

ISLAMIC "REACTION" TO THE TURKISH REVOLUTION
A FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF
THE ATATÜRK ERA (1923-1938)

by

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Title of Thesis

**Islamic "Reaction" to the Turkish Revolution, 1923-1938: A Framework for the Social
History of the Ataturk Era**

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Abstract

The history of the Turkish Revolution (1923-38) has been written almost exclusively from the perspective of the secular Kemalist elite. This tradition is most evident in the chronological litany of reform legislation that suffices as the "social history" of this most crucial period in modern Turkish history. It is also evident in the manner with which occurrences of collective action invoking Islamic legitimation have been treated as individual battles in the perpetual war between Islamists and secularists. These two aspects of Turkish historiography are characterized by a symbiotic relationship. So long as the social history of the Turkish Revolution remains unexplored, Kemalists are free to interpret collective action from an ideological perspective rather than investigate actual circumstances; at the same time, if Islamic "reaction" endures as the accepted means of classifying these events, then the pervasive historical interpretation of the Turkish Revolution as a period of rapid and total modernization stands unchallenged.

This thesis addresses the emaciated state of early Turkish social history by means of an examination of the limited number of events that might be classified as collective Islamic "reaction." It locates these events in both their geographic and social contexts, and uses these as springboards from which to examine regional variations in the modernization process and the way in which different social classes and groups experienced the Turkish Revolution. The thesis then considers the impact of Kemalist secularism upon Muslim-Turkish identity and the degree to which the process of secularization sparked Islamic "reaction." Following a careful interpretation of the individual occurrences of Islamic "reaction," the thesis concludes with the argument that collective Islamic action was in fact rare and that more striking was the reaction of the Kemalist elite to organized religion and the persistence of a collective Muslim identity among the Turkish population. Popular protest against the modernization process was uncommon in part because various factors unique to Turkish society discouraged public opposition, but also because *legislated* reforms in reality had a very uneven impact upon Turkish society. The Turkish Revolution did not effect the instantaneous transformation implied by many historical accounts of the period.

Research into these issues necessitated work in both the Public Record Office, London and in Turkish libraries. The conclusions reached in the thesis are based on a thorough examination of reports written by British Foreign Officers living in Turkey during the presidency of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and an initial investigation of Turkish-language newspapers and population censuses published in the same years. An image of a complex weave of Turkish experiences during the Turkish Revolution emerges from these sources: combined in this thesis with the scattered information available in the published histories of modern Turkey, this image serves as a foundation for future socio-historical research into the Turkish Revolution.

Dedication

Family have been a constant source of support throughout the past two years. I could not have completed this thesis were it not for my wife, Meg Brockett, who at the very start encouraged me to pursue graduate studies. Meg travelled with me to England and Turkey, and faithfully worked alongside me at the Public Record Office and as I struggled to learn modern Turkish. Since our return to Canada, Meg has provided me with a home in which to work and has patiently assisted me as I have refined my ideas and put them down on paper. It is to Meg that I dedicate this thesis.

Upon the Tenth Anniversary of the Turkish Republic

"The Turkish Nation!

We are in the fifteenth year since we began the war for independence. Today is the greatest festival in our Republic's entire tenth year.

May it be celebrated!

At this moment, as a citizen of the great Turkish nation, I am filled with the deepest joy and excitement at reaching this auspicious day.

My fellow countrymen.

In the space of a small time we have accomplished many great deeds. The greatest of these deeds, their foundation, is the Turkish Republic -- a mark of Turkish heroism and the height of Turkish culture.

For this success we are indebted to the determination with which the Turkish nation and its valuable army marched together.

However, we must never consider our accomplishments sufficient, because we are bound and resolved to do many more and much greater deeds. We are going to raise our country to the level of the world's most prosperous and civilized countries. We are going to provide our nation with the means and sources to gain the greatest possible prosperity. We are going to raise our national culture above the highest level of civilization.

We must consider the measurement of time in accordance with our century's speed and concept of action, not in accordance with the relaxed mentality of passed centuries. Compared to the past, we will work much more. We will succeed at greater deeds in less time. With regard to this, there is no doubt that we will succeed because the character of the Turkish nation is great. The Turkish nation is diligent. The Turkish nation is clever. The Turkish nation has known how to overcome its difficulties through national unity and cooperation. While on the road to progress and civilization, the Turkish nation has in its hand and in its mind the torch of positive science. And I must emphasize with all seriousness that as an advanced human society, a long enduring quality of the Turkish nation has been to revere the fine arts and to advance by way of them. And it is because of this that our nation-state is one that continually, by every means and with every precaution, nourishes and develops our nation's advanced character, untiring diligence, natural intelligence, commitment to science, love of the fine arts, and national unity...

How happy is he who can say that he is a Turk!"

--Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, October 29, 1933

(Translated from *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, II, pp. 318-19)

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In Turkey I received assistance from friends too numerous to mention here. In particular I must recognize the advice of Professor Dr. Zafer Toprak (*Boğaziçi Üniversitesi*) and Professor Dr. Çetin Yetkin (*Ak Deniz Üniversitesi*), and the many hours they spent patiently expounding upon modern Turkish history.

I am grateful to Dr. Reşat Kasaba of the University of Washington for acting as my external examiner.

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I.

Introduction

On 25 December, 1930 readers of the *New York Times* would have noticed the first in a series of reports concerning popular unrest in the Republic of Turkey, this one titled "DERVISH REVOLT FAILS NEAR SMYRNA." Only a few weeks prior to the beginning of the "holy" month of Ramazan, the Turkish government had been shocked by a potentially wide-spread movement proclaiming that President Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) be replaced by the deposed and exiled Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. This movement was the result of a conspiracy hatched by members of the *Nakşibendi* dervish order: six dervishes originally from the city of Manisa had descended from nearby mountains, upon the economically destitute town of Menemen and incited the "notoriously fanatical" local immigrant population against the "secular" government. Armed with turbans, a "Koranic flag" and several guns, the dervishes proclaimed the arrival of the long-awaited *mehdi* and the start of a "holy war" to restore Islamic rule. Upon being challenged by a local gendarme officer, the dervish rebels shot and wounded him. Not satisfied with this act of violence, one of the rebels proceeded to saw off the head of the officer, Kubilay, drink from his blood, and plant the severed head a-top the flag pole around which the dervishes were performing ritual dances. Declaring their invincibility -- the dervishes had spent the previous weeks indulging in narcotics -- they defied a unit of local militiamen with the cry "bullets cannot harm us." To the contrary, within minutes, three dervishes were dead and the Menemen *Olayı*¹ over. In response to this strange occurrence, the Turkish government effected martial law in the areas of Menemen, Manisa and Balıkesir, and arrested thousands of "religious reactionaries" throughout the country. The subsequent trial of "participants" in the Menemen *Olayı* resulted in the sobering decision that 36 men and women be sentenced to death.²

The present study originated in the form of a question regarding the implications of the violence that occurred in Menemen in the context of the Turkish Revolution, an era (1923-1938) defined by the efforts of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) to establish a "secular" Turkish nation-state. My initial investigations revealed, that although the *New York Times* might offer tantalizing insights into the Menemen *Olayı*, English-language scholarly assessments of early Republican Turkish history not only treat the event cursorily but also

¹The Turkish word *olay* is translated as "event" in English. This word will be used in conjunction with "Menemen" throughout this thesis to signify the fact that this occurrence can neither be classified as a rebellion nor even a public protest -- it was a strange and unique "event."

²The above description is derived from information provided in reports in the *New York Times* appearing in the following issues: December 25, 29, 30, 31 (1930); January 2, 3, 11, 16, 21, 26, 30 (1931); February 1, 2, 3, 5, 15, 18 (1931); March 1 (1931).

fail to examine the social history of which it was a part. The historiography of the Turkish Revolution is overwhelmingly elitist in nature, concerned only with chronicling the impressive feats of legislation -- and the political intrigue related to each -- by which a Kemalist elite dreamed of creating a culture and political-economic infrastructure appropriate to a "modern" Turkey. A distinctive aspect of this scholarship is the emphasis placed upon the revolutionary "secular" developments of the period: instead of the traditional interpretation of Ottoman-Turkish history in which rulers (*askeri*) and ruled (*reaya*) were but two halves of an Islamic whole, modern Turkish social divisions are presented in the form of a "secular"- "religious" dichotomy. The machinations of the former have been examined to the exclusion of the experiences of the latter, and as I discovered, the historical evaluation of collective action invoking Islamic legitimation -- such as occurred in Menemen -- is limited to a monochromatic interpretation in which "Islam" is presumed to be inherently resistant to innovation and all collective action undertaken in its name to be fundamentally seditious and deserving of the pejorative label, "reaction."³

Subsequent research also revealed that the Menemen *Olayı* was not unique, but that various other occurrences of Islamic "reaction," although inconsistently cited by scholars, are a theme unexplored in the historiography dealing with Turkey under the presidency of Mustafa Kemal (1923-1938). In light of the significance of social movements in other Muslim societies yet the exclusion of Turkey as a region of study in a collection of essays devoted to the topic,⁴ I wondered if Turkish Muslim society had fallen victim to the prevailing historiographic bias in favour of Turkish "secularism." After all, although associated with efforts to establish an independent Kurdish state, the *Şeyh Sait* revolt (1925) provides as good an example as any of a social movement legitimated by, but not limited to, Islamic symbols and institutions. The historiography of the Kemalist period, therefore,

³The Turkish word most commonly used in newspapers of the time was *irtica* meaning "reaction." A reaction of some kind is entirely normative given the circumstances, but the word *irtica* took on extremely ominous connotations implying treasonous motives. The more modern Turkish word, *tepki*, also means "reaction" and arguably has assumed the same connotations.

⁴Edmund Burke, III, and Ira M. Lapidus, eds. *Islam, Politics, and Social Movements* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988).

includes two weaknesses which I have set out to address. In the first place, the social context of Islamic "reaction" to the Turkish government remains largely undefined; "reaction" is associated with the Turkish "masses" who fail to become the legitimate subject of historical analysis until their politicization following World War II. Secondly, the negative classification of these events as "reactions" to secular reform and even as "rebellions" against the state is unsubstantiated and devoid of a historical sensitivity to the uniqueness of individual events in a changing Muslim society.

My approach to this task is founded upon three inter-related methodological assumptions derived from current social and cultural historiography. The primary assumption is that by studying collective action in a particular social and cultural context, one can learn much more about the way in which that society "operates:" the importance of values and practices to individual and communal identities, the varying relationships between segments of the population, and the ways in which the populace interpreted their own historical experiences. The corollary to this is that the investigation of social movements can also illuminate the experiences of the "silent masses" all too often neglected by an elite-oriented historiography. In the context of a period of Turkish history renowned for revolutionary change, it is possible to discover how the "masses" controlled, accepted and rejected diverse aspects of modernization. The association of "reaction" with Islam, however, implies an essential relationship between the "religious masses" and the modernization process -- a relationship that does not necessarily reflect true social dynamics. Thus, my third assumption concerns the complexity of social experiences and the importance of evaluating a Muslim society in its specific social and economic contexts. For, as Ira Lapidus has argued, the history of any Muslim people

has to be told by appraising each and every historical situation in terms of the interplay of Islamic conceptions, of material and economic conditions, of political circumstances, and the role of non-Islamic situational and value considerations so that each case can be understood at once as unique in itself and yet as a related aspect of the larger history of Muslim peoples.⁵

⁵Ira Lapidus, "Islam and the Historical Experience of Muslim Peoples," in M. Kerr, ed. *Islamic Studies: A Tradition and Its Problems* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1979), p. 101. The preceding theoretical premises are based on the following works: Edmund Burke, "Islamic and Social Movements: Methodological

The Turkish Revolution

Fundamental social and political changes dating back to the eighteenth century coupled with the disruption and devastation resulting from more than a decade of war, provided the opportunity for Mustafa Kemal to forge a modern nation-state out of the neglected Ottoman heartland, Anatolia. The ambiguity inherent in the use of the term "Turkish Revolution" to refer to this transformation can be neatly resolved by deferring to an Ottoman-Turkish distinction current at the end of the nineteenth century. No single word (like the contemporary word *devrim*) had an equivalent meaning to current English usage of "revolution;" instead, *ihtilal* referred to the forceful removal from power of an established government or authority, while the term *inkılap* denoted rapid social and institutional change integral to the establishment of a modern and civilized state, of which western nations were the most advanced examples.⁶ In the Turkish case, the period of *ihtilal* can be limited to the War of Independence that, although ostensibly fought in defence of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph, ultimately opened the door for the deposition of the Ottoman dynasty (November, 1922) and proclamation of the Turkish Republic (October, 1923). The process of *inkılap* began with a series of unprecedented laws abolishing the Caliphate and "secularizing" both the educational and legal systems in March, 1924. Reform legislation designed to create a unique "Turkish" national culture and a solid economic-political foundation for the state continued to be passed by the Grand National Assembly until the death of Mustafa Kemal in 1938. By this time the sovereignty of modern Turkey had been established beyond a doubt, but his death meant that the Turkish Revolution never effected the complete cultural change envisioned by Mustafa Kemal. Despite the efforts of his loyal cadre to perpetuate

Reflections," in Burke and Lapidus, eds. *Islam, Politics, and Social Movements*, pp. 17-35; Lynn Hunt, "Introduction: History, Culture, and Text," and Suzanne Desan, "Crowds, Community, and Ritual in the Work of E.P. Thompson and Natalie Davis," both in Lynn Hunt, ed. *The New Cultural History* (Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1989), pp. 1-22 and 47-71; Judith Tucker, "Taming the West: Trends in the Writing of Modern Arab Social History in Anglophone Academia," in Hisham Sharabi, ed. *Theory and Politics and the Arab World: Critical Responses* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 198-227; and Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Rites of Violence" in her *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), pp. 152-88.

⁶This distinction is made by Niyazi Berkes in "*Ihtilal, İnkılap, ve Devrimler*" in his *Atatürk ve Devrimler* (Istanbul: Adam Yayınları, 1993), pp. 133-151. Both words were originally Arabic and in Ottoman usage prior to the 19th century *inkılap* referred to the introduction of unwanted and destabilizing changes into the Ottoman state system which could potentially result in the collapse (*ihtilal*) of the Sultanate and its authority.

his vision of the Turkish state, internal division and external events precluded such a possibility.

The authoritarian means by which Mustafa Kemal imposed revolutionary Kemalist doctrine were not uncharacteristic of an age in which fascism and dictatorship were the European norm. As president, Mustafa Kemal was not only the dominant figure in Turkish politics, but by virtue of a powerful state and party apparatus (Republican People's Party) he eventually succeeded in extending his influence throughout the country. This process necessitated the cooperation of the Turkish elite which was by no means united, despite the semblance of unity preserved throughout the War of Independence. War, however, can inspire extraordinary alliances, and the cooperation of Islamist *ulema*, dervish *şeyhs* and members of the military-bureaucratic establishment in pursuit of freedom from foreign domination and the rescue of the Sultan-Caliph, quickly dissolved with the cessation of hostilities in October, 1922. At Mustafa Kemal's behest, the composition of the Grand National Assembly newly elected in 1923 included less than one third of the deputies from the previous assembly,⁷ but the struggle within the elite for the right to implement a vision for the new Turkish state continued until at least the summer of 1926 when former C.U.P. members implicated in a plot to assassinate Mustafa Kemal were imprisoned, exiled, or executed. Nevertheless, Anatolian society remained beyond the complete control of Ankara and under the influence of regional notables and religious leaders whom the Kemalists perceived to be the greatest threat to their concept of a secular, centralized Turkey.⁸

Kemalist ideology, positivist and rational in nature, was immediate heir to the intellectual trends that dominated the Young Turk movement in the last decades of the

⁷Among those not reelected in 1923 were *ulema* and *şeyhs* from eastern Anatolia; those religious leaders remaining in the Assembly gradually lost their influence. By the fourth Assembly in 1931 those with a religious occupation comprised a minority of 3%. See Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Din-Devlet İlişkileri* (Ankara: Rehber Yayıncılık, 1992), I, p. 119; and, Frederick Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965), p. 181.

⁸Political opposition to the Turkish Republic has been thoroughly examined in Eric Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991) and *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1906* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984); and, Walter Weiker, *Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey: The Free Party and Its Aftermath* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973).

Ottoman Empire. An implicit belief was that the Kemalist elite was inherently more intelligent and adaptable to change than were the Anatolian "masses:"⁹ the elite believed themselves commissioned to lead the Anatolian peasant out of darkness into light. The only requirement of the Turkish "masses" -- the bedrock of the new state -- was a willingness to meekly comply with the demands of a revolution from "on top." Any hesitation to comply with or attempt to defy reform legislation on the part of non-elite Turks was interpreted as proof of their ignorance, backwardness, and errant religiosity. Collective action publicly repudiating secular reforms rendered the Kemalist elite particularly uncomfortable and afraid that their Islamist "opponents" had gained the upper hand in the struggle for control over Turkish society.

Opposition by Turks to various aspects of the Turkish Revolution, therefore, occurred in both the political arena in Ankara and in provincial society. Turkish political intrigue has already been the subject of much study, while occurrences of collection action invoking Islamic legitimation have not.¹⁰ Islamic "reaction" in fact comprised both individual and collective action. Defiance of the government by individual Turks is extremely difficult to locate with any precision: the sources used for this study frequently refer to the arrest of persons accused of resisting or vocally opposing change, without elaborating on the details. These instances will be referred to at appropriate times in the course of this thesis.¹¹ Far more revealing for the purposes of this study were social movements involving sizeable crowds or social networks. Of these, only three involved violence on the part of "reactionaries:" the *Şeyh Sait* Rebellion (1925), an insurrection in Rize at the same time as

⁹The relationship between the two eras is explored in Ergün Özbudun, "Antecedents to Kemalist Secularism: Some Thoughts on the Young Turk Period," in Ahmet Evin, ed. *Modern Turkey: Continuity and Change* (Opladen: Leske Verlag & Budrich, 1984), pp. 25-44. The intellectual trends of the Young Turk era are carefully detailed in Şükrü Hanioğlu's forthcoming *The Young Turks in Opposition* (Oxford University Press).

¹⁰The other form of "opposition" recognized by the Kemalist elite was Communism. Communist propaganda had been a problem during the War of Independence, and during the presidency of Mustafa Kemal "Communists" were periodically arrested. Labour union activities were strictly circumscribed by the government. In 1934, the government was particularly perturbed by the popularity among students of the communist teachings of Nazım Hikmet. See discussion in FO 371/17961/E2805 Loraine (Angora) to FO, 27 April, 1934.

¹¹Three particular cases that I discovered in which individuals were accused of subverting the state and which do not fit into this thesis occurred in Bursa (*Cumhuriyet*, 18 Eylül, 1930); Finike (*Cumhuriyet*, 22 Şubat, 1931); and, Samsun-Istanbul (*Son Posta*, 23 Mayıs, 1935; *Cumhuriyet*, 3 Ekim, 1935).

other "hat protests" (1925), and the Menemen *Olayı* (1930). Other movements were limited to the gathering of a crowd and the vocal criticism of state policies in apparent response to the perceived transgression of a common Islamic "moral economy." These included the series of hat protests in 1925 and a public demonstration in Bursa in 1933. Of a rather different nature -- but still referred to as Islamic "reaction" by contemporary newspapers and as "uprisings" by some scholars -- were the arrests of adherents to sufi *tarikats* and Muslim brotherhoods in 1935 and 1936. This study represents my investigation into these incidents of collective Islamic "reaction" and the contexts in which they occurred.¹²

*The Turkish Revolution in Recent Historiography*¹³

Trends in the historical treatment of the Turkish Revolution are directly related to the dominance of Mustafa Kemal and the convictions of the Kemalist elite concerning their own social superiority. Among the most prominent histories of this period in Turkey today is Suna Kili's *History of the Turkish Revolution*.¹⁴ According to her interpretation, the Turkish nation was born out of the formation by exhausted and war-weary Turks, of small pockets of resistance when faced with invasion and partition by imperial powers; ultimately, however, they were only united into a powerful force by the "messianic" arrival of their saviour, Mustafa Kemal. Defying great odds, Mustafa Kemal led the struggle against not only imperial powers, but also the frequent rising of reactionary Islamic groups; he eventually succeeded in defeating all opponents of the Turkish nation and in implementing extensive reforms whose essential nature and effectiveness are beyond question. Kili's approach is the epitome of Kemalist scholarship intended to inspire Turks to concentrate on

¹²Three other collective movements, about which evidence is scarce and even questionable, allegedly occurred in Gaziantep-Urfa (1924); Bursa, Istanbul, Sivas and Konya (1928); and Siirt (1935). These will be mentioned briefly in Chapters 5 and 6.

¹³This discussion is based on Turkish-language studies because no single English-language history is limited to the period; in some cases these years are treated as a part of a much larger historical process, while in others the importance of particular themes -- economic or political -- is examined. My choice of Turkish histories is based in part on Eric Zürcher's excellent historiographic discussion in *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic*, pp. 1-11.

¹⁴Suna Kili, *Türk Devrim Tarihi* (Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1982).

ideal views of Turkey's past under Mustafa Kemal rather than on the serious cleavages in contemporary Turkish society. Inspirational though it may be for the purposes of patriotism, it is a unidimensional interpretation of the actions of one, admittedly great man, as representative of the history of an entire nation.

A similar approach is evident in the extremely valuable study of early Turkey by Mahmut Goloğlu.¹⁵ A year by year presentation of the issues debated within the Grand National Assembly and reported in Turkish newspapers, Goloğlu's work provides important detail not available elsewhere.¹⁶ A subtle but important difference from Kili's study lies in the fact that, although Goloğlu is far less doctrinaire in his interpretation of events and does not attempt to justify the dominance of Mustafa Kemal and the Republican People's Party, he constantly defers to the extensive speeches made by Mustafa Kemal and other members of the elite. The consequence is a history literally written and interpreted by those who speak; invariably this means not observations of contemporary processes and conditions, but a re-statement of Kemalist ideology, a proclamation of the hoped-for future, and the assertion that what they believed should happen was indeed taking place.¹⁷

The resulting "elite" view of the Turkish Revolution permeates virtually every historical account of the period and can accurately be described as reflecting a "progressivist fallacy."¹⁸ This consists of the assumption that modern western institutional forms, political systems, technology and even cultural accretions, are superior to anything dating from Ottoman-Islamic times, and that their attainment is both desirable and inevitable. It follows that the persistence or revival of any religious sentiment or practice is both undesirable and

¹⁵Mahmut Goloğlu, *Devrimler ve Tepkileri (1924-1930) (Revolutions and Reactions)* (Ankara: Başnur Matbaası, 1972) and *Tek Partili Cumhuriyet (1931-1938) (The Single Party Republic)* (Ankara: Kalite Matbaası, 1974). These are but two of a lengthy series of histories written by Goloğlu.

¹⁶The limitations of this work also lie in its dependence on parliamentary records, for in the 1930's policies were increasingly debated behind closed doors at meetings of the Republican People's Party before being presented to the Assembly for final approval.

¹⁷This strain of thought has been extremely pervasive in Turkish historiography and is evident most of all in the English-language biography of Mustafa Kemal by Lord Kinross, *Atatürk: The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964).

¹⁸This term is suggested by Sabri Akural, "Kemalist Views on Social Change," in Jacob Landau, ed. *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 125-152.

essentially reactionary. The effect of this approach to history is evident in at least two characteristics of Turkish historiography: a virtual neglect of the experiences of the non-elite Turkish city-dweller, townsman, and village peasant at a time when they comprised the vast majority of the population; and an emphasis upon chronologies of revolutionary legislation. In very few historical works can one find genuine consideration of the impact of the reforms on the various groups and classes of Turkish society. As the historian Albert Hourani has observed, the concentration by historians on the ideology of a minute portion of any country's population tells us:

what "modernizing" governments and elites wished to do and what they thought they had done, but what in fact was happening -- how the process appeared to those whom the rulers were trying to change, or how they accepted the process but changed its direction -- does not appear clearly.¹⁹

A noteworthy characteristic of the historiography of the Turkish Revolution is that in order to bridge the "elite"- "mass" dichotomy, one must cross the secular-Islamist divide and consider the works of Islamists which are rarely granted recognition by contemporary Kemalist scholars.²⁰ This tension results from the fact that most Islamist histories are permeated with venomous opposition to the secular state and are intended to convince a more popular audience of a conspiracy against "Islam" in modern Turkey.²¹ No more objective than those of Kemalist historians, works by Islamists force one to consider the issues that Kemalists prefer to ignore. Hasan Ceylan's *State-Religion Relations in the Republican Period* is but one example:²² not limited to a chronology of reform legislation, it sheds light on how those Turks (the majority) who revered Islamic institutions and symbols, experienced the enforced application of reforms aimed at secularizing state and society and discrediting

¹⁹Albert Hourani, "How Should We Write the History of the Middle East?" *IJMES* 23 (1991), p.134.

²⁰The exception to this is Şerif Mardin's *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (New York: SUNY, 1989). An extremely complicated analysis of the social and cultural factors integral to Muslim identity and belief in the context of modernization, this study does offer valuable insights into the way in which Turkish Muslims were affected by and dealt with secular government reforms.

²¹Necip Fazıl Kısakürek is but one example, *Son Devrin Din Mazlumları (Religious Victims of the Last Revolution)* (Istanbul: Toker Yayınları, 1970).

²²Hasan Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Din-Devlet İlişkileri*.

the world-view of Muslim Turks. Ceylan's study necessarily depends on personal recollections and oral accounts of the Turkish Revolution, and the reliability of these may be questioned in light of the ideological division within contemporary society; however, the graphic images of suffering contained in these accounts provide a counter-weight to the sterile histories conforming to Kemalist ideology. If used carefully, with an awareness of the potential for exaggeration, Islamist accounts of Turkish history can be particularly enlightening.

It must be admitted that, although the predominant characteristics of Turkish historiography have been delineated, the categories are far from concrete. Mete Tunçay's *The Establishment of a Single Party Administration in the Turkish Republic*²³ is evidence of the recent tendency towards a more rigorous and methodologically self-conscious study of the Turkish Revolution. Aware of the need to employ carefully defined terminology rather than simply bandy about such words as "secularism" and "dictatorship," Tunçay acknowledges that because the government was such a powerful institution in this era, it is essential to define its characteristics and fundamental ideologies. Having thus proposed the various possibilities for interpreting the role of government in a single party system, Tunçay reexamines the first eight years of the Republic, carefully weighing the evidence and claims of both Islamists and Kemalists when dealing with such controversial issues as the Independence Tribunals (*Istiklâl Mahkemeleri*) and the apparent contradiction between the government's policy of populism and its application of the principle of secularism. Tunçay's study benefits not only from his concern for consideration of greater contexts -- Turkish developments in light of contemporary European political trends -- but also from the author's sensitivity to the complexity of issues related to religion and his awareness that Turkish historical experience extended beyond the ranks of the elite. However, as with almost every other historical study, Tunçay's emphasis upon political structure and the importance of legislation in the period precludes a more thorough examination of the social history of the early Turkish Republic.

²³Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması (1923-1931)* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1981).

An examination of Islamic "Reaction" and the Social History of the Turkish Revolution: Sources and Organization

Historical studies of the Turkish Revolution have been fundamentally a-historical in their commitment to a secular-elite perspective and virtual denial of the historical experiences of the majority of the Turkish population. This is particularly apparent in the scant efforts devoted to genuine consideration of Islamic "reaction" to the Turkish Revolution. Most scholars have been uncertain as to how or whether or not to discuss such occurrences of collective action. Because both Islam and the experiences of the "masses" have not been deemed suitable foci for the study of the Kemalist period, these events have been largely ignored, with the exception of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion and the *Menemen Olayı* which possess their own rather sensational qualities. As a result of this historiographic neglect, orthodox Kemalist scholars have been free to incorporate collective Islamic action into their own interpretations of modern Turkish history. Arguably the most influential of these scholars is Tarık Tunaya who posits a perpetual conflict between Islamists and secularists, and briefly examines particular events in the inter-war period not so much to establish an accurate historical record as to substantiate this theory. Tunaya goes so far as to assert that virtually every event involved members of the *Nakşibendi tarikat* intent upon subverting the state, but he provides no evidence to corroborate this. Tunaya's misrepresentation of Islamic protests remains unchallenged; rather, his interpretation has clearly influenced subsequent scholars such as Çetin Özek and Binnaz Toprak. Özek interprets them as simply the efforts of misguided fanatics to return to a past order, while Toprak classifies each event as either an "uprising" or a "rebellion." As I will demonstrate in this study, these interpretations are not the result of careful analysis and are by no means justifiable.²⁴

²⁴Tarık Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı (The Islamist Movement)* (Istanbul: Simavi Yayınları, 1991); Binnaz Toprak *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981), pp. 66-70. Toprak's approach to these events is somewhat ironic as it undermines the main purpose of her work which is to contradict accepted stereotypes of the "static" nature of religion and its role in the modernization process. Another scholar influenced by Tunaya is Çetin Özek who goes so far as to copy verbatim much of Tunaya's work, including mistakes. See Çetin Özek, *Türkiye'de Gerici Akımlar (Reactionary Movements in Turkey)* (Istanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1968); and *Türkiye'de Lâiklik Gelişim ve Koruyucu Ceza Hükümleri* (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1962). More detailed examinations of these movements are contained in the works of Tunçay (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*) and Ceylan (*Din-Devlet İlişkileri*), although neither author offers a thorough analysis of the material.

Both English and Turkish-language documentary sources relating to Islamic "reaction" and the Turkish Revolution were examined for this thesis. Throughout the period 1923-1938, British consuls were based in the provincial centers of Mersin, Trabzon, Izmir (Smyrna) and Edirne (Adrianople); although stationed in one location, consuls and visiting military attaches were encouraged to undertake extensive trips to other parts of the country. Consequently, there exist many detailed reports relating conditions in and the impact of reform legislation upon different regions of Turkey. Details concerning opposition movements are also contained in consular reports: while these are far more informative than any other English-language source, they were invariably based on a consul's reading of Turkish newspapers and not on first-hand accounts. The quality of consular reports depends largely upon the personal interest of the writer and whether or not he was more interested in recording accurate details or making grandiose prophecies about the future welfare of the Turkish state. In analysing these reports, I have tried to discern when observations were affected more by what an individual expected to see -- in accordance with certain jaded presuppositions about Turks, Muslims or peasants -- than by the reality of a situation. It would appear that this collection of personal observations and records of discussions between British and Turkish officials is as complete a source of information concerning the social and cultural impact of the Turkish Revolution as any single Turkish-language source currently available.²⁵

Newspapers comprise the most comprehensive Turkish-language primary source currently available. Unfortunately their value is limited by a number of factors. Those published prior to late 1928 were printed in Ottoman-Turkish and therefore inaccessible to this researcher. Newspapers were also a means by which the secular-elite manipulated

²⁵The other English-language source utilized for this study was the extensive travel literature from the period published as both articles and as monographs. Although a source of limited use, some travel literature was of particular value because an author had been privileged to visit areas of the country and observe certain aspects of the Turkish Revolution not discussed by British officials. Three scholarly studies that verged on social histories of the period were in fact written in the 1930's by men who knew the country well. These have been especially useful. They were: Henry Allen, *The Turkish Transformation: A Study in Social and Religious Development* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1935). August Ritter von Kral, *Kamâl Atatürk's Land: The Evolution of Modern Turkey* (London: P.S. King & Son, 1938). D. Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk: Social Process in Turkish Transformation* (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939).

public opinion and consequently reported on only those topics deemed permissible. Censorship and intimidation were common, especially in the 1930's.²⁶ Although Turkey had a well-developed press, and a wide variety of newspapers were published throughout the country, the most easily accessible are those published in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara. It is unfortunate that newspapers published in smaller, provincial towns -- those likely to provide insight into local events, conditions and personalities -- are extremely difficult to come by. Even though newspapers from the specific places in which opposition movements occurred may be unavailable, the main Istanbul newspaper, *Cumhuriyet*, and others carried detailed and frequent reports concerning these events and, most importantly, the subsequent arrests, trials and sentences.²⁷

Although official government archives are still closed to researchers, a wide variety of other primary documents useful for ascertaining the particular social location of an event are available in various forms to the creative and persistent researcher. Of these, but two were examined for this study. The first, population censuses from 1927 and 1935, represents published government documents currently available in Turkish archives and libraries.²⁸ Despite the fact that the results of these and other statistical reports may have been considered suspect by European observers at the time, if used critically and in conjunction with contemporary written documents, they can be of great value. It is common for historical studies of the Turkish Revolution to include extensive references to government statistics, but few scholars have undertaken a careful interpretation of their significance to the social history of the period. The censuses do, however, provide adequate information

²⁶See Çetin Yetkin, *Türkiye'de Tek Parti Yönetimi 1930-1945 (The Single Party Administration in Turkey)* (Istanbul: Altın Kitaplar Yayınevi, 1983), pp. 67-69.

²⁷The newspapers examined for this study were: *Cumhuriyet* (Istanbul): January - December, 1930; January - 15 March, 1931; January - December, 1933; January - December, 1935; January - February, 1936. *Son Posta* (Istanbul): May, 1935; January - February, 1936. *Ulus* (Ankara): November - December, 1935; January - February, 1936. *Akşam* (Istanbul): November - December, 1935; January - February, 1936. *Anadolu* (Izmir): December, 1935.

²⁸*Umumi Nüfus Tarihi, 1927* (Ankara: İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, 1929); *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935* (Ankara: Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Directörlüğü, 1937). The 1927 Census was the object of considerable criticism by foreign observers; more recent study, however, has corroborated claims concerning its *accuracy*. See Frederick Shorter, "The Population of Turkey After the War of Independence," *IJMES* 17 (1985) 417-441.

from which solid conclusions can be drawn concerning issues such as migration, ethnic composition, urbanization and the participation of women in the work-force -- all fundamental aspects of social history.

The other form of Turkish-language primary source referred to for this study is the incomplete published transcripts of the Ankara Independence Tribunal (*Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi*) that operated between 1925 and 1927.²⁹ One of the tribunals established following with the Kurdish uprising of 1925, it was responsible for the investigation of other protest movements that occurred in 1925 and 1926, and the transcripts provide insight into both the workings of the courts, the attitudes of the prosecutors, and most importantly, the social background of those accused of participating in these movements. The image of these movements that emerges from the transcripts, however, cannot be considered entirely reliable because the purpose of the tribunals appears to have been to prove Kemalist suspicions regarding opponents of the state rather than the unbiased examination of the events themselves. What is missing from these transcripts and from all historical accounts of the period so far are the detailed, personal testimonies of those involved. If ever these are found, the social history of this period will be greatly enhanced.

