinci Kisim* (Istanbul: 1898-99), 12.

[512] Ali Riza, *Ilm-I Ahlak*, *Ucuncu Kisim*, 68.

In this depiction, it is obvious that those who did not produce, already labeled as lazy and unproductive, had no role to play in society. Carrying the metaphor to an extreme level, the author stated that these useless cogs had no place in the nation:

> By stating in Quran "And that man hath only that for which be maketh effort," *Cenab-I Hakk* made it clear for his servants that there are no other ways than work for earning a living, and cause of prosperity and happiness and work for this goal encompasses everything [without discrimination]. Then, everyone without exception must work. Lazy people do not have a right to live (*tembellerin yasamaya istihkaklari yoktur*). [513]

By the turn of the century, connecting laziness with crime was already more than imaginable. Abdurrahman Seref, when discussing the necessity of "sa'y u amel" in his morality text posits that work is a universal law that no one has an exception for.[514] After narrating benefits of working, ranging from happiness and strengthening of the human body, he arrives at the issue of idleness: "Working has an influence on the law and order of the country: those who work, … are always busy with their own businesses, never desire the law and order to be disturbed. With their success, they serve their state."[515] At this point in his discussion of the necessity of work, Seref starts conflating the lazy people with criminal people, and takes it to another level by declaring laziness as a crime:

> On the other hand, those despicable people who do not work… want to make a living in a parasitical way, by eyeing the properties of the people. The weak ones become a burden to their states, and their able and artful ones get themselves into … fraudulent acts and disturb the people, transgress law and order, and interrupt business and the general economy. The state has to engage itself to end their crimes and spend great amounts and sacrifice a great deal. From these explanations it should be understood that those who

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[513] Ibid., 67.

[514] Abdurrahman Seref was the principle of the Galatasaray Lycee. For more information on this important figure of the late Ottoman period, see chapter III of this dissertation.

[515] Abdurrahman Seref, *Ilm-I Ahlak* (Istanbul, 1318), 78-79.

work (*erbab-i mesai*) are assistants of our country's order and progress while those who are lazy (*ashab-i atalet*) are the destroyers of this perfection and happiness.[516]

After 1908, morality books went through multiple transformations, while there was a much discernible continuity with the previous morality books. One of the most distinguishing differences involved how the authors titled their texts. In the post-1908 publications, morality texts were more likely to appear with a title carrying the term "*medeni*," which can be translated as modern. This new phenomenon is most apparent in the books written by the authors who published in both periods. Take, for example, Ali Irfan's work on morality. While his 1900 book was titled *Rehber-I Ahlak*, his 1913 book was titled *Mufassal Ahlak-I Medeni*. Likewise, Ali Riza, titled his 1901 book *Ilm-I Ahlak*, while his morality book, published in 1915, was titled *Ibtidailere Malumat-i Ahlakiye ve Medeniye*.

The books titled *Malumat-i Medeniye*, which can be translated as civic information treatises, were new comers to the scene. While morality books and the increasing prevalence of morality education in *ibtidaiye*, *rushdiye,* and *idadiye* schools were seen as symbols of the Hamidian modernity, the *Malumat-i medeniye* books were not. These books were associated with the constitutional era (*Mesrutiyet*) and regarded as a sign of departure from the Hamidian educational politics. The fact that these *malumat-i medeniye* books entered the Ottoman scene exactly the same year of the *Mesrutiyet* only bolsters this argument. However, the division should not be exaggerated. Morality books and *Malumat-i Medeniye* books do not present a clear-cut division as it is argued by some historians.[517]

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[516] Ibid.

[517] Mehmet O Alkan, "Modernization from Empire to Republic and Education in the Process of Nationalism," in *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey*, ed. Kemal Karpat (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 47-132.

Differences between the Hamidian morality texts and the post-1908 morality texts are several. First, while being in accordance with *akil (aql*, reason) used to be an emphasis in morality texts, as seen in Sadik Rifat's mid-nineteenth century book, morality books of the 1908 era directly and openly referenced the perceived norms of Europe, but, as like before, incorporated them into the established knowledge. Ali Seydi has directly addressed this issue in his discussion of what morality is: *"...*that the ethical rules designed and brought to their perfection today by the Europeans are completely in congruence with the exalted laws of the shariat… *"*[518] Moreover, the *Malumat-i Medeniye* books acknowledged the newness of the juxtaposition of social duty with morality, although, as seen previously, this vein was already there in the nineteenth-century texts.

It has been argued that, in the Ottoman education system, domains of ethics and religion were differentiated in the post-1908 era, in accordance with CPU's 'secularist' politics as opposed to Abdulhamid's Islamist politics. It is true that Abdulhamid II supported morality education, and his policies, building on the early Tanzimat policies, left an indelible mark on both the field of morality as a new knowledge and its integration to the education system. There was a proliferation of *ahlak* books as textbooks, mostly claiming the inaccessibility and specialty-oriented nature of the older *ahlak* books and opening up the field to the popular readership, including the captive audiences of the school system. However, as discussed earlier in this work, this approach assumes two separate spheres of ethics and religion, which were not clearly demarcated, both in the Hamidian and the constitutional eras. Second, mostly teleologically driven, this approach places a greater importance on change than the continuity between the two eras. Third, it reflects a Comteian idea that religion in a modern world will

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[518] Ali Seydi, *Ahlak-I Dini*, Preface.

retreat in stages from the public, and that it will soon diminish. [519] Historiography who

subscribed to the secularization theory portrayed the Constitutional Era as a preparatory phase to

the *laic* Republican Era, and canning of these two genres as part of the process of transition from

"the religious to secular" perfectly fitted the agenda.

Although it is true that *Malumat-i Medeniye* books placed less emphasis on a discourse

heavily laden with Islamic terminology, it is also true that a substantial amount of morality books

before the revolution, displayed very similar arguments as the *Malumat-i Medeniye* books.

References to Islamic principles are abundant in both pre and post-1908 revolution. For example,

verses and hadith on the virtue of work and warnings against laziness, or the maxim attributed to

the prophet "first the knowledge of body, then the knowledge of religion" are frequently-

mentioned in both periods.[520] Both genres equally present arguments justified as "laws of

civilization," "*terakkiyat-i hazira*" and "modern science." The opposite is also true: the *Malumat*

books make use of Islamic arguments as frequently as they deemed necessary. They have

appealed to an increasingly widening reading and hearing public. A clear-cut separation between

the genres and/or between pre and post-1908 will take arguments in these books at face value

and rip them off from historicity, thus diminishing the richness of the reality.

