

**EDUCATION, NATIONALISM AND GENDER IN THE YOUNG TURK ERA
(1908-1918)**

A Master's Thesis

**by
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September 2007**

To the memory of Prof. Dr. Ayhan Enacar, my dear father

EDUCATION, NATIONALISM AND GENDER IN THE YOUNG TURK ERA
(1908-1918)

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of
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by

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in

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ANKARA

September 2007

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to analyze the education of Ottoman girls during the Second Constitutional Era, and to examine the “ideal female citizen” model, which was described in the primary and secondary school textbooks. When the Second Constitution was inaugurated, Young Turks targeted to inculcate the new generations with the principles of the Constitutional Monarchy and destruct the symbols of the Hamidian Regime, for the purpose of securing the continuity of the new system. After the Balkan Wars, the success of the Balkan nations in the wars was explained with the nationalist education they received in their schools, and Turkish nationalism became the dominant educational doctrine, surpassing Ottomanism. The concepts of motherhood and womanhood were re-defined in this nationalist atmosphere, and the female citizens were given the duty of constructing the nationalist generations of the future.

Key Words: Citizen Education, Ottoman women, Young Turks, Nationalism, Second Constitutional Era, Balkan Wars, Female education.

ÖZET

JÖN TÜRK DEVRİNDE EĞİTİM, MİLLİYETÇİLİK VE TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET (1908-1918)

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Bu tezin amacı II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi’nde Osmanlı kız çocuklarının eğitimini, ve ders kitaplarında tarif edilen “ideal kadın vatandaş” modelini incelemektir. II. Meşrutiyet’in ilanından sonra, Jön Türkler yeni sistemin devamını güvenceye almak amacıyla yeni nesilleri Meşrutiyet ilkelerine göre yetiştirmeye ve Abdülhamit döneminin siyasi sembollerini yok etmeyi amaçlamışlardır. Balkan Savaşlarının sonrasında, Balkan milletlerinin savaşlardaki başarıları okullarında aldıkları milliyetçi eğitime bağlanmış ve Türk milliyetçiliği zamanla Osmanlıcılık ilkesinin önüne geçerek eğitimde baskın doktrin haline gelmiştir. Bu milliyetçi atmosfer içinde annelik ve kadınlık kavramları yeniden tanımlanmış, kadın vatandaşlara milliyetçi nesiller inşa etme görevi verilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Vatandaş eğitimi, Osmanlı kadınları, Jön Türkler, Milliyetçilik, II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi, Balkan Savaşları, Kadın eğitimi.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

i) Subject:

Schools are important institutions of education and indoctrination, which often incorporate legitimization and conveyance of common ideological formulas and judgments of a society. Public education is also a way of inculcating the children with the existing gender roles, either through the curricula and textbook content, or extra-curricular activities. In other words, “the school simultaneously engages in constructing and transmitting a hierarchy of knowledge that legitimizes and forms the cultural and social environment in which gender socialization takes place.”¹

Another important function of public education is to inculcate the children with the principles and values of the political regime, for the purpose of including them into the system. The examination of intentions or the philosophy of education can be carried out by analyzing the curricula within the context of the political, social and intellectual

¹ Feride Acar and Ayşe Ayata “Discipline, Success and Stability: The Reproduction of Gender and Class in Turkish Secondary Education” in *Fragments of Culture: The Everyday of Modern Turkey* Ed. Deniz Kandiyoti and Ayşe Saktanber (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 90-111, 90-91.

climate of the time, since the ideas of the decision-makers and the ruling elite play an important role in the formation of educational policies.²

The curricular content, therefore the targets of the education system are reflected in the textbooks to a considerable extent, and textbooks “transmit culture, reflect values, and serve as springboards for the intellectual development of individuals and the nation.” For that reason, political regimes intend to legitimize themselves and strengthen their power through textbooks.³

This study attempts to examine the education policies of the Young Turks for the socialization of Ottoman children as gendered individuals, through a study of the curricula and textbook content in the Second Constitutional Era. I will try to explain the impact of the changing political climate and rising nationalism on the process of creating citizens between the years 1908 and 1919. Since Young Turks targeted to legitimize themselves and construct generations inculcated with the necessary political doctrines and values through education, numerous textbooks for both boys and girls were printed during that period. I will also concentrate on the differences between the textbooks written for boys and girls, in order to find out the descriptions of the “ideal Ottoman women and men” which the Young Turks aimed to create. My main goal in writing this thesis is to analyze the perceptions of womanhood, motherhood and citizenship of the Young Turks and display their relation with the rising Turkish nationalism, in order to show whether education during the Second Constitutional Period was an instrument of

² Felicity Hunt, *Gender and Policy in English Education: Schooling for Girls (1902-44)* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 18.

³ Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 187.

emancipating women, or just a reinforcement of the traditional gender hierarchy in the Ottoman society.

For this purpose, I will examine a group of textbooks prepared for the primary and secondary schools, together with the curriculum and laws and regulations regarding educational policies. On the other hand, I will refer to the works of intellectuals of the time regarding the emancipation of women and the necessary policies and methods of citizen formation. For the purpose of making a comparison between the legal and social acquisitions of women in the Second Constitutional Period and the governmental policies of female education, I will briefly explain the developments in the status of women in Ottoman Empire at the time.

Since an analysis of a particular historical period makes sense only when it is carried out within the historical and social context, I will explain the status of women during the nineteenth century by giving particular emphasis on the Tanzimât period and the Hamidian Era, in the light of fermâns, newspapers, periodicals, books and novels of the time, as well.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that one of the most guaranteed ways to understand the gender policies of a certain government is to analyze its education policies. Although there is a huge literature on Ottoman women in the Second Constitutional Era, most of the scholars chose to concentrate on the feminist discourse, which they analyzed mostly through women's periodicals, newspapers and novels of the period. The flaw of such studies is their inability to explain the mentality of the Young Turks, who were the decision makers of the time. The articles of the feminist authors, who were extraordinarily educated and self-confident when compared to the other women in the society, or the novels produced by the intellectuals, provide only the

normative guidelines set by a very small portion of the educated elite. On the other hand, studying the ideas of the Young Turks through a survey of newspapers and periodicals like *Türk Yurdu*, *Sebilürreşâd*, *Tanin*, and magazines on education does not show the full picture, since Second Constitutional Era was a period of clashing ideologies. Besides, utilizing all the periodicals and publications in such a prolific period is definitely beyond the scope of a single academic study.

The only way to understand the real pedagogical doctrines of the Young Turks is to analyze the curricula and textbook content, since they provide us the “ideal citizen model” defined according to the dominant ideology of the government. The policy of the government regarding women’s emancipation can also be traced by examining the textbooks.

ii) Literature and Sources:

There are only two scholarly works, which make use of a large number of textbooks written during the Second Constitutional Era, in order to understand the educational policies of the government. The first one is “*Ders Kitapları ve Sosyalleşme*”⁴, written by Nuri Doğan, which compared the Hamidian Era textbooks with the Second Constitutional Period textbooks. Although very comprehensive, his work does not provide necessary information on the education of girls and the gender policies of the Young Turks, since Doğan made use of only five books for this purpose, most of which were Home Economics Books. Since he did not see any Moral and Civic Knowledge books written for female students and did not compare the textbooks written for boys and girls, he does not provide any information regarding the citizenship status, social duties

⁴ Nuri Doğan, *Ders Kitapları ve Sosyalleşme (1876-1918)* (İstanbul: Bağlam, 1994)

and responsibilities of women. Therefore, although being a valuable source that explains the education of Ottoman boys in detail, it has a deficiency in providing information about the gender policies of the government.

The other work is “Makbul Vatandaşın Peşinde”, written by Füsun Üstel for the purpose of comparing the citizen education in the Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey. Like Doğan, Üstel does not give detailed information on the inculcation of girls, since she made use of only two books prepared for the female students. Her book also does not elucidate the relationship between the rise of Turkish nationalism and the importance attached to motherhood during the Second Constitutional Era.

There are also some articles and monographs, concentrating on some specific textbooks. In his article, Faruk Öztürk, after making a brief comparison of moral and religious education policies in the Hamidian Era and the Second Constitutional Period, concentrates on Baha Tevfik’s book “Yeni Ahlak”, which was prepared as a textbook.⁵ Similarly, Zafer Toprak analyzes a Moral and Civic Knowledge book, which was written in 1908, for the purpose of inculcating Ottoman children with the basic principles of citizenship.⁶

Therefore, an analysis of the Second Constitutional Era textbooks through the gender lens is still necessary in order to discover the impact of nationalism on the changing concepts of motherhood, womanhood and the state’s gender policies.

There are some valuable academic works regarding the impact of nationalism on the gender policies of some Middle Eastern states, at the turn of the century. Omnia

⁵ Faruk Öztürk, “II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Ahlak Öğretimi ve Baha Tevfik’in Yeni Ahlak’ı” *Milli Eğitim Dergisi* 145 (2000) [yayim.meb.gov.tr/dergiler/145/ozturk.htm]

⁶ Zafer Toprak, “80. Yıldönümünde “Hürriyetin İlanı” (1908) ve Rehber-i İttihâd” *Toplum ve Bilim* 42 (1988): 157-173.

Shakry explains in her article that Egyptian mothers came to be responsible for the “physical, moral and intellectual development” of their children, within the context of a nationalist discourse. She claims that motherhood was accepted as the fundamental of an anti-colonial national identity, and women were positioned as markers of national backwardness. According to her article, since Egyptian mothers were defined as “ignorant”, their capability to construct the new generations was questioned, and an “ideal mother” was modeled, within this nationalist context.⁷

Similarly, Afsaneh Najmabadi compares the pre-modern and modern concepts of motherhood in Iran, by comparing the pre-modern texts on women with the ones written during the first decades of the twentieth century. She tells that although women were not regarded as the educators of the nation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the twentieth century, the low intellectual development of women came to be associated with the nation’s underdevelopment. She explains how girls’ education became the dominant subject of discussion, as the concept of “citizenship” gained importance.⁸

On the other hand, there are some scholarly works regarding the rise of “girlhood” and female education in the twentieth century England. Felicity Hunt analyses the curricula and textbooks of the English girls’ schools, in order to explain how the pupils were “created to meet a variety of economic and social imperatives”. She explains

⁷ Omnia Shakry, “Schooled Mothers and Structured Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt” in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* ed. Lila Abu- Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 126-170.

⁸ Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Crafting and Educated Housewife in Iran” in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* ed. Lila Abu- Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 91-125.

the importance given to motherhood with the rise of “eugenic feminism”, which focused on the health and intellectual development of the mothers.⁹

In her book “The New Girl: Girls’ Culture in England 1880-1915”, Sally Mitchell claims that the proliferation of the periodicals and books for girls, together with the compulsory schooling, created a girl’s culture in England at the turn of the century. Mitchell describes this new girlhood as a separate social category distinguished from the adults and children, and claims that the new girls’ culture “suggested new ways of being, new modes of behavior, and new attitudes that were not yet acceptable for adult women”. She also mentioned the impact of schools by categorizing girls according to their ages and giving them the opportunity to share their experiences and create new fashions in language.¹⁰

iii) Overview of the Thesis:

Chapter II is a summary of the legal, educational and social reforms regarding women in the Tanzimat Period and Hamidian Era. In the first section, I explain the emergence of the woman question by analyzing the novels, books and periodicals of the time, for the purpose of providing the historical setting of the problem. In the second section, I summarize the changes in the status of Ottoman women by analyzing some laws, regulations and fermans regarding the lives of Ottoman women. Chapter III is an overview of the Second Constitutional period. In the first section, I analyze the Islamist, Westernist and Turkist approaches to the emancipation of women, and show that the

⁹ Felicity Hunt, *Gender and Policy in English Education: Schooling for Girls 1902-1944* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991)

¹⁰ Sally Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls’ Culture in England 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 1-3, 74.

intellectuals of the time perceived women as constructive social agents, necessary for the realization of their social projects. In the second section, I explain the development of the feminist discourse by examining some women's periodicals. In the last section, I summarize the educational and social reforms regarding women.

In Chapter VI, I clarify how the child-centered pedagogical methods of the *Meşrutiyet* teachers developed, by referring to the major internal political events of the time, and the changes in the educational views of intellectuals as a result of those events. I also explain how Turkish Nationalism became the dominant educational doctrine, surpassing Ottomanism through time. Then, I analyze the contents of the textbooks, which is crucial to understand how the primary and secondary school students, who were accepted as the future citizens of the Empire, were indoctrinated in order to become the protectors of their country and the Constitutional Monarchy.

In the fifth chapter, I undertake an analysis of the primary and secondary school textbooks for the purpose of outlining the differences between the education and socialization of Ottoman boys and girls. By studying various topics from the textbooks, I comment on the newly constructed concepts of motherhood, citizenship and housewifery; and their relation to Turkish nationalism. I also analyze those concepts in order to show whether female education in the Second Constitutional Era was an instrument in modernizing and emancipating women, or just a reinforcement of the traditional gender hierarchy, by over-exalting the classical gender roles.

CHAPTER II

THE EMERGENCE OF THE “WOMAN QUESTION” AND STATUS OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

“When change starts in a society, this change spreads through the unexpected areas.”¹¹ This was true for the Ottoman Empire, which experienced a long process of change during the nineteenth century. Looking for the “mysterious source” that provided military and economic superiority to the Western world, the Ottomans began with the visible sources of power and prosperity, like the weaponry and scientific innovations.¹² However, this was also the beginning of the social, institutional and cultural transformations related to the increased exposure to the Western world and the developing opportunities of communication.

One of the most important institutions which experienced cultural transformation was the family. As the process of modernization accelerated, a new concept of modernity started to transform and reshape the traditional family values. The status of women was closely related to this transformation, since women were considered as the protectors of the traditional values of the society.

¹¹ İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (İstanbul: Alkım, 2005), 244.

¹² Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong: The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 64.

The aim of this chapter is to explain the emergence of the “woman question” which appeared as a result of the modernization process, as well as to explain the changes in the educational, social and legal rights of women. In the first section, I will tell that both the modernists and the conservatives concentrated on the woman question while searching for solutions to the problems of the state and the society. Given this context, I will show how the concepts of “woman” and “family” were used interchangeably in order to emphasize the problems and degeneration in the society. I will further claim that “woman” was also used as a metaphor of the “state”, in order to criticize the undesired economical, political and social conditions of the time; and tell that this was a result of the political climate of the nineteenth century, especially the Hamidian Era. I will argue that family was seen as the nucleus of the state while women were seen as the main sources of its degeneration or development. I will give particular attention to the ideas of the members of Ottoman intelligentsia focusing on women’s emancipation and its necessity for the future of the state.

Then, I will analyze the changes in Ottoman women’s lives by explaining the educational, legal and social reforms, which affected the status of women in society.

II.1 The “Woman Question”: Women at the Center of the Political Debate

In this part, I will analyze the ideas of the Ottoman intellectuals by giving examples from their essays, books, novels and theatre plays related to the issue of women’s modernization.

II.1.1 Press

At the beginning of the century, instruments of western-style communication, like newspapers, books and the telegraph were mostly used by the Ottoman ruling class. Although their use spread through the other layers of the society through time, the most radical changes were recognized in the lives and minds of the upper class men and women.¹³ Therefore, communication played a crucial role in the cultural and social transformations in the society, by providing a platform for Ottoman intellectuals to discuss the problems of the society and propose solutions for them by publishing essays, translated works, books and novels. The primary concern of these publications was the moral and social decay in the Ottoman society that resulted in the inferiority and backwardness of the empire when compared to its European contemporaries.

These publications present us the approaches of the Ottoman intellectuals towards modernization and change, as well as depicting the condition and living style of the upper class Ottoman people who lived at the time they were written.¹⁴ The male authors used the plight of women as an instrument to express their concerns about social conventions, which they found “stultifying and archaic”. They often criticized the traditional patriarchal structures when commenting on the emancipation of women. Although having a conservative attitude towards Islam, the *Young Ottomans*, especially

¹³ Şerif Mardin, “Tanzimat’tan Sonra Aşırı Batılılaşma” in *Türk Modernleşmesi* Eds. Mümtaz’er Türköne and Tuncay Önder (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006) 21-79.

¹⁴ Ibid., 32-33.

Namık Kemal and Şinâsi can be defined as the earliest advocates of women's emancipation, paving the way for later discussions.¹⁵

One of the intellectual trends imported from Europe was “social Darwinism”, which can be defined as “selective Westernization”. Writers and reformers commonly used the West as an example for social change by emphasizing its status as a modern and civilized society. Nevertheless, cautions against women becoming “too free”, “too ambitious”, and “too visible” in the pursuit of *alafranga*, were equally common. Writers attempted to draw the boundaries of Westernization, by constantly warning their readers, “this far, and no farther”.¹⁶

The “woman question” became the dominant subject of discussion when the Ottoman intellectuals explained the social, cultural, moral, and even economical problems of the empire with the supposedly inferior status of women. İsmail Doğan explains this situation with reference to the theories of some sociologists like Frederic Le Play and Durkheim, who were important sources of inspiration for many authors in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Le Play, who explained the social problems with the negative effects of industrialization, claimed that industrialization gave the greatest damage women and family. He further claimed that the problems of the society could be solved by improving the conditions of the family, which was a small prototype of the society. In other words, according to LePlay, a powerful and stabilized society could only be achieved by united, empowered families.¹⁷

¹⁵ Deniz Kandiyoti, “End of Empire: Islam, Nationalism and Women in Turkey” in *Women, Islam and the State*, ed. Deniz Kandiyoti (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 26.

¹⁶ Elizabeth Brown Frierson, “Unimagined Communities: State, Press and Gender in the Hamidian Era”, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 1996, 171.

¹⁷ İsmail Doğan, “Türk Ailesinin Tarih ve Gelenek Etkisinde Belirlenen Sosyolojik Yapısı.” In *XIV. Türk Tarih Kongresi: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler II. Cilt I. Kısım* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005) 639-663, 654.

Namık Kemal was the first Ottoman intellectual to emphasize the relation between the state and the family, by saying: “The houses of a country are like the rooms of a home. Is it possible to achieve comfort, prosperity and happiness in a home whose rooms are filled with a constant hatred and numerous quarrels?”¹⁸

He also connected the happiness of a family to the status of women. Therefore, we can see one of the earliest examples stressing the interrelations between woman, family and the state and placing women at the center of discussion, in Namık Kemal’s article. In another article published in *Tasvir-i Efkâr* in 1867, he strongly advocated women’s rights and claimed that the source of the inferior status of women was their ignorance. He claimed that women should be educated for the prosperity of the society:

Our women are now seen as serving no useful purpose to mankind other than having children; they are considered simply as serving for pleasure, like musical instruments or jewels. But they constitute half and perhaps more than half of our species. Preventing them from contributing to the sustenance and improvement of others by means of their efforts infringes the basic rules of public cooperation to such a degree that our national society is stricken like a human body that is paralyzed on one side. Yet women are not inferior to men in their intellectual and physical capacities.... The reason why women among us are thus deprived is the perception that they are totally ignorant and know nothing of right and duty, benefit and harm. Many evil consequences result from this position of women, the first being that it leads to bad upbringing for their children.¹⁹

As can be seen, the greatest problem concerning women was explained as education, and ignorance of women was perceived as the source of the troubles in a

¹⁸ Namık Kemal, “Aile”, *İbret*. 56. (Ramazan 1289/ Teşrin-i sâni 1288), 1-2, in *Osmanlı Modernleşmesinin Meseleleri* Eds. Nergiz Yılmaz Aydoğdu and İsmail Kara (Ankara: Dergâh, 2005)274-278.

¹⁹ Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong*, 70.

society. Women were given the duty to protect the social order by upbringing well-educated men, who will work for the prosperity of their country.

The same argument is repeated in detail in Şemseddin Sâmî's book *Kadınlar*. In the book, he tells that women are the sources of the human society, and the morality of the public depends on them; because they are the ones who keep the family together. He continues by telling that while the moral behaviors of a woman is capable of protecting and increasing the morality of the whole society, her immorality and tendency towards pleasure and entertainment can totally degenerate it.²⁰ Women need to be literate and must learn Arithmetic, Accounting, Economics, Medicine, Physics, Chemistry and other sciences to a certain level in order to fulfill their duties.²¹

Şemseddin Sâmî stresses the benefits of educating women and claims that this is a way of enlightening the whole society:

The education given to a man is useful for himself only, and is totally destroyed when he dies. However, the education provided to a woman is transferred to her children and grandchildren. If educating men is like planting a tree which will provide shade, educating women is like planting a tree which will give fruits, as well as providing shade.²²

Şemseddin Sâmî's approach to women's education and emancipation is clearly very similar to LePlay's:

A woman is the center of the family. The other members of the family are dependent to her, and stay together because of her existence, just like the planets depending on the Sun [....] Family means the woman. Since the society is composed of families, the education of women is crucial for the happiness of the society.²³

²⁰ Şemseddin Sâmî, *Kadınlar* Ed. İsmail Doğan, (Ankara: Gündoğan, 1996) 13-17.

²¹ Ibid., 30.

²² Ibid., 47.

²³ Ibid., 25-26.

While claiming that a woman must improve herself in order to up bring her children properly and to be a good wife to her husband, Şemseddin Sâmi also advocated that women should have occupations that are suitable to their delicate nature, and claimed that they can work as tailors, doctors, shopkeepers and pharmacists, as well as looking after their children.²⁴

Ahmed Midhad Efendi also commented on the education of women by telling that the upbringing of children was a religious duty of mothers; and the education of sons up until the age of seven and of daughters up until the age of nine had been assigned to mothers.”²⁵

Women’s emancipation started to be discussed also by female intellectuals in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially during the Hamidian Era. With the gradual increase in the rate of literacy, Ottoman women found the opportunity to express themselves in regular newspapers and magazines in the nineteenth century. The newspapers and magazines for women created a platform in which educated young women could discuss various issues like education of women, polygamy, marriage and divorce, legal advantages and disadvantages of women. Many famous authors like Fatma Aliye Hanim, Emine Semiye Hanim, Nigâr Hanim, Gülistan İsmet and other prolific authors found the chance to enlighten Ottoman women with their articles. Education of women and the problems of young girls who wanted to continue their education were among the most frequently debated issues in these periodicals. For example, it was stated

²⁴ Şemseddin Sâmi, *Kadınlar*, 32-35.

²⁵ Ahmed Mithad, *Ana ve Babanın Evlad Üzerindeki Hukuk ve Vezâifi* (İstanbul: 1317), 38-39 cited from Berrak Burçak, *The Status of Elite Muslim Women in İstanbul Under the Reign of Abdülhamit II*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, 1997, 58.

that some families preferred to marry their daughters at a very young age and therefore ruined their education:

A woman does not have the ability to prepare her mind and body for education for all her life. After having children, her capability to learn diminishes so that she can only read one or two issues of our newspaper in a week. For that reason, it is necessary not to be late for the education of young girls. [...] A girl should start her education at the age of five. She should go to school until the age 15. However, there are girls who are married at the age of 13 or 14. This has various evil consequences as well as leaving education..²⁶

A letter in the newspaper *Terakki* in 1868, which was written by an old woman whose daughters learned how to read and write, shows the changing perceptions of Ottoman women towards education:

In old days, when we were young, men used to say that it's improper for women to be literate. Now I understand that it was to prevent us from being human, and to make us stay like animals.²⁷

In women's periodicals which flourished especially in the Hamidian Era, the legal and educational opportunities of Ottoman women were compared with those of European and American women²⁸, and women's duties of being good housewives and mothers are discussed.²⁹ When reading these periodicals, one can easily observe the gradually increasing self-confidence and enthusiasm of the female writers. Also, the pen names used by women changed through time. With the increasing educational opportunities and the importance given to female education, being a student or graduate of girls' schools providing secondary degree or higher was perceived as a prestige and

²⁶ "Kızların Zaman-ı Tahsili", *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*.4. (Rebiülevvel 1313/ 13 Ağustos 1313) 1-2.

²⁷ Aytunç Altındal, *Türkiye'de Kadın: Marksist Bir Yaklaşım* (İstanbul: Havas, 1977), 126.

²⁸ Zeyneb Sünbül, "Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete.2. (4 Rebiülahir 1313/ 11 Eylül 1311) 2-4.

²⁹ For examples, see Fatma Rasiha, "Hanımlarımız ve Ev İdaresi" *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*.6. (30 Rebiülahir 1313/ 7 Eylül 1311) 5, "kadınların Thasili Hakında Bir Mütalaa I", *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*.20. (19 Cemaziyelevvel 1313/ 26 Teşrinievvel 1311) 1-2.

honor by women. We often come across signatures like “two educated ladies”, “a school girl”, “Cemâliye and Fahriye, graduates of Darülmuallimât”, used in order to emphasize the privileged condition of the authors.

Although there was a common negotiation on the necessity of women’s education and women’s role in upbringing children, “woman question” had other dimensions. Various other issues about women were also being discussed in press. Fatma Aliye, the earliest female opponent of women’s emancipation and the daughter of Cevdet Paşa, engaged in a debate with Mahmud Esat Efendi, a member of the *ulemâ*, about his articles on *teaddüt-i zevcât* (polygamy). In these articles, Mahmut Esat told that imitators of the Europeans wrongly believed that polygamy was the weak side of Islam and added that polygamy was not a practice originated with Islam, but rather in human nature. He claimed this naturally polygamous instinct should be allowed for socially beneficial results to accrue. Fatma Aliye responded his article by saying that the practice of polygamy could no longer be defended, and biological and physiological justifications had nothing to do with this issue.³⁰ She also said that:

If we believe that Islam has universally valid principles, we ought to declare that the monogamous marriage is the one enjoyed by Islam and that the verse of the Quran enjoining men to remain with one wife is in accordance with civilization. It is only then that we can justify our position.³¹

After Fatma Aliye’s response, Mahmud Esat responded to her claims by writing another article, and admitted that polygamous marriage was only permitted under certain

³⁰ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 286-288.

³¹ Ibid.

conditions. Yet, he made a distinction among the material and non-material moral aspects of Western civilization and claimed that borrowing the former is desirable.³²

Fatma Aliye also wrote a book called *Nisvân-i Islâm*³³ (women of Islam) which was published in the newspaper *Tercümân-i Hakikât*, and wrote at length about various issues related to women such as *cariyelik* (female slaves), polygamy, marriage, divorce, *tesettür* (Islamic norms of female attire) and women's status in Islam.³⁴ Her book can be defined as a defense of the traditional Ottoman culture and religious values against the critical and biased attitudes of the European travelers.