My investigation of these original sources revealed two inter-related phenomena symptomatic of the authoritarian state presided over by Mustafa Kemal: first, that Islamic "reaction" was, in fact, very limited; and secondly, that precise information regarding the unfolding of these events is extremely difficult to obtain. Details about specific events are available but they must be treated with circumspection because of the potential for distortion according to ideological perspective. Consequently many aspects of collective Islamic action remain open to speculation, and insufficient evidence exists with which to precisely reconstruct the exact circumstances of protest and the motivation of the protestors. Nevertheless, my extensive research into Islamic "reaction" has provided important insight into the social history of the Turkish Revolution, and the documentary and statistical sources

²⁹Ahmed Nedim, Hzn. *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabıtları 1926 (Transcripts of the 1926 Ankara Independence Tribunal)* (Istanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 1993).

that I examined shed much light on the previously neglected experiences of the majority of the Turkish populace.³⁰ This thesis, therefore, concentrates more on establishing a framework for the social history of the Turkish Revolution in which Islamic "reaction" can be understood, than on the movements themselves.

The organization of this thesis reflects my approach to interpreting individual occurrences of Islamic "reaction." My first concern is to locate the events in a geographic context, and so Chapter Three discusses the insights gained from primary research regarding the impact of economic and infrastructural modernization upon six separate geographic regions that constitute modern Turkey.³⁰ I am also interested in determining the social background of the "reactionaries" themselves: Chapter Four, therefore, analyzes the impact of the cultural, economic and political reform upon the identifiable economic classes within Turkish society. As "reaction" almost exclusively depended on some form of Islamic legitimation, an examination of the relationship between "secular" reforms, Muslim identity and public protest is presented in Chapter Five. Chapter Six is an actual interpretation of the occurrences of Islamic "reaction" themselves according to available information, and in it I indicate how the trends examined in the previous chapters intersect in cases of collective protest. Many of the observations contained in these chapters are original and supplement those contained in thematic -- economic and political -- histories of the period. To my knowledge, British Foreign Office papers have not been used for this purpose, and Turkish newspapers and statistical sources have been subject to minimal analysis.

I precede these chapters with a brief summary of certain trends -- including those related to collective action -- characteristic of late Ottoman social history. This is contrary to the tendency of most Kemalist histories of the period, but it is particularly important historical background considering the relevance of my research to the establishment of a firm foundation for the future study of Turkish social history. Ultimately, the study of Islamic "reaction" sheds light on the efforts of Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish elite to sever public Ottoman-Islamic institutions and symbols from the Muslim-Turkish body and to inculcate a

³⁰The six regions identified are: Black Sea coast, western Anatolia and Aegean coast, Mediterranean coast, eastern Anatolia, central Anatolia, and Thrace. For the purpose of simplifying analysis, eastern and south eastern Anatolia have been combined as have western Anatolia and the Aegean littoral.

new national Turkish identity among the people. Whether by forcibly changing the cultural products of a society they succeeded in fundamentally altering the cultural and social fabric of Anatolia, is the subject of this thesis.

II.

Precursors to Revolution: Aspects of Late Ottoman Social History

I am a Turk; my faith and my race are mighty,
My chest, my essence, is filled with fire.
A man is the slave of his fatherland,
A Turkish son will not stay at home, I shall go.

I shall not let the Book of Muhammed be removed,
I shall not let the banner of Osman be taken,
I shall not let the enemy attack my homeland,
The House of God will not be destroyed, I shall go.

These lands are the home of my fathers,
My house, my village, are the corner of the place,
This is a homeland, this is the arm of God,
A son will not destroy the home of the father, I shall go.
-Mehmed Emin, from *A Voice from Anatolia*, circa 1900³¹

No serious scholarship denies that events and trends of the Turkish Revolution were, to a large extent, a continuation of certain aspects of nineteenth-century Ottoman modernization, albeit in a considerably different context. The significance of more than a century of institutional secularization, political centralization and bureaucratization, and ideological development along positivist lines, to the foundation of the Turkish Republic has been well documented.³² It remains for historians to direct their energies to exploring the impact of these fundamental changes in the upper echelons of Ottoman society upon the complete array of Ottoman social groups and classes. Just as political historians have begun to reconsider the assumption that the nineteenth century was an era of Ottoman decline, so

³¹Translated and excerpted by David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876-1908* (London: Frank Cass, 1977), p. 54.

³²It must be noted that Kemalist scholars today are particularly concerned to emphasize the uniqueness of Mustafa Kemal's reforms, sometimes to the point of ignoring previous Ottoman developments. See Suna Kili, *Türk Devrim Tarihi*, pp. 118-119. The potential for debate is evident in the lively discussions contained in: *Türkiye İş Bankası International Symposium on Atatürk* (17-22 May 1981) (Ankara: Kültür Yayınları İş-Türk Limited, Şirketi, 1984).

too more rigorous and detailed investigation into the modernization process throughout Ottoman society will result in a variegated image revealing the more durable social linkages and practices.³³ An accurate understanding of the social history of the Turkish Revolution necessarily is founded upon an appreciation of the complexities of Ottoman society in its final decades. Although this is not the place for a comprehensive account of late Ottoman social history, it is necessary to emphasize certain trends that were the precursors to the social change resulting from the Turkish Revolution.

An important premise of this study is that demographic changes had a profound impact upon late Ottoman and early Republican Turkish history. Assessment of the numbers of people involved in population movements is exceedingly difficult, and suppositions based on statistical estimates must be very cautious. Nevertheless, the statistics that reflect demographic changes between 1853 and 1924 are so great that impressionistic conclusions carry some validity. As a result of military defeats and the loss of territory to the newly autonomous inhabitants of European Ottoman lands, some 5 million Muslim refugees and immigrants settled in Anatolia between 1853 and 1908. Considering that the population of Anatolia in 1912 has been estimated at approximately 16.5 million, the significance of the fact that close to one third of the Anatolian population was "recently settled" is immediately obvious.³⁴ Not only did the in-migration of large numbers of people result in the transfer of financial capital and occupational skills, it also meant that a significant part of the Anatolian population had left behind old lifestyles and undoubtedly nurtured high hopes about the future. They were prepared for change.

³³Donald Quataert's recent study of small scale manufacturing and cottage industry in the nineteenth century Ottoman economy is the prime example of a more thorough examination of Ottoman society: *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of The Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

³⁴Kemal Karpat has undertaken an extremely detailed study of nineteenth century Ottoman demographics and most of the information contained in this discussion is taken from Karpat's, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). For details concerning late 19th century migrations see p. 55. Karpat notes that although Syria and Iraq received some refugees, the vast majority settled in Anatolia. Estimating the population of Anatolia just prior to World War I is made difficult by shifting provincial and international borders, to say nothing of the steady flow of refugees and immigrants. The figure of 16.5 million does not include Istanbul; it is taken from Justin McCarthy, "Foundations of the Turkish Republic: Social and Economic Change," *MES* 19:2 (April, 1983), p. 140. Karpat's calculations are not dissimilar: see Karpat, p. 190.

Kemal Karpat has identified the three most substantial ethnic groups that settled in Anatolia as Muslim Circassians, linguistically distinct from Anatolian Turks; Muslim Crimean Turks who spoke a language similar to Anatolian Turkish; and Balkan Muslims who were predominantly Turkish.³⁵ Settled as ethnic communities throughout Anatolia, these migrants presented a significant challenge to an Ottoman government intent upon establishing a collective Ottoman identity. Cohesion formed indirectly among all Muslims as a result of growing tension with Christian minority groups -- new immigrants likely had poignant memories of their experiences with Christian nationalism in their previous homelands -- and Ottoman leaders could not help but foster a Muslim concept of identity as the religious composition of the Empire changed towards the end of the century. Nevertheless, the Islamization and Turkification of Anatolia that can be attributed to immigration did not erase common ethnic and experiential bonds among the diverse segments of the Anatolian populace: Kurds, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Tartars, Circassians, Serbs, Laz, Georgians and Turks. Creation of a common national identity and culture was among the greatest challenges faced by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk after 1923.

To do so, Mustafa Kemal and the leaders of the Turkish Republic were able to rely on the previously established infrastructure of the last Ottoman sultans and leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress. The filtration of new ideas and institutional changes throughout the Ottoman provinces in the nineteenth century was undoubtedly imperfect, but the effect of Ottoman reform legislation was at least felt in Anatolian cities and provincial towns. Provincial bureaucracies increased in size and strength while the tax system was revised with hopes of greater efficiency. The penetration of new roads, railways and the telegraph increased the communication of new ideas from Istanbul to the provinces, and also encouraged greater agricultural production and the export of surpluses.³⁶ By 1867, 103

³⁵Ibid, pp. 75-77

³⁶On the spread of transportation and communication see Philip Schoenberg, "The Evolution of Transport in Turkey (Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor) under Ottoman Rule, 1856-1918," *MES* 13:3 (October, 1977) pp. 359-372; Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. Volume 2. *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) pp. 226-228; 243; 306-309.

separate telegraph stations were spread throughout Anatolia,³⁷ and along with the establishment of new provincial police forces -- gendarmes -- by the C.U.P., provided the central government with considerable means of control. The extent to which Anatolian provincial centers had been drawn into Istanbul's sphere of influence was evident in the fact that they were home to political party organizations -- primarily C.U.P. -- after the turn of the century.³⁸ Istanbul, however, remained geographically distant from much of Anatolia; Ankara, on the other hand, was an ideal location from which Turkish leaders could exploit the means of control established by the Ottoman government.³⁹

For all the power apparently inherent in the Ottoman government's extension of means of communication and transportation, it is abundantly evident that Ottoman leaders were resigned to the fact that they had no choice but to resort to exploiting more traditional means of communication in order to forge a degree of unity. In many cases this involved conciliating tribal leaders, but far more often it necessitated alliances with the recognized leaders of Anatolian Muslim society: members of the *ulema* and dervish *tarikats*. All too often, scholars have uncritically applied the "decline paradigm" to Anatolian Islam and propagated the fallacy that the beliefs and practices of Muslims lost significance as a consequence of C.U.P. and later Kemalist reforms. The diminished influence of the *ulema* as an *institution* within late Ottoman politics was indeed striking -- but by no means

³⁷Roderic Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph in the Ottoman Empire," in his *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), p. 142.

³⁸Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 206.

³⁹The tendency is to assume that this penetration was complete and unhindered, which was definitely not the case. The population of provincial towns was minimal compared with that of villages, and topographic realities necessarily caused large parts of Anatolia to remain isolated. Şerif Mardin presents a helpful picture of the eastern Anatolian provincial center of Bitlis at the turn of the century in *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey*, pp. 27-39; 43-65. Ali Karaca, on the other hand, examines Ottoman attempts to establish control throughout Anatolia and improve the welfare of Muslim inhabitants -- it is evident that the lack of trained personnel and money to finance projects was a major hinderance. Ali Karaca, *Anadolu İslahâtı ve Ahmet Şâkir Paşa (1838-1899) (The Reform of Anatolia and Ahmet Şâkir Pasha)* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık Ltd., 1993).

complete⁴⁰ -- when compared to previous centuries, and Mustafa Kemal did inherit a tradition in which the state was relatively free of religious constraints.⁴¹ The Istanbul-based *ulema*, however, were arguably only the tip of the iceberg and the arrival of 5 million Muslim immigrants -- including *ulema* and dervish *şeyhs* -- most surely was of more significance for Anatolian society.⁴² It is also probable that the actions and attitudes of Ottoman reformers forced many of the *ulema* into a new and more intimate relationship with Anatolian Muslims, thus intensifying the religious nature of the rural and urban majority and emphasizing the gap between them and the reforming bureaucrats.⁴³

The nineteenth century is also recognized as an era of renewal for Islamic dervish *tarikats*, many of which permeated Anatolian society. Although Sultan Mahmud II's attacks on the *Bektaşî tarikat* are frequently cited as the start of the decline of sufism in nineteenth century Anatolia, such a conclusion does not hold up under closer scrutiny. The *Bektaşîs* were not rendered extinct, but rapidly resurfaced in the guise of other *tarikats* and later even reestablished their presence in Istanbul. The void left by their removal from positions of power was quickly filled by the increasingly influential leaders of the *Nakşibendi tarikat*.⁴⁴

Tarikats were immersed in the various intrigues of Istanbul's politics but their strengths were primarily derived from extensive networks throughout Anatolian society. The respect commanded by a *şeyh*, of his disciples, as one who could show them the way to greater knowledge and experience of Allah, also translated into a degree of social and

⁴⁰David Kushner is one of the lone voices questioning the decline of the *ulema* and his arguments are very credible; see David Kushner, "The Place of the Ulema in the Ottoman Empire During the Age of Reform (1839-1918)," *Turcica* 19 (1987), pp.51-74.

⁴¹See Şerif Mardin, "Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey," in J. Piscatori, ed. *Islam in the Political Process* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 138-159.

⁴²Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 58. Kemal Karpat, "The *hijra* from Russia and the Balkans: the process of self definition in the late Ottoman State," in D. Eickelman and J. Piscatori, eds. *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 131-152.

⁴³See Michael Gilsenan, *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Arab World* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), pp. 43-45.

⁴⁴İrfan Gündüz, *Osmanlılarda Devlet-Tekke Münasebetleri (Ottoman State-Tekke Relations)* (Istanbul: Seha Neşriyat A.Ş., 1989), pp. 133-156.

political influence that Ottoman leaders envied and feared. Sultan Abdülhamid II's manipulation of Arab *şeyhs* is well known and even leaders of the C.U.P. looked to Anatolian *şeyhs* for support. Despite the fact that efforts at centralization pursued by Mahmut II severely restricted the material resources available to sufi *tarikats*, Abdülhamid II later went to considerable efforts to provide for the education and welfare of Anatolian *şeyhs*. At the same time, a dervish *şeyh's* means of existence clearly extended beyond income from *vakıfs* and might include income derived from his status as a landowner or merchant, as well as generous gifts from his followers.⁴⁵

It is essential, therefore, to recognize that nineteenth century trends established a precedent for the future circumstances of dervish *tarikats* in the Turkish Republic. As some of the most influential members of Anatolian society, *şeyhs* were integral to attempts by the government to reach, and in the case of war, even mobilize the Anatolian population -- Mustafa Kemal's reliance upon *Bektaşî* and *Mevlevî Şeyhs* in the War of Independence is well known.⁴⁶ At the same time, both Ottoman and Republican reformers were determined to limit the influence of *şeyhs* over Anatolian Muslims; however, *tarikat* allegiances and networks could not be completely controlled by a government's manipulation of financial resources and physical institutions -- such as *tekkes* -- and sufism remained a powerful social phenomenon.⁴⁷ Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's fictional description of an Anatolian village during the War of Independence provides a vivid reminder that most Anatolian Muslims revered and even feared the itinerant *şeyhs* who visited villages on a regular basis. A few

⁴⁵On Abdülhamid II and *tarikats* see Gündüz, *Devlet-Tekke Münasebetleri*, pp. 216-234; Butros Abu-Manneh, "Sultan Abdülhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda Al-Sayyarlı," *MES* 15:2 (May, 1979), pp. 131-153; Stephen Duguid, "The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia," *MES* 9:2 (May, 1973), pp. 139-155; and, Cezmi Eraslan, *II Abdülhamid ve Islâm Birliği: Osmanlı Devleti'nin Islâm Siyaseti 1856-1908 (Abdülhamid II and Islamic Unity: The Ottoman State's Islamic Politics 1856-1908)* (Istanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat A.Ş., 1992); pp. 217-222. Barnes has argued that the seizure of *vakıfs* caused the complete decline of *tarikats*. See J.R. Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1987).

⁴⁶Gündüz, *Devlet-Tekke Münasebetleri*, pp. 216-234; Mustafa Kara, *Din, Hayat, Sanat Açısından Tekkeler ve Zaviyeler (Tekkes and Zaviyes From The Perspective of Religion, Life and Art)* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1990), pp. 318-347.

⁴⁷The number of *tekkes* was still significant in 1914: 258 alone in Istanbul and at least 40 in Bursa. See Gündüz, *Devlet-Tekke Münasebetleri*, p. 220. Mustafa Kara, *Bursa'da Tarikatlar ve Tekkeler, 1 (Tarikats and Tekkes in Bursa)* (Bursa: Uludağ Yayınları, 1990), p. 79.

"strangers" (*yaban*) may indeed have rejected the superstitions that nourished such allegiances, but they were very much a minority.⁴⁸

The arrival of five million immigrants and refugees in Anatolia during the second half of the nineteenth century coincided with significant changes occurring in the Ottoman economy: namely, those related to the integration of the Ottoman economy within the world capitalist system. These two separate trends in late Ottoman history were both of tremendous importance to the efforts of future Republican leaders to establish a sound national economy following the War of Independence. Integration into the world economy and the settlement of new farming families in Anatolia resulted in the intensification of agricultural production; new land was brought under cultivation and efforts were made to improve crop yield so as to meet the demand of the European market.⁴⁹ An important exception to the situation in other Middle Eastern regions at this time, it must be emphasized that Anatolian land remained in the hands of peasant-farmers and generally did not concentrate in the hands of a few wealthy landowners. Scholars have concluded that large-scale landownership occurred only in very specific areas: the eastern Anatolian plateau, reclaimed wasteland in the Çukurova Plain (Adana), and certain parts of the Aegean littoral. The increasing influence of merchants and money lenders -- particularly Christians -- resulting from production of export crops was in fact of far greater significance to the Anatolian peasant than maltreatment at the hand of landlords, and contributed to intercommunal conflict following 1914.⁵⁰

It is typically observed that large-scale industry was not a characteristic of the late

⁴⁸Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Yaban (The Stranger)* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1992). This novel was first published in 1932.

⁴⁹Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914* (London: Methuen, 1981), pp. 181-209. On the process of integration see Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London: Verso, 1987) and Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany: SUNY, 1988).

⁵⁰Ibid, p. 62; Çağlar Keyder, *The Definition of a Peripheral Economy: Turkey 1923-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 14; Haim Gerber, *The Social Origins of the Modern Middle East* (London: Mansell, Ltd., 1987), pp. 84-90.

Ottoman economy. Anatolia was, ostensibly, an exporter of raw materials and an importer of finished European products. The primary agents responsible for this trade were members of the Christian minorities. This over-simplification denies the very real importance of manufacturing industries to Ottoman society. Some large industry did in fact exist: mills and factories, often state-sponsored, were located in major centers such as Istanbul, Izmir and Adana, especially after 1880.⁵¹ Far more important were home-based, cottage industries that likely prospered in this period as the quantity of home-woven textile products in fact increased. Although this important element of the Ottoman economy is usually neglected by historians, recent research has revealed how very important the "local" weaving of yarn, silk and carpets was as a form of supplemental income for agrarian peasant families.⁵² The labour force on which this industry depended was dominated by women. Although they were paid extremely low wages, they were a vital component of Ottoman economic production, and when compared with men contributed an equal if not greater amount to a family's well-being. The participation of women in the manufacturing of products consumed within the Ottoman Empire proved even more crucial in the long years of war.⁵³

A final qualification regarding nineteenth century Ottoman industry highlights a further example of the importance of demographic changes: migrants to Anatolia represented almost every social class, and included a significant number of experienced Muslim businessmen possessing varying amounts of capital available for investment in the Ottoman economy. A relatively small group in comparison to the long established Christian merchants, Muslim businessmen gradually increased in numbers and in influence -- to the point that in the charged atmosphere of the C.U.P. era, these Muslim merchants began to receive preferential treatment from the Ottoman government.⁵⁴ They represented the

⁵¹Owen, *The Middle East*, pp. 181-209; Keyder, *The Definition of a Peripheral Economy*, pp. 50-67.

⁵²See Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*.

⁵³See Donald Quataert, "Ottoman Women, Households, and Textile Manufacturing, 1800-1914," in A. Hourani, P. Khoury and M. Wilson, eds. *The Middle East: A Reader* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1993), pp. 255-69; and, Ahmed Emin, *Turkey in the World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 231-238.

⁵⁴Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, pp. 80-81; Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, pp. 75-77.

foundation of a future Turkish bourgeoisie class.

Economic changes in the late nineteenth century resulted in increased European demand for Ottoman raw materials and therefore involvement by European companies in the Ottoman economy: a consequence of this was the growth of Anatolian wage-labour. Whether as coal miners or tobacco processors in the Black Sea region, factory workers in Istanbul, Izmir or Adana, or railway construction labourers throughout Anatolia, the opportunity arose for Anatolian peasants to earn higher, but not very reliable, wages. This not only disrupted previous agricultural labour patterns but also resulted in a new class of "labourers" who demonstrated considerable solidarity in times of economic hardship.⁵⁵

Each of these socio-economic aspects of the late Ottoman Empire was profoundly relevant to the establishment of an Anatolian-based Turkish Republic. A Muslim Turkish merchant-class able to replace minority Christian businessmen, the widespread existence of local self-sufficient industry, and a workforce comprising skilled labourers -- men and women -- were essential to a stable Turkish economy in the 1920's. Integration into the world economy was an unavoidable fact of the nineteenth century, and the Great Depression of 1929-30 had a detrimental impact throughout Turkey. Nevertheless, the inherent strengths of the Turkish economy dating back to the Ottoman Empire enabled a remarkably smooth recovery in conjunction with state-sponsored industrialization.

Contemporaneous with these social and economic developments towards the end of Ottoman history were nascent cultural and ideological trends of particular significance to the cultural policies espoused by the Kemalist elite after 1923. Prior to the late nineteenth century, the word "*Türk*" had possessed extremely derogatory connotations, and an unexpected result of the suppression of political debate during the reign of Abdülhamid II was a vital cultural discourse in which *Turkish* culture and Anatolian "identity" became the foci of much attention. The Young Turk revolution of 1908 initiated something of an "intellectual renaissance" in which various competing ideologies were propounded for the

⁵⁵See Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration* (New York: New York University Press, 1983).

purpose of regenerating Ottoman state and society. It was out of this debate concerning the acceptable degree of westernization and the basis of "Ottoman" identity and loyalty that "Pan-Turkism" and later "Turkish nationalism" evolved. Although the proponents of Turkish nationalism did not reject Islam outright, they argued for its subordination to Turkish culture and the process of modernization. The ebb and flow of Ottoman fortunes following 1908 resulted in the gradual dominance of this particular ideology and the enactment of "social reform" legislation intended to "secularize" education and law, and transform the role of women in society. With the advent of the first World War, a new emphasis was placed by the C.U.P. upon the defense by "Turks" of Anatolia against foreign powers and even local Christian communities.⁵⁶

Ottoman political and ideological turmoil initiated by the *Tanzimat* was paralleled by considerable social upheaval, particularly in the Balkan and Arab provinces. By contrast with the violence connected with popular discontent in these areas, Anatolia appears to have been remarkably "peaceful," such that one historian has argued that there existed an Anatolian "moral economy" or culture "disinclined to use violent protest to register its complaints."⁵⁷ The causes of popular anger and frustration were plenty -- crop failures and famine, high taxation, problems arising from the arrival of new immigrants, and the impact of mechanization upon home industries -- but Anatolians restricted their expression of this to "avoidance" of the government or controlled protests against factories or government institutions. The notable exception to this is, of course, the complex and bitter communal conflict in eastern Anatolia between Armenian and Turkish-Kurdish communities. Furthermore, the years immediately preceding the Young Turk revolution were characterized by increasing economic hardship and this, in turn, ushered in a period of intense labour unrest in the form of many strikes.⁵⁸

⁵⁶On the development of Turkish nationalism see: Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism*; and Ergün Özbudun, "Antecedents of Kemalist Secularism."

⁵⁷Donald Quataert, "Rural Unrest in the Ottoman Empire, 1830-1914," in Farhad Kazemi and John Waterbury, eds. *Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East* (Miami: Florida International University Press, 1991), p. 43.

⁵⁸See Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance*.

"Secularization" over the course of the nineteenth century was also a cause for consternation, particularly among Islamist *ulema* and theological students. The most ominous occurrence of collective action -- at least to budding Turkish nationalists -- was the "Islamic" counter-revolution of April 13, 1909 during which Islamists succeeded in transforming popular grievances stemming from economic, political and cultural changes into a common demand for the restoration of the *şariat*. The event itself demonstrated that not only did Islamic leaders remain influential in Ottoman society but that "secularization" was a preoccupation of an elite out of touch with popular sentiment; public protest in the Turkish Republic would reveal very similar trends. The C.U.P.'s response to these events also foreshadowed the future Turkish state's *reaction* to "Islamic reaction:" the successful crushing of opponents through military might and capital punishment in 1909 was carefully observed by the many military officers involved, not the least of whom was a young Mustafa Kemal.⁵⁹

The Turkish War of Independence

The impact of a decade of war -- most notably World War I and the War of Independence -- upon Anatolian society is a topic that has been largely neglected. This is not the place to examine the devastation of the war or the social upheaval that dominated Anatolia prior to the cessation of hostilities in November, 1922.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, at the expense of ignoring many other vital issues, two themes must be stressed in order to conclude this composite picture of Anatolian society on the eve of the Turkish Republic.

The most obvious consequence of a decade of war-induced tumult, namely death reinforces the theme of demographic change that runs throughout this chapter. It is a sobering irony that the increase of Anatolia's population by 5 million prior to 1914 was roughly equivalent to the estimated decrease of the same population between 1914 and 1922.

⁵⁹Among the sources relating to this event are David Fahri, "The *Şariat* as a Political Slogan -- or the 'Incident of the 31st Mart,'" *MES* 7:3 (October, 1971), pp. 275-99; and Tarık Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, pp. 116-38. Public unrest also occurred in various other Anatolian cities at the same time although information regarding these events is not available at present.

⁶⁰Information is limited to Ahmet Emin, *Turkey in the World War* and this work desperately needs updating. A more recent article is that by Feroz Ahmad, "War and Society under the Young Turks, 1908-18," in A. Hourani et al, eds. *The Middle East: A Reader*, pp. 125-43.

The losses and sufferings of the Christian and particularly Armenian minorities in this period have long been emphasized, while the experiences of the numerically superior Muslim population have largely been ignored. Estimates of Anatolian mortality rate are especially difficult to come by, but available figures reveal an important distinction: that although 40% of the Armenian and 25% of the Greek population died as compared to 18% of the Muslim population, the relative numbers involved were vastly greater with regard to Anatolian Muslims, of whom at least 2.5 million died.⁶¹ No single segment of the population avoided the devastation of war. Even though large parts of Anatolia remained outside the battle theatre during the War of Independence, disease and famine spread to every province. Inevitably, the inhabitants of certain regions suffered more than those of others: the population of the eastern provinces, where Armenian-Muslim-Russian intercommunal warfare had been worst, dropped by 50%, while in the western provinces that Greek forces had occupied between 1919 and 1922, it is estimated that 30% of the women twenty years or older were widows in 1927.⁶²

The population decrease in Anatolia reflected not just war-related deaths, but also the large numbers of emigrants that either fled the intercommunal violence, or were a part of the "population exchange" agreed upon by the Turkish and Greek governments at the end of the war. Of those Armenians and Greeks that had survived, most had left Anatolia by the end of 1924. Approximately 1 million "Greek" Christians were relocated to Greece; they were to be replaced by less than half a million "Turkish" Muslims coming from Greece and Bulgaria.⁶³ It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the impact of the loss of 1/3 of the

⁶¹Justin McCarthy has conducted the most extensive investigation of Anatolian population loss during the wars. His estimates of deaths are as follows: Armenian: 600,000 or 40% of their population; Greek: 313,000 or 25% of their population; and, Muslims: 2,500,000 or 18% of their population. By 1923 only 70,000 Armenians remained in Anatolia while the overall population has been estimated at approximately 13 million. Justin McCarthy, *The Muslim Population of Anatolia, 1878 to 1927* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of California, 1978), pp. 229-336; *Muslims and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia at the End of the Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), pp. 130-133. See also F. Shorter, "The Population of Turkey After the War of Independence."

⁶²McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities*, pp. 118-119; McCarthy, "Foundations of the Turkish Republic," pp. 140-142.

⁶³Ibid, pp. 141-142; Stephen Ladas, *Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: MacMillan, 1932).

Anatolian population by 1923: not only had the population become almost entirely Muslim, but of the survivors, many had been forced to leave their homes and resettle in other parts of Anatolia. Land was available for the taking, but male labour was scarce and many established "traditions" had been destroyed.

The Anatolian Muslim population that emerged victorious from the strife of the War of Independence carried not only the scars of Christian-Muslim hostilities, but also the haunting memories of Muslims opposing each other and ultimately the work of the Independence Tribunals (*Istiklâl Mahkemeleri*) established by the nationalist government in 1920. Not only had fighting occurred between Turkish Muslims and Greeks, Armenians, Kurds and French forces, but a significant portion of the Muslim population had remained committed to the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. Encouraged by Ottoman and British agents and propaganda, these Muslims determined that it was their duty to oppose the Ankara government under Mustafa Kemal.⁶⁴ Consequently, pockets of resistance and even rebellion formed throughout Anatolia and many of those areas not actually occupied by foreign soldiers witnessed their own civil war. It was to counter this threat to the security and success of the nascent nationalist movement and to quell the pervasive sense of chaos and lawlessness throughout Anatolia, that a number of Independence Tribunals were established and then dispatched to extend government control over each and every province.

It is virtually impossible to estimate with any confidence the number of people tried and punished by the Independence Tribunals between 1920 and 1923; documentation is incomplete, and contradictions are readily apparent. Nor do published estimates take into account the numerous "military courts" that were often replaced by the Independence Tribunals, but only after having executed large numbers of those accused of opposing the nationalist government.⁶⁵ Nevertheless those figures that are available reveal that at the

⁶⁴A complete summary of these events is contained in Şerafettin Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi*, 2 Kitap, *Ulusal Direnişten Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ne* (*History of the Turkish Revolution: From National Resistance to the Republic of Turkey*) (Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1992), pp. 165-231.

⁶⁵The most comprehensive information available is contained in Ergün Aybars, *Istiklâl Mahkemeleri* (Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1975). See also *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabıtları - 1926*, pp. xiii-xxxii. See Aybars pp. 117-122 for mention of the impact of military tribunals. Ceylan provides the Islamist perspective that includes the accusation of significant undercounting based on the confessions of members of the tribunals themselves. See Ceylan, *Din-*

very least, 59,000 people were brought before the courts, and of these, 43,000 received a variety of punishments, while 4,000 were sentenced to death.⁶⁶ Most important of all -- and something for which no accurate statistics exist -- is the fact that those executed were people found guilty of inciting opposition and rebellion, and more often than not these leaders were members of the local *ulema* and/or important figures in dervish *tarikats*. The Independence Tribunals which operated in these years thus served not only to impress upon the Anatolian population the fact that the Ankara government could and would extend control throughout the region, but that it would brook no opposition, especially from the traditional leaders of Anatolian society -- the men of religion. It was a theme that would be reemphasized time and again in the Republic of Turkey.

Devlet İlişkileri, I, pp. 96-102.

⁶⁶These statistics are from Aybars, p. 211. As many as 1500 of these sentences were not carried out.

III.

Regional Variations on the "Modernization Symphony" in Asia Minor

"Communication with people on the train and in towns was not forbidden; on the contrary, it was almost encouraged. Thus, we were given a true picture of Turkey and became aware that Turkey as a whole did not present a uniform pattern with normal local deviations, but displayed discrepant stages of development in different sections. We saw an over-all picture of heterogeneity and retardation which called for maximum unity, harmony, and cooperation by us all."

-Ahmet Yalman, circa 1925¹

A significant result of the Turkish War of Independence was the unprecedented amount of exposure that the Turkish elite and masses had to one another in their territorial homeland. If the Ottoman elite had been somewhat removed from the daily life-experiences of the Anatolian population, then the opportunity to fight side by side against occupying armies most certainly forced the emerging Turkish leadership to appreciate some of the realities inherent in the lives of Anatolian peasants. Mustafa Kemal, for one, was convinced of the importance of this close interaction; his much heralded principle of populism (*halkçılık*) found definition in his commitment to travel -- in company with other members of the elite -- throughout Anatolia. Lengthy tours served a variety of purposes: in 1928, drawing on his charisma and popularity as national hero, Atatürk was the driving force behind the campaign to teach the population to read and write the new alphabet and thus create loyal citizens of the Turkish Republic.² Following the disturbing success of the Free

¹Ahmet Yalman, *Turkey in My Time* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), p. 153.

²As one official noted, Atatürk's commitment to this process was so strong that no accessible part of the nation felt certain that they would not be visited and examined on their progress by the Gazi himself. See comments in FO 371/13094/E4759 Edmonds to FO, September 27, 1928. I mention here just two of the many trips undertaken by Mustafa Kemal. Note: Due to the inexperience of the researcher, in some instances Foreign Office document references are not complete. In these cases volume page numbers have been provided in place of document numbers and when the author or recipient of a document is uncertain they are not provided.

Party candidates in municipal elections in late 1930, Mustafa Kemal again undertook an extensive tour of Anatolia, this time to assess the causes of popular discontent and to "arrive at conclusions regarding the everyday life of the people."³ The Turkish Revolution was indeed a period of "legislated reform" emanating from a cadre of elite Turks in Ankara; however, it is important to note that these leaders, although idealists, were also very aware of the post-war social conditions that they sought to change.

The Kemalist era is best known for the extensive program of "secular" reforms introduced between 1923 and 1938. It was also a period characterized by the reconstruction and modernization of the Anatolian economic and political infrastructure. Historians of the Turkish Revolution have constructed an image of this period around "pivotal" dates associated with legislation aimed at secularization and modernization, the result being an unjustified emphasis upon the *unity* of the Turkish experience and the perpetuation of an illusion of *complete* change.⁴ It is no coincidence that this approach to interpreting modern Turkish history has enabled Kemalists to classify collective opposition to the government under the general rubric of Islamic "reaction," without examining the specific circumstances in which opposition was expressed. However, Anatolia is a geographically diverse region and Anatolian society a multitude of evolving social groups. Both of these truths defy a simplistic classification -- be it in terms of periodization, inter-regional continuity, or "elite" and "mass" amalgams -- for the purposes of historical analysis.

The present and subsequent two chapters are designed to present a more nuanced interpretation of the modernization process and to reveal how "national" trends actually varied according to particular geographic regions and segments of the population. This

³On this tour see FO 371/14585/E6335 Clerk (Angora) to FO, November 19, 1930.

⁴This emphasis is no doubt encouraged by publications such as the Republican People's Party statistical collection published in 1938: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, *On Beşinci Yıl Kitabı (Fifteenth Year Book)* (Ankara, 1938). This presents impressive statistics and reports as proof of the successful modernization of Turkey. To have presented more detailed reports, on a regional or vilayet level, would have necessitated far more qualified conclusions. Turkish libraries also hold various Vilayet "handbooks" published at different times and it was disappointing to discover that these contained very little of a historical nature -- they too appear committed to perpetuating the an image of unhindered progress. Kemal Karpat notes a number of local histories published by the People's Houses in the 1930's that might be of some relevance. It has not been possible to examine these for this work. See Kemal Karpat, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey 1931-1951," *Die Welt Des Islams*, 15 (1974) pp. 69-84.

interpretation is unlike any other in the historiography of modern Turkey.⁵ A genuine "social history" of any one region, or social group for that matter, would necessarily be based upon *local* newspapers and documentary sources, and thus the images in this chapter are incomplete because only limited information can be gleaned from the travellers' accounts, diplomatic records, and government statistics used for this study. Nevertheless, these social-historical insights derived from investigation into the circumstances of Islamic "reaction" provide a comprehensive framework within which further research into the social history of the Turkish Revolution might be conducted. This chapter places individual occurrences of Islamic "reaction" in a regional context, the purpose being to consider whether characteristics unique to an area or the impact of economic and infrastructural modernization upon it made it more likely to be the location of public protest. Islamic "reaction" was not limited to any one region of Turkey, and so examination of the various regional contexts results in a comprehensive survey of the impact of modernization throughout Anatolia.