Continuity between texts with an emphasis on morality of both eras reflects the strength

of Ottomanism as a modern imperial project. Exclusionist language was not based on communal

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[519] For an evaluation and critique of secularization theory, see James Gelvin, "Secularism and Religion in the Arab Middle East: Reinventing Islam in a World of Nation States," in *The Invention of Religion: Rethinking Belief and Politics in History,* eds. Derek R. Peterson and Darren Walhof (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 115-130. The article presents arguments against the secularization theory and shows how religion's meaning and function changed during the late Ottoman period.

[520] It is presented as a hadith, but I have also seen it attributed to Imam Shafi'i. "*Ilm-ul ebdan summe ilm-ul edyan.*" For example see Riza b. Hasan, *Takvim-ul ebdan li sihhat-il Insan* (Istanbul, 1324). See also Ali Irfan, *Ahlak-I Medeni* (Istanbul, 1329), 4.

boundaries, but it was based on contribution to society. Authors of morality texts, addressed/imagined the Ottoman nation as a single entity, as sharing a homogenous culture,[521] and simultaneously crafted an ideal image which not only emphasized the differences both between the past's "classical Ottomans" and "the Ottoman nation of today."

Continuities aside, exclusionist language was employed in a much stronger and clearer way in the post-1908 Ottoman world. Morality texts reflected this. This language was going to be employed by different constituents in conflict especially in the polarized social context of the post-1908 period. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) primarily deepened the sense of crisis among reformist groups.

A book published in 1912 was representative of the period, while it had unique characteristics as well. The author Vahyi (1878-1957), a retired Major and an educator, titled his book *A Muslim is Always a Perfect Person.* It neither used the term *medeni* nor *Islami*, but directly attributed a role to his audience. While the title is rather catchy and aphorismic compared to other morality texts, Vahyi structured his book roughly along the lines of morality books. The book makes strong arguments about work based on Islamic norms. Vahyi enumerates the ahadith and verses, such as "Earning a living is an obligation to Muslim males and females alike."[522] A disparaging language was directed against those who merely practice the daily rituals of Islam, attacking their ritual nature: "By merely reciting prayers and bending up and down: Is not it the case that all the prophets, especially Muhammed (PBUH), have accomplished their duties with a struggle (*cihad*) … that dwarfed the greatest heroes of the earth?"[523] The author

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[521] For how these ideas of homogeneity contributed to what Ussama Makdisi calls Ottoman Orientalism, see Ussama Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." *American Historical Review*, 107:3 (2002): 768–796.

[522] Vahyi (Olmez), *Musluman Daima Mukemmel bir Insandir* (Istanbul, 1912), 126.

[523] Ibid., 129.

continues with a set of arguments that refute the understanding that Islam condoned poverty.[524]

Then, with an interesting twist, he elaborates on the necessity of making money more than one's

daily need: "A good Muslim can act as a good Muslim to the extent that he has money."[525] Work

became an essential element, when the connection between being a good Muslim and making

money was established:

> Let us not stop anymore, and work, and make money –the first power. But let us spend
> that money in humane and Muslim ways. Let us not worship it. Let it worship our
> consciousness and our faith. Let us show how great Islam is.[526]

After quoting the prophet' saying "my poverty (*faqr*) is my pride," the author engages in

a long discussion that poverty is not the same as deprivation (*zugurtluk*).[527] According to Vahyi,

by poverty, the prophet meant a certain level of submission to God, not deprivation. Thus, the

author separates deprivation from *faqr*, and condemns deprivation. Only after this tweaking, is

the author able to argue that based on Islamic rules, one not only needs to be rich, but also should

have no mercy for the poor:

> Because of all these, what we are supposed to do is this: to show no mercy to those
> deprived ones that do not work even though their intelligence and abilities allow them to
> work, and regard those people close to infidelity (*kufre yakin*) and never get even close to
> extending a helping hand to them. [528]

Vahyi did not hesitate to declare these parasites as people who are "close to infidelity." Islam,

according to him a religion that forbids anything that causes harm to a person, his family and

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[524] Ibid., 133-135.

[525] Ibid., 158.

[526] Ibid., 162.

[527] Ibid., 134.

[528] Ibid., 134-135.

friends, and to humanity: "The worst [harm] is caused by laziness, which is forbidden!"[529]

Vahyi singlehandedly declared that all *ahadith* that disparage worldly work are fabrications,

which later were attributed to the prophet. [530]

II.   Politicization of Productivity

Major journals, labeled either as "Westernist," "Islamist," or "nationalist" in

historiography, displayed very similar attitudes and assumptions about the problem of

laziness.[531] All political camps, including the policy-makers they criticized, regarded the social

habits and societal institutions perceived to inhibit productivity and promote laziness a common

social enemy. However, their critiques differed in several levels. All these groups differed in

attribution of the causes of laziness, the ways in which this issue needed to be addressed, and the

identity of who was supposed to be labeled as lazy and unproductive, hence, formulating

different visions of modernity. Reformists attached competing political meanings to these terms,

making them the intersection points of various value accents. These specific polemics reflected,

what the Ottoman historian Resat Kasaba called, "the ambiguities of an Ottoman modernity." [532]

What were the sources of laziness in Ottoman society? Who were these lazy and idle

people? Who was "akin to infidelity?" With these questions the problem of laziness entered into

the realm of the discernibly political, leaving the mindset that all reformers shared and arriving at

a political space where lazy, in its implications, became a label that different political groups

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[529] Ibid., 135.

[530] Ibid., 141.

[531] These identities are either self-ascribed, or ascribed by opponents. I, in no sense, take these identities as given.

[532] Resat Kasaba. "Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities," in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, eds. Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1997), 15-36.

used to denigrate each others' approach to the reforms. In what ways was exclusionist language, which had been developing through moralistic narratives and social critique, employed by various political constituencies in the post-1908 period? In what ways did the new formulations of laziness as a social disease become a social and political weapon to criticize and render rival ideologies inadequate in the march to progress?

What was national had to be filtered based on their contribution to productivity of the nascent nation, and productiveness proved to be a very volatile term. Lazy, in its implications, became a political label through which different political groups used to denigrate each other's approach to the reforms. The answer to the above questions varied. The identity of the usual suspects ranged from the government bureaucrats who were a morbidly inefficient crowd, the coffee-house dwellers whose sleepy image was already engraved into the orientalist narrative, the unproductive consumerist francophone dandies and fobs, to the Sufis who were accused of disregarding worldly work and 'rotting' in their Sufi lodges, and to the *medrese* students who wasted their days in idleness.