II.1.2 Novels and Theatre Plays:

In analyzing the nineteenth century novels and theatre plays, it is vitally important to know the realities of the time and the writers' attitudes towards modernization. When we study the intellectuals of the late Ottoman period, we realize that they were the first generation of novelists, who had a message to give to the society. Therefore, the first Turkish novels can be defined as pedagogically driven, written in order to give a lesson to the society, to teach right from wrong by constructing a microcosm (family) upon which the macrocosm (Ottoman Empire) could be presented to

³² Ibid. For full transcriptions of the essays of both Fatma Aliye and Mahmud Esad, see *Çokeşlilik: Taadüd-i Zevcat, Fatma Aliye- Mahmud Esad* Ed. Firdevs Canbaz (Ankara: Hece, 2007).

³³ When Fatma Aliye started to publish essays in *Tercümân-i Hakikât* with her own name, most people did not believe that they could have been written by a woman. Her famous translation of Volonté was believed to be translated by her brother Ali Sedat Efendi, and *Nisvân-i Islâm* was believed to be written by her father Ahmed Cevdet Paşa. Also, since she was the protégé of Ahmed Mithad Efendi and was highly influenced by his literary style, many people believed that her novels were written by him. (Ahmed Mithad Efendi, *Bir Osmanlı Kadın Yazarın Doğuşu* (İstanbul: Sel, 1994, 82-83).)

³⁴ Mübeccel Kızıltan, *Fatma Aliye Hanım: Yaşamı, Sanatı, Yapıtları ve Nisvân-i İslam* (İstanbul: Mutlu, 1993), 55.

debate.³⁵ In other words, the writers of the nineteenth century were primarily concerned with the enlightening function of literature. Their aim was to reach as large an audience as possible, in order to spread their ideas on various issues like modernity, abolition of polygamy and the advantages of marriages between consenting partners.³⁶ The authors of the novels and theatres of the post-Tanzimât period focused in two main issues: the status of women in the society and the modernization of the upper-class men.³⁷

In this section, I will explore the evolution of the woman question in Ottoman literature by analyzing the most common themes such as “the evil consequences of arranged marriages”, “the problematic results of polygamy” and “the benefits of female education”, in order to show how these innocent and romantic-looking themes were used to give political messages and criticize the existing rule. Especially in the Hamidian Era, in which direct criticism of the Sultan and his regime was almost impossible due to the strict censorship, political criticisms were disguised as stories of desperate young women and men who were trapped by the traditional values of the society.

A very commonly used theme was the troubles and pain caused by arranged marriages. In Ottoman society, the introduction of the idea that a man and a woman should get married with their own will and only if they loved each other created great intellectual and emotional turmoil. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the ideas of the French Revolution, particularly *liberté* (liberty) started to influence the literate circles in Ottoman society. At the same time, *amour* (love) began to represent so much more than just an intense personal relationship; and was associated with a political

³⁵ Elif Bilgin, “An Analysis of Turkish Modernity Through Discourses of Masculinities”, Unpublished Phd Dissertation, (Ankara:Middle East Technical University, 2004), 85.

³⁶ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 252.

³⁷ Şerif Mardin, *Tanzimat’tan Sonra Aşırı Batılılaşma*, 33.

passion of the time. “The state was equated with the father, and autocratic, backward political arrangements with patriarchalism and restrictive marriages.” Then, *amour* and *liberté* were used interchangeably in a wave of intellectual liberalism during the politically oppressive decades.³⁸ Especially during the Hamidian Era, many authors were claiming that declaration of love was not possible without the declaration of Liberation.³⁹ “Woman” and “marriage” were being used metaphorically for the state in the political climate of the time.⁴⁰

Şinasi’s satirical play *Şair Evlenmesi* (The Marriage of a Poet), which was written in 1860 and referred as the first Turkish play in the western mode, can be defined as one of the prominent criticisms of the traditional arranged marriage system. The hero, *Müştak Bey*, a young and modern-minded man, falls in love, and wants to have a “love marriage” with his beloved. However, he discovers that her bride-to-be was replaced by her elder- and uglier- sister, as a result of an arrangement according to the traditional values. However, *Müştak Bey* manages to substitute his rightful bride for her sister, and the play ends happily.⁴¹ Another satirical play, *Açıkbaş* (Uncovered Head), was written by Ahmed Midhad Efendi in order to criticize many aspects of nineteenth century upper-class Ottoman life. In the play, the father *Hüsnü Bey* is an old man, who imitates the material aspects of western culture, literally living *alafranga*, but still having old fashioned patriarchal values. He forces his sixteen year old daughter *Yekta Hanım*, who is in love with a young man called *Fettan Efendi*, to marry one of his old friends. *Hüsnü*’s nineteen year old wife *Hesna*, who got married with *Hüsnü Bey* without

³⁸ Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family and Fertility 1880- 1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 87-88.

³⁹ İlân-ı Hürriyet olmadan ilân-ı aşk olmaz.

⁴⁰ Alan Duben, *Kent, Aile, Tarih* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2002), 154.

⁴¹ Ibid., 89.

loving him, probably because of his money, supports him because she wants to live in the same house and have an affair with the groom-to-be's young son. At the end, *Yekta* and *Fettan* marry as a result of a trick planned by *Fettan*. This play is a humiliation of the *alafranga*-behaving but traditionally-thinking people, as well as a condemnation of the arranged, loveless marriages.⁴² Şemseddin Sâmî's *Taaşşuk-i Talat ve Fitnat* (The Falling in Love of Talat and Fitnat) is a romantic tragedy again with a subtext of social criticism. An eighteen year old boy called *Talat* falls in love with *Fitnat*, the stepdaughter of a tobacconist, after seeing her at the window. *Fitnat* loves *Talat* as well, but since she is not allowed to leave the house, the boy, still beardless, disguises himself as a girl in order to visit his lover. However, *Fitnat*'s father marries her to a rich old man, who, to make matters worse, turns out to be her real father. The lovers commit suicide and the father loses his mind.⁴³ In this novel, the young lovers are presented as the victims of the patriarchal values which prevented them from becoming happy by choosing to unite freely. Another example is Nâmık Kemal's *Zavallı Çocuk* (Poor Child), in which the author criticizes the traditional norms of marriage, and parents who abuse their authority for their own benefit.⁴⁴

As can be seen, according to the novels and plays of the late nineteenth century, one of the greatest problems which the young girls had to cope with was the intolerant evil fathers who forced their daughters to marry for their own benefit. We can see the "intolerant father-state" and "backward political applications-forced marriages" metaphors better, after a detailed analysis of such literary products. During the years of

⁴² "Açıkbaş" in *Ahmed Mithad Efendi Bütün Oyunları* Ed. İnci Enginün (İstanbul: Dergah, 1998)

⁴³ Faroqhi, 266.

⁴⁴ Bernard Caporal, *Kemalizmde ve Kemalizm Sonrasında Türk Kadını* (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası, 1982), 66.

Hamidian censorship, love was used as an euphemism for liberty. In Ahmed Mithad's novel *Tevhhiil* (Marriage), the hero *Mazlum Bey* asks: "when there are still no individual liberties (*hürriyet-i şahsiye*) in our country, how can a man choose a girl he wants, or a girl the man she desires?"⁴⁵ Similarly, in his story *Karnaval*, a character says:

"Sir, this *alafranga* is really something. *Liberté*! Freedom! That's what it's all about! A man needs a woman; a woman a man. Why nowadays should parents demand that this natural freedom (*hürriyet-i tabiiye*) be restricted?"⁴⁶

Another very common and hotly debated theme in early Turkish novel was polygamy. As well as the intellectuals who wrote essays and newspaper articles on the social problems caused by polygamy, the novelists and the writers of theatre plays devoted a great deal of their energy to prove that polygamy was a great problem on the society's way to transform into a modern and civilized one. Nevertheless, Alan Duben and Cem Behar's study on the nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman population shows that polygamy was very infrequent, and only 2 percent of marriages in Istanbul were polygamous.⁴⁷ They claim that "the outcry against polygamy during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was part of a larger ideological battle for egalitarian gender relations and a modern western way of life, and polygamy had a great symbolic value both for the Ottomans and for many foreign observers of the Ottomans."⁴⁸

Although being very infrequent, it is easy to assume that polygamous marriages created serious psychological tension among the members of the families.

⁴⁵ Duben and Behar, 92.

⁴⁶ From Ahmed Mithad, *Karnaval*, quoted in Duben and Behar, 92.

⁴⁷ Duben and Behar, 148.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 158.

Contrary to the ideas of Mahmud Esad and many others who advocated that polygamy was a normal aspect of family life because of physiological reasons, we can see that polygamy was perceived as a great family tragedy, by analyzing the memoirs. In her autobiography, Halide Edip Adivar tells that her family was separated into two after his father got married with her second wife. We can understand that women were not accepting the fellow wives as a normal part of their lives, because Halide Edip tells that her father got married with his second wife secretly, after sending her first wife on a vacation. She explains at length how these two women end up being enemies of each other, becoming paranoid and believing that their rival has cast a spell on them, and treating little Halide as a spy of the other. She tells that her father had to divorce his second wife after some problematic years of continuous intrigues, jealousy and hysteria, which made life unbearable for the members of the household.⁴⁹

Such problems caused by polygamy were continually used in the novels and plays in order to emphasize the inferior, desperate status of Ottoman women. A prominent example in this regard is Ahmed Mithad's famous play *Eyvah*, which tells the tragedy of a man named *Meftun* with two wives, *Sâbire* and *Leylâ*, both of whom are uninformed about the existence of the other. Since he loves both of them very much and is unable to make a selection, he suffers a lot. At the end of the play, *Meftun* has to divorce her first wife *Sâbire* as a result of the pressure of her family. *Sâbire* becomes ill, and forces *Meftun* to divorce *Leylâ* with *talak-i selâse* (an irrevocable divorce) before she dies.⁵⁰ The importance of this play lies in the fact that it focuses on the impossibilities of polygamy, although the husband loves both of his wives very much. A

⁴⁹ Halide Edip Adivar, *Mor Salkımlı Ev* (İstanbul: Özgür, 2005).

⁵⁰ "Eyvah" in *Ahmed Mithad Efendi Bütün Oyunları* Ed. İnci Enginün (İstanbul: Dergah, 1998)

famous novel which tells the mutual enmity of the fellow wives is Nâbizâde Nâzım's *Zehra*, which is considered as the first psychological novel in Turkish literature. This time, the hero named *Subhi* gets married with his slave, *Sırrı Cemâl*, and a wild rivalry starts between *Sırrı Cemâl* the first wife, *Zehra*.⁵¹ The novel depicts the jealousy and hatred of the fellow wives perfectly.

Deniz Kandiyoti claims that emancipation of women was considered from an “instrumentalist framework” in the literature, suggesting that changes in women's condition would benefit the society as a whole.⁵² Especially female education constituted an important part of this instrumentalist framework, and many authors used educated, modern-minded, and therefore empowered and confident female characters in their novels and plays. Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, in his novel *Mutallâka* (The Divorced Woman), describes a well educated and self confident woman named *Akile* (meaning clever woman), who is interested in reading books in her spare time, and able to discuss various issues with her husband. Gürpınar depicts the ideal “empowered Ottoman woman”, and shows the cultural differences between two generations of women, by telling us the quarrels between *Akile* and her mother-in-law:

“What is that again? Are you reading a book?! Just look at the situation of this room. Does it look like a room of a lady? One can think that it is a *kıraathane*. All the books and newspapers of Istanbul are here... In our times, girls had their spinning wheels and looms. Nowadays they have libraries, inkwells and pens. We used to weave. You read novels... What was that thing which happened last night? You were discussing something with your husband... You said the spelling of a word, and your husband said it was not true... Then you made a bet for two liras. Then you looked it up from, what you call ‘dictionary’ or whatever, and found out that you were right... Girl, that night I felt frightened of your mischievousness. Why did you get married if you were so good in writing? You should have

⁵¹ Nâbizâde Nâzım, *Zehra* (Ankara: Akçağ, 2005).

⁵² Kandiyoti, *End of Empire*, 26.

entered in a clerical office... Ah, my friends have warned me before taking you! They said ‘do not take a literate girl to your son; she will twist you around her little finger.’ I don’t know why, but I lost my foresight and did not listen to them... They were right! I do not know what kind of a spell you are casting on my son? He has become silent since you have stepped into this house...”⁵³

Ahmed Mithad Efendi also wrote many books on modernization, family interrelations and social problems. In his short stories *Felsefe-i Zenân* (Philosophy of Women) and *Diplomalı Kız* (The Girl with a Diploma), he depicted independent women who were able to work and earn their own living. In most of his novels and short stories, Muslim women received private education, learned embroidery, cooking, housekeeping, as well as reading and writing Ottoman Turkish and French, and playing the piano. However, except the two short stories mentioned above, they did not have the opportunity to practice their talents and their knowledge in the outside world and the labor market.⁵⁴ Fatma Aliye, in her novel *Refet*, tells the story of an orphan girl who works hard to complete her education as a teacher, in order to earn her living.⁵⁵

In general, nineteenth century authors condemned the patriarchal arrangements and intolerant families, which were the main reasons for women to suffer. They claimed that the most important reason for women’s inferior status was their ignorance, and stressed the crucial role of female education. However, one can easily recognize that the changes that are considered necessary in women’s status in family and society were not related to their personal rights and instincts to improve themselves. These changes were

⁵³ Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, *Mutallâka*, (İstanbul: Oya, 1971), 12-13.

⁵⁴ Bahar Çolak, *Portraits of Women in the Late Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire from the Pen of Ahmed Midhad Efendi*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, 2002.

⁵⁵ Mübeccel Kızıltan, 24.

necessary for the health and benefit of the society, not for the individual evolutions and emancipations of women.⁵⁶

Up until this point, I explained the reactions of the Ottoman elite towards modernization and change, and analyzed the nineteenth century novels from the perspective of politics. I showed the disguised messages under the common themes such as arranged marriages and polygamy, and claimed that women and their problems were used for the purpose of criticizing the existing political order and the old, traditional patriarchal arrangements in the society. This section was important to show that the woman question was placed at the center of the political debates of the post-Tanzimât Ottoman society. I also showed that women's emancipation was considered a social necessity, without which modernization and civilization could not be achieved. The authors of these articles, books, novels and theatre plays were highly educated, modern-minded and mostly male. Therefore, these sources only help us to understand the ideas of the upper-class Ottomans, who generally had a direct contact with the Western culture.

In the following section, I propose to undertake an analysis of the state's policies regarding women and their emancipation, in order to make a comparison between the normative ideals and the realities concerning women. I will explain the educational, legal and social changes in the lives of Muslim Ottoman women and the transformation of the traditional Ottoman family by analyzing the fermâns, regulations and laws issued during the nineteenth century.

⁵⁶ Bernard Caporal, 75-76.

II.2. Education of Women during the Nineteenth Century

Before the Tanzimat, the official education of girls was limited to the *sıbyan mektebi*, or the children's school, the purpose of which was to give Muslim Ottoman children the necessary elementary religious education. These schools were generally established as *vakıfs* and located in a *külliye* or near a mosque or *medrese*.⁵⁷ The boys and girls studied at the same classes and memorized verses from the Kur'an, learned how to pray, and how to read and write from instructors of whom were *imams* of the mosques.⁵⁸ Reading and writing was only limited to Arabic Script, therefore the graduates of *sıbyân mektebi* were not able to read newspapers or books other than the Kur'an. They also never had courses necessary for their daily lives and intellectual development such as Calculation, Geography or History.⁵⁹

Girls had the opportunity to continue their official education only up until the age of nine, which was considered the age of puberty for women. After that age, girls were not able to continue their education, since they were not allowed to intermingle with boys.⁶⁰ Although there were no rules or regulations preventing women from having higher education in Islam, education of girls after the *sıbyan mektebi* was evaluated as unnecessary by the *ulemâ* and common people, due to the limited public presence of

⁵⁷ Bayram Kodaman and Abdullah Saydam, "Tanzimat Devri Eğitim Sistemi", In 150. Yılında Tanzimat, 475.

⁵⁸ There were very rare examples of *sıbyan* schools for girls which were directed by the Ministry of Waqfs. The teachers of these schools were women who have memorized the Kur'an. However, it was more common for religiously knowledgeable women to give lessons to both girls and boys at the mosques or at their own houses, rather than in schools. (Yahya Akyüz, "Öğretmenlik Mesleği ve Osmanlı'da Kadın Öğretmen Yetiştirilmesi", Tarih ve Toplum 195 (2000): 54-60, 31).

⁵⁹ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi Vols I-II* (İstanbul: Eser, 1977), 82-86.

⁶⁰ Yahya Akyüz, "Osmanlı'da Kadın Öğretmen Yetiştirilmesi", 31.

women in society and the lack of suitable job opportunities for them.⁶¹ Although there were *medreses* which provided secondary and higher education in the empire, girls did not have the chance to be admitted to these institutions.⁶²

After *sıbyan mektebi*, the education of an ordinary girl continued at home, where she learned cooking, sewing, cleaning and childcare from their mothers and the older women in the family. The basic purpose of such education was to up bring them as good wives and mothers for the future. Some conservative families used to send their daughters to the skilled women's houses as apprentices for the purpose of teaching them various types of handcrafts such as tailoring and needlepoint embroidery. This kind of education had an important role in creating a qualified female work force and providing the young girls an occupation.⁶³ On the other hand, the daughters of rich and broad-minded families had the privilege of getting further education from special tutors and nannies.⁶⁴ They learned foreign languages, and even took private lessons on Philosophy, History, Literature and Mathematics to a certain level.⁶⁵ Another way to have further education for a woman was to join a religious order (especially a *mevlevi* order) and to learn poetry and music.⁶⁶

During the Tanzimat Era, the role of women in Ottoman society gradually increased and women's education became an important aspect of Ottoman

⁶¹ Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Osmanlı Modernleşme Dönemi'nde Kız Eğitimi", *Kebikeç* 10 (2000): 223-238,223.

⁶² Mustafa Şanal, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kız Öğretmen Okulunda Görev Yapan Kadın İdareci ve Öğretmenler ile Okuttıkları Dersler", *Belleten*, 231 (2004), 1.

⁶³ Ekrem Işın, "Tanzimat, Kadın ve Gündelik Hayat", *Tarih ve Toplum* 51(1988):22-27, 22.

⁶⁴ Berrak Burçak, The Status of Elite Muslim Women in İstanbul Under the Reign of Abdülhamit II, 12.

⁶⁵ A good example for an educated woman intellectual who acquired most of her cultural background and knowledge from special tutors is the famous novelist Fatma Aliye Hanım (1862-1936). Also her sister Emine Semiye, poet Nigar bint-i Osman, poet Leyla (Şaz), Gülistan İsmet and Makbule Leman were the daughters of notable families who received modern education at home and later became opinion leaders for Ottoman women by writing on women's rights in various newspapers.

⁶⁶ Selçuk Akşin Somel, Osmanlı Modernleşme Dönemi'nde Kız Eğitimi,224.

modernization. Especially after 1850s, the idea that women's education was as important as men's education became widespread especially among the intellectuals and bureaucrats of the time.

Despite the growing public opinion about the education of women, the literacy rate of the female population of the empire was still very low. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were nearly 5000 public primary schools enrolling over 650,000 students. However, only less than 10 percent of these students were girls.⁶⁷

In this part, will analyze the development of different stages of education for women during the nineteenth century and explain how educational and occupational opportunities evolved from the Tanzimat Era to the reign of Abdülhamit II.

II.2.1 Primary Education

Probably the most important achievement regarding the primary education of girls in the Ottoman Empire was the Regulation of Public Education (*Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*), which was issued in 1869.⁶⁸ Article 9 of this regulation stated that primary education was to be compulsory between ages 6-10 for girls and 7-11 for boys.⁶⁹ The names of the children who are at the age of starting primary school, and their parents or other relatives who are responsible to look after them were to be

⁶⁷ Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 167.

⁶⁸ A copy of *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi* can be found in *Meclis-i Tanzimât Defterleri*, defter no: 2, p.221-254, and a printed copy at: BOA YEE 112/6.

⁶⁹ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, article 9.

recorded in registers in all villages and districts.⁷⁰ The schoolteachers were to check the list at the first day of the school and inform the *muhtar* (the head of the village or neighborhood) if there were any children who were absent.⁷¹ This was a very crucial step for the emancipation of Ottoman women; since the education of girls became compulsory at least at the primary level, rather than being dependent on the parents' own initiative. Another important article of the regulation was the one, which stated that if there were two primary schools in a village or neighborhood belonging to the same religious community, one of them had to be a girls' school. If there is only one primary school belonging to a religious community, the girls of that religious community had to be accepted to the schools for boys until a separate primary school for girls was inaugurated.⁷²

Although the term *sıbyân mektebi* was used in order to define the primary schools in the Regulation of Public Education, the curricula of these schools were not the same as the curricula of the old *sıbyân* schools which only included religious training, Arabic Script and the memorization of verses from the Kur'an. The modernized primary school curriculum included more worldly-oriented courses like Mathematics, Elementary History, Elementary Geography and Mathematics.⁷³ There had to be separate primary schools for girls as well as the mixed schools, and their curricula were to be included special courses like sewing.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*, article 10.

⁷¹ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*, article 11.

⁷² *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*, article 15.

⁷³ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*, article 6.

⁷⁴ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*, article 16.

During the reign of Abdülhamit II, the primary schools were defined by the term *ibtidai*.⁷⁵ Kanûn-i Esâsî, which was the first constitution of the Ottoman Empire, included an article which stated that “the primary stage of education of all Ottoman people is going to be compulsory.”⁷⁶ This was another important improvement because the principle of compulsory primary education for women was included in the Ottoman constitution and equal educational opportunities for boys and girls were guaranteed.

Before 1876, the total number of *ibtidâi* schools all around the empire was less than 200. This was partly because the Tanzimât statesmen preferred *rüşdiyes* over the *iptidâi* schools.⁷⁷ However, Abdülhamit II employed a more intensive and serious policy on the *iptidai* schools and targeted to spread them all around the empire. One of the main reasons for that was his ideal to save the Muslims of the Empire from their ignorance towards education and enlighten them in order to compete with the missionary activities of the special schools established by foreigners.⁷⁸ According to the statistics in the

⁷⁵ In spite of the attempts to reform the existing traditional Kur'an schools throughout the 1860s, the lack of success in introducing worldly-oriented courses into these schools along with an emphasis on natural scientific subjects resulted in the foundation of the first government primary schools. The first model of such institutions was set up in Istanbul in 1872, and it was given the name '*ibtidai mektebi*'. When good results were achieved from the students of these schools, the Regulation of Public Education managed to increase their number and transform the old *sıbyân* schools into *ibtidai* schools. (Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire*, 108-109.)

Although the Regulation of Public education targeted to make a reform in the primary schools, *sıbyân* schools which were following the old curricula and educating students in the old way (*usûl-i atika*) continued to operate. New primary schools, namely the *iptidâis* were inaugurated in order to educate students according to the new system (*usûl-i cedid*). Therefore, primary schools in the Ottoman Empire were divided into two different types: *sıbyân* schools which were directed by the Ministry of Waqfs, and *ibtidai* schools which were directed by the Ministry of Public Education. (Yasemin Tümer, “Tanzimat’tan Sonra Osmanlılarda Kızların Eğitimi”, M.A. thesis, Marmara University, 1999.) Also see Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi* (İstanbul: Alfa, 1999), 142-144.

⁷⁶ Bayram Kodaman, *Abdülhamit Devri Eğitim Sistemi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), 67.

⁷⁷ Bayram Kodaman, 77.

⁷⁸ For a more comprehensive study about the ways Abdülhamit competed with the missionary schools established by the western countries, see: Benjamin Fortna, *Mekteb-i Hümayûn: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Son Döneminde İslâm, Devlet ve Eğitim* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005)

yearbook of 1906-1907, the number of *ibtidai* schools was 4659 for boys and 349 for girls.⁷⁹

II.2.2. Secondary Education

II.2.2.1. *Rüşdiyes* for Girls

One of the most important improvements in women's education which paved the way for other reforms was the establishment of *rüşdiyes* for girls. The official report of Ministry of Education in November 1858, stated that education was an important aspect of the state's development, and proposed the establishment of *rüşdiyes* for girls.⁸⁰ The first *rüşdiye* for girls was opened in 1858 in the district of Sultanahmet.⁸¹ The necessity of secondary education for girls is explained in the official newspaper Takvim-i Vakai, as follows:

It is necessary that parents pay attention to the acquisition of good manners and education of their daughters since the order and welfare of the marriage, which is an arduous and toilsome business requiring endurance on the side of the husband in order to earn a living, will depend on those women who know worldly as well as religious affairs, who are obedient and contented and who preserve their honor.⁸²

⁷⁹Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını, 1839-1923* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1992), 9.

⁸⁰ Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk kadını*, 9.

⁸¹ Ergin, 457.

⁸² Burcak, 24.

Conspicuously, further education for women was seen as a necessity to craft better wives and mothers, rather than educating them for an occupation or broadening their horizons by increasing their intellectual ability.

Unfortunately, we do not have access to the curriculum of the first *rüşdiye* for girls opened in 1858.⁸³ The *salnames* (yearbooks) from the following years show that the curricula of the girls' *rüşdiyes* included courses like Embroidery, Tailoring and Religious Education, which targeted equipping the students with the necessary knowledge to be good housewives in the future. Nevertheless, courses like History, Geography, Orthography and Mathematics, which were oriented towards increasing the students' intellectual background, were included as well. The curriculum of the girls' *rüşdiyes* according to the yearbook of 1877 was as follows:

First Year: Religious Training, Morals, Civics, Ottoman language, Mathematics, Sülüs and Rik'a (forms of Arabic script)

Second Year: Religious Training, Arabic, Persian, Mathematics, History, Sülüs, Rik'a, Tailoring.

Third Year: Arabic, Persian. Ottoman Language, Orthography, Mathematics, Geography, Religious Training, Reading, History, Sülüs, Rik'a, Embroidery.

Fourth Year: Religious Training, Reading, Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Language, Orthography, Mathematics, Geography, Introductory Law, History, Sülüs, Rik'a, Embroidery.⁸⁴

⁸³ Somel, Kız Eğitimi, 226.

⁸⁴ Kurnaz, 10.