It is a paradox that concentration upon the history of diverse regions and social groups in this period results in a chronological "blur," because while the available sources reveal both common themes and unique aspects, they only rarely document the specific impact of a particular piece of legislation at the local level. Consequently, prior to examining the impact of the Turkish Revolution on Turkey's geographic regions, I will briefly establish the chronological context in which these changes occurred. The year 1930 was pivotal in both the economic and political history of the Turkish Revolution; the change in Kemalist politics being directly linked to the violent Islamic "reaction" in Menemen in December. Until March, 1929 Mustafa Kemal had maintained control over the country by

⁵The shift to local studies is one of the significant trends delineated by Edmund Burke in new approaches to Middle Eastern social history: "The pulling and tugging of factions, the pressures of political and economic exploitation at the level of everyday life, the influence of local political and religious figures shaped the responses of particular groups." Edmund Burke III, "Islam and Social Movements: Methodological Reflections," in Edmund Burke III and Ira Lapidus eds, *Islam, Politics and Social Movements*, p. 23. The two most recent "text book" studies of Turkish history must be credited with providing the reader with an awareness of the varied impact of modernization, particularly upon social groups, but because both deal with a much larger period of history, their examination of the Turkish Revolution is limited. See Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1993); and Eric Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1993).

means of the repressive Law for the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükuin Kanunu*) and the associated Independence Tribunals. The year 1930 witnessed a second effort (the first being the Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25) to introduce multi-party politics, this time at Mustafa Kemal's direct behest. The subsequent popularity of the new Free Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), however, was particularly disturbing to the Kemalist elite, and following its dissolution in November, Mustafa Kemal initiated a thorough reformation of the Republican People's Party and state apparatus. One element of this was the closure of the semi-independent Turkish Hearths (*ocak*) -- cultural institutions first established by the Young Turks -- and the proliferation of the new People's Houses (*halkevi*): the latter were under the direct control of the Republican People's Party and were integral to Mustafa Kemal's attempts to transmit notions of secularism and nationalism to the Anatolian populace. The People's Houses provided an important compliment to the slowly expanding system of public education during this period, although neither institution (in 1930-31 there were some 6,598 primary schools, and 164 "advanced" schools; by 1938 some 210 People's Houses had been opened) was capable of effecting revolutionary changes upon a population mostly scattered among some 35,000 villages.⁶ Economically, 1930 marked the conclusion of a 7 year period during which the government's ability to implement protective tariffs had been restricted by the Lausanne Treaty. Agriculture had fared far better than industry in these years, but the onset of unusual natural conditions and global economic depression in 1929 impoverished all sectors of the Turkish economy. The Turkish government's response was to restrict imports and exports, encourage the purchase of "Turkish" products, and provide assistance to farmers. Only in 1932 did it introduce the first "Five Year Plan" by which the government would play a direct role in rapid industrialization.⁷

⁶Studies useful to understanding the political-institutional changes in this period are Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi'nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*; Çetin Yetkin, *Türkiye'de Tek Parti Yönetimi 1930-1945*; Walter Weiker, *Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey: The Free Party and its Aftermath*; François Georgeon, "Les Foyers Turcs a L'Epoque Kémaliste (1923-1931)," *Turcica* 14 (1982), pp. 168-215; Kemal Karpat, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey -- 1931-1945;" and, Ehud Houminer, "The People's Houses in Turkey," *Asian and African Studies* 1 (1965), pp. 81-121.

⁷The most lucid discussion of the Turkish economy in this period is Korkut Boratov, "Kemalist Economic Policies and Etatism," in Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun, eds. *Atatürk Founder of a Modern State* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1981).

The Black Sea Coast

Extending from Hopa in the east to Zonguldak in the west, some 6000 small villages were tucked into the valleys along the mountainous Black Sea coast. The two most populous districts were Trabzon and Samsun, and it is with relation to them that the most extensive historical documentation exists. Following the passage of legislation outlawing the fez and dervish *tarikats* in late 1925, the most violent and widespread unrest in the country occurred in the eastern Black Sea vilayet of Rize, known for its fiercely independent population of Laz.⁸ Trabzon, the largest city in this region, was frequently noted to be home to disaffected members of the elite, and Samsun was one of the very few municipalities in which Free Party candidates were successfully elected in 1930.

Statistics indicate that although the region's population was almost completely Muslim, there did exist pockets of identifiable ethnic groups: Rize's population was predominantly Laz, while Samsun vilayet became home to some 22,000 immigrants from western Thrace between 1923 and 1928. As was frequently the case, these immigrants were expected to "re-people villages which [were] literally shapeless masses of ruins," and many died as a result of insufficient food and shelter.⁹ In contrast to the linguistic homogeneity of Trabzon vilayet, speakers of Circassian and Georgian languages comprised some 11,000 (3.3%) of Samsun's population in 1935.¹⁰ The pre-Republican residents of this region had been accustomed to pledging allegiance to patronymic groups that retained a certain degree of independence in spite of Ottoman efforts to effect domination of the region.¹¹

An area not commonly associated with the destruction incurred by the War of

⁸The Laz were apparently an indigenous eastern Black Sea people; partly as a result of the Turkish government's efforts to de-emphasize ethnic heterogeneity information relating to the Laz is particularly difficult to discover. For details on this unrest see Chapter Six. Little is known about the event, although the intensity and scale of the unrest were almost certainly the result of the strong collective ethnic identity characteristic of the Laz.

⁹See comments in FO 371/10867/p.6-20 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, February, 1925.

¹⁰*Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935*. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, *İstatistik Yıllığı 1929 C.2 (1929 Statistical Yearbook)* (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1929).

¹¹Michael Meeker, "The Great Family Aghas of Turkey: A Study of a Changing Political Culture," in R. Antoun and I. Harik eds., *Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), pp. 237-247.

Independence, villages, towns and cities along the Black Sea were in fact devastated by bitter inter-communal conflict in the same period. Although Trabzon, which could claim the benefits of structural improvements undertaken by occupying Russian forces during the first World War, emerged in 1922 in far better condition than Samsun and its hinterland, no part of the coast had escaped the effects of the Pontus Rebellion¹² and other instances of violence. Both Muslims and Christians alike suffered tremendously: while the Ottoman vilayet of Trabzon had been home to some 258,465 Greek Christians in 1911-1912 (17% of the population), the 1927 census reveals that the same region contained but 95 Greek speaking inhabitants. According to one report, "Turks and Christians kept burning each other's villages for years with the result that in all the region between Samsun and Sivas practically not one village escaped destruction."¹³

The economic advantages possessed by Trabzon following the war -- largely a result of the fact that it was the sole terminus for over-land Persian trade -- had been lost by 1928 and it would appear that the "balance of trade" began to shift in favour of Samsun where railway construction had begun and where an American operated tobacco processing plant was located. The export economy of the western Black Sea region, based on hazelnuts, eggs, timber and tobacco, began to increase in the 1920's. By contrast, the two essential components to Trabzon's economy, roads and port facilities, remained in poor condition and Trabzon city had neither running water nor electricity in 1927. At the same time, grandiose plans to modernize Trabzon failed to materialize: local Turks initiated the restoration of damaged houses and creation of public gardens with an enthusiasm that quickly waned.¹⁴

¹²The Pontus rebellion was an effort by Greek inhabitants along the coast to establish an independent Greek state during the War of Independence. It encompassed most of the region between Sinop and Rize.

¹³FO 371/10867/p.6-20 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, February, 1925. Statistics are from *Umumi Nüfus Tarihi, 1927*. McCarthy has estimated that the population of the Black Sea region in 1922 was some 20% (550,000) less than it might have been had war not been fought. Trabzon as a city went from being cosmopolitan -- 43% of the population being non-Muslim prior to the war -- to almost completely Muslim after the war (1.2% non Muslim). McCarthy, *The Muslim Population of Anatolia*, pp. 108-139, and "Foundations of the Turkish Republic," p. 142.

¹⁴For descriptions of the region see FO 371/10867/E1093 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, 12 February, 1925; FO 371/11555/E3930 Edmonds, June, 1926; FO 371/12320/E3236 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 12 June, 1927; FO 371/12320/E3234 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 12 May, 1927; FO 371/13094/E5860 Were (Trebizond) to Clerk, 15 November, 1928.

Dependence upon profits earned from trade with other countries rendered many Black Sea inhabitants vulnerable to the drop in prices resulting from the Great Depression. Combined with the consequences of unnatural weather patterns in 1928-1929 (for example the ruination of hazelnut crops in certain areas) this brought about considerable hardship, including starvation, for much of the population.¹⁵ Nevertheless, government assistance to destitute farmers eventually ameliorated these problems and the improved economic situation of the entire country in the 1930's was reflected by increased hazelnut and tobacco exports from the Black Sea coast. Simultaneously, efforts to modernize the region gradually took effect: in 1932 Samsun was connected to Ankara via Sivas by railway, and in 1936-1937 extensions reached the western city of Zonguldak, the one part of the region to benefit directly from industrialization by way of the establishment of a "semi-coking" plant in 1935, and later a large electrical power plant; in 1934 a new road leading inland from Trabzon to Gümüşhane was also completed, its construction being of significant benefit to local economies.¹⁶

Politically, the eastern Black Sea region was viewed with suspicion by the government in Ankara: not only was it remembered to be a part of the country whose inhabitants had supported the Progressive Republican Party in 1924, but the proximity of Trabzon to the Soviet border led to fears of Bolshevik influence. The British consul to Trabzon frequently commented upon the prevalence of local resentment towards the Republican People's Party inspectors appointed to Trabzon and Rize. The local Turkish Hearth, supposed to be the primary means by which modern ideas and western culture were disseminated to local inhabitants, proved to have so little support that activities appeared to

¹⁵On the effects of economic depression on the region see FO 371/13077/E3997 Matthews (Trebizond) to Clerk, 7 July, 1928; FO 424/272/E1935 Edmonds, 9 April, 1930; FO 371/15381/E4252 Matthews (Trebizond), August, 1931.

¹⁶Regional improvements are mentioned in FO 371/16983/E529 Turkey Annual Report, 1932; FO371/-17971/E6905 Matthews (Trebizond) to Loraine, 17 October, 1934; FO 371/20087/E381 Matthews (Trebizond), October, 1936.

cease in 1928.¹⁷ By contrast, in Samsun government programs appeared far more successful, and in 1935 the local People's House was a thriving institution, providing musical and sporting activities for local Turks as well as promoting lessons in farming methods and hygiene in surrounding villages.¹⁸ It is also from a report on Samsun that we learn of efforts to encourage the acceptance of the new alphabet: adults aged 16-40 were required to attend school, and the city's police kept careful records of those who had passed examinations, and even visited local coffee houses to ensure that all customers were literate.¹⁹ Gradually, the Republican People's Party succeeded in extending its control over Trabzon and Rize as well, removing those people who persisted in opposition and successfully coopting other local notables into its service.²⁰

The Mediterranean Coast

It is, perhaps, surprising that the Mediterranean coast of Turkey -- in particular the fertile plains of Antalya and Adana-Mersin -- was *not* the site of considerable popular unrest. Although, at different times between 1923 and 1938, British officials noted the prevalence of popular resentment towards the government, opposition was limited to the considerable support offered to the Free Party in both Adana and Antalya. It was also from this region that a number of alleged "Islamic reactionaries" were brought to Menemen to stand trial in early 1931, but none of these appears to have been involved in vocal public protest. This passivity is surprising because the Adana-Mersin region was home to a variety of identifiable ethnic groups and local officials were known for their intolerance of non-Turks. A significant number of immigrants settled in the region in this period, such that in 1935 there

¹⁷On political and cultural issues see FO 371/11528/E4053 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, 15 June, 1926; FO 371/12320/E3629 Clerk (Constantinople) to FO, 22 August, 1927.

¹⁸See Lilo Linke, *Allah Dethroned: A Journey Through Modern Turkey* (London: Constable and Co., Ltd, 1937), pp. 169-175.

¹⁹Henry Allen, *The Turkish Transformation*, p. 126.

²⁰See for example the case of one Mahmut Bey mentioned in Meeker, "The Great Family Aghas of Turkey," pp. 248-264. On attempts by the local Republican People's Party Inspector to legislate change in the region see FO 371/20087/E2013 Falanga (Trebizond) to Loraine, 18 March, 1936; FO 371/20087/E2389 Falanga (Trebizond) to Loraine, 16 April, 1936; FO 371/20087/E3075 Falanga (Trebizond) to Loraine, 19 May, 1936.

were communities of Greek, Bulgarian, Yugoslavian and Syrian born "Turks."²¹ Immigration statistics, however, reveal only half the tale, for Arabic-speaking residents constituted 5.2% (12,700) of the population of Mersin vilayet and 4.6% (17,600) of the population of Adana vilayet, and a small population of resident Kurds was apparently supplemented by as many as 100,000 seasonal labourers each year.²² It is in this multi-lingual and multi-ethnic context that the activities of the local Turkish Hearths and People's Houses, particularly those in Mersin, must be placed: in response to the prominence of foreign languages, officials attempted at various times to enforce the use of Turkish. In 1925 the focus was upon Mersin port-workers, but in 1934 the battle was against not only foreign languages but also "oriental" clothing. Guilty of transgressing strict local regulations, Arabs, Kurds, and Greeks were arrested amid rumours of imminent deportation to the interior. A visit from the Turkish Minister of the Interior was required to temper such discrimination.²³

Irregardless of linguistic or ethnic identity, inhabitants of the Mediterranean coast were all subject to the varying economic fortunes of the period. The region of Turkey least affected by war, its economy grew rapidly in the mid 1920's due to a prosperous cotton trade.²⁴ By way of contrast with the eastern Black Sea coast, projected reconstruction and modernization was in fact carried out as planned: Mersin benefitted from its importance as the country's premier Mediterranean port, while Adana became a centre for local industry

²¹In 1935 Seyhan (Adana) and İçel (Mersin) vilayets were home to 10,960 Greek, 2,247 Yugoslavian, 2,716 Bulgarian and 3,943 (Seyhan only) Syrian-born residents. Statistics from *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935*.

²²This figure -- perhaps an exaggeration -- was obtained from Turkish authorities by British diplomats and mentioned in FO 424/262/E3822 Edmonds (Constantinople), 17 June, 1925. The urban Arab population was even more significant: 9.9% in Adana and 9.5% in Mersin. According to the 1935 census there were 7,108 Kurds resident in the two vilayets.

²³For details see FO 371/10870/p.203-05 Hoare (Mersina), 1925; FO 371/17958/E6178 (Mersina), September, 1934; FO 371/20864/E1790 (Mersina), March, 1936.

²⁴Adana-Mersin was occupied by French forces and Antalya by Italian forces during the War of Independence. Christian losses in the Ottoman province of Adana were some 89,000 while Muslim losses amounted to 42,000. However, a concern that pervaded the lives of many Turks in this region was that it would be the site of a not-too-distant invasion by Italian forces, especially if the Turkish government forced a show down with the British concerning the Mosul question in 1926. See FO 371/11528/E6437 Hoare, 22 November, 1926. For an early account of these cities see FO 424/262/E3822 Edmonds (Constantinople), 17 June, 1925.

and education.²⁵ Nevertheless, popular contentment stemming from a healthy economy quickly evaporated following unexpected floods and drought and the onset of the Depression in 1930. Exports and imports ceased, businesses declared bankruptcy, and farmers struggled to pay back large debts. It was hardly surprising that the Free Party, stressing the need for new economic policies, attracted considerable support under such difficult conditions.²⁶

Inhabitants of Adana-Mersin were subject to considerably more direct control by the government than their compatriots on the Black Sea -- the activities of the Turkish Hearths and People's Houses being but one example. The government's commitment to modernization through education was evident in its establishment of elementary and secondary schools in both Mersin and Adana as well as an agricultural, a commercial and two teacher's schools in Adana. Similarly, in a region renowned for the presence of malaria, particular emphasis was laid upon the control of disease: doctors and medicine were dispatched to local villages, and on market-days vaccinations were carried out *en masse* in Adana.²⁷ Local representatives of the Republican People's Party made their presence felt by controlling the publication of local newspapers as well as by employing questionable means to suppress candidates of the Free Party. Accounts of the electoral process suggest that not only was voting rigged in favour of the Republican People's Party, but that local officials imprisoned Free Party candidates, intimidated their supporters, and forced voters to vote in favour of the

²⁵On the effects of modernization see FO 371/11528/E7605 (Mersina), December, 1926; FO 371/12320/E3350 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 21 June, 1927; FO 371/13094/E1446 Chaffy (Mersina), March, 1928; FO 371/13094/E1987 (Mersina), April, 1928; FO 371/13094/E2006 Chaffy (Mersina) to Edmonds, 9 April, 1928.

²⁶On these conditions see FO 371/14583/E2034 Edmonds, 14 April, 1930; FO 371/14583/E2859 Edmonds, 27 May, 1930; FO 371/14583/E5507 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 8 October, 1930; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930; and editions of *Cumhuriyet* for March and December, 1930. Foreign Office documents do not shed much light on the local economy of the 1930's except that Mersin was to suffer from the diversion of exports via the town of Payas with the construction of a new rail link in 1934. By 1936 the entire Çukurova Plain was said to be extremely prosperous. See W.E.D. Allen, "Anatolian Spring," *The Nineteenth Century* (October, 1936), p.457.

²⁷On education see FO 371/12320/E3350 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 21 June, 1927; FO371/14583/E2034 Edmonds, 14 April, 1930. On public health see FO 371/17958/E1542 (Mersina), 1934; and Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, p.242-259.

government.²⁸

Two anthropological studies carried out in villages located on the eastern Mediterranean coast shed light upon changing patterns of land ownership that were particularly prominent in this region during the Kemalist ear. The Çukurova was but one region in which a decrease in the Christian tenants had resulted in the occupation of vacated land by semi-nomadic Muslim Turks. Land-holding patterns varied from village to village, local landlords frequently possessing more influence than the government. In those situations where land was privately owned, the gradual division of land between individual members of a family and an increased concentration upon cash crops dependent on a form of mechanized agriculture rendered farmers vulnerable to the changing market, and ultimately to money lenders and landlords. While not a new phenomenon, the growth of a landless labour class in the Mediterranean region during the Turkish Revolution was a direct result of economic change, modernization, and regional socio-economic characteristics. Similar circumstances were to develop throughout Anatolia between 1923-38, paving the way for considerable social strife in the 1940's and 1950's.²⁹

Western Anatolia

Documentary sources relating conditions in Western Anatolia (which includes both the Aegean coastal plains and the inland vilayets of Eskişehir, Afyon and Isparta) suggest that this, undeniably most "modern" part of Turkey, was fraught with economic difficulties and disappointments and that the populace felt considerable resentment towards the policies of the Kemalist government. The city of Izmir was infamous as a center of opposition in which former members of the C.U.P., communists, and the most ardent supporters of the Free Party could be found. It was also in western Anatolia that some of the most significant

²⁸On local politics see FO 371/11528/E6437 Hoare, 22 November, 1926; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930.

²⁹Mübeccel Kiray, "Social Change in Çukurova: A Comparison of Four Villages: in P. Benedict et al ed., *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974), 179-203. Joseph Szyliowicz, *Political Change in Rural Turkey, Erdemli* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966). Although these studies were both carried out in the multi-party period, both Kiray and Szyliowicz devoted considerable efforts to learning from their informants how village life had been affected by the Turkish Revolution.

movements of Islamic "reaction" were located: Menemen (1930), Bursa (1933), Milas-İsparta (1935), and Manisa (1936). In spite of the fact that it could boast the most elaborate transportation and economic infrastructure in the country, western Anatolia was subject to the same challenges facing every other region: geographic hindrances to development and uncertain economic conditions. It comprised some 9,000 separate localities, comparatively few of which were linked together by road or railway; the isolated nature of the town of Çanakkale and even the city of Bursa was the rule rather than the exception.³⁰ Perhaps more than those of any other region, the communities of Western Anatolia also faced the greatest task of reconstruction following the War of Independence.

Virtually the entire territory had been subject to foreign occupation and the devastation resulting from local communal violence as well as battles between Greek and Turkish forces was tremendous. The population base of the region in 1923 was drastically reduced and survivors had not only to deal with the trauma incurred by the war but also to reestablish their homes in completely ruined towns and villages. Muslim and Christian losses were staggering, the Ottoman province of Aydın alone losing some 45% (1 million people) of its population. Following the war, fully one third of women of a marriageable age found themselves widowed.³¹ Survivors were also subject to epidemics; one report estimated that just one third of new-born children survived past the age of one. As a result of this human loss, labour was scarce and certain industries and forms of agriculture

³⁰Whereas Çanakkale was comparatively small and isolated due to surrounding mountains, Bursa was one of the country's largest cities and home to significant industry. Nevertheless, no railway connected Bursa with another major center in 1933 and the poor condition of roads was a great hinderance to the incorporation of Bursa within the national economy. See Carl Stotz, "Coastal Lands of the Sea of Marmara," *The Journal of Geography* 32:8 (November, 1933), pp. 305-315; "The Human Geography of the Dardanelles," *The Journal of Geography* 34:5 (May, 1935), pp. 173-186; and, "The Bursa Region of Turkey," *The Geographical Review* 29:1 (January, 1939) pp. 81-100.

³¹Prior to the war, the Ottoman vilayets of Hudevingar and Aydın (and the independent sancak of Biga) had some 727,000 (17%) Greeks and Armenians. In 1935, İzmir vilayet was home to 21,000 non-Muslims, and Bursa, 2,213. The proportion of non-Muslims in İzmir city went from 61.5% to 13.5%. Some 518,635 Muslims were lost from the region such that in 1922 the Ottoman vilayet of Aydın was 26% and Hudevingar 17% below its natural population level. Statistics from *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935*; McCarthy, *The Muslim Population of Anatolia*, pp. 106-139; and, "Foundations of the Turkish Republic," 142.

dependent upon skilled workers (formerly Christians) stagnated.³²

The government's commitment to restoring the economy and infrastructure of western Anatolia exceeded its commitment to all other regions, except perhaps to the city of Ankara itself. The city of Izmir in the 1920's was the archetype for reconstruction and modernization: new roads, electricity, telephones, government offices and houses could all be observed. Through local Turkish Hearths members of the Republican People's Party eagerly disseminated new ideas providing classes on hygiene as well as foreign languages. The region was also the site of an extensive education system, including agricultural schools in both Izmir and Bursa. Throughout the period it was the primary target of government-assisted industrialization, and prior to the introduction of the first Five Year Plan, the establishment of sugar factories, the weaving of carpets, and the manufacture of porcelain tiles were all encouraged. In the 1930's, factories were opened throughout the region: textile mills in Nazili and Bursa, a jute factory in Izmir, a silk factory in Gemlik, a paper plant in Izmit, and a sponge factory in Bodrum. Such intensive development, however, was also accompanied by extremely tight control by the government -- often through a large military presence -- over Western Anatolia. That national economic policies having a considerable impact on the region were not subject to local input was the cause of much dissatisfaction.³³

The problems faced by inhabitants of western Anatolia were too great to be solved quickly or easily in the uncertain economic climate of the period. The plight of newly settled immigrants in the Black Sea region has already been mentioned; however, it was in western Anatolia that immigrants were most numerous and faced the greatest challenges. Throughout the period, waves of immigrants were settled in villages and towns, but were frequently placed in situations demanding skills which they did not possess, and government attempts to provide material assistance rarely ameliorated extensive needs. The cities of Bursa and Menemen (both sites of Islamic "reaction") both received such an influx of

³²On post-war conditions in the area around Izmir see FO 371/10228/E9733 Edmonds (Smyrna) to Lindsay, 31 October, 1924; FO 371/10869/p.219-20 Military Consul, 1925.

³³On developments in this region see FO 371/10869/p.165 Colonel Woods, December, 1925; FO 371/12320/E3236 Watkinson (Smyrna) to Clerk, 20 July, 1927; FO 371/12320/E3352 Consular Officer (Smyrna) to Clerk, 27 July, 1927; and, Von Kral, *Kamâl Atatürk's Land*, pp. 96-135.

immigrants, that by 1935 28% of their urban populations had been born outside of Turkey; between 1928 and 1934, the vilayet of Izmir alone received some 60,000 immigrants.³⁴ Primarily of Greek origin, these newly settled communities were frequently cited as being particularly resentful towards the government. Immigrants and survivors of the war alike, were all subject to frustration with government efforts to stabilize the economy, and frequently found cause to complain about high taxes and prices, the scarcity of products as a result of monopolies, government corruption, and the complicated bureaucratic procedures that hindered the marketing of farm products. Global depression and natural disasters only exacerbated matters. The overwhelming support accorded the Free Party leader, Fethi Bey, upon his visits to Izmir, Manisa and Balıkesir in September, 1930, suggests that even concerted efforts at modernization by the government had not solved the most immediate concerns of Anatolian Turks.³⁵

It is from diverse descriptions of specific locations in western Anatolia that insight into the uneven nature of modernization is gained. It is abundantly evident that as conditions improved in the 1930's, the process of modernization did not erase previous customs, but that newly established institutions and practices co-existed with those characteristic of Ottoman-Anatolian culture. The latter were in no way instantaneously rendered irrelevant: in both Bursa and Izmir, visitors could not help but comment on the apparent contradictions between cinemas, banks, street lights, and taxis -- all associated with people clothed in "western dress" -- and narrow Ottoman streets, bazaars and mosques -- all associated with turbaned *hocas* and veiled women.³⁶ Within western Anatolia as a whole, different locales

³⁴Between 1921 and 1928 immigrants arrived in large numbers in: Balıkesir (37,174), Bursa (34,453), Izmir (31,502), Manisa (13,829) and Kocaeli (28,187). Statistics from *Umumi Nüfus Tarihi, 1927; Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935; İstatistik Yıllığı, 1929*. On government aid given to immigrants see Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, *On Beşinci Yıl Kitabı*, pp. 395-401.

³⁵Regional economic difficulties are discussed in FO 371/11528/E2142 Chamberlain to FO, 23 June, 1926; FO 371/11528/E4051 Chamberlain to FO, 26 June, 1926; FO 371/11528/E6437 Hoare, 22 November, 1926; FO 371/12330/E1761, April, 1927; FO 371/13094/E2531 Morgan (Smyrna) to Clerk, 19 April, 1928; FO 371/13089/E5621 Morgan (Smyrna) to Clerk, 26 November, 1928. On the Free Party in Izmir see FO 371/14585/E4978, 8 September, 1930.

³⁶See descriptions in Lockie Parker, "Green Bursa," *Asia* 34 (December, 1934), pp. 746-750; and also a description of Kütahya in *Cumhuriyet*, 22 Kânunuevvel (December), 1930.

also presented widely divergent images: prosperity in the city of Kocaeli, and destitution (a need for drinking water, a drainage system, and a medical dispensary) in the town of Tavaş. Most jarring of all, was the contrast between the rebuilt, modern city of Afyon and the semi-isolated, ruined villages of its hinterland.³⁷

Thrace

The one region in which opposition movements appear not to have taken root was the area geographically separate from Anatolian Turkey, Thrace. A territory frequently over-run by armies in the nineteenth century and completely occupied by Greek forces until the conclusion of hostilities in 1922, "European Turkey" enjoyed unprecedented stability from 1923 onwards. Information regarding this region is particularly hard to come by, but it is probably difficult to overemphasize the physical devastation and reduced population with which Turkish officials were faced. As one British diplomat observed, even in 1927, it appeared as though "life had departed from these regions and left death permanently in charge."³⁸

Nevertheless, these conditions provided the Turkish government with an unequalled opportunity to implement its program of modernization. As a result more than 230,000 immigrants from Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, were settled in Thrace,³⁹ and the local Turkish Hearths and People's Houses were charged with the task of forging a common sense of Turkish nationalism. Assisted by elementary schools in "every village," and a large contingent of gendarmes and Republican People's Party officials, Kemalist

³⁷See FO 371/20868/E3448 Dixon, June, 1937. On Kocaeli see *Ulus*, 8 İlkânun (December), 1935; *Cumhuriyet*, 21 Şubat (February), 1933.

³⁸References to Thrace following the war are contained in FO 371/11548/E1497, 1926; FO 371/11554/E2873, 1926; FO 371/12326/E749, February, 1927.

³⁹Between 1923 and 1928 arrivals were as follows: 49,441 in Edirne; 33,119 in Kırklareli; 33,718 in Tekirdağ. In 1934 the Turkish government initiated a new policy aimed at repopulating and Turkifying the region: this included settling some 84,675 Romanian, Bulgarian and Yugoslavian immigrants. Inevitably, rapid urbanization resulted: Kırklareli city grew some 63% and Luleburgaz some 116% between 1927 and 1935. Statistics from *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935; İstatistik Yıllığı, 1929; Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, On Beşinci Yıl Kitabı*, p. 401; Von Kral, *Kamâl Atatürk's Land*, pp. 203-212.

disciples witnessed considerable success.⁴⁰ A British school teacher, visiting the region in 1933, recorded a typical scene: upon arriving in a village marked by a church converted into a mosque by the addition of a minaret, a brand new school building and medical dispensary, and a village hall, this teacher was greeted by the two people representative of the co-existent sources of power in the region -- a policeman and *hoca*.⁴¹ In the economic sphere, because the region's farmers had a constant market in nearby Istanbul for whatever surplus they could produce, they were among those Turks least affected by the Depression. The apparent lack of opposition to Mustafa Kemal in European Turkey suggests that the devastation of war, the arrival of large numbers of immigrants, and the continued relevance of religious officials, when combined with cultural policies aimed at Turkification and secularization, were not the inevitable precursors of social unrest.⁴²

Eastern Anatolia

By way of contrast, the eastern expanse of the Anatolian plateau was (and continues to be) the most unstable region in Turkey: Erzurum city (1925) and the district of Beşiri (Siirt Vilayet -- 1935) were sites of Islamic "reaction" to the government, and it was in this area that the Şeyh Sait (1925) and other Kurdish rebellions occurred. Characterized by an inhospitable climate and mountainous terrain and desert, eastern Anatolia -- particularly the

⁴⁰The government benefitted from an already established rail and road system in the region. In 1926 a sugar refinery was built in Alpu. Other descriptions of the region are found in FO 371/10858/E3341, June, 1925; FO 371/14583/E2034 Edmonds, 14 April, 1930.

⁴¹Brian Stanley, "Turkish Schools: Seen Through the Eyes of an English Visitor," *School and Society* 40 (December 15, 1934), pp. 814-819.

⁴²Istanbul, although technically split between Thrace and western Anatolia, is arguably in a class of its own. A city of some 700,000 in 1927, Istanbul remained -- along with Izmir -- the country's main centre of international trade and was therefore severely affected by the Depression. The shift of government ministries from Istanbul to Ankara must also have had some impact. Foreign Office reports indicate that Istanbul, home to many disaffected members of the elite, was represented by a press frequently critical of Ankara's policies. As the Ottoman capital, Istanbul was also home to influential Kurdish organizations dervish *tarikats*, and members of the *ulema* from which, it is evident, opposition movements sprang. Nevertheless it was not the location of violent protest and although Ankara received far more attention, Istanbul was the site of many improvements and home to some of the nation's biggest hospitals and best schools. On Istanbul see Michael Langley, "Social Reforms in Turkey," *Contemporary Review* 147 (May, 1935), pp. 566-573; Talbot Rice, "Some Impressions of Modern Turkey," *Royal Central Asian Society Journal* 18 (April, 1931), pp. 194-206; and, Eleanor Bisbee, *The New Turks: Pioneers of the Republic 1920-1950* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951).

south -- was populated by large numbers of nomadic Kurdish tribes. In 1927 approximately 45% of the region's population was Kurdish while vilayet and local proportions were frequently far greater. Nowhere else in the country was there such a clear division between Turks and non-Turks.⁴³

War, of course, had drastically affected the region, and the virtual disappearance of the Ottoman Armenian population by 1922 is well known. Prior to the war, 31.5% of Erzurum's (city) population was non-Muslim; by 1927 the figure was just .1%. Muslim casualties were also enormous, such that in 1922 the population of the Ottoman vilayet of Van was 65% lower than it might have been had the region developed in peace. Occupation of much of the region by Russian forces in World War I, and of the southern areas of Gaziantep and Urfa by the French in the War of Independence, led to such bitter fighting and destruction that the region was aptly described as "nothing but waste and desolation."⁴⁴ The local economy suffered not just because of the destruction of resources and businesses but also because of the loss of a huge percentage of the skilled labour force (Armenians). War had prevented the cultivation of crops and after 1922 local farmers deemed cattle raising more profitable than sowing fields: this shift not only resulted in a shortage of food for the populace but also rendered the economic welfare of farmers vulnerable to the effects of cattle plague in 1925. The eruption of Kurdish unrest in 1925 precluded the possibility of any early attempts to resolve the difficulties faced by all the inhabitants of eastern Anatolia.

A prominent theme in the history of this region is that of its gradual inclusion within the government's radius of control. Following the suppression of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion

⁴³Kurdish concentrations were greatest in the vilayets of: Hakari (89%), Van (76%), Bitlis (75%), Siirt (74%) and Diyarbekir (69%). Erzurum's population, by contrast, was just 13% Kurdish. It should also be noted that the vilayets of Mardin (28%), Siirt (20%) and Urfa (12.5%) had significant numbers of Arabic speaking residents. Statistics from *Umumi Nüfus Tarihi, 1927*.

⁴⁴FO 371/10863/E7918 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 15 December, 1925. On post-war conditions in the region see also FO 371/10867/E5900 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, August, 1925; FO 371/10867/p.40 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, November, 1925. Whereas the Ottoman vilayets of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis and Diyarbekir were home to a total of 685,048 Armenians in 1911-1912, in 1927 Erzurum vilayet had just 12, Bayazit, 1. McCarthy estimates Muslim casualties at 770,653. No way exists for accurately measuring Kurdish losses -- Olson puts the number at 500,000. See McCarthy, *The Muslim Population of Anatolia*, pp.108-139, and, "Foundations of the Turkish Republic," p. 142; and, Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Sait Rebellion 1880-1925* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), pp. 20-21.