Differences in their conceptualizations of what constituted modernity was reflected in their understanding of the problem of laziness. Many social groups were attacked equally the same by different political camps. Those who argued that Islam, as a lifestyle, is the compeller of modernity posited that only the technological and industrial fruits of European modernity were supposed to be borrowed. By centering social life on Islam, Islamists, as they are referred to in literature, argued that these cultural norms needed to be kept at bay. They pointed out that idleness was becoming a new lifestyle *because* of a misconceptualization of what civilization meant.

'Westernists,' on the other hand, envisioned the salvation of the empire in closely modeling after the Western European model, which included assigning a limited place to "religion" in the organization of the new nation, especially in politics. They challenged the role 'Islamists' attributed to religion and argued against their highly selective attitude toward "Western Civilization." Response of the 'Westernists' to the attacks of Islamists came through the critique of 'parasitic' social groups, such as the Sufis and religious scholars (*ulema*), who were seen as the support bases of Islamist camps.[533] Celal Nuri, a proponent of adapting Western-style modernity, for example, argued that attending the religious authorities' preaching on patience and obedience rendered people unproductive, which in turn led to the unproductive nation.[534] Sufi lodges (*tekke*) and seminary schools (*medrese*) were not only seen as hotbeds of idlers, but their pupils were also viewed as those who abused the system by being exempt from military service. Their members were regarded as 'parasitic' social classes to be eliminated from the social scene.[535] These groups were being placed outside the boundaries of an imagined nation.

Of course, ideological boundaries between these groups, never homogenous, are not as clear-cut as they appear to be. Allegiances shifted and formulations changed as international and national politics changed. Moreover, under a close scrutiny, even within the writings of the most prominent of any camp at this period do not display homogeneity of ideas. Themes that have

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[533] Of course, the ideological boundaries between these groups, which are not homogenous at all, are not as clear-cut as they appear to be. Allegiances shifted and formulations changed as the international and national politics changed. While some Islamists shared the feelings of "Westernizers" about these institutions and offered radical removal, some "Westernizers" employed a revivalist language about these institutions.

[534] Celal Nuri (Ileri), *Tarih-I Tedenniyat-I Osmani* (Istanbul 1330/1914-15), 108. He also argued that the religious functionaries (ulema) and their sons who secured high-ranking jobs turned into a group of idle people.

[535] For the critiques and reform attempts of the medreses during the Hamidian regime, see Amit Bein, " Politics, Military Conscription, and Religious Education in The Late Ottoman Empire." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38 (2006): 283-301.

been championed by Islamists have also been very prominent themes among those who are considered to be Westernizers. As it will be seen, critique of the *medrese* system has been a very strong theme, not only among Westernists, but also among Islamists. This fact is attested by the fact that Celal Nuri (Ileri), an ardent modernizer, wrote one of the most important books on the theme of *Ittihad-I Islam* (Unity of Islam/Pan-Islamism), a theme that is mostly associated with Islamist political goals. Celal Nuri, however, is labeled by historiography as a Westernist.[536] While Islamists shared criticisms of the "Westernizers" about these institutions and offered revivalist solutions, "Westernizers" employed a language that offered more radical solutions regarding these institutions. Both groups of reformists with diverging ideas shared the discursive field, but demonstrated a different vision of Ottomanism. Ottomanism, as recent scholarship has provided more evidence of, was the dominant political ideology until the dismemberment of the empire.

Labels such as Islamist, Westernist, and nationalist tend to reflect, first, the labels political opponents assigned to each other, and more importantly, the conformism of historiography that repeated and established these labels, privileging one ideology as modern and trapping the other in ahistorical categories. But borrowing a metaphor from Tom Waits, this is merely 'making feet for children shoes.' It is an accomplished fact that both Islamists and Westernists were modern, sharing the same political and public space that came to being during the Ottoman reform period. Moreover, recent historiography shows that once nationalism as an ideology is differentiated from particular nationalist movements, it becomes clear that Islamists as well as Westernists were both functioned within the world-view of nationalism, in the

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[536] Celal Nuri, *Ittihad-I Islam* (Istanbul, 1913). For the complexity of these political identities, see Ismail Kara, *Amel Defteri* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1998), 203-205.

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ideological level. In the historiography, only particular nationalisms based on constructed ethnicities, Turkish nationalism, for example, was given the title of nationalism.

The call for productivity was a shared call among different political camps. If there was a disease of laziness, it cut across communal boundaries, and if work was a cure for laziness and apathy, it was advocated to be practiced by the Ottoman nation in its entirety. The shared understanding of what constituted social vice can be seen in the different groups' common campaigns against venues such as the coffeehouses. A prominent figure of political Islam, Tunali Hilmi, rallied all the Ottomans to work hard: "if not all the Ottomans, take note, all the Ottomans, did not work, even if one percent of their [share of the] duty…for five – ten years, without interruption, for the sake of 'the state-caliphate's welfare,' -let's wake up- we will not be saved from dangers."[537] In the opening article of one of the well-known "Islamist" periodicals that was published by members of ulema, *Beyan'ul Hakk*, Mustafa Sabri Efendi, a well-known member of ulema, who later became the last *Seyhulislam* of the empire, presented the reasons for why this publication was necessary:

> The path of our journal and its reason of publication is to establish and work to maintain (…)ties between the Ottomans, be they Muslim or non-Muslim; and every member by not simply sitting within despicability and apathy … [they should] work hard to bring about the means of both this worldly and other-worldly progress (…).[538]

By centering the social life on Islam, these authors targeted, through two clusters of critiques, the causes of social laziness. First, they attacked the assumed misunderstanding of Islam that, in their view, caused the population to be fatalistic and lazy. Second, these authors pointed out that idleness was becoming a new lifestyle because of Westernization. In these

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[537] Tunali Hilmi, "Medreseler Kongresi." *Sirat-I Mustakim* 3, no. 54 (1325): 27.