The Regulation of Public Education (1869) also included important articles concerning the girls' *rüşdiyes*. In big cities, there was to be at least one girls' *rüşdiye* if the city is composed of a religiously homogeneous population. If the population is composed of both Muslim and non-Muslim subjects, then each religious community was going to have a separate *rüşdiye* for girls.⁸⁵ The instructors of these schools were to be women, however, until learned and qualified female teachers were trained, old and morally upright men were to be employed.⁸⁶ Girls with a primary school diploma were to be admitted to *rüşdiyes* without an examination while the others were to have an exam as a proof of their eligibility to go to *rüşdiyes*.⁸⁷

There were important achievements in women's education under the reign of Abdülhamid II. Although Abdülhamid was notorious of his authoritarian and Islamist policies⁸⁸, he did not take the negative attitudes of the *ulemâ* towards women's education seriously. When he wanted to make a reform in the public schools which were under the governance of the Ministry of Public Education, he assigned a commission to prepare a report about the current situation of the public schools. The commission, under the guidance of Ahmed Esad Efendi, the *şeyhülislam* of the time, proposed that the girls' *sıbyân* and *rüşdiye* schools should be abolished and new girls' schools for four years should be inaugurated. According to the report of the commission, girls from 6 to 9 years old would be accepted to those schools, since the age of 9 was the age of puberty

⁸⁵ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, article 27.

⁸⁶ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, article 28.

⁸⁷ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, article 30.

⁸⁸ There is a widespread prejudice against Abdülhamid II, especially about his attitudes towards the female subjects of the empire. For example, Bernard Caporal states that Abdülhamid II was not supporting the emancipation of Ottoman women at all. He also states that although he "could not" hinder the process of women's modernization; he tried to keep their education within the limits of Islamic education. Bernard Caporal, *Kemalizmde ve Kemalizm Sonrasında Türk Kadını*, (Yenigün Haber Ajansı, 1999), 108.

(*müşteha olmak*) for girls.⁸⁹ Since these advices were clearly targeting to restrict the education of women with basic religious training and literacy, none of them were accepted by the sultan. On the contrary, the number of *rüşdiyes* for girls increased dramatically during the reign of Abdülhamid II. In year 1877, which was only one year after the beginning of his reign, there were only nine *rüşdiyes* for girls in Istanbul. There were a total of 309 girls studying at these schools. According to the statistics of the years [H. 1323/1324- M. 1906/1907], the total number of *rüşdiyes* for girls was 79 in the Ottoman Empire.⁹⁰ As can be seen, many girls' *rüşdiyes* were inaugurated in both İstanbul and the provincial areas during the Hamidian Era.

II.2.2.2. *İdâdi* for Girls:

During the reign of Abdülhamid II, a school which was to give an education higher than the girls' *rüşdiyes* was founded on 18 March 1880. The school started its first year of education with only three students. The curriculum included courses like Ottoman Turkish, History, Geography and Mathematics, Home Economics, Writing, as well as French and other elective foreign languages. The boarding students had to pay a yearly tuition of 33 liras, while the day students that had their lunch at school paid 18 liras, and day students that brought their lunch from home paid 6 liras. However, this school had to be closed after two years because it was not in demand. This situation can be explained by the tendency of the families to give more importance to their daughters'

⁸⁹ Somel, Kız Eğitimi, 229.

⁹⁰ Burçak, 67.

marriage than their education.⁹¹ The compulsory tuition also can be a negative aspect of this school which discouraged parents from sending their daughters.

II.2.3 Occupational Education for Women

II.2.3.1. School of Midwifery

Probably the first opportunity for the Ottoman women to engage in public service was the establishment of a school of midwifery in the School of Medicine in 1842. This was also the first attempt of the state to educate women in order to provide them an occupation. The first graduates were ten Muslim and twenty six Non-Muslim girls who received their diplomas in 1845. The students were trained on dummies and there were to be no men around during the training.⁹² There were no prerequisites when applying for the school of midwifery; women were not even expected to be literate to attend the classes.⁹³

II.2.3.2. Industrial Schools for Girls: *Sanâyi-i Nefise Mektebi*

The first Industrial School for girls was established in 1865 in Rusçuk by Midhat Paşa, the governor of the Danube at the time. The basic target of the school was to meet the needs of the army such as clothes, underwear and bandages, as well as

⁹¹ Yasemin Tümer, *Tanzimat'tan Sonra Osmanlılarda Kızların Eğitimi*, 92.

⁹² Ergin, 541-542, Somel, *Kız Eğitimi* 225, Burçak, 23

⁹³ Ergin, 542-43.

employing orphan girls and providing them a regular salary. When Midhat Paşa returned to Istanbul, he established an industrial school for girls in 1870 with a similar purpose. The orphan girls were trained and gained expertise in this school and were to work in a factory in Yedikule in order to sew the necessary things for the army.⁹⁴ The student profile of the school was composed of girls from different religious communities, who were older than ten years old and had no parents or whose parents had obstacles in working and earning money.⁹⁵

Besides providing the orphan or poor girls an occupation, these industrial schools had another important function. Most of the girls who were trained did not know how to read and write prior to entering these schools. The girls were not only learning how to read and write, but also having courses on grammar, literary composition and even Arabic and Persian. Since there was a multi-ethnic student scale in these schools, girls who did not know how to speak Turkish were having Turkish and pronunciation lessons up to 15 hours a week.⁹⁶

Although it was targeted to increase the number of the industrial schools for girls as well as the *rüşdiyes* during the Hamidian Era, the attempts were fruitless. The reason for this can be explained by the expensive tools that were used in these schools and the financial difficulties of the time.⁹⁷ However, despite all these difficulties, three industrial schools were established in Istanbul during that period. The first one was opened in 1878 by Ahmet Vefik Paşa in Üsküdar. The second was opened in the district of Aksaray, and the third in Cağaloğlu in 1879. The first two were day schools, and the

⁹⁴ Burçak, 26. Also see Ergin, 687.

⁹⁵ Yasemin Tümer, 95.

⁹⁶ Elif Ekin Akşit, *Kızların Sessizliği: Kız Enstitülerinin Uzun Tarihi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 93-95.

⁹⁷ Kurnaz, 23.

third one was a boarding school. The first industrial school which was established by Midhat Paşa was closed in 1884 and its students were transferred to these newly founded schools. Also, in year 1884, a regulation consisted of twenty-three articles was published and it was decided that 75 boarding and 125 day students were to be accepted to these three industrial schools in Istanbul.⁹⁸ The students were having courses like Painting, Embroidery, Music, Playing the piano, and Tailoring, according to the yearbook of 1305.⁹⁹

According to the regulation of 1884, the period of education in these schools were to be five years. The curriculum was to be as follows:

First Year: Alphabet, Kur'an, Sewing, Knitting.

Second Year: Religious Training, Ethics, Writing, Embroidery, Drawing, Crochet.

Third Year: Elementary Ottoman Grammar, Drawing, Elementary Mathematics, Needlepoint Embroidery, Cutting.

Fourth Year: Elementary History and Geography, Natural Sciences, Writing and Literary Composition, Fabric with Flowers, Cutting and various styles of sewing.

Fifth Year: Home economics, Hygiene, Sewing, Drawing, Various styles of cutting.¹⁰⁰

The industrial schools for girls had an important role in providing poor and orphan girls an occupation and gave them the chance to maintain their source of income, as well as creating a young labor force which produced bandages, clothes, underwear and other necessary materials in order to meet the necessities of the army and the state.

⁹⁸ Burçak, 72.

⁹⁹ Although we do not have detailed information about the curricula of these schools before 1900, it is possible to detect the names of some courses from the part of the yearbook of 1305, which lists the names of some teachers and the courses they taught. (Kurnaz,21).

¹⁰⁰ Burçak, 73.

In later years, industrial school for girls also gained the mission to provide the palace various types of fabrics.¹⁰¹

II.2.3.3. Darülmua'llimât: The School for Training Female Teachers

As I mentioned above, the establishment of girls' *rüşdiyes* was an important turning point in women's education in the Ottoman Empire. However, an important problem concerning the quality of education in these schools was the lack of qualified and learned female teachers. Since the education of women was limited to the *sıbyan mektebi* before 1858, there were no educated women who could give courses on history, geography or mathematics when the first *rüşdiyes* were inaugurated. There were 13 *rüşdiyes* for boys when the first *rüşdiye* for girls was opened in 1858.¹⁰² The instructors for the primary schools and *rüşdiyes* for boys were being educated in *Darülmua'llimin* (school for male teachers), which was established in 1847.¹⁰³ There was no school for training female teachers for the girls' primary schools and *rüşdiyes*. As a result of this problem, courses other than sewing and embroidery were given by male instructors.¹⁰⁴

As I noted previously, it was stated in the regulation of public education¹⁰⁵ that the courses of the girls' *rüşdiyes* were to be told by female instructors, but it was not possible until qualified female instructors were educated. I also stated that a separate

¹⁰¹ Akşit, 97.

¹⁰² Kurnaz, 10.

¹⁰³ Abdülkadir Özcan, "Tanzimat Döneminde Öğretmen Yetiştirme Meselesi", In 150.Yılında Tanzimat, pp.441-474, 441.

¹⁰⁴ Ergin, 668.

¹⁰⁵ Articles 68-78 of the Regulation of Public Education is about the *Darülmua'llimât*. They include details about the curriculum, policy, the qualities of the students to be accepted, salaries for the teachers and the workers of the school, and how the graduates were to be placed in primary and secondary schools.

school of female instructors (*Darülmuallimât*) was to be established, and the school was to have two branches, one for primary school (*ibtidaiye*) teachers with a curriculum of two years and one for secondary school (*rüşdiye*) teachers with a curriculum of three years. Also, there were to be different sections for the teachers of Muslims' schools and Non-Muslims' schools.¹⁰⁶ The preparations started after the Regulation, and was announced in the newspapers that *Darümuallimât* was going to accept applications of women between 13 and 35 ages in order to educate them as primary and secondary school teachers. Thirty two girls applied for the program and they had an exam on various subjects like Grammar, Geography, *Sülüs*, Embroidery and Tailoring. All of the applicants passed the exam successfully and gained admission to the school. A house in Sultanahmet district was rented and arranged as the school building.¹⁰⁷

Darümuallimât was officially opened on April 26th 1870, with an opening speech of Safvet Paşa, the Ministry of Education.¹⁰⁸ He stated that Islam has never had a negative approach towards the education of women and it was crucial to educate women in order to have truly educated children, and said that Ottoman women deserved a higher degree of respect in the Ottoman society. He also stated that the inabilities of Ottoman women were related to their low education level, rather than their mental incapability or lack of talent. He pointed out the importance of the practical usage of information, and claimed that if Ottoman women used their knowledge in the area of production, they

¹⁰⁶ *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, articles 68- 70.

¹⁰⁷ Mustafa Şanal, 4.

¹⁰⁸ Saffet Paşa, together with Ali Paşa had an important role in the preparation of *Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi* (Regulation of Public Education) and the establishment of the Sultânî of Galatasaray, Darülmuallimât, Darülmuallimin-i Sıbyân (the school educating male instructors for primary schools) and Darülfünûn. (Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 128-129).

would maintain happiness in their families and become like their European sisters.¹⁰⁹

Darümuallimât became the second school in the Ottoman Empire which educated teachers after *Darülmualimin*. After the establishment of *Darümuallimât*, the graduates of girls' *rüşdiyes* found the chance to continue their education, and most importantly, to have an occupation.

Darümuallimât had important positive effects on the quality of education in primary and secondary schools for girls in the Ottoman Empire. However, it is vitally important to note that all the girls' schools in the empire did not have the privilege to employ professional teachers. Due to the limited capacity of *Darümuallimât* and the small number of applicants each year, there was a considerable scarcity of female teachers who had the necessary occupational formation.¹¹⁰ We can also say that all the graduates of *Darümuallimât* were not working as teachers in public schools, because it was stated in the Regulation of Public Education that the graduates of the school were to be appointed in schools in various cities and villages by the Ministry of Public Education, and they did not have the chance to select their place of work.¹¹¹ It is easy to guess that the graduates of *Darümuallimât* did not have the chance and motivation to go to schools which were far away from their families. If we consider that the only school for female teachers was in Istanbul, we can see that it was impossible for all graduates of *Darümuallimât* to be appointed in schools in Istanbul. Also, despite all these changes and improvements in the education system and the emergence of job opportunities for women, getting married and having a family of their own was still the biggest priority of

¹⁰⁹Sema Uğurcan, "Tanzimat Devrinde Kadının Statüsü" in 150. Yılında Tanzimat" (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 501. Also see Kurnaz, 23.

¹¹⁰Somel, Kız Eğitimi, 233.

¹¹¹*Ma'arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, article 75.

young women. Most families were sending their daughters to *Darümuallimât* in order to provide them a higher education, not to make them professional teachers and send them away to other provinces. The Ministry of Education tried to solve this scarcity problem by employing women who were not trained as teachers, especially in schools at villages¹¹². According to the Regulation of Public Education, the female instructors holding a *Darümuallimât* diploma were to have priority to others in job placements.¹¹³

II.3. Women's Position in the Ottoman Legal System in the Nineteenth Century

Before the nineteenth century, Ottoman women were already active players in the legal proceedings of the *kadı* courts, both as plaintiffs and defendants. It can be said that women had no less access to the Muslim courts than men; and they always had the opportunity to solve their problems through law.¹¹⁴ However, it is known that most of the women who enjoyed their rights to use the courts were from middle-class families, since there was a tendency among the elite women to prefer informal networks and the social influence of their male kin to solve the legal disputes.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, the lower-class women and the slaves enjoyed lower access to the courts because of the fees

¹¹² Şefika Kurnaz claims that the appointment of the graduates of *Darümuallimât* is an important keystone since the state was “officially” accepting women’s public service. She also says that although it is stated that women were trained as midwives since 1842, we do not know whether they were officially being appointed by the state. (Kurnaz, 28).

¹¹³ *Ma’arif-i Umumiye Nizamnâmesi*, article 77.

¹¹⁴ For examples of Ottoman women’s experiences in *kadı* courts, see Ronald Jennings, “Women in Early Seventeenth Century Ottoman Judicial Records: The Sharia Courts of Ottoman Kayseri”, *JESHO*, 1975 1 (53-114).

¹¹⁵ Fariba Zarinebaf- Zahr, “Ottoman Women and the Tradition of Seeking Justice in the Eighteenth Century” in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era* ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 253-263, 253.

involved in legal proceedings.¹¹⁶ Therefore, social and economical status and cultural background were important determinants of the accessibility to the courts.

The *Tanzimat* Era witnessed important attempts to form a standard legal structure especially in the areas of family law, inheritance law and land law.¹¹⁷ These changes were also closely related to the emancipation of women, since some of them included equality in the issues which the traditional Islamic Law had different applications. The Landownership and inheritance rights of women changed in favor of women, and many decrees targeting to regulate issues like marriage, divorce and family life were issued. Women were also included in the census for the first time during the Tanzimat Era. The abolition of slavery was another important development which changed the status of the female slaves (*câriye*) into female servants. I will discuss each legal development below and question whether they were applied in real life or not, in order to draw the complete picture of the nineteenth century.

II.3.1. Landownership Rights of Women

In the Ottoman Empire, cultivation of land was an important source of income. Around 90 percent of all the arable lands were state-owned (*mîrî*) lands. The state owned lands were divided into two as *tapulu* and *mukataâlu*. *Tapulu* lands (title-deed) comprised all lands which were given to the peasants under the *tapu* regulations, while *mukataâlu* lands included lands which were leased under a rental contract called

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ortaylı, İlber, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile* (Istanbul: Pan, 2001), 154.

mukataâ. The one which is related to this topic is *tapulu* land.¹¹⁸ The principal rights of real ownership were denied in the possession of *tapulu* lands. It was not possible to sell, donate, endow, leave by will or mortgage such lands. On the other hand, the possessor of *tapulu* lands could transfer them to another farmer or bequeath to his sons.¹¹⁹

The *mirî* lands, therefore the *tapulu* lands were subject to *örfî* law, which was based on the decrees and fermâns of the ruler (*sultan*) and *fetvâs* written in accordance with the rules of Islâm. Privately-owned land (*mülk*) was subject to Islamic Law. According to the principles of transfer of *mülk* by inheritance, the daughters could inherit ½ in the case of the owner having only one daughter, and 2/3 in the case of the owner having more than one daughter. Therefore, Islamic Law did not provide equal share to women and men in inheritance. This inequality is based on the assumption that the material needs of females will be met by males all throughout their lives.¹²⁰

In the case of the transfer of *tapulu miri* lands, only the son had the right of tax-free (*meccânen*) inheritance. If there were no sons, the land was transferred to the daughter with the payment of the title deed (*tapu ile intikâl*).¹²¹ This regulation continued until it was decided with a decree in Cemâziyelûlâ 14th 1263/1847 stating that the daughters should inherit the lands of the father without making a payment. Moreover, the lands of men were to be shared equally by the sons and the daughters, and

¹¹⁸ For more information on Ottoman land system and the taxation of lands, see: Halil İnalcık, “Köy, Köylü ve İmparatorluk”, “Osmanlılarda Raiyyet Rûsumu” and “İslâm Arazi ve Vergi Sisteminin Teşekkülü ve Osmanlı Devrindeki Şekillerle Mukayesesi” in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu: Toplum ve Ekonomi*, (İstanbul: Eren, 1996), Ömer Lütü Barkan, *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi* (İstanbul: Gözlem, 1980) and Halil Cin, *Osmanlı Toprak Düzeni ve bu Düzenin Bozulması* (Ankara: Yenigün, 1978).

¹¹⁹ Halil İnalcık, “State, Land and Peasant”, in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire: 1300-1600*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 103-119. Ömer Lütü Barkan, “Türk Toprak Hukuku Tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274 (1858) Tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi” in *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi*, 291.

¹²⁰ Burçak, 21.

¹²¹ Halil Cin, *Miri Arazi ve bu Arazinin Mülk Haline Dönüşümü* (Ankara: Sevinç, 1969), 15 and Burçak, 21.

the *miri* lands controlled by women were to pass on to son and daughter without any payment.¹²²

Another important development was the enactment of a new land law, *Arâzi Kanunnâmesi* in Şevvâl 23 1274/1858. According to the 54th article of this law, in the case of the death of a male or female possessor of a *miri* land, the land was to pass on to his /her son and daughter without any payment and equally.¹²³ The Land Law of 1858 was prepared in order to create a liberal landownership system and to regulate the Ottoman land system in order to deal with the economic deficiencies of the state.¹²⁴ However, it is conspicuous that the law provided equal inheritance rights to women.

Despite the rights given to women in landownership during the Tanzimat Era, application of these new laws is questionable. İlber Ortaylı, relying on his research on nineteenth century *kadı* registers (*sicil*) of Ankara, Çankırı, Konya and Kayseri, claims that there were still some trials which the daughters had half share. He tells that in fact there was a secular-Islamic double standard continuing in inheritance law as well as in the other branches of law during the nineteenth century.¹²⁵

II.3.2. Abolition of Slavery

It is well known that most of the upper class Muslim households were using female slaves under the names of *câriye* (concubine), *halayık* (female slave servant), and

¹²² Cin, *ibid.*, Kurnaz, 29, Burçak, 21-22.

¹²³ Burçak, 22, Cin, 17. For a detailed discussion on *Arâzi Kanunnâmesi*, see Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Türk Toprak Hukuku Tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274 (1858) Tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi” in *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi* 332-375.

¹²⁴ Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, 154.

¹²⁵ Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, 155.

odalik (concubine, odalisk). However, with the official abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century, these women started to be employed in a different status, with a salary. The female servants, cleaning ladies and laundrywomen replaced the old female slaves, creating a new female labor class.¹²⁶

The first written document related to the abolition of slavery was an imperial decree written to the major of Baghdad in 1847, which forbid the slave trade in Africa. However, we know that this was an unsuccessful attempt from the letter of Mustafa Reşid Paşa, which was sent to the majors of Trablusgarb and Libya in November, 1849. He states in this letter that the slaves should be treated well during the slave trade and whoever acts against this order would be penalized. The attempts to abolish the slave market can be the result of Sultan Abdülmecit's effort to meet the expectations of the European powers, since the Ottoman State promised to abolish slave trade in the treaty of Paris in 1856.¹²⁷

Although the buying and selling of slaves became officially prohibited with multiple decrees, it is a well known fact that this institution continued to exist during and after the reign of Abdülhamid II.¹²⁸ Although *Kânûn-i Esâsi* stated that the Ottoman people had personal freedom, there were many decisions made by the *şeyhülislâm* about the slave market and the condition of the slaves even in year 1916.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Kadın Dergilerinde Osmanlı Hanımları ve Hizmetçi Kadınlar" *Toplumsal Tarih* 63 (15-24), 15.

¹²⁷ Kurnaz, 31.

¹²⁸ Burçak, 23.

¹²⁹ Kurnaz, 31.

II.3.3 State Intervention in the Family Law during the Nineteenth Century

Analyzing the nineteenth century “Ottoman family” is a troublesome task, since various different ethnic origins, religious communities and cultural backgrounds coexisted in the Ottoman Empire. This heterogeneous population structure of the empire is an obstacle in defining the Ottoman family. Even families from the same religious community had important differences which made it almost impossible to make generalizations.

The Non-Muslims had the opportunity to solve their family issues in their own religious courts, although they also had the chance to use the *kadı* courts as well. The Muslim families were subject to the Islamic Law. As can be seen, there was no single family law because of the heterogeneous character of the families in the Ottoman Empire. Although the “Ottoman Family” which is of relevance to this thesis is a Muslim one, it is vitally important to note that even Islamic Law had various applications in issues related to the family life. This diversity of applications was a result of the different interpretations of the four main religious schools in Islam: The *Malikite* School, the *Hanefi* School, the *Hanbali* School and the *Shafi* School.

Ottoman Empire witnessed a period of significant reforms and changes not only in the administrative and military areas, but also in legal and cultural spheres during the nineteenth century. These changes transformed the legal status, daily practices and traditional values of the family as well. However, the effects of these changes were

related to the cultural and religious structures of the families¹³⁰. In other words, it is not possible to conclude that nineteenth century reforms and cultural transformations affected all Ottoman families equally. This situation was a result of the heterogeneous population structure of the empire, as told above.

In 1830s, the reforms of Mahmud II limited the functions of the *kadi* courts regarding issues like inheritance, family law and *waqfs*. Despite this restriction in the functions of these courts, there was a conspicuous increase in the number of trials. Family issues were being subject to law; and marriage contracts and divorce records were being kept in the *kadi* registers. As the families from different religious communities increasingly became dependent to the law instead of living in their closed and conservative worlds, the concept of “family” became an important subject in the bureaucratic system.¹³¹

As I told above, family law was based on the Sharia, rather than the customary law (*örfî hukuk*), which was the law made by the ruler. However, Tanzimat statesmen aimed to eliminate the problems in marriage and regulate the family life with *fermâns*. These *fermâns* mostly aimed to deal with the obstacles in marriages.¹³² One of the greatest problems which made it difficult to get married for the young boys was the custom of “*başlık*”. *Başlık* was a certain amount of money or goods given by the groom to the family of the bride prior to the marriage. Unlike *mehr*, *başlık* was not an Islamic practice. While *mehr* was paid to the bride in order to secure her future in case of a divorce or the death of the husband, *başlık* was paid to the father of the bride generally

¹³⁰ İlber Ortaylı, “Osmanlı Aile Hukukunda Gelenek, Şeriat ve Örf”, in *Sosyo kültürel Değişme Sürecinde Türk Ailesi* (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Araştırma Kurumu, 1992)462.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, 152.

to finance the expenses of the bride's trousseau. In some areas of the Ottoman Empire, *başlık* was very common and created various social troubles.¹³³ For this reason, Tanzimat statesmen tried to prohibit *başlık* by issuing imperial decrees. For example, in a decree dated Ramazan 14th 1266/ February 27th 1850, it was stated that the *başlık* was a great problem in marriages in the sancak of Canik:

It is stated in the official report which was delivered to Meclis-i Valâ that in the wedding feasts of Canik, the fathers, brothers and other relatives of the girls are demanding from the fathers of the grooms or the grooms themselves a huge amount of akçe (silver coins) and since most people are incapable of providing such a big sum, the shameful act of kidnapping girls is occurring. Although this *başlık* money is customary in other places under the name "muaccel", which is used to finance various necessities (of the wedding), here (Canik) this money is under the possession of only the father or other relatives of the bride and it does not provide any advantage to the bride. For this reason, the people living in these places are asked to completely abandon this custom of *başlık akçesi*.¹³⁴

It was stated in another imperial decree dated 1845 that the excessive expenditures in the wedding feasts were making it arduous to get married. Also, it was ordered that the amount of *mehr* to be determined according to the different income levels in the society. Another decree dated 1863 determined different amounts of *mehr* for poor, middle-class and rich families. The proposed amounts of *mehr* were 100, 500 and 1000 *guruş*, respectively.¹³⁵

Another important problem was the over-intervention of the families of the brides into the marriages. In a fermân dated 1844, it was stated that girls were going to

¹³³ Mehmet Akif Aydın, *İslam- Osmanlı Aile Hukuku* (İstanbul: İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı, 1985), 104.

¹³⁴ BOA İMVL 162/4733

¹³⁵ Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, 152-153.

get married with their free will, and payments like *başlık* were prohibited.¹³⁶ In another document, the freedom of girls to get married with their free will was emphasized again: it was stated that some families were hindering the marriages of their daughters until 30 years of age in Koca ili. It was also stated that the young widows were being prevented from re-marrying by their relatives in the same region. The families were prohibited to hinder their daughters' marriages unless there were religious obstacles, since their interventions were hindering the continuation of the generations.¹³⁷

Another important legal improvement of the Tanzimât Era was *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-i Adliye*, which was an attempt to codify the Islamic civil law. Actually, Mecelle was developed as a reaction of a conservative group of Tanzimât bureaucrats headed by Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, towards the attempts of Ali Paşa and his supporters to accept the French Civil Law. A committee worked between years 1868-1876 in order to create an alternative for accepting a foreign civil law, and prepared the *Mecelle*, which was consisted of 16 volumes.¹³⁸

Mecelle was a compilation of various *fetvâ* and *fiqh* books, and was based on the principles of the Hanefî School. Although it was planned as a codified Islamic Civil Law, it did not include some important issues like the family and inheritance laws. This can be explained with the reluctance of Ahmet Cevdet Paşa about the possible reactions of the *ulemâ* and conservative groups.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ İsmail Doğan, *Osmanlı Ailesi: Sosyolojik Bir Yaklaşım* (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2001), 79.