(1925), the military continued to play an important role throughout the region. The extension of new railroads that connected Ankara to Erzincan and Diyarbekir (1935), and ultimately to Erzurum and Bitlis was vital to the successful administration of the region. The government's policies were not just limited to oppressive means of control; visionary governors in eastern Anatolia made significant efforts to establish hospitals and schools in the region. Turkish hearths were integral to the process -- 40% of those established after 1925 were in eastern Anatolia -- and a British official travelling in the area in 1930 commented on the relatively successful programs of the Turkish Hearths in different towns and cities. Perhaps the greatest tasks facing Turkish officials were the dissolution of large landholdings, the settlement of nomadic tribes, and the encouragement of agriculture. Although it was not given primary importance in the first Five Year Plan, eastern Anatolia did benefit from the establishment of a sugar refinery in Erzurum (1935) and the modernization of mining operations in Ergani (Diyarbekir: 1935-38)⁴⁵

It is important here to refute the notion that inhabitants of eastern Anatolia were inherently opposed to change. The primitive agricultural techniques and means of transportation noted by many observers were a result, most of all, of the isolated nature of the region and the successful relationship that local farmers had established with their environment. As one foreigner observed, inhabitants of eastern Anatolia had, in fact, been prepared for change by destruction wrought by the war, the return of divisions of Ottoman soldiers from eastern Europe following World War I, and the improvements in local industry and trade resulting from the Russian occupation.⁴⁶ Another report describes the success of the Turkish Hearth in Bulanik (Bitlis): operated by the lone medical student assigned to the area by the government, it provided local Kurdish peasants, who had been moved into the town (vacated by deported families), with a variety of lessons. Despite the fact that use of the Kurdish language was discouraged, the newly settled villagers were eager participants

⁴⁵Developments in eastern Anatolia are assessed in FO 371/12321/E5304 Hoare, 7 December, 1927; FO 371/14579/E2678 Edmonds, May, 1930; FO 371/15379/E4015 Roberts, July, 1931. A good description of the region is in Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, pp. 41-142. On government centralization see Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Books, 1992), pp. 189-192.

⁴⁶FO 371/10863/E7918 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 15 December, 1925.

in the learning process.⁴⁷ Political instability, and not "reactionary ignorance," was the cause of slow development in eastern Anatolia. Brigandage, unrest along Turkey's borders with Iran, Iraq and Syria, and most of all, the efforts of Kurdish nationalists and the reciprocations of Turkish armed forces were of far greater significance to the history of eastern Anatolia than is usually admitted.⁴⁸

Central Anatolia

Descriptions of central Anatolia from this period reveal that despite the presence of Ankara in the region, modernization and government control were far from complete. The region in which the Konya, Yozgat and Koçgiri rebellions (in support of the Ottoman government) occurred during the War of Independence, it was also in its cities of Maraş, Çerkeş, Tokat, Sivas, and Kayseri that various forms of Islamic "reaction" occurred following the dissolution of *tarikats* and the outlawing of the fez in 1925. As if to disprove the assertion that centralization and secularization had actually been effected, it was in İskilip and even Ankara itself that Islamic "reactionaries" were arrested in 1936. Similar to western Anatolia in that an extensive rail network (constructed in this period) linked only major centres, a significant portion of the region's 8,500 communities remained largely beyond the reach of the Kemalist elite.

Although an area for the most part unoccupied by foreign troops and outside the theatre of war between 1919 and 1922, the drastic decrease in the Christian and Muslim populations in central Anatolia indicates the severity of civil war and inter-communal hostility.⁴⁹ Following the war, the population of the region remained remarkably homogenous: few immigrants were settled here and apart from communities of Kurds in

⁴⁷FO 371/12320/E3352 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 25 May, 1927.

⁴⁸Reports on Kurdish unrest are abundant among Foreign Office files. See for instance, FO 37114583/ O'Leary (Constantinople) to Clerk, 16 September, 1930; FO 371/ 16091/E222 Turkey Annual Report, 1931. See also Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması*, p. 127.

⁴⁹During the War of Independence, Konya was occupied by the Italians (with little fighting) and Maraş by the French. McCarthy estimates that Sivas, outside the theatre of war, lost 180,413 Muslims and 180,000 Christians to inter-communal violence. The Ottoman vilayet of Konya lost some 418,442 inhabitants, many by emigration such that its population was 37% less than it might have been in 1922. McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities*, pp. 108-139.

Malatya, Maraş, and Sivas, the only other identifiable ethnic presence was that of Circassians in Kayseri, Tokat and Çorum.⁵⁰ Economically, central Anatolia was far more insulated from the effects of the Depression than other regions because its farmers depended less on export trade. Farmers did, however, still have to face the consequences of drought and flooding. Sivas vilayet, among the foremost grain growing areas in Anatolia, was one area to benefit from its direct connection by rail to the rapidly growing consumer center of Ankara in 1930.⁵¹

Detailed descriptions of the transformation of Ankara in this period abound.⁵² It is from reports of Konya, however, that one gains the most comprehensive image of the variety of changes that might have occurred in different parts of the region. In contrast to the situations in both Trabzon and Mersin-Adana where Republican People's Party officials rather than the local governor held the reigns of power, Konya Vilayet was administered by a particularly capable governor committed to extending the benefits of modernization to urban and rural areas. Although "in the grip of the central government," sources reveal that Konya's governor was committed to including local inhabitants in the decision-making process: within the city of Konya itself, he presided over an informal *meclis* (council) of local businessmen, while among the villages a limited system of self-government was developed. In both settings the governor was careful not to enforce all new laws to the point of alienating the local population.

The transformation of Konya city, like that of Izmir and Ankara, included the

⁵⁰Population proportions are as follows: Kurds: Malatya (42%), Maraş (14%), and Sivas (13%). Circassians: Kayseri (5.4%), Tokat (2.7%) and Çorum (2.1%). The only two vilayets to receive significant numbers of immigrants were Niğde (15,702) before 1928, and Kayseri (17,000) between 1928 and 1934. Statistics from *Umumi Nüfus Sayımı, 1927*.

⁵¹Malatya and Kayseri were two centers in which textile mills were established and thus benefitted tremendously from new rail connections. On the modernization of central Anatolia see FO 371/13094/E5863, November, 1928; FO 371/15381/E4251 Catton, August, 1931; FO 371/15381/E4252 Matthews (Trebizond), August, 1931; and, Keyder, *Definition of a Peripheral Economy*, pp. 25-37.

⁵²Descriptions of Ankara are found in FO 371/10870/p.213 Foreign Office Minutes, 12 December, 1925; FO 371/10869/pp.163-64 Leepers, December, 1925; FO 371/10869/pp.176-92 Woods, December, 1925; FO 371/13824/E906 Turkey Annual Report, 1928; FO 371/15376/E913 Turkey Annual Report, 1930. See also Paul Anderson, "Impressions of Modern Turkey," *Contemporary Review* 153 (January, 1938), pp. 26-34; and, Stephen Ronart, *Turkey Today*, J.M. Greenwood, trans. (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1938), pp. 135-66.

building of new offices, hospitals, and schools, the introduction of electricity, and even the creation of plans for a race course. Although Konya vilayet was largely dependent on agriculture for its economy, carpet weaving and other forms of local industry were gradually reintroduced in the 1920's; unlike other vilayets in the region, Konya did not benefit from the economic advantages of railway construction. Whereas in Sivas, as throughout the country, schools were established in old *medreses* (and in some cases presided over by old *hocas*), Konya was privileged with the construction of modern school buildings -- regular, commercial, military and teachers' schools -- all of which were equipped with the most advanced equipment. To complement this formal emphasis upon education, the governor also initiated the formation of a troop of boy scouts. As in every other city, including Ankara, there remained in Konya an "old fashioned" district that spawned many contradictions including the presence, side by side, of a teacher's college, small mosque, and a large statue of Mustafa Kemal. As one British diplomat noted,

Here such contrasts may be seen as young Turks in tennis flannels passing old Turks in native costume, Turkish schoolgirls on bicycles dodging strings of camels or frisky horses being led up to the race-course, motor cars avoiding ox-carts, or a Turkish hospital nurse looking askance at such anachronisms as veiled women.⁵³

Despite the governor's commitment to consult with local inhabitants and the obvious benefits derived from modernization, the economic downturn of 1929-30 gave Konya's farmers and town dwellers cause to complain. Local businesses faced bankruptcy while farmers struggled under the burden of debts owed to the Agricultural Bank. Taxes, as well, were a burden for all. Similar circumstances were experienced by Turks throughout the region -- and as has been demonstrated, the entire country -- and newspapers frequently carried stories relating the plight of central Anatolian Turks as they struggled with poor crops, high prices, and insufficient assistance from the government.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, as the

⁵³FO 371/13094/E2871 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 May, 1928. On Konya and its relationship to other vilayets see also FO 371/11528/E6437 Hoare, 22 November, 1926; FO 371/11528/E4291 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 8 July, 1926; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930.

⁵⁴Economic problems are discussed in FO 371/14583/E6335 Clerk, 19 November, 1930; FO 371/15381/E4251 Catton, August, 1931. See also newspaper stories from 1930 describing the difficulties faced by inhabitants of Ereğli, *Cumhuriyet*, 19 Haziran (June), 1930; Niğde, 23 Haziran, 1930; and, Zara (Sivas), 4 Teşrinievvel

government gained control of the economy following the cessation of restrictions imposed by the Lausanne Treaty and devoted itself to assisting both agriculture and industry, and as natural conditions favourable to agriculture returned, the situation in central Anatolia and Turkey as a whole improved greatly. The pessimistic reports of 1930 gave way to optimistic assessments in 1935 and 1936, in which disappointment stemming from unfulfilled expectations of the modernization process was overshadowed by the relief that improved agricultural techniques had increased yield and that excess produce could sometimes be marketed by a developing transportation network.⁵⁵

The information available for this study was not sufficient to reach accurate conclusions concerning local economic and social conditions in the specific towns in which Islamic "reaction" took place. It is not possible at this point in time, therefore, to equate public protest with either the activities of a local Turkish Hearth or People's House, or the failure of the state to correct local problems arising from the impact of war or economic crisis. There is irony in the fact that although it is possible to determine that the inhabitants of Menemen and Manisa were subject to particularly difficult economic circumstances in 1930, the Menemen *Olayı*, as I shall argue in Chapter Six, was hardly a "popular" protest and that local conditions were not of primary significance. That both Menemen and Bursa were also home to sizeable immigrant communities is noteworthy; immigrants were visible participants in the occurrences of Islamic "reaction" in these cities, but in neither case was the geographic location of unrest simply a reflection of local ethnic composition. In Rize and eastern Anatolia, by contrast, the existence of identifiable ethnic communities -- Laz and Kurdish -- was integral to the violent incidents of Islamic "reaction." As this geographic survey has revealed, the impact of war and economic crisis was common to *all* regions of Turkey, and significant ethnic communities could be found throughout the country. Expression of discontent arising from poor economic conditions appears to have been limited

(November), 1930.

⁵⁵See for instance details in FO 371/20087/E7381 Matthews (Trebizond), October, 1936; and *Cumhuriyet*, 2 Şubat (February), 1935. It is worthy of note that İskilip -- the town central to one of the dervish networks uncovered in 1936 -- was reported to still be in very poor condition in the same year. See *Aksam*, 5 Şubat, 1936.

to "legal" public rallies in support of the Free Party which proposed new economic policies. Nor do the efforts of zealous Kemalists to promote cultural change via Turkish Hearths and People's Houses in cities such as Mersin and Izmir seem to have provoked more conservative Turks to "react" publicly. In light of this, it is extremely surprising that public protest was not in fact a more common phenomenon.

The Turkish state's commitment to modernizing the entire nation was dependent upon the integration of the "geographic" periphery into the center at Ankara. The process however was uneven at best, and the task of modernizing the isolated towns and villages scattered across a vast and topographically diverse Anatolia was too great even for the institutions spawned by the Kemalist government. As this chapter has demonstrated, not even the most privileged regions witnessed the instantaneous transformation that is implied as common to the entire country in many historical accounts of the Turkish Revolution. Regional inequalities existed, but as the evidence in the next chapter suggests, of far more consequence was the differentiated experience of modernization common to urban and rural Anatolia. It was in towns and cities that social cohesion was greatest and that cultural transformation was promoted most ardently. Anatolian towns were also the most frequent location of Islamic "reaction."

IV.

Reactionaries, Fanatics or Turkish Citizens? Social Classes, and their Correlation to Islamic "Reaction"

"The people of Turkey do not constitute separate classes although with regard to personal and social life, and the division of labour, one of our primary principles is to consider society divided into various branches of work. Small farmers, small craftsmen and artisans, workers, the self-employed, manufacturers, owners of large areas of land and companies, and businessmen represent the fundamental divisions in Turkish society. The work of each of these is indispensable to the lifestyle and happiness of the other and of the general public. Based on this principle, our party's cherished goal is, in the place of class struggle, to provide for social order and unity and to balance the interests of each group without disturbing any of them."

-Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 1931⁵⁶

The value derived from locating movements of Islamic "reaction" in their geographic contexts is limited. Public protest was not simply a characteristic of the "conservative" or undeveloped east, but occurred throughout Anatolia at various times. Collective action reflects both an intensified sense of social solidarity as well as the presence of charismatic leadership provided by a respected member of a community, and the question that now must be examined is whether or not popular unrest was unique to a particular *social* location. Just as consideration of geographic location of these events resulted in a reconstruction of regional experiences of modernization, so too investigation into the social background of "reactionaries" provides the opportunity to delineate the varied impact of modernization upon the identifiable social classes and groups constituting Turkish society.

Deciphering the meaning of Islamic "reaction" is made all the more difficult by the fact that the available sources provide insufficient descriptions of the constitution of the "rabble" that gathered to express popular discontent, or of those individuals who opted to defy government legislation by way of passive non-compliance. Even more frustrating is the

⁵⁶Translated from a quotation in Mahmut Goloğlu, *Tek Partili Cumhuriyet (1931-1938)*, p. 18.

paradox that when a particular "protestor's" social position can be determined, there is usually sufficient reason to doubt the degree to which he or she allegedly participated in the event. The arrest, trial and even conviction of an individual during the Turkish Revolution cannot be considered reliable evidence concerning his or her actions: documentation relating to the Menemen *Olayı*, in particular, reveals that punishment -- including the death penalty - - was indicative more of the state's anxiety and determination to deter future opposition than of the guilt of the accused.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, it is evident that those people accused of fomenting Islamic "reaction" were not representative of a single social class or group. Although leadership of protest was almost always attributed to the "men of religion" (a *hoca* or *şeyh*), "participants" at one time or another included men and women, local notables and peasant farmers, state employees and urban artisans.

To define distinct classes and groups within Turkish society is to contradict the fundamental principles of nationalism (*milliyetçilik*) and populism (*halkçılık*) by which Mustafa Kemal stressed social *unity*. The Kemalist elite were careful to refute the idea that either an individual's relationship to a particular means of economic production or ethnic background provided the basis for class or group consciousness: Turkey was a nation founded by Turks, for Turks, and no other identity apart from "Turkish" could be tolerated. Despite the importance of this unifying ideology to the intellectual history of the Turkish Revolution, it was in fact an ideal not reflective of social reality. As I shall argue in Chapter Five, Anatolian-Muslim society comprised multiple religious communities, the existence of which precluded consummate social cohesion. Division along economic lines was also a characteristic of Turkish society, although "class consciousness" was hardly as prominent in the Kemalist era as it would become in subsequent decades. Between 1923 and 1938 the

⁵⁷Following the Menemen *Olayı* (see Chapter 6), thousands of arrests of suspected Islamist reactionaries were made throughout the country. The trial of "participants" in the actual unrest included some 142 people, of whom 36 were sentenced to death (of those 28 were effected). British officials noted that prior to the handing down of the sentences the "president" of the tribunal had assured the accused that their sentences would not be severe -- however, following a meeting with Mustafa Kemal, 36 people found themselves condemned to death despite the fact that their degree of participation was questionable. Among those hung for "Islamic reaction" was a Jew from whose shop a coil of rope had been taken! See FO 371/15370/E650 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 4 February, 1931; FO 371/15370/E1046 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 23 February, 1931; and, Kemal Üstün, *Menemen Olayı ve Kubilay* (Istanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1977), p. 29.

primary means of economic production were farming, small-craft manufacturing (artisans), and slowly expanding large-scale industry; it was also a period during which a Turkish "middle class," comprising professionals and businessmen, increased in size drastically. The degree to which those participating in similar means of economic production possessed a shared "consciousness" or common social goals varied considerably, and the Turkish Revolution most certainly did not witness significant class conflict. For the purposes of examining the varied impact of modernization upon Turkish society and interpreting the motives behind public protest, however, I have identified four economic "classes," the members of which not only shared a common economic pursuit but also possessed a similar degree of social influence, or ability to effect change in Turkish society. The four classes are defined as a Turkish elite, a farming peasantry, the professional-bourgeoisie, and an urban artisan-labourer class. Of equal importance to economic "classes" were ethnic groups, membership in which transcended class divisions.⁵⁸ They were arguably the form of social organization characterized by the greatest cohesion and strongest sense of identity. I employ these categories, in part, because the "elite"- "mass" dichotomy typically associated with Turkish society does not suffice as an analytical paradigm. It is true that the *Kemalist* elite did alienate themselves from a vast proportion of the populace by way of their attempt at cultural reformation, but all Turkish adults, elite included, had been raised in an Ottoman-Islamic culture and had more in common than is generally recognized. Increased social mobility also, was a result of the Turkish Revolution,⁵⁹ the elite and professional-bourgeoisie classes gradually expanding to include individuals from the provincial lower classes. Kemalist reforms made it more likely that the son or daughter of the peasant farmer might receive the education necessary to become a teacher, and in accordance with the wishes of Mustafa Kemal, the election of new deputies to the Grand National Assembly in

⁵⁸I have devised this classification after reading James Bill, "Class Analysis and the Dialectics of Modernization in the Middle East," *IJMES* 3 (1972), pp. 417-434.

⁵⁹For a discussion of this process of political socialization see Kemal Karpat, "Structural Change, Historical Stages of Modernization, and the Role of Social Groups in Turkish Politics," in K. Karpat, ed. *Social Change and Politics in Turkey: A Structural-Historical Analysis* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), pp. 11-92.

1931 resulted in greater representation afforded to farmers and tradesmen.⁶⁰ Class analysis, therefore, will reveal not only how distinct "classes" experienced the Turkish Revolution, but also the nature of "class" interaction and "class" responses to the Kemalist agenda.

The Turkish Elite

The composition of the new Turkish elite changed drastically in the earliest years of the Turkish Revolution. At the conclusion of the War of Independence, membership in the Grand National Assembly included many of the former Ottoman elite such as *ulema*, *şeyhs*, bureaucrats and military officers. The salient characteristics of this "Turkish elite" were well defined by a contemporary British diplomat who noted that they were those

possessing any sort of education or stake in the country: officials, khojas, army officers, professional men, journalists, school masters, students, and local notable. For them the controversies of the day mean something real and while they include large numbers of more or less conservative persons and large numbers of subservient opportunists, they include also a strong and rather more homogenous element of radicals.⁶¹

The "homogenous element of radicals" comprised those deputies loyal to Mustafa Kemal, and by mid-1926 they had emerged triumphant from a bitter intra-elite rivalry. The Kemalist agenda for modernization necessitated an unquestioning and committed cadre and those members of the Turkish elite who wavered in their support or publicly opposed Mustafa Kemal found themselves isolated, accused of treason, and either exiled or executed as punishment.⁶² Future assemblies might contain greater representation from among the lower

⁶⁰See FO 371/16091/E222 Turkey Annual Report, 1931. Although commented upon at the time, statistically this increase was not large. For a detailed analysis see Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, pp. 180-184.

⁶¹FO 371/10171/p.32 Henderson (Constantinople) to FO, 24 January, 1924.

⁶²Revealing descriptions of this political rivalry are found in the previously cited document, and in FO 371/10870/E3338 Turkey Annual Report, 1924. The process by which political opposition was purged has been examined by Eric Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, and *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925*. A most persuasive interpretation of this period argues that rather than effect a social revolution, Mustafa Kemal instead concentrated on educating and preparing the Turkish elite to govern Turkey according to his ideals for a democracy. It turned out to be a much more difficult task than he had imagined. See Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, pp. 37-72. See also İlder Turan, "Continuity and Change in Turkish Bureaucracy: The Kemalist Period and After," in J. Landau ed., *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, pp. 99-124.

classes, but those deputies elected had been carefully chosen by the President beforehand. The "Turkish elite," therefore, became a "Kemalist elite," and it was members of this class that conjured-up images of violent, irrational Islamic "reaction." It is because the history of the Turkish Revolution has been written as an account of these men's activities and thoughts that Islamic "reaction" has become the accepted label for occurrences of collective action, regardless of specific circumstances.⁶³

The modernization of Turkey required that the most capable and loyal members of the ruling elite convey the Kemalist vision to all regions of Turkey, either as provincial governors (*vali*) or as less official but equally powerful inspectors of the Republican People's Party.⁶⁴ This extension of centralized control throughout the country infringed upon the relative power held by influential regional notables. Notables possessed power and authority by virtue of extensive landholdings, familial lineage (including tribal), or religious learning: their ability to inspire loyalty to themselves and opposition to a central government led Mustafa Kemal to attempt to draw notables into the ruling elite. Although this alliance protected many who possessed large landholdings (government efforts at redistribution being thwarted), tribal chiefs and religious notables found their authority challenged by the government in its determination to settle tribes, eliminate Ottoman-Islamic institutions, and create new loci of power. The success of *Şeyh Sait* -- both a Kurdish tribal chief and Nakşibendi şeyh -- at inciting Kurds to rebellion was precisely what the government feared regarding the influence of provincial notables. During Mustafa Kemal's presidency, their fate varied: those notables who refused to be seduced by the government usually found themselves called before the Independence Tribunals. Many, found guilty of inciting opposition, were executed, while others were imprisoned or sent into exile in distant parts of Anatolia.

⁶³Because their history has been the subject of considerable study and because the elite were not really associated with the "Islamic reaction" studied here, I have chosen not to elaborate on their experiences. The most important theme with relation to the elite is that of "instability" and the suddenness with which someone might find him or herself excluded from membership in the elite.

⁶⁴The dominance of Republican People's Party inspectors over the governors of Trabzon and Adana is mentioned in FO 424/262/E3822 Edmonds (Constantinople), 17 June, 1925; FO 371/12320/E3629 Clerk (Constantinople) to FO, 22 August, 1927. In other cases visionary governors had the ability to effect positive change and retain considerable respect: for example, İzzet Bey in Konya and the famous General, Kazım Dirik. See FO 371/13094/E2871 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 May, 1928; and, Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, pp. 141-143.

Other notables, typical of their Arab counterparts, recognized the need to adapt in order to preserve their social position and reasoned that "the material advantages to be gained merely by lending one's name to the party more than compensate . . . for any loss of dignity."⁶⁵ Such a change of heart may have appeared fortuitous at the time, but a frequent result was the eventual alienation of the notable from his previous local supporters.⁶⁶ This process was indicative of a social trend for which the Turkish Revolution must be noted: between 1923 and 1938 the Kemalist elite lost touch with the real-life experiences of the majority of the Turkish populace and created a cultural void as they imposed their conceptions of modernity and civilization on what was a mature and relatively cohesive Anatolian-Islamic culture.

*The Farming Peasantry*⁶⁷

One year prior to the death of Mustafa Kemal, a British traveller visited the western Anatolian city of Afyon Karahisar and its surrounding villages. Upon observing the apparently minimal impact of Kemalist reforms on village-life, he concluded that the "Turkish Government, appreciating no doubt that a large and contented though backward agricultural element is a stable factor in the population, appear to be in no hurry to introduce reforms."⁶⁸ Government, indeed, played a significant role in the lives of peasant farmers in this period -- but by its absence not its presence. This is a distinction particularly important to understanding the experiences of the Turkish peasantry during the Turkish Revolution; for although the state desired to improve farming methods to the point that the

⁶⁵FO 371/12320/E3629 Clerk (Constantinople) To FO, 22 August, 1927.

⁶⁶The example of Mahmut Bey in Trabzon seems to be typical of local notables, many of whom did not possess large land holdings. See Meeker, "The Great Family Aghas of Turkey."

⁶⁷I use the term "peasant" here to denote those Turks who resided in villages (generally with a population of less than 500) and who engaged in agriculture as a primary means of economic production. As will be mentioned, in Turkey most peasants owned their own land and were not beholden to a landlord. However, most did not produce for the market economy, although the proportion engaged in subsistence farming alone declined in this period. My classification of the peasantry has been, in part, aided by John Waterbury, "Peasants Defy Categorization (As Well as Landlords and the State)," in Farhad Kazemi and John Waterbury, eds. *Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East*, pp. 1-23.

⁶⁸FO 371/20868/E3448 Dixon, June, 1937.

nation might be agriculturally self-sufficient, it was not committed to practically assisting peasant families meet their primary needs or to including them within the political process. The sheer size of any attempt to take the principles of the Revolution to the more than 28,000 villages with less than 500 inhabitants was beyond the means of an autocratic state, and notable changes in the lives of the peasantry were destined to coincide with its politicization in the 1940's and 1950's. Instead, the Kemalist elite was content to *legislate* a vision of the ideal Anatolian village and leave the responsibility of implementation to the slowly expanding cadre of provincial Kemalists -- teachers, officials, and businessmen -- who more often than not had more pressing concerns.⁶⁹

Peasant farmers constituted more than three quarters of Turkey's population in this period, but they were not the primary participants in movements of Islamic "reaction" (the exception being the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion (1925)). This does not, however, mean that peasants readily conformed to the few pieces of legislation that were actually brought to their attention. Based on a long tradition of periodic interference by the state in their lives, their attitude towards the Kemalist government likely followed the maxim that it was "to be obeyed in so far as obedience is unavoidable; used to one's own advantage if the occasion arises; and other wise ignored or kept at arm's length."⁷⁰ As will be discussed in Chapter Five, documentary sources reveal that it was not uncommon for "forbidden acts" -- the wearing of the "fez," the proclamation of an Arabic call to prayer -- to be continued in isolated communities. The *Şeyh Sait* rebellion was one situation in which a "peasant revolt" did occur,⁷¹ but it must be noted that this was not a movement of landless peasants looking to provide for their personal economic well-being: those peasants who did participate (by no

⁶⁹I have drawn helpful insights on the peasantry in this period from Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, pp. 74-76; and on the peasantry in general from Henry Rosenfeld, "An Overview and Critique of the Literature on Rural Politics and Social Change," in R. Antoun and I. Harik, eds. *Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East*, pp. 45-73.

⁷⁰Paul Stirling, "Social Change and Social Control in Republican Turkey," in *Türkiye İş Bankası Symposium on Atatürk*, p. 582. A similar observation is made by John Kolars, "The Integration of the Villager into the National Life of Turkey," in Karpas, ed. *Social Change and Politics*, p. 197.

⁷¹Peasants were clearly also integral to the uprising in Rize in 1925, but there exists insufficient information to reach any firm conclusions regarding the number involved or whether the peasants themselves had unique grievances.

means a majority of the population) in fact generally possessed their own land, while the class of sharecroppers, dependent on Turkish authorities to protect them from Kurdish landlords, did not join the rebellion. Far more important than any economic or material grievances as a cause of Kurdish mobilization was the intricate network of tribal and dervish *tarikât* affiliations on which the leaders of the revolt could depend. The failure of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion revealed that this form of social cohesion, most intense in eastern Anatolia, had its limitations.⁷²

It must be stressed that although Turkish peasants were poor and frequently suffered as a result of insufficient resources, the conditions in which they lived were considerably better than those experienced in the years of war prior to 1923. More importantly, the majority of peasants possessed their own land, from which they at least had a reasonable chance of providing for their own immediate needs. Social dislocation resulting from loss of land was the exception rather than the rule during the Kemalist period, sharecroppers being found only in eastern Anatolia, the Çukurova plain, and in some areas along the Aegean coast. Poverty, so frequently observed to be a reality of rural Turkey, was neither a new phenomenon nor one that was associated with "unjust" landlords; instead it was the result of poor soil, unnatural weather patterns, and unrealized expectations of an unstable market economy.⁷³

The peasant experience during the Turkish Revolution can only be tentatively linked to the various pieces of "reform" legislation intended to increase agricultural production, because the application of particular policies varied from one location to another. It is naive to accept as gospel truth the optimistic conclusion rendered by a contemporary commentator,

⁷²There seems to be some difference of opinion as to how important "landlessness" was to the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion: Van Bruinessen states clearly that participants generally owned land, while Kazemi uses other information regarding the effect of the 1856 Land Code in Van Bruinessen's study to justify his efforts to place the rebellion within a schemata dependent upon landless peasants revolting. See Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, pp. 182-85, 293; Farhad Kazemi, "Peasant Uprisings in Twentieth-Century Iran, Iraq and Turkey," in Kazemi and Waterbury, eds. *Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East*, pp. 101-24.

⁷³Regarding landownership see Gerber, *The Social Organization of the Modern Middle East*, pp. 104-118. Hershlag, for one, has over-emphasized the "exploitation" of the Turkish peasant. Z.Y. Hershlag, *Turkey: The Challenge of Growth*, Second, Revised Edition (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), pp. 47-58. See also my comments on page, 22, Chapter Two.

that "the peasant who up to now has always been the beast of burden, is now beginning to enjoy the fruits of his labour; the government has put in all its efforts to helping agriculture."⁷⁴ The contentious issue of land "reform" or "redistribution" (particularly in eastern Anatolia) is but one example of a noble Kemalist principle that for the most part failed to materialize.⁷⁵ When the state did actually implement legislation designed to remedy one problem, positive results were frequently negated by other unforeseen circumstances. The tithe may have been abolished in 1925, but those peasants who succeeded in producing a marketable surplus as a result, were then faced with transporting that surplus to a market, the bane of many a peasant's existence. Those peasants who did live within reach of the gradually expanding network of railways benefitted from a monetary income, but dependence on this for their livelihood rendered them vulnerable to the collapse of markets and thus prices.⁷⁶ The state's efforts at expanding agricultural production by way of the Agricultural Bank also met with mixed success: the introduction of machinery such as tractors resulted in the redundancy of former labourers, and frequently the burden of overwhelming debt upon those farmers who had invested in the equipment.⁷⁷

Education was the primary means by which the state hoped to effect positive changes in agricultural practice, and in the limited vilayets where a "model farm" or an agricultural school were found, local farmers undoubtedly learned new techniques and obtained higher

⁷⁴FO 371/10870/p.213 Foreign Office Minutes, 12 December, 1925.

⁷⁵On land reform see FO 371/21935/E2214 Turkey Annual Report, 1937; Goloğlu, *Tek Partili Cumhuriyet*, pp. 221-33; and Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması*, p. 132.

⁷⁶Keyder estimates that surplus was produced by 40% of peasant families occupying 80% of cultivated land in the late 1920's. This surplus frequently depended on favourable weather conditions. New taxes on land and livestock were in fixed amounts and while less than the tithe, the drop in prices in the 1930's made the land tax more burdensome: Keyder, *Definition of a Peripheral Economy*, pp. 1-37. The problem of marketing produce was a complaint frequently registered by British officials; see for instance FO 371/11528/E6437 Hoare, 22 November, 1926; FO 371/13838/E3828 Helm, 29 June, 1929; FO 371/13810/E5984 Clerk to FO, 13 November, 1929. Concerning the problems facing the inhabitants of *Zara Kazası* near Sivas see also *Cumhuriyet*, 4 Teşrinievvel (November), 1930. In 1931 the government was forced to lighten the taxes on farmers once again; and following the drastic drop in prices by 1932 the government intervened to keep grain prices high. See Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, p. 99; and FO 371/16091/E222 Turkey Annual Report, 1931.

⁷⁷See comments related to this in Hershlag, *Turkey*, p. 111; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930; and specifically regarding Ereğli near Konya, *Cumhuriyet*, 19 Haziran (June), 1930.

quality seed. These institutions were few and far between, and although mandatory military service for young men included instruction in "modern" methods of farming, young men needed on farms were the most likely to be exempted from military service. Arguably the greatest benefit derived from the Kemalist state was an unprecedented condition of security throughout Anatolia, enabling farmers to work without disruption. Unfortunately, even this proved tenuous when brigandage increased in eastern and western Anatolia as a result of the economic problems of 1928-32: no state policy could guard against the suffering that resulted from unprecedented drought and flooding and the collapse of foreign markets.⁷⁸

The most enduring impact of Kemalist modernization upon peasant life was the initiation of processes that would lead to considerable social dislocation within village communities in future decades. Two processes are particularly important, the first being changing patterns of landownership. These varied from village to village, but the introduction of mechanized methods of farming, high quality seeds, and improved means of transportation *gradually* facilitated the concentration of land with fewer families. A farmer's decision to produce a monoculture rather than pursue mixed farming, debt incurred to the Agricultural Bank or a local notable in an effort to increase production, and unexpected weather patterns and economic depression all contributed to the growth of a class of landless, seasonal agricultural labourers. When the opportunity arose, these workers would frequently find temporary employment on government construction projects or in local factories.⁷⁹ The second process, that of evolving social relations, was directly linked to the first. Farmers who had lost their land were forced into new, less favourable relationships with members of the local community and, as migrant workers, found their own horizons expanded. Social dislocation was also the product of the state's efforts to expand the

⁷⁸Brigandage was frequently mentioned by British diplomats. See for instance, FO 371/13810/E89, December, 1928; FO 371/13823/E5264, October, 1929. Problems resulting from harsh weather conditions were often mentioned in the newspaper, *Cumhuriyet* in March, October and December, 1930. On peasants and education see İlhan Başgöz and Howard Wilson, *Education Problems in Turkey, 1920-1940* (Bloomington: Indiana State University Publications, 1968).

⁷⁹The settlement of nomadic tribes also resulted in new landownership patterns as land was supposed to be distributed to all members of a tribe, the chief not necessarily being the one to receive the largest plot. A tribal chief, therefore, was no longer assured of his prominence within the tribal community, while other tribesmen gained greater independence.

education system. The placement of school teachers or other officials in a village presented an unavoidable challenge to local religious and secular leaders, while the process of learning became independent and institutionalized rather than dependent upon village elders and oral traditions. Those youth fortunate enough to receive advanced education in a distant town or city were particularly threatening to the established social order when they returned to their own communities determined to implement the benefits of modernization.⁸⁰

It must be emphasized again that incorporation of villages into a national culture and economy, and the diminishment of local self-sufficiency were processes only just begun during the Turkish Revolution, their effects being most noticeable in subsequent decades. The Kemalist commitment to legislation had a limited impact upon most Turkish peasants. Laws such as the Village Law of 1924 and the Law of Reform of Rural Instruction of 1927 were based on the optimistic conviction that farming peasants already possessed the wealth, education, and means by which to effect their own revolution. The Village Law specified that villagers were responsible for the drainage of swamps, extension of irrigation canals, construction of roads and schools, and the establishment of local bureaucracies. These came about slowly if at all. Similarly, the state's good intentions to extend basic education to all villages reflected a vision of the future rather than an immediately attainable goal. "Village Development" was an often discussed topic among the Kemalist elite, but it was rarely a reality. The institutions most integral to the process -- the Turkish Hearths and People's Houses -- proved to be more the haven of the aspiring provincial elite rather than the vehicle for transmitting the principles of the Turkish Revolution to Anatolian peasants.⁸¹

⁸⁰This discussion is based on Kiray, "Social Change in Çukurova;" Szyliowicz, *Political Change in Rural Turkey, Erdemli*; J. Morrison, *Alışar: A Unit of Land Occupance in the Konak Su Basin of Central Anatolia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Libraries, 1939); Richard Robinson, *The First Turkish Republic: A Case Study in National Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); Korkut Boratov, "Kemalist Economic Policies and Etatism."