[538] Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Beyan'ul Hakk*, vol. 1 (1908), 1.

writings, the salons and Pera's prominent locations, where dancing and drinking took place, were

presented as the imported wrongs of Westernization, suggesting more 'national' devotion to

work as a social and religious act, as opposed to the leisure of a consumerist bohemian.[539]

According to Islamists, these dandies got the idea of being modern all wrong. A very strong

language was readily available to cast these people out of the nation. As Mehmet Arif, a

contributor to *Beyan'ul Hakk* argued:

> Here it is, those Frank-imitators (*Frenk mukallitleri*), who act like they know everything
> but in reality they are the embodiments of ignorance, claiming freedom [but] being the
> slaves of their own animal desires and European behaviors and those seeing-blinds
> (*bakar kor*)…..[They] bring to our innocent and clean country, Europe's leisure
> battalions, drinking jamborees, gambling legions, vile morality leagues, destruction-and-
> decay-causing armies, (…) submitting and serving to the {Europeans] by being their
> advance guards. [They] appear in the public as if they are articulating something already
> accepted as common sense. These people should be certain that God's law and Islam
> (*sher'ullah ve din-i hakk*) is always victorious upon these and their ilk. They are always
> defeated; those who have no religion cannot have good morality, and those who do not
> have good morality cannot contain any good idea or intention that will benefit the
> nation.[540]

A common thread of Islamist thought involved a binary between two aspects of --what they

perceived as-- the "European civilization." Prominent names of the Islamist cause, such as

Mehmed Akif, argued that only technological and industrial, i.e. 'beneficial' aspects of the West

were supposed to be borrowed, while cultural norms of the Ottoman Empire were in conflict

with those of the Europeans. Critical approach to Western modernity is well-described in a piece

by Egyptian Islamist Farid Wajdi, which was translated to Ottoman Turkish in 1908: "If we are

to take example of the West, why not borrow from them in what they are strong and solid. We

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[539] Hasan Hikmet, "Ictimaiyatta Garbcilik ve Bozgunculuk" (Westernism and Defeatism in Society). *Sebilurresad*,
no. 637 (1341/1925): 198-200. Also see Unsigned Commentary "We are Getting Westernized: Dance, Ball, Dance,
Ball." *Sebilurresad*, no. 594 (1924): 349-351.

[540] Mehmet Arif, "Mezbaha-i Ahlakiyeler yahud Kahvehaneler." *Beyan'ul Hakk,* no. 19 (16 muharrem 1327): 433-
435.

are not supposed to imitate the West, not without a thorough scrutiny." Morality, according to him, was not among the strong suits of Western modernity. [541]

One ought to work like a Westerner (*frenk*), but not live like one. The differentiation was articulated by Vahyi in this way: "Only that we know what makes us *us*, and not forget our Muslimness, and not make ourselves *frenk* in the aspects of faith, belief, and morality. [Let us] work like a *frenk*. But let us fight against not being like him when it comes to following any of our desires. If we do this, if we can manage not alienating what makes us *us*, we and our posterity will live as Muslims."[542]

Unfortunately, a Muslim did not work like a *frenk*. For the Islamists, one of the sources of laziness as a social problem was imitation of wrong precedents, *taqlid,* especially in the matters that needed rational judgment. In 1908, *Sirat-i Mustakim,* one of the most prominent "Islamist" periodicals, translated a series of articles from Muhammed Abduh. In these articles, Abduh took issue with many of the problems he saw among his contemporary Muslims. But, since he considered these problems to be caused by the disease of laziness, he gathered them all under this overarching problem, the criticism of imitation (*taqlid*), one of the central problematics of Islamist thought of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this regard, he defined laziness as: "This pernicious disease [which] can be defined as not practicing rational judgment, and being stuck with whatever is at given, which has no place in Islam's true nature."[543] Abduh linked the problem of *taqlid*, directly to the laziness of the practitioner of

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[541] Farid Wajdi "The Muslim Women." *Sirat-I Mustakim*, no. 8 (19 Ramazan 1326/October 15, 1908), 123.

[542] Vahyi, 151.

[543] Muhammad Abduh, "Atalet Gecici bir Hastaliktir." trans. Mehmet Akif, *Sirat-I Mustakim*, no. 29 (1324): 44-46. Also see, Muhammad Abduh, "Ataletin Intac Ettigi Fenaliklar." trans. Mehmet Alif, *Sirat-i Mustakim* (February 1324 [1909]).

Islam. The way in which it was problematized by the Islamist scholars of the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries, *taqlid*, had too many different facets. Therefore, the attacks on practices

related to *taqlid* had/have multiple targets, which Abduh presented in his article: the first

dimension involves *taqlid* of the medieval scholars, the opposite of which was *ictihad*. The

second dimension is imitation of the West, which was another central theme through which

Islamists criticized the social disease of laziness.

The emphasis on borrowing good aspects of European modernity was a frequently raised

issue. In 1909, in a piece titled "East- West," Huseyin Hazim, a scholar who frequently

published in *Beyan'ul Hakk,* addressed the issue of selectivity. Huseyin Hazim criticized total

imitation of the West, arguing that in Europe the notion of morality was in disarray, and that the

family was collapsing.[544] He attributed the weakening of the Ottoman Empire to failing to follow

the example of their hardworking ancestors and being unsuccessful in selecting the good

practices of the West:

> Why not take into our awakened consideration the West's scientific and industrial
> inventions, which are products of their relentless intellectual and material work? Even if
> it is a bitter truth, I will present it: we do act like idiots in this issue. … At least we should
> have remained on the path of hard work and activity that our eminent ancestors opened
> (…) in order to complete our material happiness, even though we would not be able to
> gain the upper hand, we probably would still present a competition. But alas! We have
> become such suckers of laziness (*damengir-i atalet*) that we won't let it go easily.[545]

Articles published in Islamist journals presented the largest collection of Islamic evidence

on encouraging hard work, and condemning laziness. The selection of Quranic verses and

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[544] Huseyin Hazim, "Sark-Garb." *Beyan'ul Hakk*, vol. 20 (Istanbul, 23 Muharrem 1327/2 February 1324/14 February 1909): 448-450.

[545] Ibid.

ahadith was no match to morality books, in which mostly well-known *ahadith* circulated.[546] It seems that the ulama publications got out of recycling Islamic evidence and published more material supporting their case. The one explanation to this is that, a majority of morality books were written by non-ulama members of society, such as instructors, bureaucrats, doctors, and other professionals. With the post-1908 boom of periodicals the ulama founded their own journals and had a chance to display their expertise in mobilizing people for productivity and against laziness.

As shown in previous chapters, a new vocabulary had been circulating in the Ottoman morality literature since the mid-nineteenth century. Terms such as *sa'y* and *gayret* (work and ardor), cehd (effort, the root of *jihad*), *kesb* (labor), and *meskenet/miskinlik* (tranquility/indolence), and others no longer had the same meanings that they had in the previous centuries. There was a proliferation of a very novel usage of Islamic terminology, with the goal of purging the 'irreligious attachments' they had gained throughout the centuries. In post-1908 political and social environment, Islamists presented the campaign against laziness, in a much clear and powerful way, as one for the betterment of religious life.