¹³⁷ Mehmet Ö. Alkan "Tanzimât'tan Sonra Kadının Hukuksal Statüsü ve Devletin Evlilik Sürecine Müdahalesi Üzerine" *Toplum ve Bilim* 50 (85-95), 90.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 143.

¹³⁹ Osman Kaşıkçı, *İslâm ve Osmanlı Hukukunda Mecelle* (İstanbul:OSAV, 1997), 5-7.

Since *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-i Adliye* did not include family law, it did not have a direct effect in the emancipation of Muslim Ottoman women. As can be seen, the intervention of the state in the family law took place in the form of imperial decrees and regulations, which targeted to eliminate the obstacles in marriages and to protect the girls from getting married by force. Marriage and divorce trials and inheritance disputes continued to be solved in the *kadı* courts as before, until the inauguration of *Hukuk-i Aile Kanunnâmesi*, which was prepared during the Second Constitutional Period.

II.4.Laws and Regulations Regarding the Social Life of Ottoman Women

II.4.1.Public Visibility

Women were prohibited to walk in the streets alone without a reasonable excuse and to intermingle with men, in the Ottoman Empire. However, during the nineteenth century, Ottoman women increasingly became more visible in public places. Especially in the last quarter of the century, the upper-class female uniform of *ferâce* and *yaşmak* began to appear more frequently on the streets worn by less high-ranking Muslim women who were unaccompanied by servants.¹⁴⁰

Another factor which changed the public culture in big cities was the growing foreign trade volume of the Ottoman Empire. The social, demographic and political conditions changed as an outcome of the increasing trade and the settlement of Europeans in port cities like Izmir and Istanbul. A new European-like urban culture

¹⁴⁰ Elizabeth Brown Frierson, 229.

developed as a result of these factors. As a result of this increased “Europeanization”, new public promenades and parks, which were available for both men and women, appeared in Istanbul. Women used to visit these places in groups and had picnics on some certain days. Also, new opportunities of public transport increased public visibility of Ottoman women from all religious communities and classes. The establishment of *Şirket-i Hayriye* (the company of steamships) in 1851 and *Dersaadet Tramvay Kumpanyası* (company of streetcars) in 1871 increased the exposition of men and women during transportation. There were separated sections for women in steamships and streetcars.¹⁴¹

However, this increased visibility of women in public places and transportation vehicles sometimes became problematic for the state, and created the need to regulate the social life of women with various decrees and fermâns.

In a fermân dated 1251/1836, it is told that the servants and sons of some guildsmen were sitting in front of the stores and intermingling with women and that women had been entering into these stores for shopping and dared to eat ice-cream in the ice-cream shops which were located in Galata and Beyoğlu.¹⁴² Another fermân dated 1250/1832 states that:

It is observed that the women wandering in public promenades do not return to their houses on time and stay out until the evening ezan (call for prayer) or later and that men and women are sitting together[...] They are asked to behave morally and women are prohibited to intermingle with men[...]¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Generally, the separate sections in steamships and streetcars were evaluated as the secondary citizenship status of Ottoman women. However, it must be noted that there were separate sections for women in the streetcars of London and Paris, at that time. (Cem Emrence, “İstanbul Tramvayında Sınıf ve Kimlik”).

¹⁴² BOA HAT 493/24223-A

¹⁴³ BOA HAT 633/31252

Another decree dated 1264/1848 tells that “a written warning for all Ottoman men and women about the appropriate behaviors while walking in the streets or the bazaars and the promenades will be prepared, since the holy month of Ramazan is coming”.¹⁴⁴

As can be seen, the state felt the need to warn women about their behaviors in the public areas even in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Similar warnings continued frequently during the reign of Abdülhamid II:

It has come to the hearing of the Sultan that some women of Islam have been wandering in Beyoğlu district with revealing clothes and sometimes even entering into houses with the excuse of consulting the doctors or the dentists. Since such behaviors are immoral and contrary to the norms of Islam, they are totally against the will of his Excellency.¹⁴⁵

As I told above, women were prohibited from going out alone, without a reasonable excuse. However, they were also expected to behave deliberately even while they were with their husbands. A document dated 1888 tells that İlhami bey, the son-in-law of Kâmil Paşa was taking his wife out in day time, while she was only wearing a scarf, and he was taking her in his arm in the street, in front of everybody. It was also told that the couple was visiting the houses of some non-Muslims together. These behaviors are defined as against the laws and the rules of the society, and İlhami bey was warned.¹⁴⁶

These documents should be evaluated as evidences of increased freedom and mobility enjoyed by Muslim Ottoman women, rather than signs of intense oppression. As Elif Ekin Akşit explains, these kinds of documents display how the Ottoman state

¹⁴⁴ BOA İMVL 122/3118

¹⁴⁵ BOA İ.DH 77319

¹⁴⁶ BOA DH MKT 1543/23

adapted itself to the changing status of its female subjects. She also states that through these fermans, the state developed a much more direct contact with its female subjects than before.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, we might consider that regarding these documents as evidences of mere patriarchal oppression may lead us to obscure their actual significance as sources of the state's reaction towards change and increased female freedom.

It can also be said that the numerous and frequent warnings imply that women were not taking them very seriously, and their social life were not being actually restricted by state intervention. The resistance of nineteenth-century Istanbul women towards the state's attempts to control their public presence is really intriguing, and we will see various examples of such resistance in attire.

II.4.2. Women's Attire

Costume is both a personal and a public way of expressing social identity, and fashion changes provide a means of assessing changes in the social values. During the nineteenth century, many rich Ottoman women, especially the ones living in Istanbul adopted the European fashions, discarding their traditional costume. This was a time in which the European influence in the empire was increasing dramatically.¹⁴⁸ The adoption of European fashions by Sultan Abdülmecid and the palace women was probably one of the strongest factors which influenced the upper-class Ottoman women in this regard.

¹⁴⁷ Elif Ekin Akşit, 35-37.

¹⁴⁸ Nancy Mickelwright, "Women's Dress in Nineteenth Century Istanbul: Mirror of a Changing Society" Unpublished Phd Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1986, 1-3.d

Through time, even some conservative middle-class women attempted to follow this new trend.¹⁴⁹

The adoption of new fashions was also related to the new public places, which became favorable among the middle-upper-class society. Previously, especially during some religious days like *kandils* and Ramazan days, men and women used to gather and promenade in some certain places like Direklerarası, Divanyolu, Lâleli and Aksaray.¹⁵⁰ In the nineteenth century, the most popular public promenades became Grand and Petit Champs du Morts, which were located in the district of Pera district, and these places were predominantly the European and Ottoman-Christian sections of the city. The fashion leaders, fancy people, trend setters and those who wanted to know the latest fashions used to visit these places. There was a kind of “clothing competition” in these public places in which social status was being contested. Since the 1826 clothing law of Mahmud II, which targeted to eliminate the visual differences among males by requiring the adoption of an identical headgear (*fes*) except for the *ulemâ* and Non-Muslim clerics,¹⁵¹ the non-Muslims led the way in wearing elegant and expensive clothes. Therefore, the Non-Muslims replaced the Muslims as fashion leaders, in the nineteenth century.¹⁵²

The clothing laws did not include women’s attire. Muslim women were always expected to get dressed according to the norms of Islam. However, as the Muslims started to prefer European fashions, the Muslim women tried to find ways in order to be as fashionable as possible, without totally abandoning the Islamic style of veiling. These

¹⁴⁹ Ebubekir Sofluoğlu “Osmanlılar’da İsrâf ve Kadın” *Tarih ve Toplum* 35 (19-22), 20.

¹⁵⁰ Cem Emrence, “İstanbul Tramvayında sınıf ve Toplumsal Kimlik (1871- 1922)” *Toplumsal Tarih* 93 (2001):6-13 ,10.

¹⁵¹ For a detailed study on the clothing laws in the Ottoman Empire, see Donald Quataert, “Clothing Laws, State and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829.” *IJMES* vol. 29 403-425.

¹⁵² Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire*, 66, 155.

attempts of Ottoman women were responded by the state in the form of decrees and warnings about Islamic norms of attire.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed an increase in European presence in the Ottoman Empire and the opening of many stores selling European clothes in Istanbul. Therefore, the decrees and warnings on the clothes of Muslim women became very frequent during the reign of Abdülhamid II:

It is has come to the hearing of his Excellency the Caliph that, some women, totally disregarding the manners of the society and the rules of the religion, are still going out the streets with revealing clothes and wearing only a tulle without using a yaşmak and the coats which they use as ferâces being in a much more strange style than even the non-Muslims'.¹⁵³

Another decree dated 1308/1891 displays the changing tastes and fashions of the time perfectly:

Some of the women of Islam are almost totally abandoning the use of ferâce and yaşmak and using the strange veils which are worn by the old Christian women, and going to bazaars and wandering in streets and places in which mostly the non-Muslim population lives, and (God forbid) promenading in a manner which is invalidating privacy. It is necessary for the Muslim women to be much more respectful to veiling during this holly month of Ramazan [...]¹⁵⁴

The decree of 20th Şevvâl 1308/1891 states that women of Islam had been wandering in Beyoğlu in open carriages almost “uncovered”, and this must not be repeated.¹⁵⁵ By looking at other decrees issued during the reign of Abdülhamid II, we can see that some other places were also popular promenades. A decree dated 1891 states that

¹⁵³ BOA İ.DH 84336

¹⁵⁴ BOA İD 1221/95618

¹⁵⁵ BOA İD 95690

some Muslim women had been wandering in Fenâr Bağçesi and Sarıyar in open carriages with their husbands without respecting the Islamic norms of veiling.¹⁵⁶

An interesting development regarding the attire of Muslim women during the Hamidian Era was the voluntary adoption of *çarşaf* by Istanbul women, an outdoor over garment which was very common in the Arab provinces. Elizabeth Frierson claims that since women became more visible in public life especially at the end of the nineteenth century, they wanted to cloak themselves from the effects of this visibility.¹⁵⁷ Burçak claims that the adoption of *çarşaf* was an attempt of the elite Muslim women to follow the latest fashion as well as being concealed.¹⁵⁸ However, the sultan did not like this brand new outdoor fashion when he first saw two women wearing *çarşaf*, after the Cuma prayer. Since he thought that men could wear these clothes for disguise, he issued a decree in 1892 prohibiting the use of *çarşaf*. However, he abolished this prohibition later.¹⁵⁹

Although these types of warnings and orders seem like the evidence of patriarchal oppression at the first sight, we can elucidate the issue by looking at their frequency: the sultans' orders on fashion and veiling must have been discarded by the Muslim Ottoman women. Because of the frequency of these warnings, Abdülhamid II has a bad reputation as oppressing women and not giving them a chance to be visible in public life. However, as I have told in the education topic previously, the Hamidian Era was very important especially in the inauguration of many schools for girls and the

¹⁵⁶ BOA İ.ZB 1317/Ra-1

¹⁵⁷ Frierson, 229.

¹⁵⁸ Burçak, 36.

¹⁵⁹ Fanny Davis, *Osmanlı Hanımı* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2006), 219.

education of women as teachers. In the following topic, we will also see the sultan's tolerance and encouragement about the proliferation of women's press.

II.5. Women's Press

With the gradual increase in the rate of literacy, Ottoman women found the opportunity to express themselves in regular newspapers and magazines in the nineteenth century. The newspapers and magazines for women created a platform in which educated young women could discuss various issues like education of women, marriage and divorce, legal advantages and disadvantages of women. Many famous authors like Fatma Aliye Hanim, Emine Semiye Hanim, Nigâr Hanim, Gülistan İsmet and other prolific authors had the chance to enlighten Ottoman women.

Before the emergence of women's periodicals, *Terakki* newspaper which was first published in 1868, published women's letters about various issues like the bad condition of the seats in the women's section of the steamships, polygamy and equality between partners. The first newspaper for women was *Terakki-i Muhadderât*, which was the supplement of *Terakki*. It published numerous letters from the readers most of whom were women. The issues discussed in the letters were mainly criticizing the status of women in Ottoman society. However, the most important concern of the readers of *Terakki-i Muhadderât* was women's education. This newspaper made 48 issues.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi* (İstanbul: Metis, 1996), 24.

Although the Hamidian Era is notorious for its severe censorship, it was quite a prolific period in terms of women's periodicals. These periodicals were produced for a female readership, in order to train young girls to become modern wives and mothers.¹⁶¹

In 1875, *Vakit yahut Mürebbi-i Muhadderât* was published for the first time. Another periodical, *Ayine*, which concentrated on the interrelations in the family, child education and marriage, followed it. In 1880, *Aile* was published, with the subtitle: "A newspaper about various issues like the family, women and children". All articles in this newspaper were written by Şemseddin Sâmî. In 1880, *İnsâniyet* newspaper was published for the purpose of enlightening women on various matters. It was followed by *Hanımlar* (1883), *Şükûfezâr* (1886), *Mürüvvet* (1888), *Parça Bohçası* (1889) and *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (1895), which was the longest living women's periodical in the Ottoman Empire, being published for 13 years. Although the censorship of Abdülhamid II was an important obstacle in the Ottoman press, we see that some women's periodicals like *Mürüvvet* were highly encouraged by the sultan.¹⁶²

As well as providing useful information on housework, education of children and family relationships, and providing a platform for exchanging ideas about women's status, some of these periodicals also had a social mission. For example, 5 percent of the revenues of *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* were being donated to orphan girls who are at the age of marriage as a supplement for their trousseau.

Women's press flourished during the Hamidian Era, but it reached its peak during the Second Constitutional period. The leading feminist periodical *Kadınlar Dünyası*, as well as periodicals, is an import source for understanding the effect of

¹⁶¹ Frierson, 64.

¹⁶² Çakır, 27.

nationalism on feminism and the changing concepts of femininity, motherhood and citizenship. Having summarized the women's periodicals in the nineteenth century very briefly, I will analyze the periodicals published after 1908 later in close detail.

CHAPTER III

DISCOURSES ON WOMEN AND THE STATUS OF ELITE MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE YOUNG TURK ERA

The main concern of this chapter is to scrutinize the dynamics of the feminist discourse which had its genesis after 1908, and developed in the intellectually pluralistic environment of the Second Constitutional Era. The growing activism of Ottoman women and the proliferation of the women's press were triggered by a nationalist spirit, which helped women become more visible in society by taking place in charity organizations, establishing women's associations and giving conferences targeting to inform women on their own rights and the ways to solve the internal and external problems of the Empire. As women's press flourished, Ottoman women found the chance to express their ideas and demand further legal and social rights, by sending letters to women's periodicals and participating in nationalist activities. On the other hand, women's emancipation was discussed by the Islamist, Westernist and Turkist male intellectuals, who considered the woman question as a part of their social projects to transform the society and the state. Therefore, we can say that the feminist discourse of the Second Constitutional Era developed alongside with the debates aiming to find solutions for the state's problematic conditions.

This chapter is composed of three main sections. In the first section, I will explain the differences between the Islamist, Westernist and Turkist approaches towards the woman question, and show that all intellectuals of the time perceived “woman” as an important “constructive social agent” which had social and political duties for the future of the Ottoman society. In the second section, I will give information on the development of women’s press and explain the political, legal and educational demands of Ottoman women who contributed to women’s periodicals, and started to define themselves as “feminists”. The third section aims to provide a summary of the educational, legal, social and political acquisitions of Ottoman women, and compare them with the demands of feminist authors, for the purpose of explaining the impact of the feminist discourse on the governmental policies.

III.1. The Ideas of Ottoman Intellectuals on Women’s Emancipation

III.1.1. Westernists

The Westernists who commented on the women question claimed that emancipation of women was very important for the construction of the future generations and the transformation of the society according to the necessities of the time. Abdullah Cevdet was highly impressed from Ribot, who had a Darwinist approach and claimed that social degenerations could be transmitted from the mothers to their descendants. For that reason, he told that the Ottoman dynasty was seriously flawed, since children born from slave mothers will be psychologically defected:

The role of the fathers in the elementary education of children is weak. The greatest job, which is to educate children from the cradle, depends on the mothers, and they must be capable of succeeding in that. If we analyze the rules which have a crucial role in the formation of our spiritual values and character in the light of M. De Lescure's book "Great Wives and Famous Mothers" and the more comprehensive works of Ribot, Spencer and Darwin, we will recognize the superior impact of the mothers. [...] Firdervsi-i Tusi tells that "A maid will only give birth to a servant, even if the father is a prophet or an emperor". The meaning of these words is very clear: we are the descendants of our mothers, rather than our fathers...¹⁶³

Abdullah Cevdet also blamed some Islamic practices and customs for the problematic condition of the society and womanhood. Despite criticizing polygamy, he also stressed that European and American women, although not being exposed to polygamy, had a much lower status than Muslim women, since they did not have the property ownership rights provided to Muslim women.¹⁶⁴ On the other hand, his famous words: "Open both the Quran and women" attracted the reaction of the Islamists, who advocated veiling for the protection of social morality.¹⁶⁵

Salahaddin Asım, in his book "*Türk Kadınlığının Tereddidi yahut Karışmak*" (The Degeneration of Ottoman Women, or Womanization), severely criticized Islam, claiming that it was not compatible with the national spirit and living style of the Turks. He defined "womanization" (*karışmak*) as a process of pacifying women, which was a

¹⁶³ Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi* (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981), 174. Abdullah Cevdet's ideas on the vital importance of motherhood were very similar to those of some famous European eugenisists of the time, like Karl Pearson, who argued for a new perception of maternity in which the mother would have the full initiative to follow her sexual and maternal instincts, and feel herself a free citizen of a free state. Eugenists played a special role in the promotion of motherhood by advocating "eugenic feminism", for the purpose of increasing the fertility of people possessing desirable characteristics such as intelligence, resourcefulness and drive, in order to have a healthier population. (Felicity Hunt, 25-26.)

¹⁶⁴ Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, 185.

¹⁶⁵ İpek Yosmaoğlu, "Yüzyıl Başında Bir Kısım Osmanlı Hanımı ve Talepleri" *Toplumsal Tarih* 26 (1996): 12-17, 12.

result of the Islamic applications such as polygamy, talâk and veiling, and religious conservatism. He further claimed that Shamanism, the religion of the ancient Turks, was much more suitable to the national and spiritual characteristics of the Turkish civilization, and gave women a more respectable status when compared to Islam.¹⁶⁶

According to Salahaddin Asım, a “woman” would transform into a “female” deprived of all her rights and freedom as a citizen, if she was treated as an instrument of sexual pleasure.¹⁶⁷ He further claimed that such women would never be able to contribute to national progress and elevation, and continue their lives as female animals. He emphasized the importance of motherhood, and told that it was the mother who transmitted culture and knowledge to a child:

As a basic requirement of progress, women must have an important role in social discipline and education. Human sexuality should not stay within the limits of fertilization, and become an instrument of transmitting civilization through heredity.¹⁶⁸

Kılıçzâde İbrahim Hakkı also blamed Islamic norms of veiling for the inferior and ignorant condition of Muslim Ottoman women, and claimed that they were excluded from all stages of social life. He further claimed that this ignorance would be transmitted to future generations, like Abdullah Cevdet and Salahaddin Asım.¹⁶⁹ Unlike Salahaddin Asım, Celâl Nuri (İleri) claimed that Islam provided various social and economic rights to women, and told that the inferior position of Ottoman women was a result of religious conservatism and misinterpretation of Islam. Tevfik Fikret also emphasized the

¹⁶⁶ Salahaddin Asım, *Osmanlı'da Kadınlığın Durumu* (İstanbul: Arba, 1989), 22-23.

¹⁶⁷ Salahaddin Asım, 15-19.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 16.

¹⁶⁹ Hamdi Can Tuncer, “Kılıçzâde Hakkı'nın Tesettüre İlan-i Harbi” *Toplumsal Tarih* 66 (1999):34-36, 35.

importance of female education in the prosperity of the state, by saying that “the sons of a nation who does not educate her daughters are destined to spiritual orphan hood.”¹⁷⁰

As can be seen, the dominant subject of discussion for the Westernists regarding the woman question was the centrality of motherhood in transmitting culture between generations. They saw women as important social agents for establishing a Westernized society.¹⁷¹

III.1.2. Turkists

Ziya Gökalp rejected European modernity as a model for advancement, and concentrated on the ancient Turkish culture and national values. He claimed that emancipation of women had to occur in three distinct realms: socioeconomic life, education and treatment. K. E. Flemming tells that Gökalp’s interest in women was based on his idea that they were the “repositories and guarantors” of the ancient Turkish past, as well as being the transmitters of civilization.¹⁷² Therefore, by focusing on the educatory role of the mothers, he had a similar approach to most of the Westernist intellectuals. However, unlike Salahaddin Asım and some other radical Westernists, he blamed the effects of other civilizations, instead of Islam itself, for social degeneration:

Women were equal to men among the ancient Turks because their religion was not an ascetic one. When the ascetic conception of the Iranian and Greek Orthodox religions penetrated through to the Muslims in the Abbasid period, ideas

¹⁷⁰ Tezer Taşkıran, *Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılında Türk Kadın Hakları* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1973), 49, 60.

¹⁷¹ Ayşe Kadioğlu, “Cinselliğin İnkârı: Büyük Toplumsal Projelerin Nesnesi Olarak Türk Kadınları” in *75 Yılda kadınlar ve Erkekler* (İstanbul:Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998) pp. 89-100, 92.

¹⁷² K.E. Flemming, “Women as Preservers of the Past: Ziya Gökalp and Women’s Reform” in *Deconstructing Images of “The Turkish Woman”* Ed. Zehra Arat (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998) pp.127-138, 128.

about the inferiority of women spread among the Muslims too.[...] The ancient family and sex morality of the Turks, which had reached high standards, is completely lost today. Under the influence of the Iranian and Greek civilizations, women have become enslaved and have sunk to a low legal status. When the ideal of a national culture arose among the Turks, the revival of, and return to, these traditions were inevitable. It was for this reason that feminism in Turkey developed alongside the rise of nationalism.¹⁷³

Gökalp explained feminism within the national context, by telling that democracy and feminism were important components of ancient Turkish past. According to him, re-adopting the ancient Turkish culture would led to the emancipation of Turkish women again:

Turkish nationalist are both popular and feminist, not only because these two principles are values in our age, but also because democracy and feminism were two bases of ancient Turkish life. Other nations, in their efforts to adapt themselves to modern civilization, have had to keep away from their past, whereas for the Turks it is enough to turn and look at their ancient past for inspiration.¹⁷⁴

Ahmed Cevad blamed the Iranian and Greek influences on the social degeneration just like Gökalp,¹⁷⁵ and concentrated on the social rights of women. In his book “*Bizde Kadın*”, he also stressed the importance of motherhood in social progress.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, Yusuf Akçuralı, İsmail Gasıralı, Kasım Emin Bey and Fatih Kerimi advocated that women should be emancipated for the development of the Muslim world.¹⁷⁷

Halide Edip took a more radical stand and claimed that women did not have enough political freedom. In her book “*Yeni Turan*”, she depicted a country in which

¹⁷³ K.E. Flemming, 132.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 133.

¹⁷⁵ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını* (İstanbul: M.E.B., 1996), 29.

¹⁷⁶ Ahmed Cevâd, *Bizde Kadın* (Dersaadet: Kader Matbaası, 1328), 42.

¹⁷⁷ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 29-30.

women had full citizenship rights, including the right to vote and enter into the parliament. However, in her memoirs, she defined her book as a “utopia”, and accepted that those demands were extremely radical for the political and social climate of the time.¹⁷⁸ She also emphasized the importance of female education, and told that it was necessary to educate girls as good mothers who had the necessary skills to discipline and look after children properly.¹⁷⁹

Another Turkist who focused on the importance of female education for national progress was Edhem Nejat. He claimed that Ottoman girls were being educated to become “fancy dolls” in the future, rather than nationalist mothers. He suggested that all girls’ schools should be transformed into “Agriculture and Womanhood Schools”, in order to equip the pupils with the knowledge necessary to become good housewives. He further suggested that some “Mobile Womanhood Courses” had to be established, to give lessons to women living all around the empire.¹⁸⁰

As can be seen, Westernists and Turkists agreed on the necessity of women’s emancipation for the development and prosperity of the state, although explaining the reasons for the social problems with different theories.

¹⁷⁸ Halide Edip Adivar, *Mor Salkımlı Ev*, 186.

¹⁷⁹ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 40.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

III.1.3. Islamists

Contrary to Westernists, Islamists underlined the importance of religious values and Islamic ethics for the protection of moral purity of women, since they believed that women represented the ethical values, health and honor of a society.¹⁸¹ Musa Kazım, the *şeyhülislâm* of the time, claimed that since women were created to become mothers and raise their children, and since they were not responsible for earning their lives, they did not need to receive high education. He told that although women were supposed to have primary and secondary education, going to the university would diminish their service as mothers and housewives, therefore damage the society. He also advocated veiling, claiming that this was not an obstacle which prevented women from going to the promenades, participating in charity organizations and attending conferences organized for women.¹⁸²

Fatma Aliye, Mehmet Akif and many other Islamist intellectuals tried to prove that Islam was not an obstacle for the emancipation of Ottoman women, by giving examples from the lives of some influential female figures in Islamic history, like Hz. Fatma and Hz. Ayşe, and referring to Quranic verses and the prophet's sayings which praised womanhood. They also stated that Muslim women enjoyed many legal and social rights, when compared to Christian women. In that sense, they shared the ideas of some

¹⁸¹ Elif Küçükalioglu Gözdaşoglu, "Imagi-nation of Gendered Nationalism: The Representation of Women as Gendered national Subjects in Ottoman- Turkish Novels (1908-1983)" Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Bilkent University, 2005, 186.