⁸¹"Village legislation" is assessed in Hershlag, *Turkey*, pp. 37-38 and in Szyliowicz, *Erdemli*, pp. 37-48. One example of the intellectual preoccupation of the elite with village development is a publication by Hasan Tankut, *Köylerimiz: Bugün Nasıldır, Dün Nasıldı, Yarın Nasıl Olmalıdır?* (Our Villages: Today, Yesterday and in the Future) (Ankara: Kenan Basımevi, 1939). Assessments of the role of Turkish Hearths and People's Houses in village development are contained in Houminer, "The People's Houses in Turkey," p. 111; Weiker, *Political Tutelage and Democracy*, pp. 177-78; and Georgeon, "Les Foyers Turcs," pp. 190-91. It should be noted that following Atatürk's death, "People's Rooms" were established in villages throughout the country, numbering some 4,306 in 1949.

The Professional-Bourgeoisie Class

The aspiring provincial elite or professional-bourgeoisie class was that which witnessed the most rapid expansion during the Kemalist period. Membership -- like that of the ruling elite -- was derived by way of advanced education and occupation: it included businessmen pursuing inter-regional and international commerce, and a variety of professionals related in varying degrees to the state such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and bureaucrats (*memur*). With the exception of teachers and doctors who might have found themselves assigned to remove villages, the professional-bourgeoisie class was concentrated in provincial towns and cities. The class destined to benefit most of all from modernization, its members were also cast in the role of "vanguard" of the Revolution: it was upon "enlightened" businessmen and professionals that Mustafa Kemal relied for introduction of new ideas and practices to Anatolian urban centers, and ultimately even to villages. Although towns and cities were the sites of virtually all Islamic "reaction," participants from this class appear to have been limited to disgruntled bureaucrats. It was not that businessmen and professionals did not have cause to be discontent, but that they correctly perceived that it was in their own best interests to tolerate hardship and uphold a process of change from which they derived at least some prosperity.⁸²

Businessmen had the most to gain as well as lose from the state's economic policies. Complaints were frequently voiced concerning unreasonable tariffs and prices, and the difficulties involved in marketing products, but all in all entrepreneurs fared remarkably well in this period of economic uncertainty. Tariff restrictions contained in the Lausanne Treaty permitted them to import manufactured products without import tariffs until 1929. Looking to their own interests rather than those of the country, businessmen reaped great profits, but devoted comparatively little energy to developing the national economy.⁸³ Government

⁸²Angered bureaucrats and local officials were implicated in the protests located in Sivas and Maras in 1925, and in the "Bursa conspiracy" of 1928. For details see Chapter 6. British officials frequently referred to the frustrations expressed by businessmen and professionals with regard to various government policies; see for instance FO 371/13094/E2531 Morgan (Smyrna) to Clerk, 19 April, 1928; FO 371/13810/E2411 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 13 May, 1929.

⁸³Typical was an entrepreneur who preferred to buy more reliable fruit trees from Italy rather than locally nurtured trees. See FO 371/13094/E2531 Morgan (Smyrna) to Clerk, 19 April, 1928.

monopolies over the production of sugar, matches, and alcohol were, in fact, entrusted to these same businessmen. The imposition of import tariffs by the state in 1929-30 and the coincidental drop in global demand for Turkey's agricultural and manufactured products (such as carpets) had a detrimental impact upon commerce, but unlike most other Turks, entrepreneurs possessed the means to change, and many shifted gears and became initiators of government-sponsored industrial enterprises in the 1930's.⁸⁴

Professionals such as bureaucrats and teachers who were employed by the state fared rather less well in times of economic crisis, for their already low salaries were frequently months in arrears. Despite the fact that Kemalist policies were ostensibly committed to increasing the salaries of officials and improving the conditions in which they worked, discontent and corruption was common. Strikes, however, were not an option for bureaucrats wishing to draw attention to their needs as frustrated telegraph workers from Adana, Trabzon and Samsun were to discover in 1925: rather than receive a sympathetic ear, they were immediately ordered to stand trial before the Ankara Independence Tribunal.⁸⁵ Another potential cause for dissatisfaction common to bureaucrats was the fact that Mustafa Kemal expected them to set an example for all Turks by eagerly embracing new practices. They were required to be among the first to don "modern" clothing, including hats, and to learn the new alphabet. The cost of new hats, when they could be found, rendered many bureaucrats indebted to the government; learning and putting to use the new alphabet was almost certainly the source of considerable frustration as well as inefficiency.⁸⁶

⁸⁴This summary is derived from various Foreign Office documents relating to the fortunes of businessmen: FO 371/10863/E7918 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 15 December, 1925; FO 371/11528/E6437 Hoare, 22 November, 1926; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930; and also the following studies of the Turkish economy: Keyder, *Definition of a Peripheral Economy*, pp. 51-65; Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, pp. 101-105; Hershlag, *Turkey*, pp. 61-75; and, Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, pp. 93-96.

⁸⁵Of those accused, five telegraphists received sentences ranging from 1-3 years in prison. On this strike see Aybars, *Istiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1982), pp. 257-59; and FO 371/10870/p.213 Foreign Office Minutes, 12 December, 1925. Mention of corruption among government employees and of wages in arrears is made in FO 371/11528/E4051 Chamberlain to FO, 26 June, 1926; FO 371/14583/E2859 Edmonds, May 27, 1930. See also Turan, "Continuity and Change in the Turkish Bureaucracy."

⁸⁶On hats and clothing see pp. 87-88, Chapter 5. Regarding the difficulties of learning the new alphabet see discussion in FO 371/13810/E916 Helm (Angora) to FO, 14 February, 1929; FO 371/13828/E3538 Helm (Angora) to FO, 29 June, 1929. Of those bureaucrats employed in Ankara, many had also faced forced relocation from

Both entrepreneurs and professionals were the beneficiaries and initiators of the process of educational and cultural change characteristic of this period. Of all Turks, they were the people most likely to see their children graduate from commercial, technical, and regular high schools and even proceed to the faculties of law and medicine in the universities in Istanbul and Ankara. Women associated with this class not only had the opportunity to enter professional occupations, but were also required to adopt western fashions and social habits that would be an example for all Turkish women.⁸⁷ It was through the efforts of this class, that the primary organs of modernization were expanded: schools, banks and insurance agencies, Turkish Hearths and People's Houses, and newspapers. Also dependent on their participation was the success of local language classes, history lessons, lectures, sports, dances, libraries, and films. The provincial elite were the guardians of the Republic and responsible for encouraging local interest in public celebrations reminding Turks of victories won in the region during the War of Independence.⁸⁸ In the words of one contemporary official, "We have our club, our societies, our books, talks by our own members, and we are taking up sports. We invite in the people of the neighbourhood. They come, listen, and gradually get an idea of what the new Government is trying to do."⁸⁹

The failure of the professional-bourgeoisie to take the Revolution to the country side has already been mentioned. Neither teachers nor doctors were eager to venture into Anatolian villages: salaries were low, conditions squalid, and they were not even assured of a favourable reception. *Bizim Köy*, the famous account of the trials of a school teacher committed to bringing change to an isolated village, is but one of many that emphasizes the radically different approaches to life characteristic of the "elite" and "masses." In urban centers, the success with which cultural programs met varied considerably, some People's

Istanbul to Ankara if they wished to retain their jobs.

⁸⁷Laws were passed requiring the wives of officials to dress appropriately and it was through balls and parties that Mustafa Kemal and the elite forced women to change their social habits. See for example FO 371/12320/E3234 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 12 May, 1927; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930.

⁸⁸See for example those described by consuls in Trabzon and Mersin: FO 424/262/E3822 Edmonds (Constantinople), 17 June, 1925; FO 371/12320/E3352 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 25 May, 1927.

⁸⁹Quoted in Raymond Colrat, "Turkey Today," *Living Age* 333 (July 1927), p. 131.

Houses being far more popular and active than others. Although businessmen and professionals lived in towns and cities alongside urban artisans, and shared in their frustrations concerning high taxation and poor living conditions, the aspiring provincial elite were in many ways separate from urban-dwellers: they lived in the "modern" parts of a town or city, and propagated ideas and practices frequently offensive to the more conservative artisan class. At times the gap must have seemed particularly exaggerated, especially when lower class Turks observed the local elite dressed in such unusual fashions as "black suits, dress shoes, bowler hats, and horn-rimmed spectacles!"⁹⁰

Urban Artisans and Labourers

The "old-fashioned" quarters in a town or city so frequently noted by foreign observers were home to the most conservative segments of the Turkish population -- those Turks whom the provincial elite were expected to transform into patriotic citizens of the Turkish state. "Conservatism" was largely associated with tightly knit social groups and their strong sense of collective identity fostered by social institutions common to urban life, dervish *tekkes* and small-craft guilds in particular. It is, therefore, no coincidence that occurrences of Islamic "reaction" were located in urban centers, and that alleged participants were most often either dervish *şeyhs*, *hocas*, or members of the artisan (*esnaf*) class: carpenters (*marangoz*), locksmiths (*çilingir*), butchers (*kasap*), blacksmiths (*nalbant*), candy makers (*şekerci*), or tanners (*tabak*). The continual *social* relevance of dervish *tarikats* and craft guilds in provincial town society long after their *legislated* dissolution is prime evidence of the failure of "legislated" Kemalist reforms to effect real changes in modern Turkey. Not only had these associations provided for the material and spiritual welfare of their members, but they were essential to a town-dweller's sense of identity. The Kemalist elite intended

⁹⁰FO 371/13077/E3997 Matthews (Trebizond) to Clerk, 7 July, 1928. Reports concerning Adana in particular refer to the means by which a local newspaper magnate and a businessman became promoters of Republican People's Party doctrine and thus alienated themselves from the population. See for instance FO 424/262/E3822 Edmonds (Constantinople), 17 June, 1925. An English translation of *Bizim Köy* is Mahmut Makal, *A Village in Anatolia*, W. Daedes, trans., P. Stirling, ed. (London: Vallentine, Mitchell & Co., Ltd., 1954). Lilo Linke comments on how difficult it was for engineers educated in Europe to return to Anatolian towns where their families could not understand their new attitudes. Linke, "Social Change in Turkey; with Discussion," *International Affairs* 16 (July, 1937), pp. 540-63.

that the slowly expanding network of state-schools, hospitals, banks, Turkish Hearths and People's Houses would replace previous institutions, and that national patriotism would replace communal loyalties. Many of the "cultural programs" propagated by the professional-bourgeoisie class were a direct assault on conservative Muslim urban-culture, and legislation aimed at its associated institutions was perceived as an attack on the leaders of these communities. If a Muslim "moral economy" pervaded Anatolian society, then it was most pervasive within the urban artisan class. At the same time, Kemalist cultural reforms instituting the wearing of the hat, the establishment of statues, and the proclamation of a Turkish call to prayer were applied most forcefully in towns and cities, and thus were most disconcerting to members of this class.⁹¹

Urban life also consisted of various stresses quite unrelated to the cultural transformation encouraged by the Kemalist elite. Towns and cities frequently received large contingents of international and even regional migrants.⁹² Residents in those towns and cities heavily damaged during the War of Independence were also acutely aware of the failure of grandiose plans to repair damage and provide such basic services as clean drinking water and adequate drainage systems. If corruption were associated with government officials, then town-dwellers experienced the associated frustrations most of all. Economic difficulties were also most intense in urban centers: following the abolition of the tithe in 1925, the burden of taxation was shifted onto urban residents and throughout the Kemalist era they voiced complaints against taxes levied on property, businesses, consumer products, and modes of entertainment. State efforts to monopolize the production and sale of certain

⁹¹My observations on the conservative nature of the artisan class have been based on P. Benedict, "The Changing Role of Provincial Towns: A Case Study from Southwestern Turkey," in Benedict, ed. *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives*, pp. 240-280; and, Richard Robinson, *The First Republic: A Case Study in National Development*. On dervish brotherhoods see Chapter 5. Little has been written on the continued social importance of guild networks following their dissolution in 1910. Under the Turkish Republic, new "occupational associations" were encouraged but apparently were not very effective. For comments on guilds see Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, pp. 8-10; and Gabriel Baer, *Fellah and Townsman in the Middle East: Studies in Social History* (London: Cass, 1982), pp. 147-230. Statistics relating to the number of new "institutions" are found in Allen, *Turkish Transformation*, pp. 99-135; and, Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, pp. 181-234.

⁹²Although rapid urbanization was not a characteristic of this period, certain cities grew rapidly: Eskişehir (45%), Gaziantep (27%), Malatya (32%), Mersin (30%). Some cities such as Trabzon, Konya, Erzurum, and Mersin attracted considerable numbers of migrants from within their vilayets. Statistics from *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935*.

products resulted in highly priced but scarce quantities of important staples; smuggling became a common means of overcoming these problems.⁹³

The effect of economic developments upon urban artisans in this period, however, were not exclusively detrimental. If demand for their products did indeed decline in the 1920's because of the availability of cheap imports, in the 1930's protective tariffs ensured that products made in Turkey were the cheapest. Fluctuation in the prices of raw materials, difficulties encountered in transporting products between regions, the establishment of factories able to mass produce standardized articles, and the loss of overseas markets for exported goods such as carpets were all detrimental to artisans. Nevertheless, new factories could not produce specialty products, and their need for large quantities of raw materials resulted in cheaper prices for local artisans. In some fields of work the formation of cooperatives was also of benefit for securing raw materials and marketing products. With the onset of the Depression and the implementation of new import tariffs (1929-30), artisans were able to benefit from reduced transportation rates and most importantly of all, government efforts to encourage Turks to "Buy Turkish."⁹⁴

Economically, large scale industry was far less significant than small-scale local production, but by the end of the first Five Year Plan in 1937, factories, processing plants, and mines had increased in number. Integral to these was a nascent industrial labour force employed not only as factory workers, but also as construction workers to build new facilities, and as operators of transportation links.⁹⁵ Conditions of employment must have varied considerably. Workers' wages did not keep pace with inflation, but labour activity to protest such circumstances was not tolerated by a government committed to effecting

⁹³Urban workers were also vulnerable to unemployment during times of economic depression. Newspapers frequently carried stories concerning the poor conditions in particular cities. For example: Kütahya, *Cumhuriyet* 22 Kânunuevvel (December), 1930; İskilip, *Akşam*, 5 Şubat (February), 1936. A story relating to smuggling in the town of Tavaş (Denizli) is in *Cumhuriyet*, 21 Şubat, 1933. Urban taxation and complaints concerning it are mentioned in FO 371/11528/E4051 Chamberlain to FO, 26 June, 1926; FO 371/12324/E633 Turkey Annual Report, 1926; FO 371/12320/E2711 Knox (Angora), 9 June, 1927.

⁹⁴The only discussions on Turkish handicrafts in this period are Keyder, *The Definition of a Peripheral Economy*, 51-55; and, Mukdim Osman, "Handicraft in Turkey," *International Labour Review* 31:2 (February, 1935), pp. 190-220. Newspapers in 1930 frequently carried articles encouraging Turks to buy local products.

⁹⁵On industrialization see Hershlag, *Turkey*, pp. 61-75; 96-107.

economic change.⁹⁶ By contrast, it appears that employees in some industrial establishments were well provided for: descriptions of the huge textile factory opened in Kayseri in 1935 emphasize the fact that in order to maintain a stable workforce, considerable efforts were made to enhance the workplace. There were huge recreational facilities, including a swimming pool, gymnasium, stadium and race-track, and an extensive housing complex for workers. A common source of frustration for the "peasants" who found employment in factories was not so much low wages or benefits, but the matter of adapting to work in a factory and the strict regulations and schedules to which they were expected to conform.⁹⁷ Due largely to inexperienced labour and a powerful government, labour unrest was of limited importance in the first two decades of the Turkish Republic. However, the foundation for strife had been laid and awaited only the rapid industrialization and urbanization of Turkey following the World War II.

Minority Groups

Turkish society also comprised significant communities of minority groups that possessed cohesive collective identities regardless of class distinctions. These groups, identifiable by either language or place of birth, were the primary focus of Mustafa Kemal's efforts to forge a common Turkish identity. Among the more prominent groups were those associated with late nineteenth century immigration from the Caucasus, the Balkans and Russia; these generally spoke fluent Turkish but retained a consciousness of their non-Turkish heritage. The arrival of immigrants from Greece, Crete, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia throughout the early years of the Republic added large communities of people

⁹⁶On general observations concerning the conditions of industrial labour see Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, p. 99. Boratov, "Kemalist Economic Policies and Etatism." Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, p. 105. In 1936 the Grand National Assembly passed strict laws prohibiting strikes; see FO 371/20866/E823 Turkey Annual Report, 1936. It appears, however, that labour laws in this period did take worker's needs into consideration and provided for medical benefits, maternity leave, and compensation for those injured on the job. See Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, pp. 253-58.

⁹⁷Ibid, pp. 248-250; see also Linke, "Social Change in Turkey."

with both a different language and a different heritage.⁹⁸ Immigrants fulfilled various economic functions, and although the majority were farmers expected to make up for the loss of greater numbers of Greek Christian farmers, others found employment in towns as artisans, and even as teachers.

The experience of immigrants in this period was twofold. For many there were the economic problems associated with settlement in regions destroyed by war: ruined fields and villages, insufficient materials and implements, and the unrealistic expectations that they engage in employment for which they were not trained. Government promises to provide assistance appear not to have begun to meet the needs of immigrants.⁹⁹ Of more significance, however, was the government's determination to assimilate non-Turks into the "national culture." Primarily the responsibility of Turkish Hearths and People's Houses, this task included language lessons as well as indoctrination into Kemalist interpretations of history that emphasized the dominant role of Turkish people and culture throughout history.¹⁰⁰ Most important of all was the fact that the original linkage between immigrants and Anatolian Turks -- that of Muslim identity -- was not only deemphasized but discredited by Mustafa Kemal. Immigrants were especially aware of their Muslim identity, and also resentful of the "Turkification" to which they were subjected; it is not surprising that they were frequently associated with movements of Islamic "reaction," particularly those in

⁹⁸Immigration consisted of: 400,000 Greeks, 63,500 Bulgarian, Yugoslavian, Rumanian and Russian immigrants before 1928; between 1928 and 1934, some 164,000 immigrants arrived from Russia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Romania; and, between 1934 and 1937, some 144,073 immigrants arrived from the same countries. Statistics from Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, *On Beşinci Yıl Kitabı*; Ladas, *Exchange of Minorities*; FO 371/13824/E906 Turkey Annual Report, 1928; FO 371/17959/E596 Turkey Annual Report, 1933. In 1935 962,000 people were registered as having been born outside Turkey and 791,715 as speaking a language other than Turkish. Statistics from *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, 1935*.

⁹⁹The difficulties experienced by immigrants are mentioned in FO 371/10870/E3338 Turkey Annual Report, 1924; FO 371/10172/10172/E9326 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 1924; FO 371/10867/pp.6-20 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, February, 1925.

¹⁰⁰This program was particularly intense in the 1930's and was aimed especially at immigrants in Thrace. See FO 371/19037/E854 Turkey Annual Report, 1934; FO 371/20866/E823 Turkey Annual Report, 1936.

Menemen (1930) and Bursa (1933).¹⁰¹

By far the largest and most cohesive minority in modern Turkey was the population of Kurds upon which Şeyh Sait depended for support during his rebellion against the Turkish state in 1925. The Kurdish populace was concentrated in, but not limited to, the poorest region of Anatolia -- the southeast, as was described in the previous chapter.¹⁰² As the circumstances of the Şeyh Sait rebellion reveal, the unity implicit in the term "Kurd" is deceptive, for the Kurdish population was divided along multiple lines: sectarian (Sunni-Alevi), adherence to *tarikats* (Nakşibendi-Kadiri), linguistic (Zaza-Kurmanji), tribal and class (notable, peasant, artisan). Despite the ardent efforts of various Kurdish organizations, "Kurdish nationalism" failed as a vehicle to mobilize the populace against the state. The Koçgiri rebellion of 1920 and the Şeyh Sait rebellion of 1925 involved completely different coalitions, and in each case unity could not be achieved because local Kurdish notables demonstrated a greater commitment to preserving their pre-existing social influence rather than to the establishment of a Kurdish state.¹⁰³

The Kurdish experience of the Turkish Revolution was dominated by two factors: war and "Turkification." Unrest varied in location, but confrontations between Turkish and Kurdish forces continued throughout this period after 1925. Although it is difficult to estimate how individual communities were affected by the threat of impending violence, the overall effect upon the economy and social relations in the region must not be discounted.

¹⁰¹Other significant minority groups were Christians and Jews. Although most had fled during the war, small pockets remained in Anatolia and larger communities were located in Istanbul and Izmir. Throughout this period their numbers decreased due to emigration. Despite conditions laid down in the Lausanne Treaty, the rights of Armenians, Greeks and Jews were eventually incorporated within Turkish Civil Law. At various times they faced restrictions on travelling, political participation, public employment, and employment in many trades and professions. Nevertheless, by comparison with previous experiences, life in the Turkish Republic was extremely secure. Their experiences are often referred to in the Annual Reports written by the British Ambassador to Turkey between 1926 and 1936.

¹⁰²In 1935, Kurdish speakers numbered some 1,470,327 or 9.1% of the population. The other minority that must be mentioned is Arab speakers: some 153,495 in 1935. These were also concentrated in the south-east and in Mersin and Adana. A significant portion of these were farmers and they fared far better than Kurds although they too were expected to assimilate.

¹⁰³Good discussions of the Kurdish populace are in Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism* and Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh, and State*.

Those communities not directly involved in insurrections did not necessarily escape the frequent deportations by which the government hoped to divide and conquer. Kurdish notables were exiled to various parts of western Anatolia, but contemporary reports also record the fact that inhumane large-scale deportations of entire communities occurred. It is a topic not examined in any detail by historians thus far.¹⁰⁴ The Turkish government's response to Kurdish unrest was not restricted to violent oppression, and Foreign Office documents reveal that visionary governors in eastern Anatolia tried very hard to conciliate and, of course, assimilate the Kurdish population into the "Turkish" national-culture. At various times martial law was lifted, an amnesty declared for Kurdish rebels, and deported families -- if not the notables themselves -- were permitted to return to their homes. Turkification was the responsibility of institutions such as schools, Turkish Hearths, and People's Houses, all of which were built in significant numbers in Kurdish towns and cities. In some cases, these appear to have resulted in the desired "transformation," although it is difficult not to imagine that in the midst of poverty and instability intense efforts at "Turkification" in fact only intensified individual and collective Kurdish identities.¹⁰⁵

Although the division of Turkish society into "classes" provides a useful means to examine differentiated experiences of the modernization process, it must be stressed that shared economic relationships were not the basis of social solidarity out of which Islamic "reaction" arose. Entrepreneurs, state-employed professionals, artisans, labourers, and peasant farmers all had sufficient cause to voice discontent concerning their economic welfare at different times during the Turkish Revolution. The professional-bourgeoisie class generally preferred to endure hardship rather than undermine a revolution from which they

¹⁰⁴Foreign Office reports mentioning the deportations include: FO 371/11528/E4053 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, 16 June, 1926; FO 371/11528/E4051 Chamberlain to FO, 26 June, 1926; FO 371/12255/E3532, August, 1927; FO 371/15369/E5131, October, 1931; FO 371/16983/E529 Turkey Annual Report, 1932. It is also an issue stressed by Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism*, p. 123. The continual conflict is detailed in Faik Bulut, *Devletin Gözüyle Türkiye'de Kürt İsyanları (Kurdish Revolts in Turkey As Seen By the State)* (Istanbul: Yön Yayıncılık, 1991).

¹⁰⁵Among the reports discussing the government's policy towards the Kurds are: FO 371/12321/E5304 Hoare, 7 December, 1927; FO 371/13089/E1986 Matthews (Trebizond) to Knox, 16 March, 1928; FO 371/14579/E2678 Edmonds, May, 1930.

stood the most to gain. The isolated conditions in which the farming peasantry lived negated the possibility of any large-scale collective identity and thus action, except in eastern Anatolia where tribal and *tarikats* networks proved effective but imperfect means of mobilization. The organized activities of industrial labourers were severely restricted by the Turkish state. Members of the urban artisan-class were those most commonly associated with movements of Islamic "reaction;" their primary source of cohesion, however, was not so much a shared means of production as the social networks derived from long association with particular guilds or dervish *tarikats*. Similar to those binding together ethnic communities, the common bonds and sense of identity characteristic of the "conservative" and "old-fashioned" segments of the Anatolian urban population were of considerable importance in a period of Turkish history when all members of Turkish society were expected to sever links with the past and swear allegiance to Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish state. Pressure upon traditional cultural linkages common to all Turks was minimal in scattered rural villages; it was particularly intense in towns and cities where Turks were exposed to the overbearing ardour of an aspiring Kemalist elite. The Kemalist dissolution of traditional Ottoman-Islamic institutions around which Muslim-Turkish identity had long formed was most disconcerting to tightly-knit urban Muslim communities; these same communities possessed the solidarity out of which evolved public protest against the attack upon the very basis of their common identity.

V.

"*Ne mutlu Türküm diyene*" ? Secular Reform and the Inculcation of a Turkish Identity¹

"Laicism as practised by the Turkish Republic, springs from the idea that religion is basically an individual concern, not a collective or a state concern, and that religious teaching is the business of the family and not of the school. Elimination of the political or temporal power of a clerical hierarchy is, of course, postulated. Persecution of religion is not intended and is not resorted to . . . for most aspects of laicization in Turkey "disestablishment" would probably be a better English cognomen."²

In 1937, the same year that the Kemalist principle of "secularism" (*lâiklik*) was adopted as a fundamental tenet of the Turkish Constitution, a German traveller published her observations on modern Turkey under the evocative title, *Allah Dethroned*.³ Typical of a genre of travel literature commenting on Turkish society between the two World Wars, no other title epitomized so well the conviction held by most Europeans that, following a lengthy struggle, the rational non-religious institutions and ideas of the "civilized" world had triumphed in the heartland of the former Islamic Ottoman Empire.⁴ In the years immediately following the War of Independence, British foreign officers had pessimistically predicted that Mustafa Kemal could not possibly succeed at implementing his bold vision and that the Turkish state would eventually collapse; within a decade, however, Mustafa Kemal had

¹This phrase, translated as "How happy is he who can say he is a Turk" is one of Atatürk's most famous and today can be found at the entrance of most Turkish towns and cities.

²FO 371/23301/E1214 Turkey Annual Report, 1938.

³Lilo Linke, *Allah Dethroned*.

⁴Arnold Toynbee was even ahead of his time when in the early 1920's he praised Turkey for its imitation of the west and expressed the hope that other non-western nations would follow its example and adopt a similar brand of practical, secular nationalism. See Arnold Toynbee and Kenneth Kirkwood, *Turkey* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1926), pp. 299-301.

consolidated political power in the Republican People's Party alone and had successfully introduced an impressive slate of reform legislation. Many contemporary western commentators succumbed to the illusion that Allah had, in fact, been dethroned. Rather ironically *Muslims* in other countries were equally concerned with developments in Turkish society, but because they perceived Kemalist secular reforms to represent an attack on their common Islamic heritage.⁵ Unlike their European peers, the defenders of Islam refused to concede that this assault would dethrone Allah, and in this prediction they were correct. Mustafa Kemal did dismantle already fragile Ottoman-Islamic institutions, but the very occurrence of genuine Islamic opposition movements (to be examined in Chapter Six) and the revival of religious issues in the national political discourse of the 1950's suggests that Turkish culture remained predominantly Muslim.⁶

The previous two chapters constituted an examination of the impact of the economic and infrastructural aspects of modernization upon Turkish society; this chapter is a consideration of the process, dependent upon the modern Turkish state-structure, by which Mustafa Kemal aspired to effect a cultural transformation. As the central government consolidated its control over Anatolia, it was necessary to inculcate a "Turkish" identity that would stimulate popular support for the new state. This identity was not limited to the Anatolian-Turkish "patriotism" previously engendered by the Young Turks, but was to be founded upon fundamental tenets of "modern civilization" -- especially rational thought and positive science -- and was to represent a distinct break with the Ottoman-Islamic past. National patriotism would replace all communal and religious loyalties. The primary, continually evolving ideology and set of policies designed to facilitate this transition from Muslim to Turkish identity was that known as "secularism." It is as predictable, reactionary

⁵Post-war bleak assessments of Turkey's future can be found in FO 371/10228/E9733 Edmonds (Smyrna) to Lindsay, 31 October, 1924; FO 371/10863/E6533 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 20 October, 1925. The response of non-Turkish Muslims to Kemalist reforms is discussed in: William Cleveland, "Atatürk viewed by his Arab Contemporaries: The Opinions of Sati Al-Husri and Shakib Arslan," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 2 (1983), pp. 15-23; Iskender Gökalp and François Georgeon, "Kémalisme et Monde Musulman," *Cahiers Du GETC* 3 (Automne, 1987), pp. 1-39; and, Fazlur Rahman, "Muhammad Iqbal and Atatürk's Reforms," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43:2 (1984), pp. 157-162.

⁶On the 1950's see Howard Reed, "The Religious Life of Modern Turkish Muslims" in R.N. Frye, ed. *Islam and the West* (The Hague: Mouton, 1957), pp. 108-148.

rejections of Kemalist secularism that scholars have characterized public protests in which Islamic symbols were prominent. This approach, however, has gained credence not because it is based on careful research but because it suits a particular ideological stance that does not allow for a more nuanced consideration of the various degrees to which secular legislation was applied throughout Turkey. Analysis of this process is indeed made difficult by the limited information regarding the changing role of religion in Turkish society that is currently available to the historian. European commentators during this period were content to reify popular images of the Orient and the "decline of Islam" rather than investigate how Turks actually experienced secularization, and their observations must be treated very carefully. My approach, therefore, has been to appropriate theoretical paradigms current in contemporary social-anthropology -- notably the importance of symbols and common practices to cultural identity⁷ -- and to consider how they can be integrated along with the information gleaned from primary sources, so as to construct a plausible argument regarding the impact of secularism upon Muslim-Turkish identities. Whereas previously I have located occurrences of Islamic "reaction" in their geographic and social contexts, I will now examine which aspects of this cultural transformation might legitimately be considered the root-causes of social unrest. On the basis of these conclusions, I will then proceed in the final chapter to an analysis of the movements of Islamic "reaction" and the social dynamic they reveal.

Anatolian Religious Diversity and Kemalist Secularism

The necessary prerequisites to understanding the impact of legislated secular reforms upon Turkish society are an appreciation of both the religious diversity of that society and the particular intent of Kemalist secularism. It is no coincidence that although population censuses dating from both the Ottoman Empire *and* the early Turkish Republic allow for the diverse classification of the Christian population -- Nestorian, Chaldean, Armenian etc. -- they provide for but one category of "Muslim." Religious homogeneity, be it fact or fiction,

⁷In particular I have drawn on the following studies: Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (London: Yale University Press, 1968); Michael Gilsenan *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Arab World*; and, Carter Bentley, "Ethnicity and Practice," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19:1 (January, 1987), pp. 24-55.

was vital not only to the Islamic Ottoman Empire but also to the "secular" Turkish state seeking to emphasize unity rather than cultural heterogeneity. During the Kemalist period, however, both ethnic and religious unity were more illusion than reality, and just as it is virtually impossible to define "Islam" as a single entity, so too it is fallacious to suggest that a common Muslim identity pervaded the Anatolian populace.

The religious cultural "carpet" of Anatolia was in fact a complex of interwoven colours and patterns. The border of this "carpet" reflected the designs of Ottoman Sunni Islam and its representative institutions in Anatolia's cities and towns. The two distinct colours within this border are those of Sunni and Alevi (Shi'i) Islam. The same general pattern, however, may be found in both colours, for the semi-nomadic Sunni and Alevi tribes comprising a significant portion of Anatolian society lived largely according to their own customs and beliefs: even when forcibly settled, their religious beliefs and practices reflected a synthesis of Islamic and pre-Islamic Anatolian and Turkic traits. Other patterns in this Anatolian "carpet" suggest the innumerable variations of "folk Islam" that prevailed through the 1930's. Variations among Alevi practices and beliefs were frequently along the lines of urban (*Şehir Bektaşiliği*) and rural village (*Köy Bektaşiliği*). Similarly, local variations of "Sunni" Islam frequently exhibited the integration of Anatolian cults as a means of avoiding the strict Sunni pietism instituted by the Ottoman *ulema* and increasingly emphasized by the influx of nineteenth-century immigrants. One distinct pattern characterized by subtle variations in design and colour is that indicative of the influential place of dervish *tarikats* in Anatolian Islam. Providing a structured mystical element to Islamic beliefs, *tarikats* comprised extensive networks of allegiance radiating from a learned *murşid* (guide) to his devoted *murids* (followers). The resulting attitude of devotion might supersede any other social relationship -- with regards to the local community and the state -- in which a *murid* were involved.⁸ Although these facets of Anatolian Islam may not have been readily evident

⁸This composite picture is derived from: Şerif Mardin, "Turkey: Islam and Westernization," in Carlo Caldarola, ed. *Religions and Societies: Asia and the Middle East* (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1982), pp. 171-174; Şerif Mardin, "A Note on the Transformation of Religious Symbols in Turkey," *Turcica* 16 (1984), pp. 115-127; Şerafettin Turan, *Türk Kültüründen Türkiye Kültürüne ve Evrenselliğe (From Turkish Culture to the Culture of Turkey and Universality)* (Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1990); and, Mehmet Eroz, *Türkiye'de Alevilik ve Bektaşilik* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990).

to Europeans, differences in belief, and related rituals and symbolism, and leadership demarcated one community from another. No one appreciated this diversity more than Mustafa Kemal, and his success at mobilizing Turks to fight in the War of Independence was in no small part due to his ability to manipulate symbols, observe rituals, and court leaders of the various Anatolian communities.⁹ Once established as President, however, Mustafa Kemal was no longer concerned with pleasing all of these communities but astutely played one group off another: thus, Alevi were the primary beneficiaries of legislation abolishing the Caliphate and *şeriat*, while dervish *şeyhs* and orthodox *ulema* approved of policies that might restrict the jurisdiction of the other. Religious diversity, therefore, meant that individual experiences of official secular policies did not differ simply according to region or social status; it also rendered efforts at unified opposition (Islamic "reaction") to particular secular policies inherently weak.