Sirat-i Mustakim published Friday sermons of Manastirli Ismail Hakki, who was one of the leading names of the Islamist cause. In one of his sermons, Manastirli, refuted the "misunderstanding" of Islamic norms that are perceived as encouraging laziness, by using Islamic evidence. Before presenting a long case against how *kanaat* (resignation, being contempt with what one has) is understood as laziness, he addressed another source of laziness, which was caused by misunderstanding Islamic norms, religion being the strongest advocate of worldly

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[546] See for example the wealth of Islamic evidence used in Manastirli. Ismail Hakki, "Kesb u Ticaretve Tesis-i Sanayiin Nazar-i Ser'-i Enverde Mergubiyeti." *Sirat-i Mustakim* (9 July 1325): 305-306.

work. He attacks the emphasis of the ephemeral nature of earthly life by Muslims. He starts his

sermon with this salvo:

> 'Why do I care for this world? We are not going to remain here. Before we know it, the
> judgment day will come.' These [statements] are most often fabrications. Bringing the
> judgment day to the attention of the *umma* is an act of hostility, and hindering progress
> (*terakkiye mani olmaktir*).[547]

According to Manastirli, those who argued that the end of the world is imminent were people of

laziness (*erbab-i atalet*). Manastirli posited that the end of the days being near is merely a trope:

Simply because anything that is in the future is closer than anything in the past. By

misunderstanding these remarks in Islamic literature, some people confuse *kanaat* with laziness,

despite the fact that *kanaat*, by definition, means "not being after other's wealth." With these

arguments he refuted this view, and called his audience for a life of productivity and hard work.

Manastirli ended his verse-and-ahadith adorned article with a bold declaration: the end of the

world is not soon; therefore one has to work for this world harder.[548] Manastirli advanced his

diatribe:

> There are a certain people who abandoned [worrying about] the hereafter. They say: This
> world is sufficient for us! Some of us are like this. This is the real evil. But the others are
> evil as well. They say thusly: We need the hereafter. Why would we need the world?
> They act upon laziness and refrain from work. They give an opportunity to the disloyal
> ones. What do they do? Some retreat to a *tekke*, some to Mecca. Some remain in their
> homes. They waste their lives in their corner sofa. [They have] no other business than
> yawning. … This is lack of patriotism (*hamiyetsizlik*). Earning your own living and
> retreating to a corner or sitting idly in a coffeehouse… are very unfavorable [acts]. These
> kind of people are not considered to be part of humanity. It is even absurd to call them
> 'human beings.' … If the existence of a thing is equal to its absence, naming it becomes
> unnecessary. Everyone has to work as much as they can. [549]

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[547] Manastirli Ismail Hakki (preacher), "Mevaiz," Esref Edip (writer). *Sirat-i Mustakim*, no. 23 (1324): 366-368.

[548] Ibid.

[549] Ibid.

The role of the ulama in articulating a new interpretation of Islam and playing a part in transforming religious discourse cannot be missed in this example. It should be noted that the critique is directed less heavily on those who do not abide by Islamic norms. Manastirli, by declaring the unproductive members of society not even human beings shows how exclusionist language was a constitutive part of productivity discourses.

According to these ulema, the culture of laziness was an outcome of the political culture of Hamidian despotism (*Istibdad*), a period during which the Hamidian despotism suffocated any hope of activism and activeness, thus encouraging people to not only be politically lazy (no parliamentary elections), but also socially lazy, by following wrong economic policies. The *ulema* who published in *Beyan'ul Hakk* advanced critiques against Abdulhamid II, who was toppled in 1909. This was another shared position of both the Islamists and Westernists.[550] Under the umbrella of the opposition of Young Turks, they criticized the rule of Abdulhamid II. A Beyan'ul Hakk author, Mehmet Tayyip, in an article titled "The legitimacy of Work (*Sa'yin Mesruiyeti*), argued that the wide-spread phenomenon of begging, which bothered all political camps, was because of *istibdad*:

> Today it is known to us all that one of the damages of the period of despotism (*devr-i Istibdad*) was the sin of laziness (*seyyie-i atalet*). Whereas we know that laziness gives birth to financial difficulty, which in turn causes one to lose one's good cognizance and causes one to a humiliating situation such as begging. Therefore, it is a religious obligation for us that we (…) work hard and give importance to the reasons that will cause progress. [551]

The language against *istibdad*, which was shared both by Islamists and others, was later employed against the Islamists, especially during the republican period.

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[550] See Ismail Kara, "Turban and Fez: Ulema as Opposition," in *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy,* ed. Elisabeth Özdalga (London, 2005), 162-200.

[551] Mehmet Tayyib, "Sa'yun Mesruiyeti." *Beyan'ul Hakk*, no.13 (4 Zilhicce 1326): 283.

For authors/reformists such as Celal Nuri, Abdullah Cevdet, Kiliczade Hakki salvation of the empire laid in following the Western European example of modernity, which included assigning a limited place to "religion," especially in the organization of legal and administrative systems. Their focus on the social disease of laziness offered a different approach, if not centered on a completely different set of social groups. Still, they used the same established discourse of productivity, and did not hesitate to argue that the "original" Islam was a religion that encouraged secular work and condemned laziness. Among their targets were ulama, *medrese* students, or more likely the *medrese* system itself, *Sufi* ideas and practices, and populist religious practices.

For these authors, *medrese*s, or religious seminaries, were not only hotbeds of idlers, but also their attendees were seen as 'parasitical' social classes. It should be noted that the condition of *medreses* warranted critique. The Hamidian reforms in the "secular" schooling system hardly touched the medrese system, which was left to its own devices. Recent scholarship shows that these seminaries were flocked by people who had little care for education, but who could blame them? Not unlike the Yeshiva students today, *medrese* students were exempt from the military service. It is likely that the overpopulation of the *medrese* schools owed their popularity party due to this privilege. Of course, in the historiography, this phenomenon was attributed to the Islamist politics of the Sultan Abdulhamid, by non-Islamists. As Amit Bein has shown, reform attempts of the Hamidian government was backfired and faced with resistance. [552]

Critique of this group against religious authorities, whom they accused of preaching patience, fatalism, and obedience that turned people into an unproductive crowd, was less on the

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[552] For the critiques and reform attempts of the medreses during the Hamidian regime, see Amin Bein, "Politics, Military Conscription, and Religious Education." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38 (2006): 283-301.