¹⁸² Musa Kâzım, "Hürriyet- Eşitlik ve Kadın Hakları" in *Türkiye'de İslâmcılık Düşüncesi* ed. İsmail Kara (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1997), 121-129.

moderate Westernists, like Celâl Nuri. However, they claimed that the weakening of Islamic practices and over-Westernization were the main reasons for the internal and external crises in the Empire.¹⁸³ For that reason, Sadrazam Said Halim Paşa told that extending the rights of women would further degenerate the Ottoman society, which had its roots from Islamic morality and customs.¹⁸⁴

On the other hand Islamists, like the Westernists and Turkists, were in favor of primary and secondary education for girls. Some members of the *ulemâ*, like Manastırlı İbrahim Hakkı, Nasuhizâde Mustafa Asım Efendi and Ahmet Rıza Bey participated in a charity organization for the establishment of a *sultâni* for girls. However, they strongly opposed the idea of sending female students to Europe, claiming that their moral values would be damaged.¹⁸⁵

After analyzing the Westernist, Islamist and Turkist approaches on the woman question, it is easy to recognize that they perceived women as instruments of their social projects for the restoration and development the Empire.¹⁸⁶ The common idea was the centrality of motherhood and the family, for the progress of the state. However, the intellectuals of the time did not consider the emancipation of women as necessary for the individual development and betterment of the female Ottoman citizens. Indeed, they treated women as important constructive agents for the future generations. Therefore, we can conclude by saying that Ottoman women became the symbols of the social plans developed by the social engineers of the Second Constitutional Period.

¹⁸³ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 27-30.

¹⁸⁴ Ayşe Kadioğlu, *Cinselliğin İnkârı*, 92.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

III.2. Feminist Discourse and Women's Press

Second Constitutional Period was a very prolific one, especially in terms of women's periodicals. After getting rid of the strict censorship of Abdülhamid II, women's press acquired a much more politicized and polemical tone in the immediate aftermath of the revolution.¹⁸⁷ The first periodicals published were *Demet* (Bunch), *Mahasin* (Beauties) and *Kadın* (Woman). They were followed by *Kadınlar Dünyası* (Women's World) and many others like *Musavver Kadın* (Illustrated Woman), *Güzel Prenses* (Beautiful Princess), *Kadınlık* (Womanhood), *Siyânet* (Protection), *Seyyâle* (Fluid), *Hanımlar Alemi* (Ladies' World), *Kadınlar Alemi* (Women's World), *Kadınlık Hayatı* (Womanhood Life), *Türk Kadını* (Turkish Woman), *Genç Kadın* (Young Woman), *Kadın Duygusu* (Woman's Feeling) *İnci* (Pearl), *Diyâne* (Piety), *Kadınlar Saltanatı* (The Rule of Women), *Firuze*.¹⁸⁸ Since my aim in this section is to explain the development of the feminist discourse, I will analyze only the women's periodicals with the most feminist tone, which paved the way for the others.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ Ayfer Karakaya- Stump, "Debating Progress in a 'Serious Newspaper for Muslim Women': The Periodical *Kadın* of the Post- Revolutionary Salonica, 1908-1909 " *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 30 (2) (2003): 155-181, 155.

¹⁸⁸ Sepil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, 37.

¹⁸⁹ For comprehensive studies concentrating on women's periodicals in the Second Constitutional Era, see Sepil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, (İstanbul: Metis, 1996), Aynur Demirdirek, *Osmanlı Kadınlarının Hayat Hakkı Arayışının Bir Hikâyesi* (Ankara: İmge, 1993), and Emel Aşa, "1928'e Kadar Türk Kadın Mecmuaları", Unpublished Master's Thesis (İstanbul: İstanbul University, 1989).

III.2.1 Mahasin (Beauties)

Mahasin started being published by Asaf Muammer and Mehmed Rauf, in September 1908. It was the first colored magazine in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹⁰ Among its authors were Asaf Muhammed, Zühre Hanım, Cenâb Şahabettin, Celâl Sahir, Halide Salih (Edip Adıvar), Faik Ali and Adülhak Hamid.

The main argument of Mahasin was the importance of education for the development of Ottoman women. It had a much more feminist tone when compared to the Hamidian Era periodicals.¹⁹¹ Adülhak Hamid's famous words: "Women of a nation are the indicators of its progress"¹⁹² were written on the first page of each issue. The speeches from the conferences organized for women were being published in the magazine, as well as articles related to the woman question. Women advocated their rights of education and demanded the inauguration of new schools for girls throughout the empire. The first issues of Mahasin were quite optimistic about the new regime. However, when the euphoria following the immediate aftermath of the revolution diminished and the deficiency of Young Turks in following a stable policy in female education was recognized, the authors started to complain about the irrelevance of the government,¹⁹³ and told that Ottoman women had to fight for their own freedom, without expecting anything from men. They also suggested that they should unite for their own

¹⁹⁰ Tülay Keskin, "Feminist/Nationalist Discourse in the First Year of the Ottoman Revolutionary Press (1908-1909): Readings from the Magazines of Demet, Mehasin and Kadın (Salonica)", Unpublished Master's Thesis, (Ankara: Bilkent University, 2003), 67.

¹⁹¹ Yıldız Akpolat-Davud "II. Meşrutiyet'te Toplumda kadına Başat Rol Vermeyen Kadın Dergisi Mahasin" *Tarih ve Toplum* 156 (1995): 42-47, 42.

¹⁹² Bir milletin nisvânı derece-i terakkiyesinin mizanıdır.

¹⁹³ Şükûfe Nihal, "İnas Sultânileri Hakkında", Mahasin no.10 (10 Eylül 1325) p.732-733.

benefit and collect money through charity organizations in order to establish their own schools by themselves.¹⁹⁴

After the seventh issue, the demand for the magazine diminished. Although its owners tried to increase its circulation through various promotions, they had to close it after twelve issues.¹⁹⁵

III.2.2. Kadın Salonica

Kadın was published between October 1908 and May 1909. Some of its contributors were Abdullah Cevdet, A. Ulvi, Abdülhak Hamit, Mehmet Emin, Ayşe İsmet, Cavide Peyker, Nigar Bint-i Osman, Nakiye, Fatma Seniye, Zekiye, and Fatma bint-i Hâşim.¹⁹⁶ What made Kadın different from the others was that, unlike the Istanbul magazines, it was based in Salonica, which was the bastion of the Young Turk Revolution, as well as the centre of numerous women's organizations. Although both the owner and the editor of Kadın were men, the magazine published a substantial amount of women's articles and letters.¹⁹⁷ Kadın's publishers were ardent supporters of the Young Turk Revolution, with close ties to the Committee of Union and Progress. Mehmet Cavit, the Salonica representative of the parliament and a leading member of the Committee, published two articles in Kadın. He wrote as the spokesman of the new regime:

This newspaper which presents you its first issue today, I hope, will have a very dignified and serious mission. After the sudden collapse of an evil regime under the heavy burden of its own

¹⁹⁴ Emine Semiye, "Terakkiyât-i Nisvânı Kimden Bekleyelim?" , Mahasin no.10 (10 Eylül 1325) p. 733-736.

¹⁹⁵ Yıldız Akpolat-Davud 43.

¹⁹⁶ Sepil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, 36-37.

¹⁹⁷ Ayfer Karakaya- Stump, *Debating Progress*, 156.

evils and crimes, a wicked regime which never even remembered you, which desired to forget your existence and which never even showed an effort to consider your social responsibilities, now you have achieved the happiness of seeking your legitimate rights.¹⁹⁸

The primary concern of the magazine was to mobilize Ottoman women in support of the constitutionalist regime.¹⁹⁹ For that purpose, the first issues of the magazine included articles promising various educational and social rights to women. Mehmet Cavit told that the Ministry of Education was working hard to provide modernized schools for girls which would meet their needs.²⁰⁰

III.2.3. Demet

Demet was a weekly literary and political magazine, which started being published in September 1908, and had only seven issues. Some its contributors were Nigâr bint-i Osman, Jülide, Ulviye, Neziye, Şiven Peride, Ruhsan Nevvare, İsmet Hakkı Hanım, Halide Edip, and the founders of the Red-White Club, a women's association in Salonica. In the second issue, the aim of the magazine was explained as protecting the benefits of women, reflecting women's thoughts by printing their writings, and informing women about literature and science for the purpose of elevating Ottoman womanhood.²⁰¹

In the second issue of Demet, Atafet Celâl told that educating only men, who constituted half of the society, would not provide progress or benefit, and added that women had to receive education in order to be capable of educating their children

¹⁹⁸ Ibid,160.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 161.

²⁰⁰ Mehmet Cavit, "Kadınlara Dair", Kadın no. 2 (17 Teşrin-i Sani 1324), 1-3.

²⁰¹ Tülay Keskin, Feminist/Nationalist Discourse, 50.

properly.²⁰² Similarly, Hakkı Behiç explained social prosperity with the education level of women, by saying that the family was the foundation of a country and within the family the woman, as the mother, was the foundation.²⁰³

II.2.4. Kadınlar Dünyası

Kadınlar Dünyası was published between 1913 and 1921, although with some interruptions, by Ulviye Mevlan. The main authors of the periodical were: Nuriye Ulviye, Mükerrerrem Belkıs, Emine Seher Ali, Yaşar Nezihe, Safiye Biran, Atiye Şükran, Fatma Zerrin, Belkıs Ferit, and Aziz Haydar. Although it had a principle to publish letters and articles written only by women, writings of men were sometimes included, as well. This was the most radical feminist women's periodical in the Ottoman Empire, and its main purpose was to protect the rights of Ottoman women, regardless of ethnic or religious group. The authors of Kadınlar Dünyası aimed to encourage women to engage in women's organizations, apply for jobs, and participate in social life.²⁰⁴

III.3. Education of Women in the Young Turk Era

As a result of a growing conservative reaction, the government was reluctant towards female education, in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. The male instructors who were giving courses in girls' schools were still being selected among the

²⁰² Atafet Celâl, "Terbiye-i Nisvaniye", Demet no.2 (24 Eylül 1324), 27-28.

²⁰³ Tülay Keskin, Feminist/Nationalist Discourse, 54.

²⁰⁴ Işık Özel, "Kadın Hareketinde Bir Öncü Kadınlar Dünyası: kadınlar Ne İstiyor?" *Toplumsal Tarih* 39 (1997):46-48. For a comprehensive study on Kadınlar Dünyası, see Sepil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*.

oldest and ugliest ones regardless of their experience and knowledge, and talented young teachers were prohibited from working in those schools. This situation was creating the need for knowledgeable female teachers to be employed in public schools. For the purpose of increasing the number of female instructors in public service, some projects to open new *Darülmuaallimâts* all around the Empire were developed. On the other hand, the capacities of some girls' *rüşdiyes* were increased, by opening new classes. However, the Ministry of Public Education had to issue an order, which prohibited the headmasters and male teachers of the girls' schools to enter into the school buildings except during the course hours. As can be seen, although trying to achieve development in female education, the government always had to make concessions to the conservatives.²⁰⁵

However, after the Balkan Wars, education of women was discussed by the educating cadres and intellectuals of the time, and providing a higher education to Ottoman girls was seen as a way to construct more educated generations to secure the future of the empire. In various conferences and panels in which the results of the Balkan Wars were discussed, educating the future mothers of the Empire became the dominant subject of discussion. Equipping the girls with the necessary knowledge and skills in order to make them good mothers in the future was presented as a key to the problems of the state. For example, in a women's conference organized for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the Ottoman Empire's defeat in the Balkan Wars, Nezihe Muhlis said:

The "characters" make nations live in prosperity and strengthen the civilization. The mother's bosom and the school make the characters stronger. The first national education is received in these places. Therefore, while programming the curricula of the schools and the education in the mothers' bosoms, it is necessary to take the political and social needs of the country into account.

²⁰⁵ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi* Vols. 3-4, 1288-1289 and Tezer Taşkıran, *Cumhuriyet'in 50. Yılında Türk Kadın Hakları*, 42-43.

[...] If we think the issue from the women's perspective, it becomes clear that this country needs mothers who will educate the future generations, and serious educational institutions which will educate those mothers.²⁰⁶

Similarly, lieutenant colonel Mustafa Kemal, in his book "*Zâbit ve Kumandan ile Hasbihal*" (A Friendly Chat with the Officer and the Commander), stressed the importance the discipline given at home from the mothers, for the creation of a nationalist spirit, by saying:

The Bulgarians are raising their children with the song: "Edirne is ours".[...] Honorable Turkish woman! Have you sung lullabies to your children while they are in their cradles? [...] Have you created a "character" for them with those lullabies?²⁰⁷

It is possible to say that the Balkan Wars became a turning point in the female education in the Ottoman Empire. The conservative reactions towards the emancipation of women gradually decreased, and the government found the opportunity to inaugurate educational reforms and establish schools for girls. In this section, I will give information on the newly-established schools and the changes in the education system.

II.3.1. İbtidâis and Rüşdiyes

As I told in the previous chapter, the number of girls' rüşdiyes according to the statistics of 1906-1907 was 85, in the Ottoman Empire. It is known that this number increased to 116 in year 1918. However, we do not know whether those schools were

²⁰⁶ Şefika Kurnaz, *Balkan Harbinde Kadınlarımızın Konuşmaları* (İstanbul: M.E.B., 1993),

²⁰⁷ Yahya Akyüz, "Eğitim Alanında Aydınların Özeleştirisi ve Balkan Savaşları" *Tarih ve Toplum* 228 (2002) 54-60, 58.

opened by the Ministry of Public Education or public initiative.²⁰⁸ There was also a considerable increase in the number of ibtidâis for girls during the Second Constitutional period: according to the statistics of 1906-1907 and 1913-1914, the number of ibtidâis for girls increased from 349 to 587.²⁰⁹

Despite the increase in the number of girls' schools during the Young Turk Era, the quality of the school buildings, the pedagogical formation of the teachers and the standards of education had always been a matter of controversy. The courses taught to female students was also attracting the attention of the intellectuals of the time, since educating the girls as the mothers of the future was the primary concern of the day. For example, Edhem Nejat criticized the curricula of the girls' schools, and claimed that the courses that were going to be taught to girls had to be different from the ones that were being taught in the schools for boys. According to him, girls needed to learn the basics of child care and housework, in order to be good mothers and housewives. Some courses that he proposed to be taught in the schools for girls were: Religious Knowledge, Ottoman Turkish, Childcare, Hygiene, Home Economics, Cooking, Gymnastics, Calculation, History, Geography, Drawing, Sewing and Embroidery, Ironing and Agriculture for the village girls.²¹⁰

Also, for the purpose of socializing and educating boys and girls between four and six years old, special schools called Kindergarten (*Ana Mektebi*) were established.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 82.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 79. It is important to note here that the Temporary Law of Public Education, which was inaugurated in 1913 had united the *ibtidâis* and *rüşdiyes* under the name "*Mekâtib-i İbtidâiye-i Umumiye*", and abolished the *rüşdiyes*. For that reason, the exact number of *rüşdiyes* and *ibtidâis* which were established until that date is unknown. Osman Nuri Ergin reports that the total number of *Mekâtib-i İbtidâiye-i Umumiyes* for girls in the Empire was 23, and there were 4416 girls in those schools. (Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi* Vols. 3-4, 1417) Also see Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 174-175.

²¹⁰ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 82.

²¹¹ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi* Vols. 3-4, 1406.

III.3.2. İdâdi

As told in the previous chapter, the first *idâdi*, which provided a higher degree than the *rüşdiyes* for girls was inaugurated during the Hamidian Era, but was closed as a result of the low demand. Ahmed Rıza Bey, the chairman of the parliament was the one who proposed the idea to open an *idâdi* for girls in Istanbul, during the Second Constitutional Period. He even established a charity organization in 1910, for the purpose of financing the new school; and was supported by some members of the *ulemâ*, as well as the palace women. However, his efforts were fruitless. After a short period of reluctance, the government undertook the business, and established a school called “*İstanbul İnas İdâdisi*” in 1911, in Aksaray district. After 1913, this school was transformed into a *sultâni*.²¹²

III.3.3. Sultâni (High School)

The high schoollycee for girls in the Ottoman Empire was established by transferring the *idâdi* for girls into a *sultâni*. The new school was named “*İstanbul İnas Sultânisi*”, with a program of 10 years. (5 years for primary level, and 5 years for secondary level.) The curriculum of this school included courses like: Ottoman Turkish, Foreign Languages, Religious Knowledge, History, Geography, Calculation, Algebra, Civic Knowledge, Hygiene, Chemistry, Cosmography, Child Education, Pedagogies,

²¹² Ibid., 83-84.

Drawing, Sewing and Embroidery, Home Economics, Gymnastics, Piano and Gına (Music).²¹³

As can be seen, this curriculum was very similar to the one which was proposed by Edhem Nejat for the rüşdiyes for girls, and was relatively weak when compared to the curriculum of the boys' sultânîs.²¹⁴

III.3.4. İnas Darülfünûnu (University for Girls)

In 1914, free conferences on Mathematics, Cosmography, Physics, Women's Rights, Gymnastics, History, Hygiene and Discipline started to be given for women in the Darülfünûn conference hall, by Salih Zeki, Gelenbevîzâde Sait, Mahmud Esat, Selim Sırrı, İhsan Şerif, Besim Ömer Paşa and İsmail Hakkı. In his memoirs, İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu tells that this was an unofficial way of providing university education for Ottoman women, without attracting the reaction of the conservative groups. He also tells that the demand for those courses was so high that the conference hall of Darülfünûn was full of women from all ages since the first year, since the attendants were not expected to have a high school diploma.²¹⁵

In 1330, a separate *Darülfünûn* for girls which was to give courses in Zeynep Hanım Konağı was established. The students who attended the conferences had an exam, and the successful ones constituted the first class of the Women's *Darülfünûn*, together with the newly graduated *Darülmualimât* and *Sultani* students. There were three sections

²¹³ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi* Vols. 3-4, 1444-1445.

²¹⁴ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutîyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 84.

²¹⁵ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi* Vols. 3-4, 1553-1556.

in this *Darülfünûn*: Literature, Mathematics and Natural Sciences. Each section had a three-year curriculum including these courses:

Literature Section: Turkish Literature, Literary Composition, Ottoman History, General History, Geography, Ethnography, Philosophy, Discipline, History of Literature, History of Industrialization, Social Sciences, Economics, Law.

Mathematics Section: Philosophy, Discipline, Trigonometry, Calculus, Elementary Algebra, Physics, Geometry, Advanced Algebra, Mathematics, Analytical Geometry, Mechanics, Law.

Natural Sciences Section: Applied Chemistry, Botanic, Mineral Chemistry, Physics, Hygiene, Geology, Philosophy, Zoology, Discipline, Trigonometry, Advanced Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Industrial Chemistry, Anatomy, Natural Science, Law.²¹⁶

III.3.5. Occupational Education for Girls

III.3.5.1.Darülmua'llimât

As told in the previous chapter, there was a lack of qualified female teachers for the girls' schools, since the government was having difficulties in sending the graduates of *Darülmua'llimât* to the girls' schools outside İstanbul. Most graduates were not even working as teachers and were getting married immediately after graduation. Emrullah Efendi, the Minister of Education of the time, proposed to establish a boarding school in order to keep the students under the control of the government and send them to rural

²¹⁶ Ibid. Also see Ayşe Afetinan, *Atatürk ve Türk Kadın Haklarının Kazanılması* (İstanbul: M.E.B.,1968), 91-92.

areas. The school was established, and the number of courses was increased, as well as extending the period of education to five years.

The number of *Darülmua'llimât* students gradually increased during the Second Constitutional Period. In 1919, there were around 6000 students in the boarding and day schools for female instructors in İzmir, Ankara, Konya, Edirne, Eskişehir, Beirut, Aleppo and Bursa.

Another important development regarding the *Darülmua'llimât* was the establishment of *Darülmua'llimât-i Aliye*, which was going to educate female teachers for the *idadis* and *sultanis*, as well as the primary schools. Also, a special education was provided for thirty *Darülmua'llimât* graduates who wanted to work as gymnastics teachers in the future. There were around 50 students in *Darülmua'llimât-i Aliye* during years 1913-1914. Most graduates of this school were continuing their education in the *Darülfünûn* for women. Also, in 1914, a special section of *Darülmua'llimât*, which was going to educate teachers for the Kindergarten, was established, with twenty three students.

Despite all these changes and regulations regarding the *Darülmua'llimâts*, the quality of education provided in these institutions, and the capability of its graduates in educating children had always been a matter of complaint.²¹⁷

²¹⁷ The *Darülmua'llimât* section was summarized from Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 90-96.

III.3.5.2. Industrial Schools for Girls

There were three industrial schools for girls in the Ottoman Empire, when the Second Constitution was inaugurated. The Ministry of Public Education extended their period of education from five years to seven years, and included more general courses to their curriculum. There were also some industrial schools which were named “idâdi”, but did not provide the right of having higher education to their graduates. Although many industrial schools for girls were opened in various cities, they were all closed because of financial problems, and only two schools in Istanbul remained.²¹⁸

III.4. Social Life of Ottoman Women during the Second Constitutional Period

III.4.1. Women and Work

Female labor constituted an important part of the total labor in the rural parts of the Ottoman Empire, since nineteenth century. The participation of women and girls was most visible especially in the export industries, like raw silk, carpets and lace. As well as forming a strong majority of the knotters, reelers and lace makers, they also dominated various spinning industries of cotton, linen and wool. Besides, women workers also constituted an important part of the Ankara mohair spinning industry. On the other hand, household spinning, weaving, knotting, embroidering and lace making was very common among the females of the rural areas. Female and child manufacturing work outside home

²¹⁸ Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 98-101.

was also commonplace, for all regions and ethnic groups. They were working in the wool yarn factories of Uşak, wool factories of Niausta in the Balkans and Eyüp in İstanbul. They were also working in the umbrella workshops in İstanbul.²¹⁹

This crucial position of women and girls in Ottoman textile production, shoemaking, and tobacco processing was a result of the long working hours and the low wages they received, when compared to the male workers.²²⁰ For example, in Uşak, the female carpet makers between 7 and 70 years old were working 15-16 hours a day, for a daily fee of 1 to 5 guruş, in 1910. Since they were having serious illnesses as a result of the working conditions, they went on a strike and asked for an increase in their salaries.²²¹ Similarly, the female carpet makers in Uşak engaged in a machine-breaking movement against the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Company, and had a fight with the soldiers.²²²

As can be seen, Muslim women living in the rural areas constituted an integral part of the working force, and were quite visible in the society. However, the same was not true for city women. Most of the Muslim women living in the cities did not have a regular income at the turn of the century, since they were living under the protection of their fathers, husbands, sons or brothers. Although most women living in big cities had skills in producing handicrafts, they were producing for their households, not for the

²¹⁹ Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 174-175.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Nicole A.N.M. Van Os, "Bursa'da Kadın İşçilerin 1910 Grevi" *Toplumsal Tarih* 39 (1997) 7-10, 7.

²²² Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Uşak'ta Halı İşçilerinin İsyanı (1908)" *Toplumsal Tarih* 99 (2002): 54-57. For detailed information on the strikes of 1908, see Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda 1908 Grevleri" *Toplum ve Bilim* 78 (1998): 187-209.

market. Some women who have lost their men were working in jobs which were accepted as “women’s jobs” such as cooking, nursery, midwifery and maiding.²²³

The Second Constitutional Period was a turning point in the lives of most Ottoman women in the cities. As a result of the loss of a significant amount of the male population and the serious economical problems after the Trablusgarb, Balkan Wars and the World War, women had to discover the ways of earning their own living.²²⁴ On the other hand, the lack of educated civil servants created new job opportunities for women. Muslim Ottoman women started to work in big companies such as the Ottoman Bank, and Dersaâdet Telephone Company in various positions, as well as participating in nationalist organizations.²²⁵ On the other hand, a battalion of workers was established among the poor and widow women for the purpose of including them into the work force, in 1917.²²⁶ In summary, the social and economic crises following the wars gave Muslim Ottoman women the chance to work and earn money outside their homes, in jobs which they could never imagine before.

²²³ Yavuz Selim Karakışla, “Dersaâdet Telefon Anonim Şirket-i Osmaniyesi ve Osmanlı kadın Telefon Memureleri” *Tarih ve Toplum* 212 (2001): 29-37 ,29.

²²⁴ Yavuz Selim Karakışla “Osmanlı’da Kadın Fotoğrafçılar” *Toplumsal Tarih* 75 (2000): 18-20, 18.

²²⁵ For detailed information, see Yavuz Selim Karakışla, “Dersaâdet Telefon Anonim Şirket-i Osmaniyesi ve Osmanlı kadın Telefon Memureleri I” *Tarih ve Toplum* 212 (2001):29-37,Yavuz Selim Karakışla “Osmanlı’da Kadın Fotoğrafçılar” , Laurence Ammour and Lorans Tanatar Baruh “Çalışan Kadından Bir Kesit: (1911-1943)Osmanlı Bankası Kadın Personeli” *Tarih ve Toplum* 183 (1999): 15-21.

²²⁶ See Meral Altındal, “Kadın Birinci İşçi Taburu Tarihçesi” *Toplumsal Tarih* 41(1997), 14-16, Zafer Toprak, “Osmanlı Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti: Kadın Askerler ve Milli Aile” *Tarih ve Toplum* 51 (1988):34-38, Yavuz Selim Karakışla, “Enver Paşa’nın Kourdurduğu kadın Birinci İşçi Taburu: Osmanlı Ordusu’nda Kadın Askerler” *Toplumsal Tarih* 66 (1999): 15-24.

III.4.2. Women's Organizations

Ottoman women, who had been forced into domesticity until the late nineteenth century, found a way out their homes and back into the public space, by participating in women's organizations. The very first women's organizations in the Ottoman Empire were founded by the non-Muslim women, in order to collect money to help those who are in need in their own religious communities. The first group of Muslim women who established an organized activity seems to have been a group founded by the wife of Mithad Paşa in 1876, for the purpose of collecting money and goods for the war victims.

The number of Muslim women's organizations remained limited until 1908. After the Young Turk Revolution, establishing civil organizations became legal, and was encouraged by "The Law of Organizations" (*Cemiyetler Kanunu*), which also forced the existing organizations to formalize their existence by registering.²²⁷

The aims of the organizations established by women varied. There were many charity organizations, aiming to help the war-wounded and the children or widows of the soldiers, like "*Şefkat-i Nisvan*", (Compassion of Women), "*Osmanlı Kadınları Şefkat Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi*" (The Association of Ottoman Women's Compassion), and "*Hizmet-i Nisvan*" (Service of Women). There were also many organizations established for the purpose of emancipating Ottoman women by providing education and job opportunities, like "*Cemiyet-i Hayriye-i Nisvaniye*" (The Association of Women's Benefit) and

²²⁷ Nicole A.N.M. Van Os "Ottoman Women's Organizagtions: Sources of the Past, Sources for the Future" *Islam and Christian- Muslim Relations* 11 (2000):369-383,369-371.

organizations with a cultural purpose, like “*Osmanlı Kadınlar Cemiyeti*” (The Association of Ottoman Women), “*Asri Kadın Cemiyeti*” (The Association of Modern Woman) and “*Tefeyyüz Cemiyeti*” (The Association of Progress). There were also some organizations aiming to provide solutions for the problems of the state and protect national liberation, as well as the feminist organizations and organizations of some political parties.²²⁸

²²⁸ Serpil Çakır, “Osmanlı Kadın Dernekleri” *Toplum ve Bilim* 53 (1991): 139-159. For more information regarding the women’s organizations, see Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi* (İstanbul: Metis, 1996).