Secular reforms, along with those related to nationalism and populism, were the means by which Mustafa Kemal hoped to effect a de-emphasis upon regional and communal identities and a transfer of loyalty to the Turkish state. At the same time, secularism was also designed to cut loose Anatolian society and culture from its Islamic moorings, and to minimize conscious identification with the Muslim *umma*, a concept vital to the unity of the Ottoman Empire. Secularism, therefore, provided the ideological framework for the derision of all practices, beliefs, and loyalties -- be they Islamic or Anatolian -- that could not be accommodated within a positivist conceptualization of the "civilized" and "modern" Turkish nation.¹⁰ In practice, however, Kemalist secularism did tolerate the continued practice of

⁹Mustafa Kemal's astute religious policies are examined Paul Dumont, "Hojas for the Revolution: The Religious Strategy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk," *American Institute for the Study of Middle Eastern Civilization Journal* 1:3-4 (Autumn-Winter, 1980-81), pp. 17-32. A more popular discussion of Mustafa Kemal's relationship with the Alevi is Cemal Şener, *Atatürk ve Aleviler* (Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1993).

¹⁰This is most evident in a series of speeches given by Mustafa Kemal in the summer of 1925 in Kastamonu (August 24 and 30) and İnebolu (August 26 and 28). See *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri (Atatürk's Speeches and Statements)* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1989), II, pp. 215-227. Kemalist secularism has been and still is the subject of intense debate: the clearest examination of the subject is Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), pp. 5-8, 479-503. Some scholars have argued that Mustafa Kemal was very much in favour of Islamic beliefs and practices: see Ethem Fırlalı, "Atatürk and the Religion of Islam," *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 9:26 (Mart, 1993), pp. 289-301; and Detlev Khalid, "Ataturk's concepts of Islamic Reformism and Muslim Unity," *Regional Cultural Institute Journal* 7:1 (Winter, 1974), pp. 39-52. Islamists are hesitant to directly criticize Mustafa Kemal but emphasize the abuses of

Islamic beliefs by individual Turks, even though its proponents deemed them no longer relevant to a national culture. If religion were to continue to play a significant role in Turkish society, the Kemalist elite was determined that it would be an "enlightened" Islam that would be a tool useful for crafting a cohesive, civilized nation. Mustafa Kemal's approach to inculcating a Turkish cultural identity throughout the populace reflected an appreciation of the fact that Anatolian Muslim identity was hybrid, derived from instrumental, primordial and habitual foundations: the formation of a "Turkish" identity would prove to be both destructive and creative as Mustafa Kemal attempted to transform these foundations. In order to exercise freedom in the process of transforming or replacing (secularizing) common symbols and habitual practices,¹¹ the Kemalist elite had first to eliminate the Islamist establishment with whom they rivalled for the right to shape modern Turkish society and culture. As one might expect, secular policies were, in fact, much more successful in diminishing the political influence of traditional leaders than in engendering a complete cultural transformation. Although the *ulema* had been dethroned, Allah remained powerful!

Disestablishing the Establishment

Integral to the intense social and political debate since 1908 concerning the appropriate forms of Ottoman law and government, Islamist *ulema* were among the first members of the old Ottoman elite to find their activities circumscribed in the increasingly authoritarian political atmosphere of the 1920's. Mustafa Kemal's earliest secular reforms were aimed not so much at "Islam" -- although their impact upon Turkish Muslim society was unavoidable -- as at those members of Anatolian society who claimed legitimacy from Ottoman Islamic institutions and were thus perceived as a political threat by the Kemalist

secular policies by local officials and the inconsistency of Mustafa Kemal's policies: see Hasan Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*. Others are very critical of Kemalist secularism because it is not a complete imitation of western secularism in that religious institutions remain under the control of the government: see Ali Fuad Başgil, *Din ve Lâiklik* (Istanbul: Yağmur Yayınları, 1991).

¹¹My understanding of "identity" has been derived from: D. Eickelman and J. Piscatori, "Social Theory in the Study of Muslim Societies," in D. Eickelman and J. Piscatori, eds. *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination*, pp. 3-25; and, Carter Bentley, "Ethnicity and Practice."

elite. First and foremost was the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph himself: his very existence presented a challenge to Mustafa Kemal, while the institution of the Sultanate-Caliphate had proven to be a potent symbol of unity during the War of Independence. The Caliphate, in particular, had been undergirded by and integral to Ottoman-Islamic society, and the *ulema* derived considerable authority from their association with this supreme Islamic office. Nevertheless, the debate fuelled first by the speculation concerning the future of the Caliphate following the abolition of the Sultanate in 1923 and by the dissolution of the Caliphate itself 1924, revealed that Islamic jurists were willing to argue both for and against the maintenance of a politically powerful Caliphate. Within the Grand National Assembly, many deputies were concerned not so much with the theological implications of Islam *sans* Caliph as with the possibility that without such a political check Mustafa Kemal might become too powerful. Mustafa Kemal, himself, took the debate to Anatolian cities and towns where he engaged local conservative *hocas* with his charisma and rhetoric, and cleverly utilized the arguments of Islamic modernists to justify the "creation" of a Turkish *umma* independent of other Muslim societies. When the Kemalist elite successfully introduced legislation to dissolve the Caliphate and the office of the *Şeyh-ül-Islam* on March 3, 1924, they paved the way for "Turkish" identity to be based not on allegiance to a religious authority but to a national hero and autocrat, Mustafa Kemal. Subsequent to March, 1924, the *hutbe* (sermon) read every Friday in local mosques was done so not in the name of the Caliph, but in the name of the Turkish Republic.¹²

The Turkish response to such a monumental act in the history of Islam was remarkably muted. "Reactionary" sermons by *ulema* scattered throughout the country resulted in their arrest -- and frequently execution -- but no popular movement arose in support of the Caliphate. Conflict was reported in the south-east, around Gaziantep and Urfa, but appears to have resulted from an effort, by local Kemalists, to exile loyal

¹²See Halil İnalcık, "The Caliphate and Atatürk's İnkılap," *Turkish Review Quarterly Digest* 2:7 (1987), pp. 25-36; Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, I, pp. 48-203; and Gotthard Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık (Islam in Modern Turkey)*, Hayrullah Örs, trans. (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1972), p. 44.

supporters of the Caliphate.¹³ A year later, Şeyh Sait led Kurdish rebels ostensibly to restore the Caliphate, but primarily to regain the semi-autonomous status that Kurdish notables had enjoyed under the Ottoman state. It is in the lack of public protest regarding the abolition of the Caliphate that we surely observe the significance of the sizeable (estimates range from 1.5 to 7 million) community of Alevi Turks who were all too glad to witness the end of an institution by which they had suffered centuries of persecution.¹⁴ To a vast proportion of isolated Sunni Anatolian peasants, however, the Caliphate must also have seemed a distant authority associated with the economic hardships and tribulations of war that had dominated their lives until 1924. In those cases where Turks had suffered at the hands of local *ulema*, there must also have been a sense of relief that an "unjust" authority could no longer claim legitimacy on the basis of the Caliphate.¹⁵ The explanation for the relative readiness with which Turks accepted this reform does not depend on negative attitudes alone: in fact, the single most significant factor was likely that Mustafa Kemal himself ably filled the shoes of the Sultan-Caliph. Scholars have frequently observed that one result of the Turkish Revolution was the birth of a "Kemalist cult" in which Mustafa Kemal was perceived as perhaps the Sultan, or even as a dervish *murşid* qualified to show his followers the "true way."¹⁶ Mustafa Kemal represented a new blend of populist leader

¹³Reports on the arrests of Islamist ulema are contained in FO 371/10171/p.45 Henderson (Constantinople) to FO, 16 January, 1924; FO 371/10172/p.172 Henderson (Constantinople) to FO, 24 July, 1924. Scant details regarding events in the south-east are found in FO 371/10218/E3177, 27 March, 1924; and in Çetin Özek, *Türkiye'de Gerici Akımlar*, pp. 79-80. Aybars refers to a dissertation touching on the results of the abolition of the Caliphate which, unfortunately, I have not been able to examine for this study. See Ergün Aybars, *İstiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927*, p. 72.

¹⁴Tunçay even asserts -- without divulging his sources -- that Alevi were instrumental in effecting the decision to abolish the Caliphate; see Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması*, p. 213.

¹⁵This was suggested with regard to eastern Anatolia: see FO 371/10863/E7918 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 15 December, 1925. Şerif Mardin has observed the lack of importance rendered the Caliphate by the influential mystic Said Nursi. Nursi's emphasis was upon the interaction of Muslims as members of a community not as subjects of a political order. Ironically, this may have softened many Muslim's responses to the abolition of the Caliphate but the denial of the primacy of political leadership was quite contrary to Kemalist efforts to engender Turkish nationalism. Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey*, pp. 101-102.

¹⁶Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p. 370; Richard and Nancy Tapper, "Religion, Education, and Continuity in a Provincial Town," in Richard Tapper, ed. *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics, and Literature in a Secular State* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1991), p. 74. One contemporary observer went so far as to suggest that Turks perceived Mustafa Kemal as a deliverer whose laws were "orders from the Prophet." Raymond

committed to circulating throughout Anatolia, capable of speaking an Islamic idiom and manipulating symbols integral to the world-view of Muslim Turks. And, although there may have been aspects of Kemalism that were ill-perceived by Turks, the interference of a powerful authority and its representatives in daily life was a reality to which they were long accustomed.

Neither the Sultanate-Caliphate nor the Ottoman-Islamic institutions with which it had been closely related had fared well under the Young Turk regime. *Medrese* schools, of decreasing importance to the training of an Ottoman elite, had increasingly fallen under the influence of secular reformers. After 1914, most were closed and used to quarter soldiers.¹⁷ Similarly, a century of innovation in the realm of Ottoman jurisprudence had limited the jurisdiction of the *şeriat* courts to matters relating to family law. In 1917, the codification of the latter in the form of the Law of Family Rights and the relegation of the *şeriat* courts to the Ministry of Justice represented another blow to the autonomy of the *ulema*.¹⁸ During this same period, social and political turmoil had frequently been associated with *medrese* students calling for a more rigorous application of the *şeriat*, and so the Grand National Assembly's decision on March 3, 1924 that both *medreses* and *şeriat* courts be closed, was essential to efforts by the Kemalist elite to exercise autonomous control over Turkish society.¹⁹ That the Kemalist target was Islamist *ulema* rather than Islam *in toto* is evidenced by the fact that the government almost immediately established *imam-hatip* schools for the training of religious officials and accepted the need to continue to apply the *şeriat* with regards to family matters in civil courts until a new Civil Law could be introduced in 1926. So long as these Islamic institutions remained under government

Colrat, "Turkey Today," p. 131.

¹⁷See Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp. 69-80. Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, I, pp. 330-33.

¹⁸June Starr, *Law as Metaphor: From Islamic Courts to the Palace of Justice* (Albany: SUNY, 1992), pp. 38-41. It must be stressed that although the codification of family law in 1917 was a new phenomenon, it likely had little impact other than within the Istanbul elite. It may have set the stage for Kemalist alterations to personal law but the law itself was in line with various Islamic schools of thought. It should also be noted that some of the earliest efforts to "reform" family law in the Turkish Republic resulted in Islamists insisting upon closer observance of the *şeriat* in 1922. See Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, I, 240-45; Berkes, *The Development of Secularism*, pp. 468-69.

¹⁹On the turmoil of the Second Constitutional Period see Tarık Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, pp. 99-116.

control, they were acceptable.

The epicenter of these changes was, of course, located among the conglomeration of *ulema*, and although ordinary Anatolian Turks might have been incited to oppose these innovations by dervish *şeyhs* and *hocas* (as was the case in the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion (1925) and the *Menemen Olayı* (1930)), they in fact had little impact upon most Turks. Islamist *ulema* who publicly opposed the imposition of closure upon the old Ottoman-Islamic order found themselves subject to prosecution by the Independence Tribunals. The remaining *ulema* were either resigned to accommodating the new order and indeed perpetuating the Ottoman tradition of state dominance over the religious establishment, or withdrew from public life and quietly devoted their efforts to preserving Islamic beliefs and practices within their immediate communities. As a contemporary scholar wrote, there were two classes of "Muslim functionaries" in Turkey,

those who will have nothing good said about the present regime, and those who are willing to say good things about it in the weekly sermon, even to preaching material handed out by Ankara. The former are for the most part unemployed, at least in religious duties.²⁰

The laws of 3 March, 1924 marked the beginning of a new social role for the Turkish *ulema*; in a society in which religious learning was consistently devalued they could no longer claim to be privileged, learned leaders. Instead, they found themselves reduced to the status of low-ranking religious "functionaries" or civil servants in a burgeoning bureaucratic system.²¹ As a result of a lack of relevant documentation, an analysis of their experiences in this period requires a sensitive assessment of the claims of abuse made by Islamists and the ominous silence of Kemalist scholars on the topic. That which is most important is understanding the impact of Kemalist policies towards the *ulema* upon the status of individuals within local communities. The predominant image derived from the relevant sources is one of a victimized class of government officials: on the one hand they might lose

²⁰Donald Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, p. 279.

²¹"Religious affairs" now fell under the jurisdiction of two separate authorities: a "Presidency of Religious Affairs" (*Diyanet İşleri Reisliği*) directly responsible to the Prime Minister, and an independent agency, the "Directorate-General of Pious Foundations" (*Evkaf Umum Müdürlüğü*). See Rustow, "Politics and Islam in Turkey 1920-1955," in Frye, ed. *Islam and the West*, pp. 82-83.

the respect of local inhabitants who correctly perceived that as *hocas* or *imams*, they acted as a mouthpiece for the proclamation of Kemalist propaganda, while on the other hand their activities were constantly subjected to the scrutiny of local government officials. Innovative legislation only emphasized their vulnerability. At various times during this period the government determined to consolidate religious offices and reduce the number of functionaries in its employ, thus rendering large numbers unemployed. Similarly, regulations regarding the dress to be worn by religious officials -- ultimately restricting the wearing of religious garb to those actually officiating in a mosque -- and the titles by which they could be addressed -- declaring illegal many which denoted respect -- only augmented the Kemalist message that the "men of religion" were no longer worthy of respect or loyalty.²² Nevertheless, this image of victimization must be tempered by the recognition that in a society in which literacy was a much valued skill, those with religious training were likely in high demand as administrators and even teachers in the first decade of the Turkish Revolution.²³ Former members of the Ottoman Islamic judiciary must also have been expected to play an important role, following limited "retraining," in the Turkish courts. For those former *ulema* who opted to work within the system, therefore, experiences of the Turkish Revolution mirrored those of all Turks, and were characterized by the struggle to adapt to new realities, assimilate the concept of a national, Turkish identity, and determine the relevance of previous practices and beliefs to life in the new republic.

In the struggle to dominate Turkish society and culture, Mustafa Kemal had originally targeted only members of the *ulema* as the probable inspiration behind opposition movements; the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion in the Spring of 1925, however, revealed that dervish *seyhs* and the institutions by which they extended their influence (*tekkes*) were potentially an even greater threat to the state. This discovered, the Turkish government promptly decided

²²This discussion is based on: Henry Allen, *The Turkish Transformation*, pp. 182-83; Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 103-50, 327-56; and Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslamlık*, pp. 32, 53-68. Clearly the relative importance of a *hoca* or an *imam* differed between communities, and any generalizations on this topic -- for which contradictory evidence can be produced -- are particularly hazardous.

²³When questioned before the Ankara Independence Tribunal, one religious functionary -- Fatih *Turbedarı Hacı Hassan* -- affirmed his commitment to the Republic and stated that he was far better off than under the Ottoman state. See *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabıtları*, pp. 33-39.

to eliminate these potentially subversive networks which also propagated "backward" and "irrational" beliefs, and in the Autumn of 1925 legislated the dissolution of dervish *tarikats* and the closure of *tekkes* and popular shrines (*türbes*) throughout Anatolia. Although the series of public disturbances that occurred in eastern Anatolian cities in November-December, 1925, are typically associated with discontent stemming from the "hat law," *şeyhs* were prominent in these protests and there can be no doubt that the fez and hat were but symbols upon which much deeper frustrations, resulting from *all* the previous secular reforms, were projected.

The tendency of many scholars to interpret the history of the Turkish Revolution in terms of chronologies of legislation rather than more sensitive indicators of social reality is no more evident than in the frequency with which the outlawing of *tarikats* and mystical practices is presented as a *fait accompli*.²⁴ A corollary to the Kemalist commitment to denying the relevance and therefore existence of *tarikats* in Turkish society, this interpretation defies very clear evidence to the contrary. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the continued importance of *tarikats* networks throughout this period was plainly revealed with the arrest of "Islamic reactionaries" (dervish affiliates) in 1935 and 1936. The government itself recognized this fact with the passage of further legislation in 1937 designed to prohibit religious association, not just according to *tarikats* but also sect (thus negating a previously effective legal defense).²⁵ Of equal importance to an appreciation of the impact of Kemalist secularism upon Turkish society, is the recognition of the *substance* of the law that demanded the dissolution of *tarikats* activities: it was, in fact, more comprehensive than is

²⁴Among the striking examples are: Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, II, p. 385; Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, pp. 461-66; Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, pp. 79-80; and Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 607-14. Some scholars recognize that the lack of information on the issue does not mean that *tarikats* disappeared. See for example: Lewis, *Emergence*, pp. 409-16; Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*, p. 152; Eric Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, pp. 200-01; and Yaşar Nuri Öztürk, *The Eye of the Heart: An Introduction to Sufism and the Tariqats of Anatolia and the Balkans*, Richard Blakney, trans. (Istanbul: Redhouse Press, 1988), p. 83.

²⁵This is mentioned in FO 371/21935/E2214 Turkey Annual Report, 1937. Ironically, the most detailed "evidence" of continued *tarikats* activities is contained in Kemal Üstün's analysis of the Menemen *Olayı*. The case presented by the prosecutor included an elaborate description of the thriving *Nakşibendi* network in western Anatolia. The irony lies in the fact that this "plot" was perhaps partly fictitious. See Üstün, *Menemen Olayı ve Kubilay*, pp. 74-86.

normally recognized. For instance, important provisions were made for the material well-being of many of the *şeyhs* who could point to certain stipulations in the original *vakıf* agreement; *şeyhs* were frequently allowed to continue to reside in the buildings previously used as *tekkes*, while some were even allowed to continue to collect revenue from properties originally set aside for their particular *tarikât*. Similarly, although local shrines (*türbe*) were also targeted by the same law, the caretakers (*türbeci*) of these sites continued to receive their previous salaries until such time as they were reappointed as *hocas* or *muezzins*. That one fragment of evidence reveals that in Bursa a *Mevlevi şeyh* found employment as an *imam-hatip* until his death in 1930, suggests that dervish *şeyhs* might also have been appointed as religious functionaries.²⁶ Despite the fact that the experiences of *şeyhs* and *türbecis* at the hands of local zealous Kemalist officials did not always reflect the spirit of this law, it is significant that it was not designed to instantaneously create a class of deprived and aggrieved Islamic leaders. Indeed, the available evidence implies the Kemalists were so confident of the superiority of rational nationalism that they truly believed that given the chance Turks would desert these "reactionary" institutions and allow them to die a quiet death in a "modern" society. On the contrary, Muslim Turks appear to have continued to value *tarikât* affiliations, and these continued to thrive without either the financial support or institutional structure with which they had long been associated. Hardened by a tradition that included oppression and persecution, *tarikats* were ideally suited to operating just below the surface of Turkish society while awaiting the time when their public activities would once again be tolerated.

Transforming Anatolian-Islamic Symbols and Habits

In the wake of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion (February-April, 1925) the Turkish government not only realized the need to prohibit *tarikât* activities, but also provided for the authoritarian means (Independence Tribunals) by which such a law might be enforced when the Grand National Assembly passed the "Law for the Maintenance of Order" (*Takrir'i Sükün Kanunu* -

²⁶Mustafa Kara, *Bursa'da Tarikatlar ve Tekkeler*, p.139. Unfortunately few concrete examples such as this exist. An English translation of the law is contained in FO 371/10870/p.208 Translation of Telegram, 3 September, 1925. See also Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp. 33-37.

- March 4, 1925).²⁷ Confident that this legislation could be used to justify even the most brutal suppression of opposition, the Kemalist elite began to introduce a diverse array of cultural reforms that would define the modern Turkish culture. They evidently believed that by passing legislation indicative not of current practice but of secular Kemalist ideals, the whole of Turkish society would eventually cooperate and aspire to participate in the elite culture.²⁸ In some cases, legislation must have had very little impact on the daily lives of the majority of Turks, both artisans and peasants. Laws decreeing that "Turkish" music should imitate European styles (1924), that Sunday be an official day of rest (1935), and that all Turks adopt "Turkish" surnames (1934-36) had little or no relevance to the ordinary Turk. Similarly, elaborate efforts by Mustafa Kemal and his cadre to purify the Turkish language of all Arabic and Persian words, and to propagate an absurdly Turkic-centric theory of the history of human civilization were no more than the playful pursuits of an elite looking for an excuse not to revolutionize Turkish social relations. Even though the evidence before their very own eyes disproved such a fantastic claim, the Kemalist elite had only to point to this sort of legislation to substantiate its assertion that Turkey was indeed a modern and civilized nation-state.²⁹

Other secular-nationalist reforms were considerably more sensible to the formation of a new state. The use of multiple calendars under the Young Turk regime, for instance, had caused considerable confusion. Kemalists were determined to integrate Turkish practices with European ones, and legislated that 1 January, 1926 was to be the start of a new era. From this point forward, only the Gregorian calendar would be used and the standardized

²⁷Although the Independence Tribunals lasted just 2 years, the Law for the Maintenance of Order remained in effect until March, 1929. See Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*, p. 168.

²⁸As one official optimistically observed in 1924: "In the broader and more general effort that is being made to draw the people out of the stereotyped habits of mind and to familiarize them with more modern conceptions of the State and the family, a certain amount of progress is being made." FO 371/10870/E3338 Turkey Annual Report, 1924.

²⁹These "reforms" are discussed in FO 371/16983/E529 Turkey Annual Report, 1932; FO 371/19037/E854 Turkey Annual Report, 1934; FO 371/20091/E933 Turkey Annual Report, 1935. Efforts to encourage Turks to adopt family names were frequently frustrated and deadlines had to be adjusted a number of times.

24 hour clock would supersede previous methods of time keeping.³⁰ The most immediate impact of this law appears to have been felt by the former *ulema*: determining the times of ritual prayers had been frustrated, while the proclamation of religious holidays had passed from their hands to those of the functionaries employed by the Department of Religious Affairs. Businessmen conducting international trade were almost certainly already using the "new" system, while the reports of travellers indicate that these innovations were only gradually applied throughout the country. A huge proportion of the Turkish populace did not possess time pieces and continued, as before, to structure their lives around calls to prayer and religious celebrations.³¹

To a government intent upon improving the state of the Turkish economy, the decision to abolish the tithe (agricultural produce tax) in 1925 and shift the tax burden on to urban dwellers was inherently logical. Agricultural production did increase in the early years of the Republic and although a land tax was instituted in place of the tithe (at a fixed monetary rate) this generally cost the peasant less: release from a burdensome tax ought to have been a relief to peasant farmers.³² The tithe, however, was a tax required by the *şariat* for the purposes of the community, and at least one scholar has suggested that its abolition was perceived by Muslim Turks as an attack on the *şariat* and hence Islam rather than as an act of benevolence.³³ None of the sources utilized for this study substantiate this interpretation, and it is almost certain that Kemalist propaganda included theological justifications for "questionable" reforms such as this. At the same time, the immediate material needs of peasant farmers likely superseded the influence of the rhetoric of Islamist *ulema*. It was no coincidence that those most likely to suffer from the institution of a new

³⁰The day was to begin at midnight rather than at sunset and thus, time had no relation to ritual prayers.

³¹See Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp. 29-31; Webster, "State Control of Social Change in Republican Turkey," *American Sociological Review* 4 (April, 1931), p. 249; and, Berkes, *The Development of Secularism*, p. 485. Observations concerning the persistence of old methods of time keeping are found in FO371/11528/E4291 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 8 July, 1926. In 1934 the metric system was also introduced as the official form of measurement.

³²For comments on this see chapter 4, p. 59.

³³Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp. 26-28.

agricultural tax system -- notables who had previously collected the tithe on the government's behalf -- were prominent among the leadership of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion.

If the abolition of the tithe did indeed aggrieve Turks because they perceived it as a transgression of an Islamic "moral economy," then other government policies were far more disconcerting. The Kemalist disregard for the sanctity of mosques, for example, was evident to everyone: in those locations where mosques had been damaged by fighting during the War of Independence or by natural disaster, there is evidence that the Directorate-General of Pious Foundations did not provide for their repair. Moreover local communities were encouraged to donate money (rather than to the restoration of mosques) to national campaigns such as the Society for Encouraging Aviation.³⁴ In many cities, the apparent abundance of mosques -- requiring civil servants paid by the government -- caused the government to re-assess local "needs" and to close those that it deemed superfluous, the most notable example of this being the decision to convert the Hagia Sophia into a national museum. In most other cases, however, former mosques were appropriated for branches of the government and for the military which used them as barracks and storage depots.³⁵

Of all the Kemalist secular reforms, it was the "hat law" which created the most turmoil throughout Anatolian society and which revealed the government's determination to enforce legislation passed in Ankara. The decision to outlaw "out-moded" Ottoman and Anatolian forms of headgear -- the fez was primarily worn in towns and cities³⁶ -- and require men to don "modern" dress including a hat (*şapka*) was particularly offensive to many Turks: "They resent deeply what seems to be an attempt not merely to do away with their own religion, but to turn them into unbelievers and they cannot bear wearing the hat

³⁴Insufficient evidence exists to know just how common this was. Two examples, however, are found in Colrat, "Turkey Today," p. 134; and Morrison, *Alişar: A Unit of Land Occupance*, pp. 94-5.

³⁵These examples are found in Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, p. 66; and FO 371/20091/E933 Turkey Annual Report, 1935; FO 371/14579/E2678 Edmonds, May, 1930; FO 371/14583/E2274 Swinerton, 28 April, 1930; FO 371/16984/E1056 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 17 February, 1933.

³⁶I have been unable to ascertain just how this law affected peasant farmers who must have worn a variety of headgear -- reports from the following years indicate that these continued to be worn, although perhaps a "brim" was added.

which has been the mark of the infidel."³⁷ Disconcertion arising from this law was undoubtedly a significant factor in the public-protests that coincided with its implementation in November-December, 1925. The process by which this new practice was introduced reveals something of the experiences of Turks at this time, for as was the case with almost every reform, the government did not attempt to hide its intentions and then suddenly spring a new regulation upon the populace. On the contrary, it encouraged rumours of the change and then gradually introduced the hat to all segments of the population. Mustafa Kemal himself initially appeared in a hat in August, 1925, publicly condemning the "old-fashioned" dress worn by members of his audience and encouraging Turks to follow his example. Legislation requiring "modern dress" was at first only applied to members of the Turkish armed forces and the civil service; they were expected to set the example for the rest of the nation. Then, in October, a door-to-door campaign in many cities met with the desired result in at least Istanbul where national celebrations on the 29th were attended only by those *not* wearing old forms of headgear. Despite these careful preparations, the actual application of the law throughout the country created considerable chaos: the evidence suggests that in many places, sufficient hats were not available upon the required day, and that even when they were, many Turks could not afford them; local officials applied the law inconsistently, and within local communities, individual Turks were embarrassed to be among the first to accept the mark of an infidel.³⁸

Contrary to the assertion made by many contemporary observers, that the hat reform was a success and that in donning a hat, Turks were celebrating the "victory of the free spirit over religious superstition,"³⁹ reports written by British diplomats during subsequent years

³⁷FO 371/11528/E61 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 30 December, 1925.

³⁸Information regarding the process by which the hat law was introduced is found in Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp. 28-29; Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 37-57; FO 371/10870/p.213 Foreign Office Minutes, 12 December, 1925; FO 371/10863/pp.146-55 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 31 March, 1925. Concerning the experiences of Turks see the following cases in *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabıtları*: Erzurumlu Zühdü (pp. 141-56); Erzurumlu Mehmed Efendi and Hoca Osman (pp. 157-63); Hacı Bey (pp. 200-03); Kara Sabri (pp. 204-05); Sabuncuzâde Mustafa Efendi (pp. 217-19); and, Hasankale Telegraf Muduru Halid (pp. 224-25).

³⁹Robert de Beauplan, "Resurgent Turkey and Decadent Syria -- Kemal and His Turkey," *Living Age* 348 (May, 1935), p. 224.

indicated that compliance with the law was in no way complete. The "fez" did not disappear entirely, and as late as 1930 it could be seen in "out of the way places;" following the Menemen *Olayı* in 1930, police reportedly arrested some 20 "reactionaries" accused of rejecting the "hat law."⁴⁰ Subsequent to the harsh penalties given "protestors" by the Independence Tribunals in 1925-1926, most Turks acceded to the new regulation in public, although the various pieces of apparel worn in place of the "fez" were indicative more of non-compliance than of submission to the spirit of the law. "Hats" included knitted skull caps, fezes with small brims, and even a "dervish tall hat turned up at the bottom." Contrary to the popular belief that the "hat law" was one of the great success stories of the Turkish Revolution, it appears that a change in headgear did not result in significantly altering the mentality under the hat. It did, however, contribute to an increasing sense of discomobulation as Turks witnessed yet another symbol of their Muslim identity subjected to degradation by the "Turkish" government.⁴¹

Mustafa Kemal's campaign to institute a new "Turkish" alphabet in the Autumn of 1928 can only have augmented popular disorientation. Although only a small proportion of the population (approximately 8%) faced the challenge of switching from the Arabic to a modified Latin script, many more Turks were aware of the intense efforts of the government to increase Turkish literacy. Turks between the ages of 16 and 40 were required to attend special schools (where they existed), and by becoming literate free themselves from

⁴⁰Reports of the "fez" are found in FO 371/10863/E7918 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 15 December, 1925; FO371/11528/E4291 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 8 July, 1926; FO371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930. Concerning the arrests after the Menemen *Olayı*, see *Cumhuriyet*, 8 *Kânunusani* (January), 1930.

⁴¹It is worth recounting in full the experience of one man from near Sivas: "At first he tried to disobey it but the *muhtar*, the bastard of a pig, had fined him. Then he had stayed indoors for a week or two. But he could not gaze at the walls for ever, so he had ordered his son to buy him a cap in the Sivas market. When he got it, he had looked at it with contempt and not touched it for many days. At last his peasant avarice had gained the upper hand. He paid for it, so he might just as well wear it. He found that all the villagers had covered their heads with similar headgear, and his opposition slowly died. After all, what did it matter? Allah could not blame him for submitting to force. If the arrow of Providence be sped by the bow of fate, there is no shield against it save resignation. One day, *inshallah* (as God will), the wicked Government would be swept away, and for the moment he kept his fez carefully hidden." From Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, pp. 179-80.

the shackles of the past.⁴² Frustration occurred on at least two accounts: bureaucratic processes became even more drawn out as *memurs* struggled to adapt, and contrary to the government's propaganda, a Turk who diligently learned to read and write could not be sure of finding a comfortable government job after doing so.⁴³ 1928 was reportedly a year of considerable social tension resulting from the decision to exclude from the Turkish Constitution a clause stating Islam to be the national religion, the presentation to the government by the Istanbul Theological Faculty of a report proposing thorough changes to Islamic practices, and rumours that Sunday would replace Friday as the day of rest. Islamists allegedly waged an underground campaign against the government on the grounds that these were but the first in a series of "attacks on Islam" aimed at converting Turks to Christianity, and at the end of the year a series of arrests in Bursa revealed an alleged plot to overthrow the government by the "Revolutionary Committee for the Protection of the Moslem Religion."⁴⁴ The relative success with which Mustafa Kemal's literacy campaign had met and the failure of Islamic "reaction" to find popular public expression, suggests that

⁴²Some 12,902 schools reportedly trained 589,858 Turks in literacy in 1928 alone. See Allen, *The Turkish Transformation*, p. 126. According to population census data, the literacy rate went from 8% in 1927 to 16% in 1935. Whether this significant increase was in fact due to the new alphabet being easier to learn than the old or due to the intense education campaign is open to some debate. See Sabri Akural, "Kemalist Views on Social Change," p. 136. By educating Turks to read a new alphabet, Mustafa Kemal was not only making it almost impossible for them to read Ottoman-Turkish books, but was also rendering Turks dependent on government-sanctioned books rather than the teachings of the *ulema* who traditionally interpreted written material for the populace. Neither the printing of Arabic books nor the teaching of Arabic were ever actually forbidden, although Arabic and Persian were removed from school curriculums in 1929. In 1934 a British diplomat reported the arrest of two hocas in Trabzon for teaching the old script. No more details on this are available. See FO 371/17962/E1544 Falanga (Trebizond) to Loraine, 22 February, 1934; and, Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmluk*, p. 31.

⁴³See comments in FO 371/13810/E91 Were (Trebizond) to Clerk, 1 January, 1929; FO 371/13828/E3538 Helm (Constantinople) to FO, 29 June, 1929; and Ceylan *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 221-47.

⁴⁴Reports discussing these tensions include: FO 371/13094/E4759 Edmonds to FO, 27 September, 1928; FO 371/13089/E5383 Clerk to FO, 12 November, 1928; FO 371/13810/E33 Clerk to FO, January, 1929; FO 371/13810/E917 Clerk to FO, 15 February, 1929. This "tension" was felt by British officials who perceived the change in the Turkish constitution to be quite momentous; just to what degree the tension pervaded Anatolia is unclear. On the report by the Theological Faculty see Rustow, "Politics and Islam in Turkey," p. 83. Details regarding the Bursa "conspiracy" are very sketchy and are not to be found in histories of the period (the one exception being Özek, *Gerici Akımlar*, p. 158). British officials claimed that "unrest" occurred in not only Bursa but Istanbul, Sivas and Konya -- a fact denied by the government. The Bursa conspiracy apparently was limited to an attempt by an imprisoned *memur* to escape by means of this "revolutionary" organization. Whether it really did a religious element is impossible to know for sure. On this see FO 371/13824/E906 Turkey Annual Report, 1928; FO 371/14578/E729 Turkey Annual Report, 1929.

the Turkish government possessed far greater control than it had in 1925.

If the transition from the Arabic-Islamic alphabet to a national-Turkish script did not have an immediate impact on all Turks, its corollary, the "Turkification" of the call to prayer (*ezan*) and ritual prayers in 1932-33 was a reform of which no Turk could remain unaware. As early as 1924, imperfect Turkish versions of the Koran and Turkish-language commentaries were in circulation, and for many years Mustafa Kemal endeavoured to no avail to commission an official Turkish translation of the Koran. In 1926, the impromptu decision by a modernist *imam* to perform ritual prayers and an entire sermon (*hutbe*) in Turkish did not result in his acclamation -- on the contrary, the resulting public debate spurred the government on to suspend and censure him.⁴⁵ By 1932, however, Mustafa Kemal was confident that the time had come to further manipulate Islamic practices for the purpose of enshrining a Turkish identity, and at his direction the proclamation of the *ezan* and the reading of the Koran and *Mevlut* were heard in Turkish at the Hagia Sophia on *Kadir Gecesi* during the month of *Ramazan* (February 3), 1932.⁴⁶ As to whether or not this was in accordance with Islamic custom and law was the subject of debate throughout the country over the course of the next year. Since 1927, the explanatory element of the Friday sermon (*hutbe*) had been presented in Turkish, but during 1932 the entire *hutbe* (including passages from the Koran and hadith) as well as the *ezan* were heard in Turkish in various Anatolian cities and towns. It was as a direct result of the uneven application of regulations related to these practices that a public protest occurred in Bursa in February, 1933. Apprehension with regard to this innovation was not limited to Bursa, and Turks from various locations were arrested and tried for proclaiming the *ezan* in Arabic. Although from this point on, the *ezan* was required to be proclaimed in Turkish, it appears that *hocas* were permitted to continue to read the Koran or hadith in Arabic. While it is impossible to estimate whether Turkish or Arabic was more common inside the mosque, it is evident that in isolated

⁴⁵On these details see Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, pp. 484-90; Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 63-64; Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslamlik*, pp. 39-52.