reformist side, but mostly offering radical solutions.[553] These groups were placed outside the

boundaries of an imagined nation. At times, they employed a language that did not take any

prisoners, as seen in the remarks of Abdullah Cevdet:

> Since general prosperity is an accumulation of the efforts of each member of society,
> those who choose to live in utter laziness while capable of work and productivity, will
> cease to be a legitimate organ of society and at that instant lose the right to consume
> society's production. [554]

In 1912, an article appeared in *Ictihad,* a prominent journal published by Abdullah

Cevdet, titled "A Quite Wakeful Sleep." [555] This article, written by Kiliczade Hakki, is important

because first, due to its unprecedented claims, showcases the differences between political

camps, and second, it is indicative of how the language against laziness was employed by a

different political agenda than the Islamists. Kiliczade Hakki, similar to his contemporaries Celal

Nuri and Abdullah Cevdet, was an ardent supporter of radical reforms and a harsh critic of the

religious establishment. The article was later published in a book titled *Declaration of War*

Against False Beliefs, and its arguments were watered down. [556] In this article, Kiliczade Hakki,

either ominously or propitiously --depending on one's perspective-- outlined a list of reforms

that some two decades later Mustafa Kemal Ataturk implemented in his new Republic of Turkey.

The author defended a modernity that not many in the public sphere voiced. Modeled

after the Western European models, and specific to the late Ottoman-early Republican context, it

raised very harsh criticism of cultural practices in the name of abstract notion of progress. The

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[553] Celal Nuri (Ileri), *Tarih-I Tedenniyat-I Osmani* (Istanbul, 1330/1914-15), 108.

[554] Abdullah Cevdet, *Ictihad*, no. 343 (15 Nisan 1932), s 5706 quoted in Sukru Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Dusunur Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Donemi* (Istanbul, 1981), 398.

[555] Kılıçzâde Hakkı, "Pek Uyanık Bir Uyku." *İçtihad*, no. 55 - 57 (21 Şubat 1328-7 Mart 1328).

[556] Kiliczade Hakki, *Itikadat-I Batilaya Ilan-I Harb* (Istanbul, 1332).

author called for the harshest sartorial reform calls, such as abolishing the veiling of women and

wearing fez, (which is, according to the author, a headgear of old Byzantines). He employed a

concept of religion that merely reduced it to a role of source of good morals, relegating it to

private sphere. Hakki's vision of modernity was a clear one, which can be seen in his manifesto:

"There is no other remedy for our salvation. Civilization is Western civilization." [557]

For Kiliczade Hakki, it was because of the religious establishment and the *softa*'s (a term

used for the medrese students, which later became a pejorative term implying a fanatical

religious adherence) that the people of the empire were in the condition they were in. These

people, according to Kiliczade, preached that this world (*dunya*) is not important, and the

looming end of days made every effort to work harder futile:

> The community of Islam is encouraged to be in poverty and indolence because many a
> [Quranic] verses and sayings of the prophet were faultily explained by these people.
> Whereas, at this day and age, the only reigning sultan is money. Everyone who is not a
> subject of this greatly powerful king is doomed to be dead or to live in misery.[558]

The similarity of these remarks to the theme of Manastirli's Friday sermon four years ago has to

be noted. However, the similarity was only on the thematic level. Hakki's approach to Islam, or

more correctly to religion in the modern sense, had a specific role in his vision. Kiliczade Hakki

advocated a role for religion that was based on its functions –it needed to patch the wants of the

people, but social life had to be centered on material gains, and market relations. The putative

role of this notion of religion was clear: it could be used in encouraging people to work more and

harder. "If you ask me, *Bab-i Mesihat* would do the right thing … if they would publish

declarations and orders containing rules of religion that encourage people to learn, produce,

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[557] Ibid., 13.

[558] Ibid., 26.

trade, and engage in agriculture, and by doing these, become wealthy and enlightened."[559] The

binary between secular and religious was fully there: In spreading a certain secular goal religious

establishment was given a role, in which religion, as it was formulated in this vision, needed to

stay in its "own sphere:"

> Because religions are consisting of descriptions of concepts that aim to perfect morality,
> the followers should not leave that sphere [of morality]. They can go on and on
> describing the divine as much as they wish and think, and portray heaven and hell, and
> keep at their prayers –if they are doing that at all—we do not object, but, considering that
> they are not beneficial to the public, at least they should not be detrimental to, and
> [should not] harm people with their fatal preachings. [L]eave [education of the people] to
> those who are experts, just as it is done in other countries.[560]

Education of the national character, which by both parties was seen as in need of rectification,

was a field of conflict between Islamist and Westernist visions. Islamists had no plans to leave

the field to the Westernists, simply because they blamed lazy and fatalist character on the

misconceptions of the ulama regarding the teachings of Islam. Therefore, it has to be borne in

mind that the defensive nature of the Islamist language regarding cleansing of religious thought

of pre-modern conceptualizations of Islam was a fight over specific institutions and socio-

political statuses. A year earlier, in *Beyan'ul Hakk*, Mehmet Rifat argued something similar to

Kiliczade, on one level, while strongly displaying a defense on another:

> It is sharia that prevents one from bad conditions such as …hedonism, laziness, and lack
> of patience (…). It is *sharia* that educates the individual, keeps family within the realm of
> peace and order, and makes a population upholders of civilization (*vayedar-i medeniyet*).
> Sharia is the constitution of Allah *(Seriat cenabi allahin kanunu esasisidir)*.[561]

The same year in which Kiliczade's article was published, a series of articles appeared in

Beyan'ul Hakk, titled "Reforming Medreses." Written by "a member of *Ilmiye*," these articles

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[559] Ibid., 55.

[560] Ibid., 32.

[561] Mehmet Rifat, "Islamiyette Medeniyet ve Hurriyet." *Beyan'ul Hakk*, no. 18 (9 Muharram 1327): 308-309.

were based on minutes of *meşihat* meetings.[562] Not only Kiliczade and his ilk, but also the opposing camp --the Islamists-- employed a similar approach in describing problems of the medreses. The authors of these proceedings had no illusions about the conditions of the *medrese* system: The *medreses* once offered great service to the nation and the state, but then "lost their great importance and became a sanctuary for military deserters and lazy people, [and in the medreses were] where they wasted their lives."[563] According to the author(s), there are several reasons why students were in perpetual state of laziness: The length of studies, and the diffused nature of the curricular system: it took eighteen years to finish studies at medreses, which is found to be excessive, especially since only 6 months of a year was spent on education. The author(s) proposed a rigorous use of time "in order to prevent further degeneration," where an education of nine hours a day and 10 months a year was needed. [564] Modeling after lay school systems, the medreses needed to be reformed thoroughly. The stand point of the Islamists was clear: medreses were necessary for the Ottoman Empire, and the *mektep* ("secular" schools) could never substitute the medrese.[565]

As the discourse of productivity gained new grounds, the paradigm of what is considered a legitimate economic activity of the medrese students was shifted. The annual trip of the medrese students to various areas of the empire, called "*cerre* cikmak" (going out to cerr/jerr) was one of the economic activities viewed under a new light and became targets of social critique. Medrese students went out to *cerr* traditionally during the holy months of Rajab –

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[562] Zeki Salih Zengin, 136.