CHAPTER IV:

CITIZEN EDUCATION AND RISE OF NATIONALISM IN THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL PERIOD

This chapter is an attempt to explain how the Young Turks reformed the Ottoman educational system, for the purpose of transforming the former “subjects” of the Empire into self-confident, creative and free “citizens”, who are attached to the new regime. First, I will clarify how the child-centered pedagogical methods of the *Meşrutiyet* teachers developed, by giving reference to the major internal political events of the time, and the changes in the educational views of intellectuals as a result of those events. I will also explain how Turkish Nationalism became the dominant educational doctrine, surpassing Ottomanism through time. Then, I will make a textbook content analysis, which is crucial to understand how the primary and secondary school students, who were accepted as the future citizens of the Empire, were indoctrinated in order to become the protectors of their country and the Constitutional Monarchy.

IV.1. The creation of the “citizen”

Second Constitutional Period (1908-1918) was a critical one, in which the political elite targeted to transform the society, as well as searching solutions for the internal and external crises which threatened the state.²²⁹ For that reason, the Young Turks, unlike the men of Tanzimât, can be defined as devoted “social engineers”.²³⁰ The greatest contribution of the Young Turk Era to Turkish political history was the creation of a new “*vatandaş*” (citizen) model.²³¹ The regulations and reforms after the inauguration of the Second Constitution targeted to regulate the relationship between the state and this newly-constructed political agent. The citizens were encouraged to engage in political events by various laws such as the “*Cemiyetler Kânunu*” and “*Tatil-i Eşgâl Kânunu*”.²³²

The period also witnessed attempts to construct a new, secular Ottoman identity, divorced from religious and ethnic cleavages that used to polarize the society into communities. Ottomanism, the political doctrine which provided equality to all subjects before the law, and was based on the idea of *İttihad-ı Anâsır* (unity of elements), was seen as the key to the problems of the state by most of the politicians.

²²⁹ Füsün Üstel, *Makbul Vatandaşın Peşinde: II. Meşrutiyet’ten Bugüne Vatandaşlık Eğitimi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004), 30.

²³⁰ İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, 140.

²³¹ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler* Vol. I (İstanbul: İletişim, 1998), 399. Although the decades of social conflict and political change were “undergirding and defining Ottoman citizenship” during the Tanzimât Era, the concept of citizenship became more explicit in the Second Constitutional period. See Ariel Salzmann, “Citizens in Search of a State” in *Extending Citizenship, Reconfiguring States* edited by Michael Hanagan and Charles Tilly (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 37-66.

²³² Füsün Üstel, ,27.

The principles derived from the French Revolution, *hürriyet* (liberty), *müsavât* (equality), *uhuvvet* (brotherhood) and *adâlet* (justice) were the main characteristics of the political ideology of the day. New national fests and commemorations replacing the religious ones were “invented” for the sake of creating a national spirit, embracing all ethnic and religious communities. These brand-new national days were “*İyd-i Milli-i Osmani*” (Ottoman National Fest), which was being celebrated on July 14th, the date of the Young Turk Revolution, “*Meclis-i Milli’nin Yevm-i Küşâdı*” (The Anniversary of the Parliament’s Inauguration), “*Mektepliler Bayramı*” (Schoolchildren’s Day), “*Çocuklar Bayramı*” (Children’s Day) and “*İdmân Bayramı*” (Gymnastics Day).²³³

Like all other political regimes, Meşrutiyet targeted to inculcate the new generations with its own values, in order to secure the continuity of the system.²³⁴ Since children were seen as the future of the society and the regime, educating them according to the principles of *Meşrutiyet* became the main pedagogical target of especially the primary and secondary schools.²³⁵ The symbols of the new regime, such as the constitution, parliament and elections were used in order to define the changes in political life and to destruct the symbols of the Hamidian Regime.²³⁶ The future mothers and fathers of the society were expected to develop the necessary skills to become an ideal Ottoman citizen and transfer them to their own children in order to create a nation of free, patriotic, self confident, creative citizens inculcated with the principles of liberty, equality, brotherhood and justice. In other words, Ottoman children, who were previously educated and socialized as *subjects* under the control of their families and

²³³ Füsun Üstel, 28-29.

²³⁴ Cüneyd Okay, *Meşrutiyet Çocukları* (İstanbul: Bordo, 2000), 12.

²³⁵ Zafer Toprak, “80. Yıldönümünde Hürriyetin İlanı (1908) ve Rehber-i İttihad” *Toplum ve Bilim* 42 (1988):157-173.

²³⁶ Nuri Doğan, *Ders Kitapları ve Sosyalleşme* (Ankara: Bağlam, 1994), 69.

religious communities, were submitted to the will of the State; in order to be transformed into patriotic *citizens*.²³⁷

Education during the Second Constitutional Era can be analyzed in two periods: the years between 1908 -1914, the period of “confusion and reluctance” in which the government could not achieve any progress due to the political turmoil and the continuous oppositions of the non-Muslim groups and foreign powers; and the period between 1914 - 1918, in which the Committee of Union and Progress became the dominant political power and inaugurated important educational laws and regulations without facing any opposition.²³⁸ I will analyze each period by explaining the political events which caused educational debates, and give examples from the works of intellectuals of the time.

IV2. Educational Debates and Reforms during the Second Constitutional Period

IV.2.1.Education Between 1909-1914

This period witnessed colorful debates on the pedagogical ways of constructing Ottoman citizens in order to change the fate of the State, and create a society of creative citizens. However, there was no real progress. The Minister of Education was replaced fifteen times, and none of the ministers could follow a stable policy.²³⁹

²³⁷ Füsün Üstel, 32.

²³⁸ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi* Vol.3-4, 1273.

²³⁹ Ibid.

The most dominant theory of the time was the Theory of Tûba Tree²⁴⁰ (*Tûba Ağacı Nazariyesi*) developed by Emrullah Efendi²⁴¹, one of the Ministers of Education of the time. The theory was based on the principle that it is necessary to start educating the society from upside down, by giving particular importance to higher education instead of primary education, for the purpose of educating bureaucrats and trained personnel as soon as possible. Emrullah Efendi told that achieving a widespread primary education was a toilsome business which would take at least two or three generations, and claimed that progress could only be achieved with the effort of highly educated people.²⁴² He was severely criticized by Sâti Bey, the head of *Darülmualimin* (the school for male teachers), who said that it would be impossible for higher education to exist without having proper primary schools.²⁴³ Although advocating his theory for a long time, Emrullah Efendi eventually had to abandon it and concentrated on preparing a regulation of public primary education (*Tedrisât-i İbtidâiye Kânunu*). This regulation was modeling the French primary school system, and was based on the principle of free, compulsory education for all Ottoman citizens. Nevertheless, this proposed regulation could not become law, due to the serious oppositions of non-Muslim groups and the political turmoil of the time.²⁴⁴

During this period, it was targeted to “nationalize” the Turkish private education, and some associations were established for the purpose of preventing the Muslim Turkish children from going to private schools established by the foreigners.

²⁴⁰ Name of a tree in Paradise, which is located upside down, with its roots at the top.

²⁴¹ For a detailed study regarding Emrullah Efendi’s political and pedagogical views, see Muammer İpek, “Bir Eğitim Bakanı Olarak Emrullah Efendi’nin Eğitim Felsefesi, Politikaları ve Uygulamaları 1908-1914”, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2002.

²⁴² Necdet Sakaoğlu, “Eğitim Tartışmaları” in *Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyet’e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1985) Vol. II, 478-484.

²⁴³ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi* Vol 3-4, 1277.

²⁴⁴ Mustafa Ergün, *II. Meşrutiyet Devrinde Eğitim Hareketleri* (Ankara: Ocak, 1996), 51.

One example for such associations is *Osmanlı İttihâd Mektepleri Cemiyeti* (The Association of Ottoman Union Schools), which was established in 1909. Similarly, the headmasters of the Turkish private schools established another union for the purpose of encouraging the Turkish children to go to Turkish schools. On the other hand, the religious minorities, taking the liberal policies of the Second Constitutional Period and the support of the foreign powers for granted, severely opposed all kinds of interventions or inspections in their schools.²⁴⁵

Although the government and the Ministry of Education aimed to unify all ethnic groups under the flag of Ottomanism, the schools in the Balkans were following a separatist ideology. The private schools established by the foreign powers and the missionaries during the nineteenth century were educating Bulgarian, Serbian, Albanian, Vlach, and Greek nationalists. Education was an area of rivalry in Ottoman Macedonia, and schools were playing a crucial role in determining their students' cultural identities. The following passage from a book called "The Population of Macedonia: Evidence of Christian Schools", which was written in late 1890s and was translated into French in 1905 explains this situation perfectly:

In Turkey, the father of a Christian family in sending his children to a particular school declares, not only the language which he wishes to learn, but also the nation with which he is connected, and of which he shares the memories and hopes. In short, he declares which is his mother country.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 179.

²⁴⁶ İpek Yosmaoğlu-Turner, "The Priest's Robe and the Rebel's Rifle: Communal Conflict and the Construction of National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia: 1878-1908" Unpublished Phd Dissertation, Princeton University, 2005, 209.

IV.2.2. Education Between 1914 and 1918

Despite the Young Turks' determination to create a national spirit according to the principle of Ottomanism, the cleavages among the various ethnic and religious groups within the empire were deep, as told above. The spread of nationalism among the subject peoples was an important obstacle for the government in realizing its goal. Although there was a great enthusiasm and joy among the society during the first days of the revolution, the tension among the ethnic and religious communities increased when people realized the new regime's incapability of creating miracles. The support provided by most of the Muslim Albanians to the rebels during the Albanian Revolt, and Balkan Wars were important incidents, which changed the Turks' approach towards Ottomanism, and convinced them that conciliation among various national interests in order to attain a unified empire was impossible to be achieved.²⁴⁷ This was the harbinger of Turkish nationalism, which developed as a reaction to the loss of 83 percent of the European territories of the Empire, and became the dominant ideology, surpassing Islamism and Ottomanism, through time. The Turkish Society (*Türk Derneği*), which was established in 1909 for the purpose of coordinating the activities of the Turkist groups, was transformed by its leaders into the Turkish Homeland Society (*Türk Yurdu Cemiyeti*) after the Albanian Revolt in 1911, and became an important movement. The Committee of Union and Progress itself, although being the major advocate of the Ottomanism ideology, turned towards Turkish nationalism.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Vol. II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 287-289.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

There was a political instability going on just before the Balkan Wars. However, the results of these wars played an important role in ending this political rivalry and a “one-party period” started after 1913.²⁴⁹ Strong leadership was required to deal with the disastrous results of the Wars. Mosques, schools and other public buildings were crowded with refugees and the war-wounded. Therefore, it was necessary to heal the wounds of the state and raise the moral of the society in order to deal with the post-war trauma. Since only the Committee of Union and Progress had the organization, manpower and program needed to accomplish these ends, the nation allowed it to assume a kind of autocracy in times of crisis, which was not achieved by another group or individual in the Empire before.²⁵⁰

IV.2.2.1. Balkan Wars and Debates on Education:

The Balkan Wars had important impacts on the education system. The Ottoman intellectuals severely criticized the Turkish educational policies, and explained the success of the Balkan nations with the importance they gave to nationalist education, referring the German leader Bismarck’s famous words when he said after the victories of his army during the wars of 1866 and 1870: “the ones who gained that victory are the German primary school teachers”. Ethem Nejat, who worked as headmaster and teacher in various schools in Manastır, Bursa, İzmir, Adana and Eskişehir, emphasized the need for a primary education system focusing on nationalist feelings, rather than mere knowledge.²⁵¹ Based on his experience in the schools of Manastır, he said:

²⁴⁹ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, 39.

²⁵⁰ Stanford Shaw, 289.

²⁵¹ Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 192.

While in the Turkish villages of Rumelia teachers who are unable to write their own names and incapable of reading handwritings are instructing the students, and in larger villages highly indolent teachers who regard talking of nationalism and Turkism as disgraceful are instructing the children of the upper classes, Macedonian teachers have transformed the comparatively rude and ignorant non-Muslim villagers into humans. They have given them a personality, a purpose. As a result, our teachers lost, and their teachers won! The thing which made them victorious is their education, while the reasons for our defeat are our schools, *medreses*, and education system. It is the educational armies of the Bulgarians which is victorious, not their military.²⁵²

In another article, Ethem Nejat told that the students of the Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian and Vlach students were being inculcated with nationalist feelings and were learning the Bulgarian history, reading the poems of the revolutionist Bulgarian poets, singing national songs, although they were not good at American or African Geographies, Physics, Chemistry or Mathematical Equations. He said that their education was “creating feelings”, which transformed the students into self-confident, honorable and creative people, while Turkish education was creating “mere knowledge”, which made the students insensitive, unconfident civil servants who are destined to be captives.²⁵³

İsmail Hakkı (Baltacıoğlu), another professional educator who gave courses in various teachers’ schools, told that the Turkish education system, which was raising weak and spiritless generations, was responsible for all the disasters.²⁵⁴ He also said:

In our schools, knowledgeable, polite, talkative youth with powerful memory is being educated. However, only one thing is not being

²⁵² Yahya Akyüz, “Eğitim Alanında Aydınların Özeleştirisi ve Balkan Savaşları” *Tarih ve Toplum* 228(2002): 54-58.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 195.

educated: Man! The active, creative, determined, courageous man that our country needs...²⁵⁵

Tüccarzâde İbrahim Hilmi (Çığıracan), a famous writer and editor of the Second Constitutional Period, after making a comparison of the educational and military budgets of the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria and Romania, concluded that the Empire was wasting its resources on military expenses, while the others were giving a higher importance in education. He said that the Balkan wars were the evidences of the vital role of education for the existence of a state, as well as the army. He also claimed that the Turkish children were disoriented towards useless professions, which were not beneficial for the progress of the state:

Do not the lullabies which the Turkish children listen from their mothers in their cradles end with “be a pasha my son, be a soldier, my son”? Is not our surrounding filled with inspirations of becoming civil servants or soldiers? Is not the purpose of our primary and secondary schools to educate bureaucrats? Is not our sole aim to raise a soldier with a glowing uniform or find a civil job to guarantee the retirement? Do any of our families respect the artists or the merchants? How many families give their daughters to merchants? How many of them send their children to be educated as craftsmen? Is not a merchant earning thirty or forty liras a month seen inferior to a civil servant who earns five liras a month?²⁵⁶

Many other intellectuals joined the debate on national education. Ziya Gökalp, the greatest mentor of the time, told that ideological and educational lessons could be derived from wars, and claimed that the main resources of educational reforms are the national depressions, which have a “healing” side effect. He said that the reason for the emerging ideological feelings in the hearts of Turkish children were the national crises which the Turkish nation experienced recently, rather than the teachers. He also defined

²⁵⁵ Yahya Akyüz, Eğitim Alanında Aydınların Özeleştirisi.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

the purpose of education as “creating nationalist individuals”, and creating such individuals as “the making of a nation.”²⁵⁷ Gökalp also claimed that the basic principle of contemporary education was to adapt ourselves to the tools most modern nations use.²⁵⁸ He criticized the Turkish education system by saying:

There is a special feature of Turkey which distinguishes itself from the other countries: In other nations, the most trustworthy and moral people are the ones who receive the highest education. However, it is the contrary in our country most of the time. The most harmful men for the country are the ones who are educated in schools or *medreses*. Numerous examples that we witnessed after the inauguration of the Second Constitution verify this paradoxical fact.²⁵⁹

Sâtı Bey told in the foreword of his famous book “The Science of Discipline” (*Fenn-i Terbiye*), a book which explained child education with psychological factors, that the technological and cultural superiority of some countries such as Germany and Japan was their determination to develop their primary schools. He also said that the Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian revolts were evidences of the role of education in a nation’s progress, and added that Ottoman Empire had to focus on its education instead of its army.²⁶⁰

Also, the teachers discussed the reasons for the deficiency of the Ottoman education system in educating nationalist and productive people, in various educational periodicals. These periodicals provided a platform for the experienced educators to exchange views about the proper ways of inculcating the Ottoman pupils with the necessary values and principles, and creating patriots willing to sacrifice themselves for their homeland. Some of those educational periodicals were: “The Periodical of Primary

²⁵⁷ Ziya Gökalp, *Milli Terbiye ve Maarif Meselesi* (Ankara: Diyarbakır Tanıtma ve Turizm Derneği Yayınları, 1964), 27-29.

²⁵⁸ Ziya Gökalp, *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak* (İstanbul: Toker, 1974).

²⁵⁹ Ziya Gökalp, *Milli Terbiye ve Maarif* 108.

²⁶⁰ Abdullah Akın, “Sâtı Bey ve II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi’nde Din Eğitimi 1908-1918“, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Sakarya Üniversitesi, 2002, 9-10.

Education” (*Tedrisât-i İbtidâiye Mecmuası*), “Discipline and Play” (*Terbiye ve Oyun*), “The Periodical of Discipline” (*Terbiye Mecmuası*), and “The Journal of the National Education and Discipline Association” (*Milli Tâlim ve Terbiye Cemiyeti Mecmuası*).²⁶¹

IV.2.2.2. The Temporary Regulation of Public Education:

The criticisms of the intellectuals and teachers encouraged the government to make reforms in the educational system, in order to create nationalist young citizens. As I told above, the one-party government of the Committee of Union and Progress had all the initiative to make reforms, without having to face serious oppositions. The Regulation for primary school education which was previously prepared and proposed by Emrullah Efendi became law with some changes, and inaugurated with the name “The Temporary Law of Primary Education” (*Tedrisât-i İbtidâiye Kânun-i Muvakkatı*) in 1913.²⁶² The main purpose of primary school education was explained as “to educate the members of the nation as useful organs to both themselves and the country.”²⁶³

According to the first article of this law, primary education was to be compulsory and free in all primary schools of the Ottoman Empire.²⁶⁴ The previous *ibtidâi* and *rüşdiye* schools were unified under primary education, and this education was divided into three levels: the beginners’ level (*devrei-i ibtidâiye*) for children between ages 7-8, the intermediate level (*devre-i vasatiye*) for children between ages 9-10, and the upper level (*devre-i âliye*) for children 11-12.²⁶⁵

²⁶¹ Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 187.

²⁶² A printed copy of this law can be found at: BOA DH-İD 190/62 (1332-Z-19)

²⁶³ Ibid., 1308.

²⁶⁴ *Tedrisât-i ibtidai mecburi ve mekatib-i umumiyyede meccanidir.* (The Temporary Law of Primary Education, article 1)

²⁶⁵ Ibid., article 23.

It was stated that a new curricula for the primary schools was going to be prepared in order to equip the pupils with the most necessary courses about their own culture and country. This was expressed by the emphasis given to Geography and History courses: “Geography, particularly Ottoman Geography” and “History, particularly Ottoman history.” Also, national poems, stories and songs were to be taught in the *gînâ* (music) courses.²⁶⁶

The official primary school curriculum, which was inaugurated after the Temporary Law of Primary Education, was prepared according to the norms set by this law. In the curricula booklet, the formal pedagogical ways to inspire the students with nationalist ideas were described, as well as setting norms for the physical appearance of the schools. According to this curriculum, the classrooms and school buildings were to be embellished with national and religious symbols, in order to inculcate the pupils with the principles of *Meşrutiyet* and Turkish nationalism. Ottoman flags, the portrait of the sultan, “long live the sultan” banners, various verses from the Quran and *hadis* banners at the walls, the banners with the formula of “*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*”, Ottoman national anthem and song hanged near the teachers’ desk, the pictures of the capital city and the previous sultans, a map including all the Ottoman lands, pictures depicting moral and national stories were the compulsory materials that had to be present in all classrooms in the primary schools.²⁶⁷

It was also stated that moral and national stories and passages were to be read during Ottoman language, Reading and Quran lessons. For example, some of the topics that were to be taught between the Quran lessons of the first and the second classes were

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ *Maarif Nezâreti Mekâtib-i İbtidâiye Ders Müfredât: Bir ve İki Dershâne ve Muallimli Mekteblere Mahsus* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1329), 100.

as follows: “Respect and love to the Sultan and the elders- Motherland and Foreign countries- The blessing of the homeland- Respect to the flag - The inheritance of our ancestors: mosques, *medreses*, fountains, tombs, bridges, *imarets*, caravanserais, schools- Respect for our fields and farms- Love for the motherland- Sacrifice for the motherland: the honor of military service...”²⁶⁸ Also, in History lessons, stories of victory about the conquest of the city in which each school was built, and the life stories of famous Turkish men who took place in wars were to be told to the students. Also, information about the biographies of some prominent figures from Islamic and Turkish history was going to be read. In the primary schools for girls, the pupils were to read the lives of the pioneering women in Islamic and Turkish history, as well.²⁶⁹

In summary, the History, Geography and Reading courses and the class room content were designed for the purpose of providing the necessary national and historical background in order to construct the patriotic citizens of the future. As can be seen, the main target was to apply Balkan methods of nationalizing students which were assumed to be successful and were proposed by Ethem Nejat and some other intellectuals.

IV.2.2.3. Ethics:

As I have explained previously, the Young Turks aimed to create generations according to the principles of the *Meşrutiyet*, in order to guarantee the existence of the new regime. An important course which was added to the school curricula was the “Moral and Civic Knowledge” (*Malumât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*), which targeted to give information about the parliament, constitution, constitutional government and the

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 6-7.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 16-17, 94.

freedom and duties of the Ottoman citizens. Sabri Cemil, the author of the book “Applied Science of Teaching” (*Ameli Fenn-i Tedris*), which was prepared as a handbook for the teachers of primary, secondary and teachers’ school (*Darülmualimin*) instructors, told that this new course was crucial for all citizens since it was a tool which would make the *Meşrutiyet* fully established. He also added that the principles of liberty, equality, mutual assistance and brotherhood were the factors which kept the society in its good shape, and the little Ottomans were supposed to advocate them against the pessimist and impatient people and learn them from their teachers at schools in order to have respect and connection to the constitutional government.²⁷⁰

A debate on the content of Moral and Civic Knowledge Course started, since the traditional moral courses which were inherited from the Hamidian regime were accepted to have a deficiency in educating generations for the Constitutional period, by the Westernists. On the other hand, the Islamists were blaming the destruction of the traditional sıbyân schools and the widespread neglect towards religious education for the Empire’s defeat in the Balkan wars. They advocated that only religious education based on Islamic morality could prevent the inevitable moral collapse. Therefore, an Islamist-Westernist controversy about the nature of morals started.²⁷¹

The Westernists forwarded the idea that a “new ethic” should be created for the Muslims.²⁷² Baha Tevfik was one of the pioneering advocates of this idea, and believed that the roots of morality should neither be searched at the skies, nor in the religious

²⁷⁰ Sabri Cemil, *Ameli Fenn-i Tedris* (Kosova Matbaası, 1326), 88-91. Also see Füsün Üstel, 43-46.

²⁷¹ Niyazi Berkes, 407-408.

²⁷² Şükrü Hanioglu, “Garbçılar: Their Attitudes toward Religion and Their Impact on the Official Ideology of the Turkish Republic” *Studia Islamica*, 86 (1997) pp. 133-158, 143.

books. According to him, morality was in humanity, which was a universal fact depending on human psychology composed of sensitivity, tradition, and instincts.²⁷³

Abdullah Cevdet emphasized the importance of conscience, rather than religious rules in preventing people from engaging in immoral behaviors:

The most powerful moral is the one which places Heaven and Hell inside us. It does not give anyone the initiative to forgive a sin. The morals, which tell that after engaging all kinds of banditry and killing numerous people, all wickedness, shamefulness and murders will be forgiven after visiting the *Kâbe* or praying many times is neither high, nor strong in character.²⁷⁴

He also worked to combine the positive social content of Islam with biological materialism²⁷⁵, and told that since Islam could not keep up with the modern advancements of the day and was one of the greatest obstacles to social progress; it should be reconciled with science, in order to be used as a tool to modernize the Ottoman society:

Religion is the science of the masses whereas science is the religion of the elite. The science which is the religion of the elite has been continuously expanding and elevating whereas religion which is the science of the masses cannot be expanded and elevated in accordance with science and this is the most important illness of the Islamic World and Turkey. In my opinion the cure of this illness is to obtain scientific value for religion, and religious power for science.²⁷⁶

On the other hand, Ziya Gökalp occupied an intermediate position between the Islamists and the Westernists and claimed that providing cultural orientation to the new generations was necessary. He told that the essence of the moral crisis was the weakening of the hold of religion, but added that the remedy did not lie in religious education, since

²⁷³ Faruk Öztürk, “II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Ahlak Öğretimi ve Baha Tevfik’in Yeni Ahlak’ı” *Milli Eğitim Dergisi* 145 (2000) [yayim.meb.gov.tr/dergiler/145/ozturk.htm]

²⁷⁴ Şükrü Hanioglu, *Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, 336.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 335.

²⁷⁶ Şükrü Hanioglu, *Garbçılar*, 140.

Turkey was in the middle of a transition period from *ümmet* state to a state of nationhood. The old religious moral values were incapable of functioning the old way. Therefore, seeking to base morality on religion would contribute to the disintegration of morality. According to Gökalp, since the education in the Ottoman schools was being penetrated by the foreign values since the *Tanzimât*, the Ottoman students were having a non-Turkish cultural orientation. For that reason, educational problems of the Empire was not a matter of pedagogical methods of teaching; but rather a matter of orienting education on the basis of a new, secular morality depending on the national culture.²⁷⁷

Gökalp's ideas on nationalist education were severely criticized by Sâti Bey, who was a Westernist and an Ottomanist. He was opposed to his ideology because he believed that Turkish nationalism in education was incompatible with the multi-national Ottoman society.²⁷⁸

Numerous textbooks on morals and civic education replacing the ones written during the Hamidian Era were written and printed with the approval of the Ministry of Public Education, during the Constitutional period.²⁷⁹ In fact, moral education was embedded in textbooks of other courses, as well. The textbooks for Home Economics, Reading, History and many others were full of either implicit moral message directed toward the sub-conscience, or explicitly told moral stories. This tendency was a part of the idea of “creating a complete citizen” with a free and creative mind inculcated with moral values. Ahmed Cevâd, the author of various textbooks for primary and secondary schools, advised the teachers to give moral messages even in the Mathematics courses,

²⁷⁷ Niyazi Berkes, 408-409.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 409-410.