⁴⁶Accounts of this event are found in: FO 371/16092/E702 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 5 February, 1932; FO 371/16092/E969 Bramwell (Constantinople) to Clerk, 6 February, 1932; and, Charles Sherrill, *A Year's Embassy to Mustafa Kemal* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1934), pp. 199-201.

Anatolian villages an Arabic *ezan* could sometimes still be heard. That one of the earliest acts of the newly elected Democratic party government in June, 1950 was to grant permission to *muezzins* to once again proclaim an Arabic *ezan* suggests that the Turkification of Islamic ritual was one of Mustafa Kemal's less successful methods of inculcating a Turkish identity.⁴⁷

The Kemalist secular policy that was to have the most revolutionary, long-term impact upon Turkish society and culture was that designed to grant new freedoms and rights to Turkish women. The Kemalist elite considered the status of women to be an important "indicator" of civilization; therefore, even without much impetus from any women's "liberation movement," they introduced legislation that would slowly transform the role of women in Turkish society. Girls and women were granted a greater opportunity to attend all types of schools, including university and they were encouraged to participate in sports and public social activities. Most important of all, the new Civil Law (1926) granted women rights equal to those of men regarding divorce and inheritance, while it outlawed polygamy and required that all marriages be performed by a civil official. On paper these changes appear impressive, and there can be no doubt that they provided a legal framework within which both urban and rural women could pursue changes in their social status in the decades following the Turkish Revolution.⁴⁸

In the 1920's and 1930's, however, a women's life experiences depended on a number of variables, most of which were beyond her immediate control. Those who lived in cities and provincial towns and were associated with the professional-bourgeoisie class likely benefitted most from Kemalism while also being expected to set an example for all other women. It was members of this group that constituted the rapidly increasing female presence within professions such as medicine, law, accounting, and teaching during the Kemalist period. At the same time, the wives of civil servants and military officers were required to appear unveiled in public, dress in modern fashions, and acquire social skills

⁴⁷See Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, III, p. 21; and, Reed, "The Religious Life of Modern Turks," p. 118.

⁴⁸Comprehensive discussions of these changes are in Starr, *Law as Metaphor*, pp. 92-93; and Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Social Change and Turkish Women," in Nermin Abadan-Unat, ed. *Women in Turkish Society* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981), pp. 5-31.

(such as dancing) appropriate to "modern" women.⁴⁹ Women remained vital to agricultural production and manufacturing -- at home and in factories -- and those in or near towns were gradually exposed to new ideas and fashions through the activities of the local *halkevi*. Old traditions died hard, however, and change in the habits of both men and women was very slow: for although the separation of the sexes on public modes of transportation might have been abolished by local city councils, men and women frequently continued to travel as segregated groups.⁵⁰

Analysis of public practices following the introduction of the new Civil Law in 1926 also suggests that popular response to the new provisions was indeed cautious. Despite the fact that a woman's right to divorce and inherit were dependent on possession of a government-sanctioned marriage certificate, local religious marriage ceremonies continued to carry far greater significance for urban and rural Turks, such that even in the 1950's, less than half of all marriages had been conducted in accordance with the law. Similarly, the official prohibition of polygamy did not suffice to eradicate its practice: estimates of the currency of multiple wives varies considerably, but it is evident that under certain social conditions polygamy continued to be practised throughout this period.⁵¹ Far more important to Turks than government legislation aimed at "modernization" were established

⁴⁹Regulations regarding women's dress are mentioned in FO 371/12320/E3234 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 12 May, 1927; Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 21 May, 1927; Consular Officer (Adrianople) to Clerk, 25 May, 1927; and, Watkinson (Smyrna) to Clerk, 20 July, 1927; FO 371/14583/E5651 Catton (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 October, 1930. Among the many articles concerning the role of women in Turkish society written by contemporary observers, the most useful are: Halide Edib-Adivar, "Women's Part in Turkey's Progress," *Open Court* 46 (May, 1932), pp. 343-60; Lilo Linke, "Social Changes in Turkey;" Lockie Parker, "Women in New Turkey," *Asia* 34 (December, 1934), pp. 356-61; and, Rosalind Toynbee, "Turkish Woman of Today," *Forum* 80 (September, 1928), pp. 412-20.

⁵⁰As was the case in Izmir. See FO 371/12320/E3234 Watkinson (Smyrna) to Clerk, 20 July, 1927.

⁵¹Estimates regarding the proportion of polygamous marriages range from 2-10%. Foreign Office reports indicate its practice on the Black Sea and on the Mediterranean coasts: the latter involving rich landowners who depended on multiple wives to administer their separate plots of land. See FO 371/12320/E3234 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 21 May, 1927; FO 371/13077/E3997 Matthews (Trebizond) to Clerk, 7 July, 1928. Various impediments to official marriage ceremonies existed: the need for birth certificates, expensive bureaucratic procedures, and the requirement that brides undergo medical examination. In 1933, 1945 and 1950 the government was forced to enact legislation legitimizing the children of unregistered marriages. See Paul Magnarella, "The Reception of Swiss Family Law in Turkey," *Anthropological Quarterly* 46 (April, 1973), pp. 100-16. It is interesting to note that with regard to inheritance rights (and property ownership between spouses) the Civil Law followed provisions in the *şariat* -- Anatolian Turks, however, did not necessarily practice these although they did see to the needs of both sons and daughters. See Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, pp. 468-73; and, Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp. 22-33.

social practices based on Islamic social and legal traditions. Although the government might have discarded Islamic family law, in local communities throughout Anatolia accepted distinctions between men and women, often according to "pollution law," retained a surprising currency.⁵²

The Turkish government did not pass legislation requiring women to unveil, even though the practice of veiling had been criticized by Mustafa Kemal at the same time that he had begun his campaign against the "fez." Not all Turkish women actually wore the veil; those who laboured in the fields and lived in tightly-knit village communities were more likely to appear uncovered in public. City and town councils, granted the freedom to regulate women's public dress according to local custom, were frequently dominated by Kemalist zealots who saw it as their duty to civilize the community. Their attempts to force women not to veil were not always successful: in Trabzon, for example, women responded to one such attempt in 1927 by dropping the black *peçe* (veil) and instead conveniently using the *çarşaf* (shawl) as a facial covering. In 1935 and 1936, town councils throughout Anatolia began to outlaw all forms of veiling (and even the manufacture of veils), and this time women in Trabzon protested by withdrawing from public. Social discontent was considerable, even resulting in the death of a policeman who had tried to force a local Turk to permit his wife to unveil. Conflict such as this was a reflection of anger not just over the transgression of accepted social practices, but also the efforts of the government to interfere in the private spheres of Turkish life.⁵³

⁵²This has been argued by Julie Marcus, "Islam, Women and Pollution in Turkey," *Journal of Anthropological Society of Oxford* 15:3 (1984), pp. 204-18. It is also worth noting that although women were given the right to vote locally (1930) and nationally (1934), the number of women deputies has consistently declined since 1935. See Nermin Abadan-Unat, "The Impact of Legal and Educational Reforms on Turkish Women," in N.R. Keddie and Beth Baron, eds. *Women in Middle-Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 190.

⁵³See FO 371/12320/E3234 Knight (Trebizond) to Clerk, 12 May, 1927; FO 371/20087/E2013 Falanga (Trebizond) to Loraine, 28 March, 1936; FO 371/20087/E2389 Falanga (Trebizond) to Loraine, 16 April, 1936; FO 371/20087/E3075 Falanga to Loraine, 19 May, 1936. Newspaper columns in 1935 and 1936 reported that women welcomed these new laws -- these reports, however, cannot be taken at face value as they were likely the efforts of local elite to win national recognition rather than a reflection of real conditions. See for example *Cumhuriyet*: 9 İkinci kânun (January), 1935; 25 Nisan (April), 1935; 17 Ağustos, 1935; *Son Posta*: 3 Mayıs, 1935; 28 İkinci Kânun (January), 1936.

A Turkish-Muslim Synthesis

Kemalist efforts to engender a Turkish identity throughout the Anatolian populace were not limited to legislation aimed at transforming the symbols and practices around which Anatolian-Muslim identities were formed, but also included a commitment to manipulating Islamic teachings for the purposes of the state. Indeed, more than one scholar has suggested that Kemalism itself resembled a religion and has drawn parallels between the Ottoman-Islamic *ulema* and the corps of Kemalist "*ulema*" comprising submissive *hocas*, gendarmes and officials loyal to the new order, and zealous members of the professional-bourgeoisie class.⁵⁴ Official or "Kemalist Islam" shunned much of the Ottoman past, tolerated the near deification of the *Gazi* Mustafa Kemal (and the establishment of his statues throughout the country), and promoted those values integral to a healthy, modern nation-state. The true flavour of "Kemalist Islam" is most evident in various compilations of sermons for religious officials, and lessons for school children, religious functionaries-in-training, and soldiers.⁵⁵ The messages contained in these sermons and textbooks concentrated on the responsibilities of Muslims loyal to the Turkish state.⁵⁶ Turks were to practice beliefs that were rational, scientific and free from superstition. The Turkish soldier learned that commitment to the state was as equally important as commitment to God: bold, brave and obedient, the Muslim

⁵⁴İlter Turan, "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey," pp. 49-50; and Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 60

⁵⁵Officially sanctioned religious education in public schools did, in fact, continue to varying degrees until 1935 when it was completely removed from primary schools. In order to provide for the education of religious functionaries, *imam-hatip* schools were established in 1924 along with a Theological Faculty at Istanbul University -- neither of these prospered however, and by 1933 the former had been closed and the latter converted into an Islamic Research Institute. As one contemporary scholar noted, so little attention was actually paid to the study of the Koran and hadith that the "course of study laid out for these new style *hodjas* would never have been accepted in an old-fashioned *medresseh*" (Allen, *Turkish Transformation*, p. 184). In 1924 there were some 29 *imam-hatip* schools with 2,258 students -- by 1932 just two schools remained. The Theological Faculty was closed in 1941. The only remaining form of religious education was Koranic schools -- of which very few appear to have survived. See Jaschke, *Yeni Türkiye'de İslâmlık*, pp.69-80; Rustow, "Politics and Islam in Turkey," p. 83; Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 327-56.

⁵⁶The manipulation of "sermons" by the government was an extremely important means of inculcating a new Turkish identity -- books with prepared sermons were provided to all *imams*. In times of political stress, the content of sermons was strictly censored. In times of economic crisis, sermons were used to encourage frugality and "Buy Turkish." For example, see editions of *Cumhuriyet* for 1930; FO 371/10870/p.203-05 Hoare, 1925; FO 371/13094/E2006 Chaffy (Mersina) to Edmonds, 9 April, 1928.

Turk was to be fiercely patriotic. Martyrdom on behalf of one's country was the greatest possible achievement. To all Turks, it was emphasized that concentration on present worldly duties was of far greater significance than thoughts about the after life. Turks were to reject the obscurantism of conservative Islamists and to grasp the compatibility of scientific and Koranic principles. A patriotic Muslim Turk would exhibit the virtues of self-reliance, hard work, and thrift, while practising modern standards of hygiene. National holidays would be observed with as much enthusiasm as those of religious significance.⁵⁷ An officially-sanctioned newspaper report (1927) defending the government's attitude towards the Koran exhibits the underlying philosophy of Kemalist Islam:

The *Koran* is the religious book of Islam and as such deserves respect and veneration. It is a holy book and its object is to sustain the conscience of Muslims. But the Koran does not interfere with the temporal affairs of the individual, which it leaves to experience, necessity and the general progress of humanity.⁵⁸

Contemporaneous with the "Islam" propagated by the Turkish government was a far more pervasive and credible "parallel" or "lived" Islam derived from previous Anatolian-Islamic traditions and preserved in the privacy of homes.⁵⁹ Superficially, it may have appeared that Mustafa Kemal had successfully engineered a significant change in the *habitus* of the Turkish populace, but practices and rituals crucial to any concept of identity remained largely unscathed as a result of the protection afforded by local communities. This "parallel" Islam was vigorously supported by former Ottoman *ulema* and dervish *şeyhs* who had chosen to withdraw from public life and quietly undermine the Turkish Revolution by emphasizing

⁵⁷See Ismail Kara, "Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi'nde Dini Yayıncılığın Gelişim Üzerine Birkaç Not" (A Few Notes on the Development of Religious Publishing in the Republic of Turkey), *Toplum ve Bilim* 29-30 (Yaz, 1985), pp. 153-78; Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, *Askere Din Kitabı (Religious Manual for Soldiers)* (Ankara: Ideal Matbaa, 1944); Dumont, "Hocas for the Revolution", p. 27. Allen, *Turkish Transformation*, pp. 184-228, 99-121.

⁵⁸This was part of a refutation of a foreign press report that Mustafa Kemal had thrown a copy of the Koran across a room in the midst of a discussion. See FO 371/12321/E4960 Clerk (Constantinople) to FO, 17 November, 1927.

⁵⁹Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice is particularly helpful in understanding why many Kemalist reforms failed to have the desired impact: traditional practices continued within the privacy of local communities or families, and the limited duration of many of the reforms (many laws being relaxed in the 1950's) meant that new practices failed to replace old, even though new symbols were instituted.

the importance of communal Muslim identity rather than national patriotism. Foreign commentators mistakenly looked to "mosque attendance" as an indicator of religiosity during this period and consequently arrived at contradictory conclusions depending on when and where they made their observations. In fact, avoidance of the local mosque was more likely an act of protest against the government-sanctioned "Islam" than a sign that Turks had turned from an "out-moded" Islam and embraced Kemalism as their new world-view.⁶⁰ Muslim Turks retained a religious vitality through their commitment to observe local rituals such as those related to religious holidays, birth and death, and marriage. And although secular reforms had the effect of disorienting many Turks, they persisted in believing that Allah played a direct role in their lives, and consequently that natural and economic disasters were likely the result of divine displeasure with the national state of affairs.⁶¹

Histories of this period rarely recognize the experiences of those Turks whose identity remained associated with the "parallel" rather than "official" Islam. It seems likely that some local Kemalist authorities did abuse their positions and persecute those Turks who, by practising the parallel Islam, were perceived as a threat to the state. We know that this did occur in 1935 and 1936 when, as will be examined in the next chapter, dervish adherents and followers of the Kurdish mystics Said Nursi were arrested throughout the country. The experiences of Turks in isolated regions remains open to speculation, but despite the claims

⁶⁰Ceylan cites the existence of an extensive group known as the "Of Uleması" located on the eastern Black Sea coast. These individuals continued to teach the courses once taught in *medreses* and raised a future generation of leaders for the Muslim community. They were forced to pursue this path in secret and even teach students while hidden in caves and forests. See Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 327-56; III, pp. 242-45. The importance of religious leaders are also very evident in Mahmut Makal's *A Village in Anatolia (Bizim Köy)*. See also: Paul Dumont, "Islam as a Factor of Change and Revival in Modern Turkey," in Sabri Akural, ed. *Turkic Culture: Continuity and Change* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1987), pp. 1-16; Nur Yalman, "Some Observations on Secularism in Islam: The Cultural Revolution in Turkey," *Daedalus* 102 (1973), pp. 139-168; and "The Center and the Periphery: The Reform of Religious Institutions in Turkey," *Current Turkish Thought* 38 (1979), pp.1-23. On mosque attendance see for example: FO 371/13828/E3538 Helm (Constantinople) to FO, 29 June, 1929; FO 371/20866/E823 Turkey Annual Report, 1936; and "Prayer and Mosque Attendance in Turkey," in *Moslem World* 18 (October, 1928) pp. 392-98. The persistence of Turks at practising folk medicine was anathema to Kemalists and throughout this period newspapers occasionally reported the arrest of an *üfürükçü* -- someone accused of appealing to superstition and mystical beliefs for the purposes of healing the sick.

⁶¹This is a comment noted more than once by British officials; see for instance FO 371/15381/E4252 Matthews (Trebizond), August, 1931. See also Eleanor Bisbee, *The New Turks: Pioneers of the Republic 1920-1950*, pp. 136-38.

of Islamists to the contrary, it must be argued that they were not always negative.⁶² Indeed, as a result of my research into this period I am forced to conclude that although the government responded harshly to occurrences of Islamic "reaction," it could not begin to control the lives of the entire Turkish populace and that Turks remained free to live as they wished. It is revealing that in the Vilayet of Konya the powerful Kemalist Governor was in fact extremely perceptive and tolerant of the needs of the local inhabitants. Rather than impose strict regulations upon the residents of towns and villages, the Governor recognized the benefit of limited "self-government" by which "councils of elders manage[d] their own internal affairs in their own way and without recourse to county courts (except in cases of crime) or Swiss or Italian codes, up to a moderate fine or punishment."⁶³ That this was the case in one of the most "modern" vilayets so close to Ankara suggests that it was more the rule than the exception. The result was something of a symbiotic relationship in which Turks adapted newly introduced Kemalist practices to their own local Anatolian-Islamic belief system and gave birth to a hybrid identity that might be appropriately labelled a modern Turkish-Muslim synthesis.⁶⁴

Chapter Two of this thesis alluded to the fact that separate religious and "national" strands had already been twisted into a single identity prior to World War I. It was this Ottoman "dualism" that was anathema to the Kemalist elite; for although they grudgingly accepted the permanence of Islam in Anatolian society, they were determined that religious identity should be subservient to national patriotism. Mustafa Kemal succeeded in instilling the concept of a national Turkish identity in urban Anatolian society, but throughout the Kemalist era Muslim identity remained equally if not more prominent.

⁶²Hasan Ceylan's third volume of *Din-Devlet İlişkileri* is a litany of the sufferings of "devout Muslims." It is difficult to know how much credence to grant each tale of woe.

⁶³FO 371/13094/E2871 Chaffy (Mersina) to Clerk, 14 May, 1928.

⁶⁴A similar thesis has been argued in Richard and Nancy Tapper, "Religion, Education and Continuity in a Provincial Town."

VI.

The *Bitmeyen Savaş*⁶⁵: Islamic "Reaction" to the Turkish Revolution

"Modern Turkey is still in its infancy, and it has been carefully nursed by a skilful hand through its first days of life, and it has been given the strong wine of nationalism and modernism at a tender age and the mass of the population has probably not yet become used to these changes. It will require many more years for the Angora government to make of the present baby a stripling fit to withstand the onslaught of reactionary forces of Islam."

-Sir G. Clerk, British Ambassador to Turkey, 1927⁶⁶

In the previous chapters of this thesis, I have utilized the interpretation of the various cases of Islamic "reaction" as a springboard for an in-depth analysis of the impact of the Turkish Revolution upon the Anatolian populace. Now that the complexity of the overall weave of Turkish experience has been established, it is feasible to examine the movements of Islamic "reaction" themselves and to consider to what protestors were in fact "reacting," and how the circumstances of each event reflect the social dynamic inherent to the Turkish Revolution.

Şeyh Sait Rebellion (1925)

In a category of its own, the violent uprising of Kurdish tribes in eastern Anatolia in February-April, 1925 was the first of several opposition movements allegedly directed by *Nakşibendi şeyhs*. In this case, there can be no doubt that members of the *Nakşibendi tarikat* were integral to the mobilization of some 15,000 Kurds, ostensibly to restore Islamic rule to Turkey, but most certainly to establish an autonomous Kurdish state. The *Şeyh Sait* rebellion has been thoroughly examined by both Martin van Bruinessen and Robert Olson,

⁶⁵"Endless War"

⁶⁶FO 371/12320/E3236 Clerk (Constantinople) to FO, 20 July, 1927.

and the outline of events is clear.⁶⁷ conceived as an independence movement under the leadership of Kurdish nationalists, the influence of *Nakşibendi şeyhs* in Kurdish-Islamic society necessitated their co-option into the process. Following the arrest of prominent Kurdish nationalists in 1924, and an incidental confrontation between Turkish gendarmes and Kurds in the town of Piran on 8 February, 1925, certain *şeyhs* determined that the time was ripe for rebellion. Drawing on an immense wealth of respect among his network of formal and informal *murids* in order to mobilize Kurds from both Zaza and Kurmancı speaking tribes, *Şeyh Sait* assumed the reins of leadership, declared a *cihad* against the Turkish government, and directed his troops north-east to the town of Varto, west to the city of Elaziğ, and south to the city of Diyarbakir. *Şeyh Sait* succeeded in capturing numerous towns and villages, but was hampered in his campaign by the refusal of many tribes to cooperate and even the opposition of certain Alevi tribes. Out-gunned by the Turkish army and airforce, the Kurds were gradually defeated in March; *Şeyh Sait* was captured on April 15.

The *Şeyh Sait* rebellion provides ample evidence for a variety of interpretations. Although Turkish authorities were intent upon discrediting its religious and proving its separatist nature at the time of the subsequent trials, by the end of 1925 the government was arguing that the dominant reactionary, Islamic characteristics of the revolt justified its own secular policies. Ironically, Islamists as well have argued that *Şeyh Sait* was a crusading Muslim rather than a manipulative nationalist: this emphasis allows for the interpretation of modern Turkish history as a poignant tale of the suppression of devout Muslims. Recently, scholars have recognized the validity of allowing for a more subtle analysis that incorporates

⁶⁷This description is a synthesis of the following works. Where details differ I have deferred to Olson's interpretation. Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Sait Rebellion*; Olson and W.F. Tucker, "The Sheikh Sait Rebellion in Turkey (1925)," *Die Welt Des Islams* 18:3-4 (1978), pp. 195-211; Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*; Van Bruinessen, "Popular Islam, Kurdish Nationalism, and Rural Revolt: The Rebellion of Shaikh Sait in Turkey (1925)," in J.M. Bak and G. Benecke, eds. *Religion and Rural Revolt* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 281-95. Foreign Office papers relating to this event were too numerous for me to examine during my time at the Public Record Office: Olson's book is based on careful examination of these documents.

both Islamic and national motives.⁶⁸

An analysis of the participants in the rebellion reveals the basic division within Kurdish society: the call to *cihad* (or an independent Kurdistan for that matter) in no way resulted in the mobilization of all Kurds in the region. On a socio-economic level, rebellious Kurds were representative of the settled, land-owning populace who remained integrated within tribal networks. Share-cropping peasant Kurds who looked to Turkish authorities to protect them from the abuses of landlords generally did not participate; nor did the class of Kurdish urban notables who also derived benefits from their association with the Turkish state. Participants included members of both major linguistic groups (Zaza and Kurmancı), but were almost exclusively Sunni Muslims: for Alevi Kurds (who had been integral to the Koçgiri rebellion of 1920) life under the secular Turkish Republic was far more palatable than that under a strict Sunni state. The most important determinant of participation, however, was the attitude of local tribal chiefs or *Nakşibendi şeyhs*: in a society characterized by patron-client relationships, Kurds were more inclined to respect the decisions of their patrons rather than act according to individual preference. By contrast, the response of a notable to appeals for support issued by Şeyh Sait revealed that personal interests were far more significant than either the establishment of a Kurdish state or the restoration of an Islamic government.⁶⁹

Kurdish leaders were both those most likely to be affected by Kemalist centralization and those most aware of the potential for a nascent Kurdish nationalism. Local notables witnessed new challenges to their traditional privileges as Turkish bureaucrats assumed authority in eastern Anatolia, and set about implementing policies aimed at abolishing the tithe (previously collected by notables), and breaking up large land-holdings. In some cases,

⁶⁸The Turkish state's approach is detailed in van Bruinessen, "Popular Islam, Kurdish Nationalism and Rural Revolt," p. 291; Uğur Mumcu, *Kürt-İslam Ayaklanması* (Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1994), p. 130; and FO 371/11556/E4798 Turkey Annual Report, 1925. The Islamist interpretation is in Hasan Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, I, pp. 359-404. More enlightened interpretations are found in Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism*, pp. 153-163; and Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*, pp. 127-39.

⁶⁹This analysis is primarily derived from van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, pp. 293-95. Olson appears to place more emphasis upon the nomadic nature of the tribes involved; see Olson, *Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism*, p. 155.

uncooperative Kurdish notables even found themselves exiled to western Anatolia. Culturally, the Turkification of the entire Anatolian population meant that the use of Kurdish dialects was prohibited not only in education but in public discourse. Those Kurds most likely to have been exposed to this attempt at a forced cultural transformation were members of the gendarme and armed forces. Thus, in 1925 there existed a limited degree of Kurdish "national" consciousness, defined not so much by Kurdish demagogues as by the oppressive policies of the Turkish government. Detailed accounts of events within the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion are scarce, and so it is significant that reports concerning the capture of Elaziğ by Kurdish forces emphasize that not only did the local Kurdish gendarmes join the advancing Kurdish army, but that once in the city Kurds intentionally destroyed buildings symbolic of Turkish authority: the gendarme post, prison, court-house, and tobacco monopoly building. Kurds may not have rallied behind a call for an independent Kurdistan, but their decision to rebel against the Turkish government was derived, in part, from a hatred of the new Turkish order to which they were expected to conform.⁷⁰

The call to restore the Caliphate, implement the *şeriat* and suffer martyrdom in a holy war was similar to that around which Kurds had mobilized during World War I and the Turkish War of Independence, and the predominance of Islamic rhetoric during the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion demonstrates the significance of a collective Muslim identity among Kurds in 1925. Both the Caliphate and *şeriat* had been integral to Ottoman-Kurdish society: without these Islamic institutions, there was little to bind together Kurds and Turks. *Nakşibendi şeyhs*, traditionally proponents of Sunni pietism, alerted their adherents to the Kemalist desecration of Ottoman-Islamic institutions, and mobilized them in defense of an Islamic order. *Şeyh Sait* proclaimed himself *emir-el-mücahidin*, while Kurdish forces marched under green flags, shouting "God bless the Prophet." Both as an act to legitimate their use of violence, and in an attempt to encourage their enemies to surrender to the "just" forces, Kurds reportedly attached Korans to their bayonets. In the case of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion, therefore, an Islamic framework was essential to the relative success which *Şeyh Sait* met in his efforts to

⁷⁰On the roots of Kurdish nationalism see van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, pp. 281-83; "Popular Islam, Kurdish Nationalism and Rural Revolt," p. 290; and, Olson and Tucker, "The Shaikh Sait Rebellion in Turkey."

mobilize a cohesive force conscious of the grounds on which it would oppose the Turkish state. However, the failure of various tribes to support the movement also demonstrates that allegiance to common Islamic symbols or ethnic identity was not necessarily stronger than commitment to local, sectarian or regional communities and leadership.⁷¹

The repercussions of the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion were relevant not only to the future of the Kurdish national movement but also to the history of modern Turkey. The first large-scale uprising by Kurdish nationalists, it provided a bed of smouldering coals from which future armed insurrections would flare up: despite the overwhelming superiority of the Turkish armed forces, Kurds continued to revolt against the government in the remaining 13 years of the Revolution. The response of the Turkish government consisted of military retribution, thorough investigations by the Eastern Independence Tribunal (*Şark İstiklâl Mahkemesi*), mass deportations, and the execution of some 440 convicted "criminals," *Şeyh Sait* included. Not only did these harsh penalties fail to douse the flames of Kurdish nationalism, but their severity undoubtedly served to intensify Kurdish national sentiments.⁷² The Eastern Independence Tribunal had been established by the Turkish government as part of its draconian response to the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion in the form of the "Law for the Maintenance of Order" (*Takrir-i Sukun Kanunu*) passed by the Grand National Assembly on 4 March, 1925. It is difficult to overemphasize the significance of this law to modern Turkish history. Although at the time it received approval from all Turkish politicians opposed to Mustafa Kemal, it provided the authority by which the Kemalist elite later effectively eliminated all political opposition. In June, 1925 the Progressive Republican Party (*Terrakîperver Cumhuriyet Partisi*) was dissolved -- some of its members being arraigned before the Eastern Independence Tribunal -- and in the summer of 1926 the discovery of a plot against Mustafa Kemal provided the pretext for a purge of former C.U.P.

⁷¹On the religious aspects of the revolt see van Bruinessen, "Popular Islam, Kurdish Nationalism, and Rural Revolt." On the religious propaganda utilized by the leaders, see Mumcu, *Kürt-İslam Ayaklanması*, pp. 57-8, 64-70.

⁷²On the activities of the *Şark İstiklâl Mahkemesi* see Ergün Aybars, *İstiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927*, pp. 129-220. On future occurrences of Kurdish unrest see Faik Bulut, *Devletin Gözüyle Türkiye'de Kürt İsyanları*.

members following their trial by the Ankara Independence Tribunal.⁷³ Confident that the Independence Tribunals would consolidate the state's control over the nation, Mustafa Kemal seized the opportunity to introduce laws integral to his vision of a modern Turkish state: laws that legislated the wearing of the hat and the dissolution of dervish *tarikats*. When Turks expressed their discontent with these cultural changes, they discovered that the Independence Tribunals were not simply tools for the eradication of political and Kurdish opposition, but that they were the means by which Mustafa Kemal would enforce conformity throughout Turkey.

Public Protests: November-December, 1925

Chapter Five emphasized the gradual process by which the "hat law" was introduced, and argued that the government's approach to the closing of dervish *tekkes* was designed to ameliorate the resulting economic hardships. Nevertheless, the weeks surrounding the implementation of this legislation were characterized by considerable public turmoil, particularly in eastern Anatolia.⁷⁴ Between 14 November and 4 December, "opposition" was reported to have occurred in Sivas, Çerkeş, Tokat, Kayseri, Erzurum, Rize, Maraş, and Giresun.⁷⁵ In fact, "opposition" emerged in four distinct forms: the unsuccessful attempt by leaders to incite a local population against the government in Tokat and Giresun; the

⁷³For details see Olson, *Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism*, pp. 158-60; and FO 371/10863/p.146-55 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 31 March, 1925.

⁷⁴Although public protests appear to have been located in the east, it is clear that opponents of the government voiced their opinions in western Anatolia: the execution of "reactionaries" was reported in Bursa and Milas, while others were arrested in Zonguldak, Bandırma, and Uşak. See FO 371/10869/p.219-20 Military Consul, 1925; FO 371/11528/E1899 Chamberlain (Constantinople) to FO, 17 March, 1926; Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*, p. 156; and *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabıtları*, pp. 233-70. There was something of a veil of secrecy over much of Anatolia at this time, and it is possible that the true extent of unrest -- and government response -- will never be exposed. Aybars, for example, refers fleetingly to unrest in Malatya which local officials apparently "dealt with," but gives no more details. See Aybars, *İstiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927*, p. 303.

⁷⁵The dates of the public protests, as best I can determine, were: Kayseri, 22 November; Erzurum, 24 November; Rize, 25 November; Maraş, 26 November; and Giresun, 4 December. Tunaya, not declaring his sources, locates the Erzurum protest in January, 1926 and Çetin Özek and Binnaz Toprak follow his lead. This is, however, most certainly incorrect. The incidents involving individuals and not collective protest in Sivas, Çerkeş, Tokat and Giresun are not examined here as information is scarce -- in Sivas and Tokat local officials were evidently among those discouraging conformity to the new laws. The only details on these events are contained in Aybars, *İstiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927*, pp. 306-13.

symbolic posting, on mosque doors, of treatises against the *şapka* (hat) in Sivas and Çerkeş; the gathering of a crowd to voice discontent in Kayseri, Erzurum, and Maraş; and a violent insurrection of rural "Turks" in Rize vilayet. The amount of available information relating to individual events varies, but in no case does the historian benefit from first-hand accounts recorded by witnesses, nor the testimonies of those accused of participating. Transcripts of certain sessions of the Ankara Independence Tribunal (January, 1926) reveal that Kemalist authorities were convinced of an extensive conspiracy linking these events: the content of these transcripts, however, reveals very little evidence in support of this, the prosecutor being more concerned to substantiate his theory than to discover an objective account of the individual protests.⁷⁶

Collective action in Kayseri, Erzurum, Maraş and Rize varied in scope and intensity. In Kayseri, the crowd numbered approximately 300 people and appears to have been led through the streets by a *şeyh* who, along with four others, was later sentenced to death for inciting the local populace. We know more about events in Maraş and Erzurum. In the former, not only was a treatise exposing the irreligious nature of the "hat law" attached to a mosque door, but a crowd proceeded from the mosque through the streets, waving a green flag and shouting, "We won't wear hats." The protestors were eventually arrested in the mosque following its storming by gendarmes and soldiers. Once again, those convicted of participating received stiff sentences: five were executed and thirteen were to spend 15 years in prison. In Erzurum, the crowd numbered between three and five thousand and was led by *şeyhs* and *hocas* who proclaimed, in front of government buildings, "We don't want heretical officials." For reasons unknown, local gendarmes opened fire on the crowd, killing at least three protestors. In immediate response to this unrest, martial law was declared in the city and although the Ankara Independence Tribunal visited Erzurum after the events, the authority to try alleged participants remained in the hands of a temporary military court. Information relating to this court is even more scarce, and the severity of the sentences (at least 6 were executed) remains unclear.