[563] Anonymous, "Medreselerin Islahi." *Beyan'ul Hakk* , no. 12 (27 zulkade 1326/20 December 1908): 200-201.

[564] Ibid.

[565] Tunali Hilmi, "Medreseler Kongresi." *Sirat-I Mustakim* 3, no. 54 (1325): 27.

Sha'ban – and Ramadan to areas designated by the *Bab-i Meshihat*, where they taught Islamic sciences, preached, recited Qur'an, and lead prayers. This was a public service of sorts for students who were knowledgeable of the prayers and rituals. In principle, the idea was to pay the dues of one's knowledge to the people. Of course, this was an economic activity as well. In turn, as a remnant of periods that were not as monetized as the modern era, they received goods and services, and seldom money, from the local people, which supported their studies during the rest of the educational year. A practice that goes back to the Saljuki times, it not only provided students the experience they needed in teaching and leading religious rituals (much like today's paid internships) and supported them economically, but it also connected medrese students with common people.

This very activity of *cerr*, however, became a central problem to be addressed when anyone talked about the medreses and the condition they were in. Perhaps there was a factual basis: the system was abused by some members of the student body. But it was more likely that this old practice seemed out of fashion: it was an occupation that could not be thoroughly regulated, organized, and controlled. Moreover, students that went out from Istanbul medreses were associated by common folk with the government. The uncontrollable and fuzzy nature of this non-modern practice became more of an issue perhaps because of this association as well. In the writings of both Islamists and Westernists, cerr was a practice that did not fit into the culture of work and productivity they advertised. Those who went out to practice *cerr* were accused of practicing outright mendicancy, perhaps simply because the payment was not systematized and appeared to be irregular from a modern perspective.

> This method of *cerr* once was established since it was, among other benefits, a good resource for education of students. Regarding the results today, it is found to be a great detriment. The exalted passengers of the path of knowledge are getting accustomed to

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begging. The method of cerr makes regular folks, not only the members of *ilmiye*, get used to begging. [566]

Around the same time in 1908, when *Mesihat* was getting together for a medrese reform, Kirimli Yakub Kemal, a contributor to *Sirat-i Mustakim,* wrote a piece titled "The Vilification of Mendicancy in Islam and its Distressing Consequences." Kirimli Yakup Kemal posits that the laziness the Ottomans fell into was due to not attending to the *Kanun-i Ahmediye* (*sharia*) and hence turning begging into a vocation. After citing the sayings of the prophet against begging (*tese'ul*), he argued:

> What a contradiction to have scholars and students … preach the norms of religion and also beg shamelessly! … Although this method of *cerr* was established as a way of [earning] scholarship and for other reasons, today it causes great damage. Making students of [Islamic] sciences get used to begging and destroying their high honor… [This] lowers the status of medrese students in the eyes of the people so much so that when they see someone with a turban on their head, they skedaddle, thinking without doubt that they have come across beggars. [567]

Conclusion

Different political constituencies applied the label of lazy and idle to their rivals to criticize (and later attempt to eliminate) them. Parallel to the scornful portrayal of the comical dandy as the Westernized character in works of fiction --as analyzed in the previous chapter-- and the exclusionist language that was articulated in morality texts, polemics that went on in political journals signaled a vital debate on what sort of model citizen their standpoint proposed for the nation.

If multiple values and accents were in their subtle forms in morality texts and in fiction, they were in their most salient forms in public discussions that surfaced in periodicals. Journal

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[566] Anonymous, "Medreselerin Islahi."

[567] Kirimli Yakup Kemal, "Islamiyette Tese'ulun Mezmumiyeti, Netayic-i Muellimesi." *Sirat-i Mustakim* 63 (1326): 169-171.

articles and newspaper pieces through which debates took place between members of different political camps, a phenomenon that proliferated after the Young Turk revolution, reveal these anxieties in more clear terms.

These debates on laziness and work ethos should be understood within the broader issues and philosophical disagreements that divided "Westernists" and "Islamists" throughout the Islamic world. The proposed intensity of the measures differed based on how each ideology viewed the vitality of certain institutions for the nation's salvation. The relationship between perceptions of these institutions and cultural elements and the use of binary of productivity versus idleness reveals dynamics of the Ottoman cultural scene right before sits dismemberment.

Epilogue

> *"Even though it might be considered unnecessary for the population that has already been mobilized, just for the sake of reminding, there needs to be signs hanging here and there that says "Run, hurry, do not stop."*
> *Kiliczade Hakki* [568]

This work has examined the thoroughly modern binary between laziness and productivity, through the analyses of social practices and evolving public debates in various historical moments. Discursive practices, embodied in knowledge production and pedagogical practices, were formulated and thus sustained the moralizing and mobilizing language of work in the empire, at a time the world was divided into nation-states, wherein productive powers of their populations became vitally important. Writing and reading morality books was a social practice that produced such discursive spaces that made different kinds of knowledge, action, and subjectivity possible. Morality books articulated, in a diverse and even chaotic manner, formulations of new knowledge fields at times in congruence, but more often at odds, with older formulations. Unlike the previous versions of the genre, most of the nineteenth-and-turn-of-the-century texts offered discussions about hard work and industriousness as issues germane to the new concepts of citizenship. Furthermore, this inquiry into the issues brought about in these texts has shown the transformation of discourses of self during the nineteenth century. They became the most effective ways to discuss work, laziness, and industriousness and crowned work ethos as the center issue of the new political and moral self. Through analyzing morality literature, then, this study showed, first, how a new knowledge was produced in the field of morality, which articulated the contours of new formulations of citizenship and subjectivity. Second, through the

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[568] Kiliczade Hakki, *Itikadat-I Batilaya..,* 75.

normative nature of morality texts, it has examined how work and industriousness became moralized, even Islamicized, and nationalized.