²⁷⁹ For a small bibliography of moral books written in both Hamidian Era and the Second Constitutional Period, see: Faruk Öztürk, “Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyet’e Ahlak Kitapları”, *Kebikeç* 6 (1998) pp. 31-39.

and gave an example of a “moral Math problem” full of implicit messages of philanthropy, national charity, and thriftiness :

A child and his father came across a poor, destitute *moral* man. The father gave him 5 *guruş*. Then, he put 10 *guruş* into a charity box for the navy. Then they entered into a store. The child’s clothes were old; they bought new ones and paid 30 *guruş*. Since the child’s shoes were new, they did not buy new shoes for him. However, his sister’s shoes were old; therefore they bought new shoes for her and paid 15 *guruş* for them. What is the total amount of money paid?²⁸⁰

As can be seen, the content of primary school education was an area of debate especially during the period which followed the Balkan Wars. The pedagogical ways of creating citizens for the new regime, and providing them a good moral education was at the center of discussion. Although there was a controversy among the Islamists, Westernists, Ottomanists and Turkists about the nature and character of the course of Moral and Civic Knowledge, it is possible to elucidate the problem by undertaking an analysis of the textbooks written during the Second Constitutional period.

IV.3. Textbook Content

From that point, I will explain how Young Turks tried to inculcate the primary and secondary school children with the principles, values and symbols of the new regime, and destructed the symbols of the old regime (*devr-i sâbık*), by analyzing textbooks written between years 1909-1918. Textbook content analysis is vitally important to understand the educational policies of the government and to discover which of the ideologies told above surpassed the others in citizen education. According to the authors

²⁸⁰ Ahmed Cevad, “Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Vataniye”, *Tedrisât Mecmuası* 3 (1326), cited in Faruk Öztürk, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Ahlak Öğretimi ve Baha Tevfik’in Yeni Ahlak’ı.

of the textbooks, since children were “the men of the future”, they had to be “educated for the future”.²⁸¹ The textbooks which will be analyzed here are prepared for both the girls’ and boys’ schools, to be used in the course of “Moral and Civic Knowledge”. On the other hand, some books written for Home Economics, Reading, and Ottoman Turkish courses will also be referred to. Citations from some story and poetry books and children’s periodicals will also be used in order to show how the child life evolved during the Second Constitutional period.

Most primary and secondary school textbooks examined in this chapter are composed of short stories, dialogues between children and their parents or teachers, as well as poetry and pictures in order the pupils to distill national and ethic lessons. Since I will analyze the indoctrination of school girls in close detail in the next chapter, I will only define the general characteristics of the citizenship education here. On the other hand, since working and earning money was attached to being male, the passages that will be used in “economic life and the duties of future citizens” topic are mostly quoted from books written only for schoolboys.

I will also analyze the topics and moral stories in these books, and compare them with the propositions of Islamist, Ottomanist, Turkist and Westernist intellectuals on moral education, in order to explain the characteristics of the ideal “Ottoman citizen” which was being constructed.

The Course of Moral and Civic Knowledge was targeting to create the future citizens of the Empire, as told above. It was told in the books that “all citizens had to be aware of their rights and responsibilities, as well as the duties of the parliament which

²⁸¹ Osman Şevki, *Yeni Usul Talim-i Kıraat* (Selânik: Yeni Asır Matbaası, 1330), 3.

was representing them.”²⁸² For the purpose of explaining the expectations of the regime from its future citizens, I will analyze some selected topics and make quotations in order to support my thesis.

IV.3.1. Meşrutiyet (Constitutional Monarchy) and Mutlâkiyet (Autocracy)

The educating cadres of the Second Constitutional Period mainly focused on indoctrinating the boys and girls with the constitutional ideology by vituperating against the Hamidian regime. The textbooks are full of bitter criticism about Abdülhamid II and the unjust administration of his politicians. The old regime was reproached for unlawfulness, wrong administration and violence:

Previously, the government collected taxes from the public, but nobody knew where it was spending them. The soldiers were naked and hungry. Our navy was small, passive and unstable. All those taxes were going into the pockets of some evil, useless men. If a person among the public would come out and ask: “what are you doing with the money you took from us?” or say: “you are doing nothing except buying houses and cars for yourselves with that money, beware of God”, they would make their man catch him and put him into prison. They would send him to exile or even throw him into the sea.²⁸³

Condemning the Hamidian regime was a way of defining the Constitutional Monarchy. In other words, the authors of the textbooks were exalting the Young Turk

²⁸² Mehmed Emin, *Yeni Mâlumât-i Medeniye ve Kânuniye* (İstanbul: Artin Asadoryan ve Mahdumları Matbaası, 1330), 4.

²⁸³ *Evvelce milletten, ahâlidenden hükümet vergi alırdı, fakat nereye sarf ettiğini kimse bilmezdi. Asker çıplak, aç bulunurdu. Donanmamız küçük, kuvvetsiz, çürük idi. Bütün vergiler, milletin paraları birtakım fenâ adamların, hayırsız heriflerin cebine girerdi. Milletten bir adam çıkıp da onlara sorsa “siz bizden aldığınız paraları ne yapıyorsunuz?” ve “siz o paralarla kendinize konaklar, arabalar satın almaktan başka bir şey yapmıyorsunuz, Allah’tan korkun” demiş olsa hemen onu adamlarına yakalattırırlar, hapse koyarlar. Nefy ederler, hatta bazen denize bile attırırlardı. Ahmed Cevâd, Aile Arasında Malumât-ı Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye Şürekâsı, 1328), 85.

rule by criticizing the old rule's supposedly defining features, in order to create an *ancient régime* distinguished from the just, free, equal rule of the Young Turks. The autocracy (*istibdâd*) of Abdülhamid was equated to tyranny and injustice, and it was told that the nation had been suffering for thirty two long years until the Young Turks came:

“We are free now, we have our *Meşrutiyet*, we have our parliament. We have nothing to fear for. We have a good, very good sultan. Our army and navy are being empowered day by day. From now on, we are a great country as well.”²⁸⁴

The old rule was defined as “flawed”, because if the authority in a country belonged to only one person, especially an “ignorant” person who have never suffered from poverty during his childhood, he would not have sympathy towards the pain and troubles of his nation.²⁸⁵ It was also told that as education became widespread in the Ottoman Empire, people were “awakened” and began complaining about the immoral civil servants, who were stealing from the public and behaving illegally²⁸⁶. Conspicuously, this was another way of praising the “educated” Young Turks who were capable of understanding the condition of their people because of their childhoods as “ordinary citizens”, unlike ignorant Abdülhamid, who had been hardly exposed to the public. On the other hand, *istibdâd* was equated with ignorance and backwardness, while *Meşrutiyet* was the regime of “modern countries”:

Absolute Monarchy has been abolished in the world today. However, unfortunately it is still ruling in cruelty and villainy in some places, people of whom are comparatively uneducated [...]

²⁸⁴ Artık şimdi hürüz, Meşrutiyetimiz var, millet meclisimiz var. Korkacak hiçbir şey yok. İyi, çok iyi bir padişahımız var. Ordumuz, donanmamız günden güne kuvvetleşiyor. Artık biz de büyük bir devletiz. Ibid., 92-93.

²⁸⁵ Doktor Hazık, *Malumât-i Medeniye: ikinci kısım* (Dersââdet: Kanaât Kitabhâne ve Matbaâsı, 1328), 15.

²⁸⁶ Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 51.

The progress in Europe that we watch in astonishment was achieved during times of liberty, not absolutism.²⁸⁷

Students were told that Constitutional Monarchy, which is the coordination between the elected representatives of the citizens and the sultan, symbolized the “rule of the public”. In such a system, the sultan does not have endless authority to act as he wishes, since there are rules and laws, demarcating the will of the sultan. Neither the sultan nor the citizens have the right to behave unlawfully.²⁸⁸ However, the Ottoman children were supposed to love their new and “good, very good” sultan, being sure that the Constitution would prevent him from behaving cruelly as the former sultan did. Liberty does not mean disobedience towards the “sultan father”:

“Hikmet: If our sultan father told us to go and throw ourselves into the sea, shall we do it?

Her Uncle: Yes, we will. However, our sultan father would never ask something like that, because this is against the law. Our sultan asked for the preparation of law, in order to rule our country. Nobody can act against it; even he can never act against it.”²⁸⁹

In some textbooks, republican governments are also explained. Republicanism (*Cumhuriyet*) is told to be “just like the Meşrutiyet”, though having some minor differences. Actually, in some books, republican governments and constitutional regimes are explicitly equated:

²⁸⁷ *Hükümet-i mutlaka bugün dünyadan kaldırılmıştır. Fakat maatteessüf ahâlisi nisbeten cehâlet içinde kalan bazı yerlerde yine icrâ-yı zulüm ve habâset etmektedir [...] Avrupa’da bugün bize hayret veren terakkiyât istibdâd devrinde değil hürriyet zamanında vücûda gelmiştir.* Ibid., 15-16.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 17.

²⁸⁹ - *Şimdi padişah babamız dese ki hepimiz gidelim, kendimizi denize atalım, biz bunu yapacak mıyız? - Hay hay, yapacağız. Fakat padişah babamız böyle bir şey söylemez. Çünkü bu, kânuna mugayirdir. Padişah babamız memleketimizi idâre etmek için kânun yapılmasını istemiştir. Bunun dışarısına kimse çıkamaz, kendisi de hiç çıkamaz.* Ahmed Cevâd, *Aile Arasında Malumât-ı Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri*, 74.

Republican government is just like the constitutional government. There are no differences. However, in this type of governments, there is a leader elected among the public for five or six years, and he is called the president of the republic. When his period is over, he goes and someone else takes his position. Of course, the rights and privileges of the president of republic are less than the ones of the sultan.²⁹⁰

It was also stated that republican government was incompatible with the Ottoman Empire's social and political conditions. When a child asks whether it was possible to apply republicanism in the empire, his father replies:

No, it is not. Because we are a nation and government composed of various ethnic groups. If we try to make elections to have a leader, each ethnic group would want the president of republic to be elected among them. There would be disputes. On the other hand, the Ottoman dynasty had established this state and made numerous sacrifices to develop it... There is no other family or dynasty which has served this state more than them. For that reason... republicanism is definitely incompatible in the Ottoman Empire.²⁹¹

Therefore, “*Meşrutiyet* is the best way of governance”²⁹², and the Ottoman students should be respectful for the regime, and work for its continuation in the future. They should have an enthusiasm about *Meşrutiyet* and celebrate the Ottoman National Fest (*Iyd-i Milli-i Osmâni*), which was a secular fest “invented” to provide an occasion of celebration for all the ethnic and religious groups, as told above. In one of the books, a “patriotic, philanthropic, hardworking, and moral”, therefore and “ideal” primary school

²⁹⁰ *Hükûmet-i Cumhûriye aynen Hükûmet-i Meşrûta gibidir. Hiçbir farkı yoktur. Yalnız böyle olan hükûmetlerde hükümdâr yerinde ahâli tarafından beş altı sene için intihâb edilmiş bir reis bulunur ki buna reis-i cumhûr nâmı verilir. Müddeti hitâm bulunca bu reis çekilir, yerine başkası gelir. Bittabi cumhurreisinin hukûku, imtiyâzı hükümdârdan daha azdır.* Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 53-54.

²⁹¹ Nuri Doğan, *Ders Kitapları ve Sosyalleşme* (İstanbul: Bağlam, 1994), 81.

²⁹² *En iyi şekl-i idâre Meşrutiyettir.* Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 50.

boy called *Sadi* organizes his friends to meet on July 10th, and celebrate the inauguration of the constitution to show their devotion and attachment to their state:

Is it appropriate to sit indolently at our homes and not to join the celebrations of the public, in a day for all of our citizens? Since it is not, let us obtain flags, “Ottoman flags” and go to the hill of “eternal liberty” and watch the parade of our honorable army, be proud of having such orderly soldiers, salute our dear sultan and shout with all our strength: “long live liberty!”²⁹³

It is also told in the book that *Sadi* and his friends went to the celebrations with clean, orderly and uniform clothes, with white gloves and red Ottoman flags in their hands.²⁹⁴ As can be seen, the ideal Ottoman children were the ones who had enthusiasm and pride to have such a perfect regime and to live in a free state, in their hearths.

IV.3.2. The Concepts of Homeland (Vatan) and Nation (Millet)

Another crucial part of the indoctrination of Ottoman students was to inculcate them with an endless love for their homeland (*vatan*). The concept of *vatan*, like all other concepts in the textbooks, was used in order to underline the differences between the “cruel” Hamidian regime and the “free” Constitutional Regime:

Here is a beautiful word which is being pronounced nowadays... My little ladies! Today, we can happily pronounce this word, which was being hidden in our hearts like a piece of diamond in a box, and which nobody could have the courage to take out, until four years ago. Previously, they would crush us when we said “*vatan*”. We are free now, that is why we do not ever keep

²⁹³ Şimdi millettaşlarımızın, vatandaşlarımızın mahsus bir günü olan “10 Temmuz” da miskinâne evlerimizde oturmak, halkın şenliğine ortak olmamak lââyık mıdır? Mâdem ki lââyık değildir. Biz de o gün için bir bayrak, birer “Osmanlı bayrağı” tedârik edelim, ellerimize alarak “hürriyet-i ebediye” tepesine gidelim, şanlı ordumuzun geçid resmini seyredelim. Böyle muntazâm bir askerimiz olduğu için iftihâr eyleyelim, sevgili padişahımızı selâmlayalım avazımız çıktığı kadar: “yaşasın hürriyet!” diye bağuralım. Ali Seydi, *Vezaîf-i Medeniye (Dersâdet: İkdâm Matbaası, 1328)*, 34-35.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

the word “vatan” away from our mouths and hearts for a minute.²⁹⁵

The “free” children of the Second Constitutional period were expected to know the definition of this concept and be willing to sacrifice themselves for it:

Our elders have born and grown up in these countries and were buried in the lands of these countries when they died. We breathe with the air of these countries. We live and learn everything in these countries. Therefore, homeland means the life of every one of us, which we are indebted to love, and work for its involvement.²⁹⁶

The authors of all the text books written before the Balkan Wars strongly emphasize Ottomanism, and aim to create a conscience of unity among the children belonging to various ethnic and religious communities living in the empire. The definitions of “homeland” and “nation” are directly related to this idea of unity:

These sacred lands, on which various ethnic groups and elements like the Turks, Arabs, Albanians, Bosnians, Kurds, Laz people, Georgians, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Bulgarians live with a language and are unified under a common benefit are called homeland. The composition of these elements living under the same rule are called “nation” (*millet*). This homeland is Ottoman; our common nation is the Ottoman nation. Girl, love your homeland and nation much more than your life, and live proudly under the honorable Ottoman flag.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ İşte iyiden iyiye ağızlarda dolaşan güzel bir kelime... Hanım Kızlarım! Dört sene evveline gelinceye kadar kapalı bir kutu içinde gizlenmiş bir elmas parçası gibi kalplerimizde saklayıp da meydana çıkarmaya cesâret olunamayan bu mübârek kelimeyi bugün siz de biz de sevinerek ağızlarımıza alabiliyoruz. Çünkü evvelden vatan deyince bizi ezerlerdi. Şimdi serbest olduk. Onun için vatan sözünü bir dakika gönlümüzden ayırmayız. Nâzım, *Kıraat-ı Beytiye: Bircümle İnâs Mekâtib-i İbtidâiyesinin Üçüncü Sınıfına Mahsustur* (İstanbul: Kitabhâne-i İslâm ve Askeri, 1328), 9.

²⁹⁶ Ecdâdımız bu memleketlerde doğup büyümüşler, vefât ettikleri vakit bu memleketlerin topraklarına gömülmüşler. Biz de bu memleketlerin havasıyla nefes alıyoruz. Bu memleketler içinde yaşıyoruz, ne öğreniyorsak bu memleketlerde öğreniyoruz. O halde vatan hepimizin hayatı demektir ki bunu sevmek, bunun âlâ olması için el birliğiyle çalışmak boynumuzun borcudur. Ibid., 10.

²⁹⁷ İşte Türk, Arap, Arnavud, Boşnak, Kürt, Laz, Gürcü, Rum, Ermeni, Musevî, Bulgar ve hakezâ akvâm ve anâsırın birer lisân ile mütekellim ve menfaât-i umûmiyece müttehid olarak üzerinde bulundukları şu mukaddes topraklara vatan denir. Vatanımızda aynı kânun altında yaşayan bu unsurların heyet-i umûmiyesine millet nâmı verilir. Bu vatan Osmanlı vatanıdır, umûm milletimiz Osmanlı milletidir. Kızım, vatan ve milletini canından çok sev, şanlı Osmanlı sancağı altında iftihâr ile yaşa. Nâzım, *Kızlara Mahsus*

The students were indoctrinated about the importance of equality among all Ottoman citizens, working cooperatively for their country. In the same book of Ali Seydi, which is composed of moral and social stories about “*Sadi* the patriotic schoolboy”, Sadi offers his friends to make military practice instead of playing games in their spare time, telling that they are supposed to have experience before they went to perform their military service. The children start practicing, and after a couple of minutes, some non-Muslim children come nearby, and start watching them. Sadi invites them to practice together, saying:

Now, there are no separations and distinctions, we are all Ottomans, we are all children of this homeland. All of us will be soldiers for this homeland. We better learn the military profession not to have problems in the future and become perfect soldiers to elevate and honor our army. Come on, I invite you to practice in the name of Ottoman hood and citizenship!²⁹⁸

The desire to create a unified Ottoman nation and inculcate the students with the principle of the “union of elements” (*ittihâd-i anâsır*) was very clear in the textbooks written before 1913. In a textbook written by Selim Kohen, a father, apparently a non-Muslim, tells his children:

I received Ottoman discipline when I was young. I grew as an Ottoman. My feelings are just like an Ottoman. I can say that my mother tongue is Turkish. Most of my classmates are now civil

Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye Şurekâsı, 1327), 116. Also see Ahmet Sâki, *Tedrisât-ı Medeniye ve Ahlâk-i İctimaiye* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şurekâsı, 1327), 19.

²⁹⁸ *Şimdi artık ayrılık gayrılık yoktur, hepimiz Osmanlıyız, hepimiz bu vatanın evlâdıyız, hepimiz bu vatan için asker olacağız. Askerliği şimdiden öğrenelim ki: ileride sıkıntı çekmeyelim; tam asker olalım, “Osmanlı ordusunun yüzünü bir kat daha ağartalım”. Haydi sizi Osmanlılık ve vatandaşlık nâmına tâlime dâvet ediyorum! Ali Seydi, Vezâif-i Medeniye* (Dersaadet: İkdâm Matbaası, 1328), 20.

servants and very happy just like me. My dear children! The protector of our coreligionists is the Ottoman state.²⁹⁹

It was told that the Ottoman citizens must unite under the flag of Ottomanism, and work together for a common goal, since different religions should not create cleavages. Every citizen, regardless of the religion or ethnic group he/she belongs, must share the same feelings and mentality with the other Ottomans, in order to defend their country in case of an intrusion of the enemies.³⁰⁰ Nevertheless, despite advocating equality among the communities, the relative superiority of the Turks was sometimes stressed:

The ones who established the Ottoman government are the Turks. The Turks have been working for six hundred years and more, in order to defend these lands. Today, the ones who have the highest population and who are the most powerful are the Turks.³⁰¹

Despite the desire to indoctrinate the students with Ottomanism, it is crucially important to remember that most of the non-Muslim students in the empire were going to schools which were either established by their own religious and ethnic community, or the missionaries. Therefore, we can think that the textbooks analyzed in this thesis were being read by only a minor group of non-Muslim students. As I told above, the Turkish educators were complaining about the separatist-nationalist ideology which the students living in the Balkan provinces were being inculcated with. We can easily think that these

²⁹⁹ *Ben küçük iken Osmanlı terbiyesi aldım. Osmanlı büyüdüm. Hissiyâtım adetâ bir Osmanlı gibidir. Ana lisânım Türkçedir diyebilirim. Sınıf arkadaşlarımdan pek çokları devlet hizmetindedirler ve benim gibi mesut ve bahtiyârdırlar. Ey sevgili çocuklarım! Dindaşlarımızın hâmisî Osmanlı devletidir.* Selim Kohen, *Mâlumât-i Etfâl*, (İstanbul: Artin Asadoryan ve Mahdumları, 1328), 5.

³⁰⁰ Ali Haydar and Ahmed Ziyâ, *Malumât-i Medeniye* (Dersââdet: Kanaât Matbaası, 1329), 19.

³⁰¹ *Osmanlı hükümetini tesis edenler Türklerdir. Türkler, altı yüz şu kadar seneden beri bu toprakları muhafaza için pek çok uğraşmışlardır. Bugün nüfusça en çok olan ve en kuvvetli bulunan Türklerdir.* Ibid., 16.

textbooks failed to create a conscience of Ottomanism, in the case of non-Muslim students.

After the huge territorial losses and the tragic results after the Balkan Wars, the textbook content changed dramatically. The textbook authors, who were emphasizing the importance of brotherhood, citizenship, equality and love before the wars, were talking of revenge and hatred this time:

Did not you hear about the happenings during the Balkan Wars? Did not you read in the books? The homeland of five million Muslims was invaded by the Balkan governments; mosques, *mescids*, *medreses* were burned, destructed and were converted into churches. The Muslims were exposed to all kinds of insults and attacks. It became impossible for anyone to live there [...] We must have an eternal hatred, dislike and feeling of revenge in our hearths against the nations who offend the homeland [...] A national revenge is legitimate. If a nation forgives the nation which gives harm to itself, if it does not take revenge, then that nation does not deserve to live.³⁰²

Therefore, 1913 was an important turning point for the educational policies of the Ottoman Empire. When the government turned towards Turkish nationalism as told previously in this chapter, the educators followed the same path, and constructing Turkish nationalists became the dominant purpose of education. Pictures depicting the Muslims trying to defend their lands against the Balkan rebels, and Turks tragically being insulted by the Serbian bandits were added into some primary school textbooks.³⁰³ Inculcating the students with an ambition to re-conquer the lost territories, on which millions of desperate, oppressed Muslims (in Bosnia, Albania, Salonika, Yanya, Crete, Gümülcine,

³⁰² *Geçen Balkan hâdiselerini işitmedin mi? Kitaplarda okumadın mı? Beş milyon müslümanın vatan-i husûsisi balkan hüûmetlerinin istilâsına uğradı, câmiler, mescitler, medreseler yakıldı, yıkıldı, kiliseye tahvil edildi. İslâmların görmediği hakâret, tecâvüz kalmadı. Hiçbir kimse oralarda oturamaz oldu. [...] Vatana tecâvüz eden, fenâlık eyleyen milletlere karşı kalbimizde sönmez, za'il olmaz bir kin, bir buğz, bir hüsn-i intikâm beslemeliyiz. [...] İntikâm-i milli meşrudur. Bir millet, fenâlık gördüğü milleti affederse, onunla barışır ise, ondan intikamını almaz ise o millet yaşamaya lâyık değildir.* Ali Seydi, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Orhâniye, 1334), 120-122.

³⁰³ See Ali Seydi, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Orhâniye, 1334), 114-119.

Filibe, Romania, the Caucasus, Egypt, Bingâzi, Tripoli, Tunisia, and Algeria) were living, was targeted.³⁰⁴ As can be seen, Turkish nationalism triggered by the Balkan wars created sorrow and hatred about the previously lost lands in the Caucasus and North Africa, as well. After that point, the Turkish children, who were the protectors of the Turkish race and all Muslims in the lost Ottoman lands, had a long list of enemies to take revenge from, including their former “brothers” and “citizens”:

This separation is enough to make us and our (Muslim) brothers who experience the disaster to be separated from us, to understand the value of the homeland. Now, they are living under the oppression and tyranny of the cruel enemies: the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, Montenegrins, Italians, French, Russians. This means that our dear homeland is composed of two parts: 1) Free and autonomous homeland, 2) Captive homeland. Our duty is to love all parts of our homeland, to have the purpose of saving the occupied parts, and to work to save it.³⁰⁵

The transformation in the educational ideology was also reflected in various poetry and reading books for children. However, such books had a much bitter language condemning the Balkan nations and infiltrating the children with a great hatred:

They behaved like worms inside us. They joined our foreign enemies. They took ¾ of our motherland and wounded our dear mother. They killed thousands of, hundred thousands of suckling babies, raped our women, and, these monsters even raped our little girls. Turkish child! Remember these enemies who were previously worms, and who transformed into snakes now. The blood of your grandfathers is shouting: “Turkish child! Take

³⁰⁴ Ahmed Cevâd, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye, Sıh iye, Medeniye, Vataniye ve İnsaniye* (İstanbul: Hilal Matbaası, 1330), 108.

³⁰⁵ *Bu ayrılık hem bize hem de bizden ayrılmak felâketine duçar olan o bedbaht kardeşlerimize vatanın kıymetini takdir ettirmeye kâfidir. Onlar şimdi, memleketlerini istilâ etmiş olan gaddar düşmanların: Yunanlıların, Bulgarların, Sırpların, Karadağlıların, İtalyanların, Fransızların, Moskofların tazyikât ve itisafâtı altında eziliyorlar. [...] Demek ki bizim sevgili vatanımız iki kısımdır: 1) Hür ve müstakil vatan, 2) Esir vatan. Vazifemiz bütün vatanımızı sevmek, esârette kalanı kurtarmak emelini beslemek, kurtarmaya çalışmaktır.* Ahmed Cevâd, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye, Sıhhiye, Medeniye, Vataniye ve İnsaniye*, 108-109.

your revenge!” Do not ever forget the words Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian and those who want to behave like them!³⁰⁶

It is also important to note the role of periodicals in creating a Turkist spirit, here. The periodicals for children played an important role in the socialization of Ottoman students outside the classroom. Such periodicals were full of pictures, short stories and games to educate children by creating a “child culture”, divorced from the strict discipline in the schools. Although there had been periodicals for children since the Tanzimât, The Second Constitutional period, especially the period after 1913 witnessed the proliferation of such magazines.³⁰⁷ Numerous poems and stories were written, aiming to create patriotic Turkish and Muslim children, instead of the former Ottoman children living happily and friendly with their multi- religious citizens:

Green mountains turned into black, the river filled with blood,
Do our hearts accept to stay still after that?
They took your screaming sister to hang
And your little brothers to burn

They took the turban of your grandfather and drowned,
They tore our Kuran, the gift of God,
They threw the flag into the mud
And had the orphans of the mothers sold...³⁰⁸

As can be seen, Turkish children, either with the textbooks or periodicals, various story and poetry books, were oriented towards Turkish nationalism as the World War approached.