Events in the Botaniya district of Rize were of a very different nature from any other

⁷⁶See *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabıtları*.

protest at this time: however, likely due to the fact that the "rebels" were Laz and that the Turkish government has historically deemphasized ethnic tensions, virtually no details concerning its extent are to be found. Originating in a small village, this armed insurrection was apparently led by an *imam* and village headman and had the goal of capturing the city of Rize and emptying the prison. Lasting as many as 10 days, and possibly spreading into the neighbouring Of Kazası (Trabzon Vilayet), this revolt was eventually defeated by government soldiers assisted by a bombardment from a naval ship. Casualties among the soldiers alone reportedly amounted to 100 (50 deaths). Allegedly inspired by *Nakşibendi şeyhs*, survivors of the violence were punished harshly by the Ankara Independence Tribunal, at least 8 being sentenced to death.⁷⁷

Regardless of whether or not these different protests were in fact the result of a conspiracy, they most certainly were an indication of popular solidarity derived from a dislike of Kemalist reforms aimed against the Islamic establishment and popular Islamic practices, and the frustrations many Turks had encountered in trying to obtain new hats and discovering themselves to be in significant debt. Participants reflected a complete cross-section of Turkish society: men and women; *hocas*, *şeyhs* and *muezzins*; civil servants, town councillors, and mayors; urban artisans and rural villagers were all implicated in one or another of the events. In Erzurum the protestors singled out government officials as deserving of blame, while in Rize rebels found inspiration in the rumour that both Prime Minister İsmet İnönü and President Mustafa Kemal had been deposed (and even killed) and that the government had been delivered into the hands of Islamist leaders. Islamic symbols,

⁷⁷Information regarding these events is sometimes contradictory. For instance, one Foreign Office report alleges that 20 people were executed in Maraş, while Hasan Ceylan asserts that violence in Erzurum claimed the lives of 15 protestors. In detailing these events I have tried to use the most reliable, and generally the smallest, figures. Although I was unable to read the Ottoman-Turkish newspapers of the time, excerpts from these are in modern Turkish in Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, pp. 37-57; and, Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*, pp. 153-59. Scant details are also in Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, p. 167. Aybars' account of the work of the Ankara Independence Tribunal also contains information; see *İstiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927*, pp. 303-22. A number of Foreign Office documents present important details not found elsewhere. See FO 371/11556/E4798 Turkey Annual Report, 1925; FO 371/12325/E633 Turkey Annual Report, 1926; FO 371/10863/E7512 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 1 December, 1925; FO 371/10863/E7918 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 15 December, 1925; FO 371/11528/E59 Knight (Trebizond) to Lindsay, 20 December, 1925; FO 371/11528/E61 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 30 December, 1925; FO 371/11528/E1899 Chamberlain (Constantinople) to FO, 17 March, 1926; FO 371/11528/E2329 Lindsay (Constantinople) to FO, 12 April, 1926.

and possibly even ritual, however, provided the most important legitimation for these acts of collective protest. The mosque as a place for meeting was central to virtually every protest, while in Maraş it served as a place of retreat from government authority. In every case, a *hoca* or dervish *şeyh* was integral to the organization of the crowd, and it may be significant that in Erzurum many of the protestors began their march only *after* completing a recitation of the *Mevlut*. Although these protests are typically linked with the "hat law" it seems that this was more the last straw rather than the root-cause of protest. Treatises against the hat were indeed posted in many cities, while rebels in Rize publicly wore the fez and protestors in Kayseri publicly wore turbans; in Maraş the rallying cry was a refusal to accommodate the new law. However, in both Kayseri and Rize the rhetoric employed to justify the crowds' actions included the allegation that the government intended to pursue even more intensive secular reforms: women would be required to unveil, and the possession of the Koran made illegal. Evidently, local *şeyhs* and *hocas* deemed the time ripe to express their opposition to Kemalist secularism before they themselves became obsolete. The participants in these protests, however, were expressing their frustration and confusion with a government that, contrary to its claims during the War of Independence, now appeared determined to radically alter the symbols, institutions and leadership integral to their individual and collective Muslim identities. Thus far, Kemalism had proven unexpectedly destructive but had yet to generate a new, positive definition of Turkish identity and community in place of past concepts.

Rather than empathize with these genuine popular sentiments, the Turkish government determined that the public protests had been organized by reactionary Islamists intent upon restoring the old Ottoman-Islamic order. Its response was to root out Islamist *şeyhs* and *ulema* that had avoided conflict with the nationalists during the War of Independence, and to intimidate the "ignorant" masses that had been "deceived" by reactionary leaders. The government effected this response by means of the Ankara Independence Tribunal and leading *ulema* -- most notably İskilipli Atif Hoca, responsible for publishing a book condemning imitation of the west, one year prior to the "hat law" -- were among the 128 men to be executed in the year ending 7 March, 1926. During this same period some 1669

people were tried, 541 of them being sentenced to prison for between 15 days and 30 years.⁷⁸ The success of this policy of intimidation is evident in the minimal occurrences of public protest -- Kurdish revolts excepted -- during the remaining thirteen years of the Turkish Revolution. Nevertheless, the cases of Islamic "reaction" prosecuted by the state in these years reveal that it did fail to adequately define a new Turkish identity that might supplant the Muslim consciousness of the Anatolian population, and that harsh retribution did not discourage Muslim association in the form of brotherhoods and *tarikats*.

Menemen Olayı (1930)

At first glance the details of the *Menemen Olayı*, as presented at the beginning of this thesis, might appear to substantiate Tarık Tunaya's theory that Ottoman-Turkish history since 1908 has been characterized by perpetual conflict between Islamists and secularists. Similarly, few documents can be as gratifying to the secular Kemalist historian as those which detail the case argued by the lawyer charged with prosecuting alleged participants in the event: apparently founded upon the testimonies of the accused, this case depicts an extensive conspiracy originating in Istanbul with *Şeyh Esat*, a leading *Nakşibendi şeyh* of the period. United around the common goal of destabilizing the government and presiding over the legal reinstatement of *tarikats* and *tekkes*, *Şeyh Esat's* zealous *murids* allegedly hatched their plot in Manisa, undertook extensive preparations in nearby villages, and settled on Menemen as the site from which to launch their "rebellion" because it had been one of the few towns to elect an opposition candidate in 1930 municipal elections. The rhetoric employed by the rebels -- condemning the new Turkish alphabet and the mandatory wearing of hats -- only substantiated the Kemalist opinion that events in Menemen were typical of Islamic "reaction."⁷⁹

⁷⁸For details of these punishments see Aybars, *İstiklâl Mahkemeleri 1925-1927*, pp. 324-25. Partial transcripts relating to the trial of İskilipli Atif Hoca are in *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi Zabutları*, pp. 109-15, 129-40. The Islamist account of this "miscarriage" of justice is found in Kısakürek, *Son Devrin Din Mazlumları*, pp. 37-77. Kemalist scholars are remarkably silent on the matter.

⁷⁹The text of the prosecutor's case is provided in Üstün, *Menemen Olayı*, pp. 54-86. Two questions arise from this theory: the first is why any prospective rebels would have chosen a town so very close to Izmir, a center of military command? And, secondly, why a leading figure in the conspiracy -- Laz İbrahim -- disappears from the

Convincing though the prosecutor's theory may be, it cannot be considered apart from two other equally plausible interpretations of the Menemen *Olayı*. The first is that propagated by Islamists; that, on the contrary, it was the result of a conspiracy among leading Kemalists to provide a pretext for the prosecution of *Nakşibendi şeyhs* and *murids* known to be active despite the law of 1925. According to this view, the entire event was staged by radicals in the employ of the government and completely unconnected with any *tarikat*. Proponents of this view go so far as to assert that Kubilay (the officer beheaded) was in fact killed by bullets fired by the local militia, and that the first question of those rebels captured alive was "where is our money?" The most conspicuous fallacy in this Islamist interpretation is the assumption that the consequences of the event -- the arrest and prosecution of *Nakşibendi* adherents -- irrefutably prove the original hypothesis. This does not follow, and Mustafa Kemal was known for seizing opportunities, resulting from unexpected turns of events, to silence perceived opposition.⁸⁰ In fact, it must be admitted that there is little incontrovertible evidence in support of either conspiracy theory, and that both rely on assumptions concerning the motives of Islamists and Kemalists in this period. Consequently, some credence must be granted the theory which interprets the Menemen *Olayı* as perpetrated by fanatics independent of any conspiracy, but deprived of their critical faculties by the effect of potent narcotics. This does not necessarily negate the millenarian and Islamic aspects of the event but it does allow for an interpretation that places greater emphasis upon the government's reaction than on the event itself.⁸¹

There can be little doubt that both Menemen and Manisa were locations in which material deprivation resulting from heavy flooding and economic depression was the cause of considerable grievance among local inhabitants. Both centers were also home to an unusually high proportion of immigrants (28% of their respective populations). Indeed,

account midway and is neither mentioned in the list of accused nor the list of sentenced culprits?

⁸⁰This theory is presented in Kısakürek, *Son Devrin Din Mazlumlari*, pp. 167-208; and in the very thorough and relatively convincing examination presented in *Yakın Tarih Ansiklopedisi*, 10 (Istanbul: Yeni Asya Gazetesi, 1990).

⁸¹This interpretation is suggested by Feroz Ahmad, *A History of Modern Turkey*, pp. 60-61. Tunçay also assesses the evidence in *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde*, pp. 293-95.

during the brief life of the Free Party, Manisa had been the site of a mass rally in support of its leader, Fethi Bey, and Menemen had been one of a handful of towns to elect a Free Party candidate in local elections.⁸² Nevertheless, as was stressed in Chapter Three, discontent with the government in 1930 was a phenomenon common to most regions and on its own was not sufficient grounds for public protest. It is plausible, however, that these grievances provided self-justification for the indifference of many inhabitants of the Manisa-Menemen region who were allegedly aware of the existence of a movement in opposition to the government. Similarly, the role of the discontented "immigrants" must be qualified; although two of the ring leaders had immigrated to Turkey (one from Crete, the other Damascus), only five others out of some 130 accused participants can be readily identified as non-Turks. The Menemen *Olayı* was not a popular protest voicing the grievances of the economically and socially deprived.

Indeed any interpretation of the Menemen *Olayı* must first recognize that it was arguably not even a "popular" protest, but that the reported crowds were the result of either coercion or curiosity. The size of the crowd is even in doubt: Tunaya puts it at 1,000, while the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper recorded that just 300 people had gathered in the town square. In the same vein, reports of the crowd's response to Kubilay's execution contradict one another. According to one interpretation the crowd scattered in horror, while according to the other, the crowd applauded the "rebels." The *Cumhuriyet* neatly solved this question by stating that 150 people remained indifferent, while 150 vocally encouraged the violence.⁸³ The details that are available concerning the unfolding of events over the course of the morning suggest that not only were local inhabitants forced to join the crowd upon the threat of death, but that prior to Kubilay's execution it was a truly fascinating spectacle. Clad in turbans and robes, the six "rebels" read *suras* (verses) from the Koran to substantiate their claim that their leader, Giritli Mehmet, was indeed the long-awaited *mehdi*, and they

⁸²For details on the Free Party see Weiker, *Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey*, pp. 91, 115. The *Cumhuriyet* newspaper reported extensive flooding in the region in October, 1930.

⁸³For these interpretations see *Cumhuriyet*, 8 Kânunusani (January), 1931; *Yakın Tarih Ansiklopedisi*, 10, p.17; Kısakürek, *Son Devrin Din Mazlumları*, p. 178; Kemal Üstün, *Menemen Olayı*, p.69; and, Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı*, p. 172-74.

performed elaborate dervish ritual dances around a green flag. That they were accompanied by a dog named Kitmir was proffered as additional proof of their mission. Possibly of equal interest to a population that had elected a Free Party candidate, was the harsh criticism of the government contained in the rebels' rhetoric. The assertion that an army of 70,000 had surrounded Ankara was likely viewed with hopeful disbelief.

Tempting though it may be to dismiss the Menemen *Olayı* as resulting from deluded visions of grandeur on the part of the rebels, the significance of the Islamic symbolism integral to the event must be recognized. The *Nakşibendi tarikat* is renowned for its historical involvement in movements aimed at opposing "unjust" authority and establishing the practice of strict Sunni beliefs. A fundamental dynamic of this activism is the commitment of *murids* to a *şeyh* and their belief in his near super-natural powers.⁸⁴ According to the case posited by the prosecutor, western Anatolia was the location of an extensive *Nakşibendi* network in which these very relationships could have existed. In this context, it is plausible that Giritli Mehmet's followers were convinced that he possessed the qualities of the *mehdi* and the ability to bring about a restoration of Islamic order in the increasingly secular Republic. Indeed, the rhetoric employed by the band of rebels leaves little doubt that they at least believed their mission to be sufficient legitimation for their actions: wielding both orthodox and sufi symbols, performing regular prayers and dervish rituals, they demanded the restoration of the Caliphate and the reinstatement of the *şeriat*. So confident were they of their calling that they consciously -- if not rationally -- defied the forces of an "unjust" and "heretical" state. In doing so they were perpetuating a clearly defined *Nakşibendi* tradition with which they were undoubtedly familiar.

There is irony in the fact that the Turkish government took the Menemen *Olayı* more seriously than the inhabitants of Menemen themselves. Following on the heels of the disturbing popularity of the Free Party, events in Menemen rendered the government extremely uncomfortable. The intensity with which Kemalist authorities prosecuted some

⁸⁴On the *Nakşibendi tarikat* see Şerif Mardin, "The Nakşibendi Order in Turkish History" in R. Tapper, ed. *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics, and Literature in a Secular State*, pp. 121-44; and, Hamid Algar, "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History," in Marc Gaborieau et al., eds. *Naqshbandis: Historical Developments and Present Situation of a Muslim Mystical Order* (Istanbul: Editions Isis, 1990), pp. 123-52.

2,200 alleged "reactionaries" in subsequent months suggests that Mustafa Kemal was acutely aware of the threat that popular discontent and effective Islamic leadership might present to the Turkish state. The Kemalist response was two-fold: Mustafa Kemal initiated a thorough reformation of the Republican People's Party and the institutions by which it would inculcate a national identity among the Turkish populace. In this way, the Menemen *Olayı* contributed to a radical redirection of domestic politics.⁸⁵ The second facet of the Kemalist response fit the familiar pattern of suppression through a legal tribunal before which the accused had little or no opportunity to defend themselves. Mustafa Kemal himself was instrumental in securing the death sentence for 36 people guilty of "participating" in the Menemen *Olayı*. Among these were friends and relatives of the rebels upon whom the rebels had called in the course of their travel to Menemen; others were inhabitants of Menemen, including a Jew who went to his death proclaiming, "Long live the Republic!" That the severity of this punishment had conveyed the desired message to the Turkish people was evident following the escape of one of the convicted just prior to his execution: although public opinion was sympathetic to his plight, when he emerged from hiding in the mountains he was promptly turned over to authorities by local villagers from whom he had requested help. A young man, he had been found guilty of abetting the "rebellion" because his father had provided food and lodging to the rebels in the village of Bozalan.⁸⁶

Bursa (1933)

In light of the government's harsh punishment of Turks involved in the Menemen *Olayı*, it is somewhat surprising that a genuine public protest occurred in Bursa just two years later; that those accused of "reaction," as a result of this protest, feared for their lives,

⁸⁵These new political policies are examined in Weiker, *Political Tutelage and Democracy*, pp. 156-257.

⁸⁶Other sources used for this discussion of the Menemen *Olayı* include editions of *Cumhuriyet*, December, 1930 through March, 1931; Mustafa Baydar, *Kubilay* (Istanbul: Üstünel Yayınevi, 1954); Neyzar Karahan, *Şehit Edilişinin 50 Yılında Kubilay* (Kubilay: The Fiftieth Anniversary of His Martyrdom) (Ankara: Spor Toto'nun Kültür Hizmeti, 1981); Celal Kırhan, *Öğretmen Kubilay ve Uydurma Mehdi* (Kubilay the Teacher and the False Mahdi) (Istanbul: Sıralar Matbaası, 1963); and the following detailed Foreign Office papers: FO 371/15376/E913 Turkey Annual Report, 1930; FO 371/16091/E222 Turkey Annual Report, 1931; FO 371/15369/E70 Clerk (Constantinople) to FO, 31 December, 1930; FO 371/15370/E518 Clerk (Constantinople) to FO, 28 January, 1931; FO 371/15370/E650 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 4 February, 1931; FO 371/E1046 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 23 February, 1931.

is entirely understandable. Similar to some of the occurrences of collective action in 1925, the gathering of a crowd outside government offices in Bursa on 1 February, 1933 stemmed not just from popular discontent with the government's interference in Islamic practice, but also from the failure of government officials to apply regulations in a consistent manner. Following a year during which Turkish-language prayers and *ezan* (call to prayer) were introduced in various cities, Turks remained confused about the required practice because Mustafa Kemal himself had failed to issue the necessary directives. Although religious functionaries in Bursa were evidently aware that local authorities had required the use of Turkish, they decided that the fact that the Arabic *ezan* could be heard in Istanbul was sufficient justification for their following suit in Bursa. However, when asked by a local official to answer for their actions, these same functionaries led a crowd of worshippers (numbering between 30 and 80) to the city center and demanded that they too be permitted to use Arabic for prayers and the *ezan*. Subsequent to this brief protest, during which some malcontents occupied the halls of government buildings, gendarmes arrived to scatter the crowd and arrest the ring-leaders. Reporting on this event, newspapers once again proclaimed the message of dreaded religious reaction to the state under the headline, "*irtica*."⁸⁷

It is evident from these details that this public protest does not deserve to be labelled a "rebellion:" it was on a small scale and was neither uncontrolled nor violent. In fact, it occurred during the month of Ramazan when more Turks were in attendance at communal prayers, and when the significance of ritual practices attained a deeper meaning for those involved. The transition from Arabic to Turkish-language ritual had sparked intense debate among Turks in the previous year, Bursa having been but one site of that debate.⁸⁸

⁸⁷Editions of *Cumhuriyet* in February and March, 1933 reported on this event. The only sources providing any detail on this event are newspapers and the following Foreign Office reports: FO 371/17959/E596 Turkey Annual Report, 1933; FO 371/16984/E534 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 21 January, 1933; FO 371/16984/R771 Newspaper Excerpts, 6-8 February, 1933; FO 371/16984/E1056 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 17 February, 1933; FO 371/16984/E1274 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 23 February, 1933; FO 371/16984/E1565 Falanga (Trebizond) to Clerk, 7 March, 1933; FO 371/16984/E1811 Morgan (Angora) to FO, 30 March, 1933; FO 371/16984/E2604 Clerk (Angora) to FO, 10 May, 1933. Tunaya (*İslamçılık Akımı*, pp. 174-75) does not do the event justice.

⁸⁸See Goloğlu, *Devrimler ve Tepkileri*, pp. 88-9; and Ceylan, *Din-Devlet İlişkileri*, II, 415-27.

Participants in the protest voiced two complaints, both of which reflect their justification for protesting publicly; the first concerned the evident discrepancy, between regions, in regulations concerning the language to be used in ritual practices. That the government should have instituted this innovation in the first place was open to question; that local Muslim Turks should be singled out and required to use Turkish in the month of Ramazan was a considerable injustice. The second complaint, that Jews and Christians were free to regulate their own worship while Muslims were not, indicated intense dissatisfaction with the state itself: this sentiment was also evident in the reaction of the worshippers to the questions raised by the government official present at the mosque.

Tarık Tunaya alleges once again that this protest was the work of *Nakşibendi şeyhs* intent upon opposing the government, but in no case do the sources available for this study substantiate this assertion. Participants in the protest included representatives of the *esnaf* (artisan class) -- a jeweller, locksmith, electrician, carpenter -- as well as *hocas* and *muezzins*. Among the leaders were immigrants from the Crimea, Georgia and Albania (6 in total), and it is conceivable that on account of their experiences of national "Turkification" their grievances were greater, and that they felt fewer inhibitions about standing up to the government. Nevertheless, the fundamental legitimation of this protest was a shared sense among the participants that they had been treated unjustly, and a common belief that once aware of popular opinion, a "democratic" government would address the source of discontent.

The government's response to the Bursa protest indicated yet again its extreme sensitivity to potential opposition, as well as its recognition that it had itself to blame. Having visited Bursa just a few days previously, Mustafa Kemal immediately returned there upon receiving news of the disturbance. Such prompt action only inspired rumours that the punishments received by Bursa protestors would duplicate those given "reactionaries" in Menemen, but this was not to be the case. Instead the local *Müftü*, responsible for enforcing government regulations with regard to religious practice, was dismissed along with two other officials. The most severe penalty awarded a protestor was 2 1/2 years in prison with hard labour. However, unable to accept the possibility that Islamic "reaction" might be limited

to a single location, the government once again initiated the arrest of "reactionaries" throughout the country. Many of these were in fact "guilty" of continuing to use Arabic for the ezan and prayers: they had been more inclined to suit personal preference than obey questionable legislation. The persistence, by many Turks, in following former Ottoman-Islamic practices may have been of little real importance, but it was contrary to the Kemalist ideals of a "civilized" nation, and proponents of the old order were invariably perceived as a threat to the state.

Muslim Brotherhoods (1935 and 1936)

That twelve years of legislated reform had failed to radically transform individual and collective identities became abundantly evident in the years 1935-36 as Turkish officials discovered evidence of the continued importance of dervish associations to many Turks. This form of Islamic "reaction" did not involve public protest, but instead the secret affiliation of Turks to a particular order or leader: it was the "secret" nature of these networks that rendered them a potentially insidious threat to the state. Over the course of two years, underground organizations were uncovered in Maraş in the south-east, and throughout western and central Anatolia.

The arrest in May, 1935 of Alevi pursuing "forbidden practices" in Maraş was typical of many events reported between 1923 and 1938. Hardly a threat to the state, both men and women were accused of "promiscuous immorality" when a search of their place of meeting resulted "in the discovery of musical instruments, a decapitated black hen, and other objects of superstition."⁸⁹ Followers of the Kurdish mystic, Said Nursi, were arrested at this same time in the western Anatolian centers of Milas, İsparta, Aydın, Bolvadin, Eğridir, Yalova, Dinar and Bursa. Similar to a network of dervish adherents exposed in Ankara, İskilip,

⁸⁹FO 371/19040/E3037 Loraine (Angora) to FO, 11 May, 1935. Among the many arrests of dervishes that I discovered in the course of my research were: 1930 - *Bektaşis* in Istanbul (*Cumhuriyet*, 8 & 10 Haziran); 1931 - various dervish affiliates in İnegöl, Kütahya, Akhisar, Kırkağaç, and Aksaray (*Cumhuriyet*, 7 Kânunusani; 8, 11 & 12 Şubat); 1932 - *Bektaşis* in Manisa (FO 371/16983/E529 Turkey Annual Report, 1932); 1933 - various dervish affiliates in Amasya and Sivas (*Cumhuriyet*, 29 Mayıs; 13 Ağustos); 1935 - women in Kırşehir (*Cumhuriyet*, 25 Ağustos); 1936 - *Nakşibendis* near Mersin (The only source for this is FO 371/20866/E823 Turkey Annual Report, 1936: unfortunately the Foreign Office paper FO 371/2009/E939 in which this is apparently detailed is not to be found at the Public Record Office).

Kırıkkale, Keskin and Tokat, in January, 1936, the accused "reactionaries" were suspected of trying to kindle "old" beliefs and practices amongst "innocent" Turks. In both cases, a learned Islamic leader was found to have corresponded with his followers -- who included a doctor, dentist, judge and retired soldier, as well as a carpenter, watchmaker, and coffee-house proprietor -- through letters and pamphlets. By contrast, the arrest of *şeyhs* and *hocas*, linked to both the *Nakşibendi* and *Rufai tarikats* in Manisa, also in January, 1936, proved superfluous when it was determined that they were not, in fact, actively developing *tarikats* networks.⁹⁰ The Kemalist declaration that, once again, the state had been threatened by Islamic "reactionaries" could not have been farther from the truth.⁹¹

Interpretation of these *tarikats* networks is aided significantly by the work of Şerif Mardin who has carefully examined letters written between Said Nursi and those followers arrested in May, 1935. From these, and other writings by Said Nursi, it is evident that Muslim Turks were not opposing the state, but searching for meaning and identity in the midst of a period in which the Muslim community and its traditional symbols and institutions were being challenged by Kemalist secularism. Said Nursi, himself, insisted that he was not propagating a *tarikats*, but encouraging genuine faith as well as emphasizing the importance of law and order. Those Turks who sought his advice indicated a desire to know more about their Islamic heritage and a need for trustworthy spiritual leadership.⁹² Secular Turkish

⁹⁰Information regarding these arrests is in FO 371/20091/E933 Turkey Annual Report, 1935; FO 371/19040/E3369 Loraine to FO, 24 May, 1935; and newspapers -- those consulted were editions of *Cumhuriyet*, *Akşam*, and *Son Posta* for May, 1935 and January, 1936.

⁹¹Tunaya asserts that the Ankara-İskilip *tarikats* activities were particularly insidious; see *İslamcılık Akımı*, p. 175. Tunaya also alleges that in December, 1935 on Şeyh Halit of the *Nakşibendi* order proclaimed himself the *mehdi* and sent his disciples to find followers in Beşiri Kaza (Siirt): violence resulted from the negative response of local villagers, and Şeyh Halit was eventually dealt with by gendarmes. His son, however, took to the mountains and continued the movement, later escaping to Syria. Following an intense search in a variety of newspapers -- *Cumhuriyet*, *Son Posta*, *Ulus*, *Akşam*, *Anadolu* -- published between November, 1935 and February, 1936, I have been unable to find any report of this event. If it in fact happened -- and Tunaya likely exaggerates the details to fit his theory -- it perhaps remained unnoticed by the press because Siirt Vilayet was predominantly Kurdish in population and not only was the region remote but armed conflict between Kurds and Turkish forces was a frequent occurrence.

⁹²Mardin observes, "To the extent that the Turkish rural world was cut off from its mytho-poetic moorings by Republican secularization, it experienced the loss not only of the moral directives contained in the discursive arguments of Islamic ethics but also of the dynamic element allowing man to come to terms with his self." From *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey*, p. 180.

nationalism could not begin to satisfy the spiritual and emotional void created by Kemalist efforts to modernize and civilize Turkish culture. Nursi, however, did not simply call Turks to a pursuit of "traditional" Islamic beliefs and practices: to the contrary, placing his message rather than his charismatic personality at the forefront, Nursi preached a unique synthesis which included traditional mystical and Sunni beliefs, and a repudiation of materialism and western culture alongside an acceptance that modern science could be integrated with Koranic teachings. In the context of an age in which bureaucracy and impersonalism were becoming dominant, Nursi's commitment to genuine personalism and the primacy of the Muslim community gained him the enduring respect of many Muslim Turks. However, as Mardin has argued, Nursi's very emphasis upon common Muslim identity, "his denial of the primacy of politics, and the stress he placed on social mobilization, [was] possibly that aspect of his theories which caused the greatest apprehension for the rulers of the Republic."⁹³

⁹³Ibid, p. 102. This discussion is based on pages 17, 96-97, 156-58, 191-93 of *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey*.

VII.

Conclusion

It is no coincidence that until now neither the social history of the Turkish Revolution nor collective Islamic action has been the subject of thorough historical analysis. The emaciated state of early Turkish social history and the superficial classification of these events as "rebellions" characteristic of a perpetual, uniquely Turkish conflict co-exist in the form of a symbiotic relationship. So long as the historical experiences of the majority of the Turkish populace remain unexplored, historians are free to interpret Islamic "reaction" within an orthodox Kemalist framework rather than genuinely examine the circumstances and meaning of each event. Similarly, if Kemalist scholars can ignore or continue to dismiss these events with pejorative labels, then the pervasive historical interpretation of the Turkish Revolution as a period of rapid modernization and total transformation will stand unchallenged. A notable result of these intertwined trends in Turkish historiography is that occurrences of Islamic "reaction" have themselves become mythical symbols in the social and political discourse current in contemporary Turkey. The *Şeyh Sait* rebellion is a source of inspiration to Kurds intent upon pursuing the establishment of an independent Kurdistan, and "memories" of harsh government retribution only intensify the conviction that Kurds have long suffered under Turkish rule. Images of the Menemen *Olayı*, on the other hand, have been manipulated by the Turkish government itself in the form of annual ceremonies and television documentaries which subtly remind Turks of the potential threat posed by religious fanaticism. Islamists, however, propagate an interpretation of the Turkish Revolution that emphasizes the injustices suffered by devout Muslims, especially those such as İskilipli Atif Hoca who were sentenced to death by the Independence Tribunals. The examination of these and other events in this thesis, therefore, serves as a remedy for this situation in which a dearth of accurate information has fuelled the propensity of various interest-groups to manipulate for their own purposes themes integral to the history of the

Atatürk era.

The minimal number of actual occurrences of public collective action invoking Islamic legitimation suggests that Islamic "reaction" to the Turkish state was the exception rather than the rule. Nor was Islamic "reaction" limited to a single form of expression; it comprised a repertoire of popular responses to the policies of the Kemalist state. These responses illuminate some of the most significant themes in the social history of the Turkish Revolution.

Violent insurrection occurred on only two occasions, both in 1925 when some doubt remained as to the legitimacy of a "Turkish" government. Although it is difficult to ascertain the importance of Laz identity to unrest in the Vilayet of Rize, there is no doubt that both Kurdish identity and social networks were integral to the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion. Ethnic solidarity provided the basis upon which local leaders formulated the concept of an armed struggle against the state with the ultimate goal of autonomy or even independence. An appeal to the Islamic sensibilities of the common populace was the means by which the leaders of these revolts hoped to mobilize support for their secular objectives. The Menemen *Olayı* also represented an attempt to inspire armed rebellion through the adroit manipulation of Islamic symbols and rhetoric. Although Kemalists at the time speculated that both the Menemen *Olayı* and the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion were part of larger conspiracies involving the former Ottoman royal family and even British agents, these "rebellions" failed to produce the proclaimed purpose -- the restoration of an Islamic order -- not because co-conspirators outside Turkey failed to deliver "promised" support, but because the appeal to "save Islam" proved insufficient as a means of mobilizing a large and cohesive enough force. Thousands of Kurds did respond to the call to oppose a government responsible for desecrating Islamic symbols and institutions, but a much greater proportion of the Kurdish population refused to take up arms. Sectarian, *tarikât*, and tribal allegiances far outweighed the influence of a common Muslim or Kurdish identity, and if a local Kurdish notable did not personally ratify participation in collective action then it also failed to be a justifiable course of action for his followers. The circumstances of the Menemen *Olayı* also demonstrated that despite

the fact that local Turks had plenty of cause to express discontent with the state, the appeal to defend the very symbols and institutions central to Anatolian Muslim society did not necessarily result in "popular" protest and insurrection. Fundamental though Islamic beliefs and practices may have been to the identity of the inhabitants of Menemen, their manipulation by articulate Islamist leaders was not sufficient to overcome a human antipathy to violence and an Anatolian-Turkish tradition of non-violent opposition to the state.

Genuine public protest limited to the expression of popular discontent through the gathering of a voluble crowd was one means by which *Turks* demonstrated their opposition to the policies of the Turkish state. Located in provincial urban centers where social cohesion was particularly strong among the "conservative" segments of the populace, these protests were linked to the two reforms that had the most widespread impact upon habitual practices of Turks -- the "hat law" and the Turkification of the *ezan*. Contrary to the most prevalent interpretation of these events, protestors in Kayseri, Erzurum, and Maraş in 1925 and in Bursa in 1933, were not simply acting out a primordial Islamic tendency to oppose innovation when manipulated by "reactionary" Islamists; instead, their decision to protest publicly reflected genuine confusion and disorientation stemming from what they perceived to be an assault upon the symbols, habits and institutions crucial to their concepts of identity. Nevertheless, it is the infrequency of this form of Islamic "reaction" that must be stressed, for more widespread public protests would have been entirely within reason. The lack of collective action in this vein suggests that not only were new laws only gradually and incompletely applied, but that Muslim Turks were more than capable of adapting to the changes with which they were faced.

The flexibility characteristic of Turks during the Turkish Revolution was in part a result of the stability derived from their association with dervish *tarikats* and Muslim brotherhoods. Apparent passive compliance with secular reforms in public, but commitment to the vital perpetuation of traditional beliefs and practices in private by means of these social networks was by far the most common response of Turks to secularization, and it was in this context that a modern identity synthesizing both national Turkish and Muslim elements took root. Indeed, not only did *tarikats* survive nineteenth century secularization in the Ottoman Empire, but the evidence discovered in the course of my research suggests

that as a direct result of Kemalist secular policies *tarikats* likely thrived underground for the duration of the Turkish Revolution. No longer associated with an Islamic state or with previous institutional means of support, *tarikats* underwent a transformation with regards to their role in Turkish society: their primary purpose was no longer the fostering of mystical beliefs and rituals, but the preservation of the "truth" so long as it was besieged by the secular state. In many cases, as with Said Nursi, this may have included a subtle shift in emphasis from the charisma of a *şeyh* to the comprehensive quality of his message and its ability to address the spiritual needs of a Muslim society floating unanchored in a sea of Turkish secularism. *Tarikat* networks no doubt remained a haven for some Islamists vehemently opposed to Kemalist secularism, but contrary to the assertions of Kemalists, they were neither inherently reactionary nor did they constitute nests of budding conspirators intent upon overthrowing the state. There is, in fact, no concrete evidence apart from Tarık Tunaya's statements, that occurrences of Islamic "reaction" were linked by the involvement of *Nakşibendi şeyhs*; the *Şeyh Sait* rebellion is the only case in which their participation is certain.

If dervish conspiracy is not a striking theme common to Islamic "reaction" to the Turkish Revolution, then the over-reaction of the Kemalist elite to collective action invoking Islamic legitimation most certainly is. Mustafa Kemal may have been a populist, but his primary commitment was to government *for* not *by* the people, and his personal reaction to many of these events reflected his own intense discomfort with popular, organized religion. An insecurity shared by most members of the Kemalist elite, it stemmed in part from vivid memories of the social turmoil -- in particular the counter-revolution of 1909 -- that characterized the Young Turk period when Islamists had been free to participate in public debate. More importantly, it also reflected an awareness on the part of Mustafa Kemal that he himself had in fact orchestrated the most successful movement of collective action legitimated by Islamic symbols and rhetoric in Turkish history -- the War of Independence. The Kemalist elite feared the possibility that Islamists might win control over the Anatolian population and successfully inspire popular rejection of the Kemalist vision of the Turkish nation-state. Consequently, even the most innocuous form of collective action -- adherence

to a Muslim brotherhood -- was initially suspected to be a camouflage for treasonous conspiracies. Capital punishment was not imposed upon "reactionaries" arrested in 1933 or 1935-1936, but subsequent to the various Islamic movements in 1925 and the Menemen *Olayı* in 1930, alleged "reactionaries" faced harsh retribution, the validity of which is open to question. Following a pattern first established under the Ottoman state and then ruthlessly applied during by the nationalist government during the War of Independence, the Kemalist elite met with considerable success in its efforts to decapitate any cohesive Islamist movement and remove its most effective leadership.

Kemalist "reaction" to organized religion, therefore, is arguably a more significant theme in the history of the Turkish Revolution than is Islamic "reaction" to innovation and modernization. This study of collective action and its social context has demonstrated that although Muslim Turks had more than sufficient reasons to express frustration resulting from material deprivation and the assault upon the basis of their self-definition in terms of the Muslim community, only rarely did they resort to public collective protest. There was in fact no "inevitable clash" between the prevalent Muslim identity and the principles promoted by Kemalism. In part this was because Kemalism remained more an ideology than an effective program of change enforced at the local level, but social harmony also derived from the fact that both secularization and modernization had long been important trends in Anatolian history and Muslim Turks proved able to adapt to change and to integrate "modern" ideas with traditional beliefs and practices. Immigrant "Turks" had already been forced to break with established traditions, while Anatolian Turks possessed a heritage characterized by non-violent inconspicuous means of protest, as well as by submission to a powerful state. All Turks had endured more than a decade of devastating war and by 1923 were prepared for both peace and change. The term "revolution" implies intense fundamental change that might be expected to spark opposition and social unrest, but this was not true of the Turkish Revolution. Occurrences of Islamic "reaction" were rare, and although the political history of the period stresses an unprecedented degree of *legislated* reform, a social-historical perspective necessarily reveals an imperfect process of real change that predated Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and continued long after his death.

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