An inquiry into how a modern and Islamic work ethics was formulated demonstrated that the assumption that Islam and modernity are mutually exclusive does not explain the wealth of Ottoman experience with modernity and Islam. Work and industriousness were at once Islamicized in a manner they were not before, and placed in the center of being a good citizen and good self. Morality authors, in the midst of their experience of new practices that made them understand and re-conceptualize their knowledge categories, frequently referenced a symbolic universe, whose sources included Islamic knowledge. The end product of these new formulations can neither be separated from the discursive traditions of Islamic knowledge nor from the discourses of modern discipline, and for the purposes undertaken here, ought to be understood in the context of nation-formation.

In the emergence and spread of new discourses, the role of social praxis cannot be denied. The ideas formulated around laziness and work discipline were rooted in the social practices of the *Tanzimat* (re-ordering) period. As the Ottoman state entered the reforms of the nineteenth century, work and productivity, as a pervasive social issue to be addressed became a focus of attention of the state. As the government expanded its bureaucracy and sought to improve bureaucratic efficiency, it played a pivotal role in the new conceptualizations of work. In the historiography, the scarcely mentioned policies targeting absenteeism, laziness, and inefficiency were by and large placed within the limited narratives of administrative reforms. Those who viewed these reforms, along with the other nineteenth-century restructurings, through the perspective of modernization theory, portrayed them as an integral component of a process called 'westernization.' Due to the reappearance of these reform attempts throughout the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they were viewed as a constant failure. Instead, the reforms and the public debates that ensued were as part and parcel of a social and cultural transformation.

As the urban space was regulated in accordance with the new work ethos, the confined environment of government offices became a venue in which spatiality and temporality of the work experience, separated from the non-work activities, was solidified –regardless of whether or not the reforms fully reached their goals. These policies, irrispective of their level of implementation, affected the daily lives of the bureaucrats, who were continuously warned and for whom attempts being disciplined occurred in the governmental bureaus all over the empire. It is very likely that by engaging them in a shared practice that redefined their temporal and spatial experiences, these policies helped create a (re)definition of work discipline and work time.

As the building block of a nation, the body became a *topos* from which the nation's perceived infirmities, including laziness and lethargy, had to be removed if a productive, healthy, and able nation were to be established. With the transformation of the discourses on the body in morality books, this new awareness became visible on a discursive level and integrated into the education system. The body, first received special treatment in the modern morality texts, concomitantly becaming part of the curriculum in the military schools, and by 1912 was subjected to militarization outside the barracks. The Ottoman body deemed as "accustomed to slacking," and accused of harboring social vices was now accused of causing the Balkan defeat by the Ottoman authors. The shift that occurred with the Balkan defeat was not only built on a century-long practice that made the body part of the nationalist discourse, but also made an emergent narrative visible on the national level in an undisputed way, and hence an indication of this discourse becoming hegemonic. The militarization that became the marking characteristic of

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the last decade of the Ottoman Empire and the first decades of the Turkish Republic cannot be understood without taking into account the process by which the body of the citizens became a site of *national* anxiety.

An important aspect of these debates is how the anxieties over productivity and reshaping the industrious body became political issues. The power of social practice and the articulation of a new normative standard demonstrated by the fact that at by the end of the century, a new category was introduced: the social misfit. While, some parts of the national body, such as women, soldiers, and students were represented as the parts of the body that could be trained, corrected and strengthened, whereas some segments of society could not even be attempted to be saved. The representations of heroes and anti-heroes in the Ottoman novels, where industrious heroes with their success stories were represented as models, while lazy and unproductive became labels to cast certain visions of modernity outside of imagined boundaries of the Ottoman nation.

Ottoman novels articulated the dynamic nature of the transformations of the nineteenth century in general, and how they described and prescribed the new forms of subjectivity through the productivity of the new self and his/her work ethics. The contrasts between the lazy and *zuppe* characters in novels indicate the establishment of difference through literary practices. The derisive portrayal of the comical dandy as the main Westernized character in works of fiction, and the paralleled polemics that went on in the political journals signaled a vital debate on what sort of model citizen would ultimately represent the nation, while the definitions of the model citizen was constantly contested.

Parallel to the scornful portrayal of the comical dandy as the Westernized character in works of fiction, and the exclusionist language that was articulated in morality texts, heated

discussions that occurred in the political journals signaled a vital debate on what sort of model

citizen their standpoint proposed for the nation. If the multiple values and accents were in their

subtle forms in morality texts and in fiction, they were in their most salient forms in public

discussions that surfaced in the periodicals. The journal articles and newspaper pieces which the

debates took place between the members of different political camps, a phenomenon that

proliferated after the Young Turk revolution, reveal these anxieties in more clear terms.

How did the transformation of work concepts and practices play out in the political

struggle in the transition from empire to republic? In what ways did the new formulations of

laziness as a social disease become a social and political weapon to eliminate the

elements/institutions that did not have a place in certain visions of modernity? What influence

did this language have on the critical decision of either reforming or banning institutions during

the first years of the Republican era? The fact that abolishing some of the age-old institutions,

such as Sufi lodges during the early Turkish Republic in 1925 (Tekkeler ve Zaviyeler Kanunu),

did not face a strong opposition even from the *ulema,* indicates that these institutions were

successfully written into the discourse of "blasphemous" idleness, the roots of which were

established in the mobilization of work in the late Ottoman period. [569]

The proposed intensity of the measures differed based on how each ideology viewed the

vitality of the certain institutions for the nation's salvation. The relationship between the

perceptions of these institutions and cultural elements and the use of the binary of productivity

versus idleness reveals the dynamics of Ottoman cultural scene right before the empire's

dismemberment. Not only institutions but also elements of Ottoman high culture did not escape

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[569] Brian Silverstein, "Sufi Practice and the Transformation of the Religious Sphere in the Late Ottoman Empire," in *Islam and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire*, ed. James Gelvin, forthcoming.

the culpability. For example, Celal Nuri blamed the laziness of the nation partly on the fact that people listened to the "nerve-easing, lethargy-inducing Turkish music."[570] Perhaps not very surprisingly, with the same arguments of engendering lethargy and passivism, Ottoman style music was banned from the national radio channel in 1935 for about a year.[571] It can be argued that the ambiguities of Ottoman modernity were transformed into absolute certainties in the republican period.

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[570] Celal Nuri, 120-129.

[571] Ismail Kara, *Cumhuriyet Turkiyesinde bir Mesele Olarak Islam* (Istanbul, 2008), 39.

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