³⁰⁶ Özdemir, *Türk Ruhu Nasıl Yapılıyor?* (İstanbul: Hikmet Matbaa-i İslâmiyesi, 1329/1914), 25-26 , cited in Cüneyd Okay, *Meşrutiyet Çocukları* (İstanbul: Bordo, 2000), 45.

³⁰⁷ Cüneyd Okay, *Eski Harfli Çocuk Dergileri* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1999), 19-25.

³⁰⁸ Öç Duygularından Küçük Yavrularımıza, *Çocuk Dünyası* 13 (1329/1916), pp.3 cited in Cüneyd Okay, *Meşrutiyet Çocukları*, 91.

IV.3.3. Economic Life and the Duties of Future Citizens

One of the most important targets of the Committee of Union and Progress was to achieve economical, technical and industrial progress in the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the state had a deficiency in providing the necessary capital for such a progress. During the first days of the revolution, the new government stressed the necessity of transferring foreign capital and giving privileges to European companies, denouncing the “destroying reign” of Abdülhamid, which had exhausted all the native capital resources, and caused the Ottomans to loose their creative skills.³⁰⁹

During the period between 1908 and 1913, the attempts of bringing foreign capital to the Empire achieved considerable success. However, the First World War triggered the idea of “national economy”, which was first emphasized by Ahmet Muhittin Bey in his article published in *İslâm Mecmuası*. He told that the foreign capital had occupied all parts of the state, and the Ottomans lost their economic independence by only providing human capital to the investments of the European companies. He also mentioned that those companies sometimes even provided the necessary human power from their own countries, preventing the Ottomans from working in the projects (like the construction of railways) of their own country.³¹⁰ The abolition of capitulations and Turkish boycott of European products were parts of the national economy project.

In this topic, I will undertake an analysis of the occupations and jobs that are proposed to primary and secondary school students, as well as the kinds of abilities which the state wanted them to develop, for the purpose of becoming creative citizens who will contribute to the economical and industrial progress of their country.

³⁰⁹ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat (1908-1918)* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982), 83.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 86-87.

IV.3.4. The Importance of Education, Work, Economic Independence and Imperialism

All textbooks written during the Second Constitutional period emphasize the importance of having good education and earning money, in order to become rich and beneficial for the society. The students were inculcated with the idea of obtaining wealth, for the purpose of securing their future. Importance of having an occupation and being hardworking were indoctrinated through stories about lazy people who take their family wealth for granted and spend all their money for the sake of having a dissipated life. These people, after the death of their parents, consume all their inheritance and become miserable.³¹¹ The keys to achieve national and individual progress and power were education, science and hard work, and this was explained with reference to developed states:

The reasons for the incredible progress of the Americans and the Japanese are science, trade, agriculture and crafts. You see that there are hundred millions of people living in Asia, Africa, Oceania in your Geography courses. However, these poor people are living under the yoke of the Europeans. That is why they stayed uneducated, could not have progress and became the captives of the hardworking nations. Today, the English, although being a nation of thirty million, have occupied half of the world and have been crushing three hundred million people under their iron-like claws, because the English are a knowledgeable and hardworking nation.³¹²

³¹¹ See Ahmed Cevâd, *Mektepte Mâlumât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri* (İstanbul: Mahmud Beğ Matbaası, 1328), 29-32.

³¹² *Amerikalılar ve Japonların fevkalâde ilerlemelerinin sebepleri, hep ilim, ticâret, ziraât ve zanaâttir. Coğrafya okurken görüyorsunuz ki Asyada, Afrikada, Okyanusya kıtalarında yüzlerce milyon insanlar vardır. Fakat bunlar, bu biçâreler Avrupalıların boyunduruğu altında esir gibi kalmışlardır. Çünkü onlar câhil kaldılar, ilerleyemediler, diğer çalışan milletlerin esiri oldular. Bugün İngilizler, otuz milyonluk bir millet olduğu halde dünyanın yarısını zaptetmiş ve üç yüz milyon insanı çelik gibi pençeleri altına*

As can be seen, education and hard work were told to provide protection from European imperialism and to have complete independence. Similarly, Turkish children must save money and should not have a dissipated life, in order to protect the national economy from the European powers:

Silk clothes are dissipation. But this is not the only way of dissipation. To have a desire to jewelry, diamonds, and fancy things is also dissipation. Europe is inventing things for the purpose of taking our money, everyday. We must not be deceived and spend our money on them.³¹³

IV.3.5. The “Idea of Initiative” (Fikr-i Teşebbüs) and Idealized Jobs

According to the textbooks, entrepreneurship and taking initiative are the keys to have a prosperous, wealthy life. All Turkish boys, who will be the breadwinners of their families in the future, must have the desire to become as rich as possible. A boy called Necmi tells that he wants to be wealthy by saying:

Mom, I want to be rich. Rich, very rich that I will have boxes of liras, houses, farms, cars, automobiles. How nice it would be. You would not work, my father would not work. Maids and menservants would service us...³¹⁴

Necmi’s desires are like a summary of the ideal life promised to hardworking Turkish boys in almost all books. Obtaining wealth should be the primary future goal for

almışlar, eziyorlar. Çünkü İngilizler malumâtlı ve çalışkan bir millettir. Ali Haydar and Ahmed Ziyâ, *Mâlûmât-i Medeniye*, 41.

³¹³ İpekli libâslar bir sefâhattir. Fakat sefâhatler yalnız bundan ibâret değildir. Mücevherler, elmaslar, cicili bicili şeylere heves etmek sefâhattir. Avrupa bizim paralarımızı çekmek için her gün bir şey icâdediyor: biz aldanıp paralarımızı öyle şeylere vermemeliyiz. Ahmed Cevâd, *Mektepte Mâlûmât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri*, 37.

³¹⁴ Anne ben zengin olmak istiyorum. Zengin, çok zengin olayım, kasalar dolusu liralaram, konaklarım, çiftliklerim olsun, arabalarım, otomobillerim olsun. O zaman ne kadar iyi olurdu, anneciğim. Sen hiç çalışmazdın, babam çalışmazdı, hizmetçiler, uşaklar işlerimizi görürdü. Ahmed Cevâd, *Mektepte Mâlûmât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri*, 80.

a young Ottoman citizen. However, this requires abandoning the old habits, ideals and mentality which they inherited from their fathers and grandfathers. The young Ottoman men should not be “burdens” to their nation,³¹⁵ and this would be possible by becoming entrepreneurs, rather than civil servants, because: “a man who has a creative mind, who has respect for himself, who understands the benefit of his personal freedom, who wants to become rich and live comfortably would not be a civil servant for sure, he would be a merchant, a farmer, a craftsmen.”³¹⁶ Civil servants are not only burdens for the state, but also desperate people who lack any talent or skill to earn money. In a story, a student who wants to become a merchant when he grows up explains why he does not want to be a civil servant:

Since they are not capable of doing anything else, and do not have self confidence, they strongly desire to become civil servants. Nobody has witnessed moral, straightforward civil servants to be able to build a house with the money they saved from their salaries. They spend their lives in need, agitation and grief. They do not have their liberty and freedom of thought. When they are dismissed, they fall into misery. They beg for a thousand people in order to be appointed for a service.³¹⁷

The idea of initiative is also necessary for the future generations, in order to have their own business, and to protect their state from the European imperialists. Ottoman Empire needs native entrepreneurs who will establish companies and develop the industry, agriculture and commerce in their country: “Our country crucially needs

³¹⁵ Ali Seydi, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Şirket-i Mürettebiye Matbaası, 1336), 25.

³¹⁶ *Kendisinde fikr-i teşebbüs olan, nefesine itimâdı bulunan, istiklâl-i şahsiyesinin fâidesini anlayan, hürriyetini seven, zengin olmak, rahat yaşamak isteyen adam elbette memur olmaz, tâcir, çiftçi, zanaatkâr olur.* Ali Seydi, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Orhâniye, 1334), 45-46.

³¹⁷ *Bunların elinden başka bir şey gelmediği, kendilerine itimâdları olmadığı için rahat zannettikleri memurluğa can atarlar. Nâmus ve istikâmetiyle yaşayan memurlardan hiçbirisinin maaşlarından arttırdıkları para ile bir ev yaptırabildiklerini gören yoktur. Bunlar daima zarûret, telâş ve hemm içinde ömür geçirirler. Hürriyetlerine, fikr-i istiklâllerine mâlik değillerdir. Azledilince sefâlet içinde yuvarlanırlar. Bir hizmete tayin olunmak için bin kişiye yalvarır, yakarırlar.* Ibid., 44.

children with the idea of initiative in order to develop and get rid of economic captivity”³¹⁸

Since the state was lacking the necessary capital and qualified manpower, the children were oriented towards occupations which would bring progress and economic power to the state. The mother of Necmi gives advice to him:

Now, if you want to be rich, you must have an occupation. It is necessary to be good at that occupation and work hard. Take engineering for example... There are a few engineers in our country. To be a good engineer... That is what they call treasure. There are lots of beneficial occupations for us: being an architect, doctor, farmer, merchant, and many more. The only way to be successful in these occupations is to have intention.³¹⁹

The author tells how Necmi became motivated after his mother’s words and became “a great engineer” and a partner of a big company after long years of hard work, and was appointed to draw the plans of a new railroad that was to be built in Anatolia. The school boys were motivated through many other stories like this, and the “*Meşrutiyet* child” was aimed to be equipped with skills like self confidence, a creative mind and creativity. At the end of another success story about a grocery apprentice who obtained capital and became a very rich, successful merchant after spending his money for a long time, the author tells that if a grocery apprentice could do this, the graduates of a commerce school, engineering school, *idâdi* (high school) or even a *rüşdiye* (secondary school) can do much more than that.

³¹⁸ *Memleketimiz terakki etmek ve ecnebi esâret-i iktisâdiyesinden kurtulmak için fikr-i teşebbüs sâhibi evlâda şiddetle muhtaçtır.* Ahmed Cevâd, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye*, 82.

³¹⁹ *Şimdi sen zengin olmak istiyorsan bir meslek sâhibi olman lâzımdır. O mesleği iyi bilmek, o meslekte çok çalışmak icâbeder. Meselâ mühendislik... Memleketimizde ne kadar az mühendis vardır. İyi bir mühendis olmak... İşte buna define derler. Fâideli meslekler bizim için pek çoktur: mimarlık, doktorluk, ziraât, ticâret, daha pek çok meslekler vardır. Bu mesleklerde ileri gitmek, muvaffak olmak ancak merâm ile mümkün olur.* Ahmed Cevâd, *Mektepte Mâlumât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri*, 82.

IV.3.6. Religious Knowledge and Moral Qualities of a Perfect Citizen

The textbooks of the Second Constitutional Period include bulk of moral stories, passages and dialogues telling the pupils the virtues that are necessary to be found in a good citizen. They are concerned about various aspects of human life, like the interrelations within a family, the child's role in a society, showing respect to the elders, donating money to the poor and not being selfish, lazy and rude. In the books which include stories and dialogues, religious reference is rare, almost not present. However, in books which include only passages which the author directly communicates with the students, reference to some verses from the Quran and *hadis* citations are present. In such books, secular knowledge about the society and religious information are amalgamated in order to support each other:

Gentlemen! One of the greatest issues of our homeland is the union and cooperation of elements. We should all work for that. The Sharia and the rules of humanity ask us to have good relations with our citizens and maybe all the humans living on earth.³²⁰

As I told previously in this chapter, there was a controversy among the Islamists, Westernists, Ottomanists and Turkists about the nature and character of morals that are to be taught in the primary and secondary schools. The examples in the comprehensive book of Nuri Doğan on the educational books of the Hamidian and Constitutional Eras show that the moral stories and passages in the Hamidian Era textbooks included intense religious indoctrination. However, the same cannot be said for the textbooks written during the Second Constitutional Period. They obviously have more

³²⁰ *Efendiler! Vatanımızın en mühim meselelerinden biri de ittihâd ve ittifâk-i anâsırdır, hepimiz daima buna çalışmalıyız. Şer'-i Şerif ve kânun-i insâniyet dâima vatandaşlarımızla ve belki dünyada mevcut olan bütün insanlarla iyi geçinmemizi emrediyor..* Ali Haydar and Ahmed Ziyâ, *Mâlumât-i Medeniye*, 21.

secular morality indoctrination, supported by religious rules, as well. Sometimes, morals are even told as a separate field:” Chastity and straightness mean avoiding the situations which are forbidden by Islam, reason and morality, and behave honestly in all kinds of work.”³²¹ It is possible to see the obvious differences between the Hamidian Era and Second Constitutional Era school books, by comparing the topics on cleanliness. Even on such an issue which can be explained by reasoning, Hamidian Era textbooks have a highly religious approach. It is told that God would not like those people who do not give importance to their cleanliness, since cleanliness is directly related to Islamic faith.³²² On the other hand, in the school books written in the Second Constitutional period, a much more scientific approach, based on reason is followed:

Some very small, non-visible animals called “microbes”, which enter into our bodies and cause all kinds of illnesses, gather in unclean places. Their saliva starts various illnesses in us. Deadly illnesses like cholera and fever never come close to clean men who pay attention to protect their health.³²³

Similarly, in the books written in the Constitutional Era, evil and good were defined with the concept of “conscience”; and it was stated that a person must not engage in evil behaviors in order not to have “pangs of conscience”:

Girl, when you do something bad, an inner voice of yours warns and rebukes you about that. Whenever you do something good, the same voice disciplines and encourages you. This inner voice which you hear about good and evil is your conscience. Girl! Conscience is a feeling of the soul given to you by God, for you to become a good person and engage in goodness. Your evil acts

³²¹ *İffet ve istikâmet demek, şer'an ve aklen ve ahlâken işlenilmesi yasak olan hallerden sakınmak ve her işte doğruluk etmek demektir.* Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 66.

³²² Nuri Doğan, *Ders Kitapları ve Sosyalleşme*, 37. Also see A. Rıza, *Ahlâk ve Malumat-ı Medeniye Dersleri İkinci Kitap* (Dersaadet: Necm-i İstikbâl Matbaası, 1328), 141-142.

³²³ “Mikrop” denilen ve vücudumuza dâhil olarak her türlü hastalıklara sebep olan gözle görünmez hayvancıklar daima temiz olmayan yerlerde toplanır. Bunların salyası bizde türlü türlü hastalıklar peydâ eder. Veya kolera, hummâ gibi tehlikeli, öldürücü hastalıklar asla temiz, hıfz-i sıhate riayetkâr adamlara yânaşamaz. Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 13.

give you pangs of conscience. Since it is created for goodness, whenever you are good and do your works nicely, help those who need you, it gives you pleasure and contentment. Do you want to be happy all the time? Pay attention to my words: Do the things which your conscience tells you to, and do not do the ones which your conscience rejects.³²⁴

As can be seen, the motive for engaging in good or bad acts was told to be in the child's conscience, rather than religious orders. This approach is very similar to Abdullah Cevdet's explanation of morals, which places Heaven and Hell inside one's head. However, it is also told in the passage that this conscience is created and placed in our souls by God. Therefore, it is not possible to fit this morality concept to pure Westernism or Islamism. The morality in the textbooks can be described as a blend of the ideas of the Islamists and the Westernists.

Moral indoctrination in the textbooks that I analyzed here was achieved mostly through short stories and dialogues, in which selfish, rude, cruel children were punished and had to pay for what they have done, at the end. For example, in a story about two sisters fighting for a piece of fabric for the purpose of making clothes for their dolls, their mother takes the fabric from them and tells them that she could have given them more if they were not that selfish. The two girls cannot say a word, regretting for what they have done.³²⁵

³²⁴ Kızım, fenâlık ettiğin zaman içinden kopan ses sana o fenâlığı ihtâr eder, seni azarlar, iyi bir iş işlediğin vakit yine bir ses seni terbiye ve teşvik eder. Hayra ve Şer'e karşı duyduğun şu ses senin vicdânındır. Kızım! Vicdân, ruhun bir duygusudur ki Cenâb-i Hakk iyi bir insan olmaklığın ve iyilik yapmaklığın için ânu sana vermiştir. Ettiğin bir fenâlık vicdânını mahzun eder. Çünkü o iyilik için yaratılmış olduğundan sen iyi oldukça, vazifelerini güzel güzel yaptıkça, sana muhtaç olan bir kimsenin hizmetinde bulunduğça o da sana zevk ve ferah verir. Daima mesud olmak ister misin? Şu sözüme dikkat et: Vicdânının kabul etmeyeceği şeyi yapma, ânın sana yap dediği şeyi yap. Nâzım, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 124.

³²⁵ Nâzım, *Kıraat-ı Beytiye* (İstanbul: Kitabhâne-i İslâm ve Askeri, 1328), 42. Also see İsmail Cezmi, *Malumât-ı Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri* (İstanbul: Artin Asadoryan ve Mahdumları, 1328), 28-30.

On the other hand, the importance of religious practice is emphasized in those books, as well:

If you fail to worship, you are disobedient to the orders of Allah. Then, all evil will attack you finding you weak and discouraged. You would not have comfort either in this world and the other world. Wake up child, do the prayer, ask for the forgiveness of your sins and faults from God. Try to discipline yourself, fill your hearth with the light of faith. A girl who wants to become good day by day should elevate her soul towards Allah, worship five times a day, fulfill her duties and pray for the health and security of herself and her family by hearth, and avoid evil.³²⁶

However, sometimes even the religious rituals were also explained scientifically with a utilitarian reasoning, by telling that the positions and movements in the daily prayer would help the body to digest food easily, and fasting is a way of cleaning the stomach and having a healthier body, as well as having a peaceful and clean soul.³²⁷

We can conclude by saying that moral education during the Second Constitutional Period was a blend of different views. Although there were Islamic references, they were used in order to support the messages given in the books. Religious practice was strongly advised, and presented as a necessity to become a good and healthy person.

In this chapter, I attempted to analyze the main educational debates, reforms as well as the textbook content, for the purpose of explaining the “citizen creating” process, which started after the Young Turk Revolution. The political events, especially the loss of a huge amount of territories strongly affected the educational policies of the Young

³²⁶ *Eğer sen ibâdetde kusur edersen Hazret-i Allah'ın emrine itaât etmemiş olursun. O vakit bütün fenâlık seni kuvvetsiz ve cesâretsiz görerek üzerine hücum eder. Dünyada ve âhirette rahat yüzü göremezsın. Kalk evlâdım, namazını kıl, kusurlarının affı için Cenâb-i Hakk'tan mağfiret iste. Nefsini terbiyeye çalış, kalbini nûr-i imân ile doldur. Günden güne alâ olmak isteyen bir kız kalbini Cenâb-i Allah'a doğru yükseltmeli, beş vakit namazını kılmalı, üzerine düşen vazifeyi yapmalı, gerek kendisinin ve gerek ailesinin sıhhat ve afiyeti, saadet ve selâmeti için Cenâb-i Hakk'a sıdk ile dualar etmeli, fenâlıktan sakınmalıdır. Ibid., 149-150.*

³²⁷ . Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 22-25.

Turk Era. The courses, books and classroom objects were designed to inculcate the students with Turkish Nationalism, as a reaction to the revolts in the Balkan provinces.

The Ottoman students were indoctrinated with love and obedience towards the new regime, and were oriented towards entrepreneurship in order to become beneficial citizens for their nation. Also, the principles and values of the Hamidian regime were deconstructed and the old rule was equated to cruelty, violence and oppression for the purpose of praising the liberal rule of the Young Turks.

Although the importance of religious practice was stressed, the concept of morality in the textbooks was much more secular than the Hamidian Era textbooks. Religious orders and social rules were amalgamated for the purpose of supporting each other and intensifying the moral messages.

CHAPTER V

THE EDUCATION OF THE “MOTHER CITIZENS”

In this chapter, I will undertake an analysis of the primary and secondary school textbooks for the purpose of elucidating the differences between the education and socialization of Ottoman boys and girls. Analyzing the school books through the gender lens provides a much better insight of the pedagogical methods of the citizen education process. Since the schools for boys and girls were separated in the Ottoman Empire, there were separate books prepared to construct the future mothers and fathers of the country. Therefore, textbooks for girls are important tools which help us to discover the state's official ideology towards the woman question and the status of its female citizens. On the other hand, they provide important details regarding the “culture of girlhood”, and the daily practices as well as the mentalities of young women during a period of war and clashing ideologies.

The books I will analyze in this chapter are mostly written for “Moral and Civic Knowledge”, “Home Economics”, and “Reading” courses of primary and secondary schools for girls. However, I will also make use of some textbooks written for boys, since they include various related topics, like “the interrelations among the family members”,

or “the clues of selecting the ideal wife and having a peaceful marriage”. Such books will help us discover the perceptions and ideas of the future fathers on marriage, women and family life.

By analyzing various topics from the textbooks, I will make comments on the newly-constructed concepts of motherhood, citizenship and housewifery; and their relation to Turkish nationalism, which was the dominant ideology of the time, as stated in the previous chapter. I will also analyze those concepts in order to display whether female education in the Second Constitutional Era was an instrument of modernizing and emancipating women, or just a reinforcement of the traditional gender hierarchy, by over-exalting the classical gender roles.

V.1 Motherhood and Women’s Responsibilities

V.1.1. Education

The young ladies of the Second Constitutional Era were inculcated with the crucial importance of education, for the future of their nation and state. The practical benefits of receiving education and developing the self were repeatedly explained; and the students were expected to appreciate the public educational opportunities, which their mothers and grandmothers did not have. Stories about the troublesome lives of religiously uneducated women and their incapability to read the Quran and pray properly were told in order for the girls to derive lessons.³²⁸ Similarly, the importance of literacy

³²⁸ Nâzim, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye*, 66, Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 20.

was strongly emphasized by telling that illiterate women who were unable to read the letters of their husbands or make calculations would be vulnerable and exposed to the danger of being deceived for all their lives.³²⁹ Also, as told in the previous chapter, religious indoctrination was also used in order to intensify the message about the necessity of education, by saying: “Knowledge is for the girls, as well as the boys. Our God asks everyone to receive education.”³³⁰ Ottoman girls were strongly encouraged to study hard and attend their classes regularly, and were told to be ambitious, and imitate their hardworking and successful friends in order to be good schoolchildren³³¹.

In all textbooks, there is an obvious and direct relationship between having education and becoming a good mother. The most important mission of a girl was presented as obtaining knowledge by going to school and transferring this knowledge to her off springs. Women were presented as the most important social agents with a vital role in developing the whole society, by controlling its smallest unit, the family. It was told that good women increased the honor of the family, and good families increased the honor of the state. Therefore, young ladies were told to prove their love to their homeland by “going to school regularly, behaving well, and doing their homework nicely”.³³² Education was a tool for raising good children who will be beneficial citizens for their state in the future:

The primary and most sacred mission of a woman is educating children, and giving them a good discipline. It is obvious that an educated child is born from an educated mother. Therefore, for a woman to be capable of disciplining a child, she must first of all

³²⁹ Nâzım, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye*, 66.

³³⁰ *İlim yalnız erkeklere değil kadınlara da lâzımdır. Cenâb-i Hakk herkes için ilim öğrenmesini emrediyor.* Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 19.

³³¹ See Nâzım, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye*, 82 and Nâzım, *Kıraât-i Beytiye Üçüncü Kitap* 89-91.

³³² Nâzım, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye*, 118.

be disciplined, and knowledgeable about the rules of education.³³³

The future mothers of the society therefore had to receive a good education and obtain the necessary pedagogical skills to raise their children in order to fulfill their duties. In the Moral and Civic Knowledge books written for boys, the fathers of the future were enlightened about the characteristics about the ideal Turkish mother, and were told to select educated girls who will be capable of helping their children's lessons, as wives.³³⁴ The “educated and modern” children of *Meşrutiyet* had to marry women who were much more enlightened than their own mothers and grandmothers, in order to raise better generations: “We are living in the twentieth century now. Ignorant women cannot be wives, mothers, or companions of life for us.”³³⁵

Also, the infiltration of the Ottoman children with patriotism was told to be the duty of their mothers, since nationalism and responsibility to work for the state were acquired through the discipline given in the cradle.³³⁶ Every mother had to indoctrinate her children with the principles of the *Meşrutiyet*:

The first obligation of the mothers is to whisper the words “homeland”, “citizenship”, “nation” and “patriotism” to their children while they are in their cradles, and tell their sanctity and importance in order to raise trustworthy, useful citizens.³³⁷

³³³ *Bir kadının en birinci, en mukaddes vazifesi çocuk yetiştirmesi, çocuklarını güzel terbiye etmesidir. Emin olmalı ki: terbiyeli bir çocuk ancak terbiyeli bir vâlideden doğar. Binâenaleyh, bir kadın çocuk terbiyesine muktedir olmak için evvel emirde kendisinin terbiyeli olması, terbiye kânunlarını bilmesi lâzımdır.* Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 40.

³³⁴ A. Rıza, *Ahlâk ve Malumât-i Medeniye Dersleri Birinci Kitap* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Jirayir Keteon, 1328), 129.

³³⁵ *Artık yirminci asırda yaşıyoruz. Göz kapalı kadınlar bize zevce, vâlide, refika-i hayat olamazlar.* Hakkı Behiç, *Malumât-i Medeniye ve Ahlakiye* (Dersaâdet: İkdâm Matbaası, 1327), 118.

³³⁶ *Ibid*, 40-41.

³³⁷ *Vâlidelerin birinci vazifeleri daha beşikte iken çocuklarının kulaklarına “vatan”, “vatandaşlık”, “millet”, “milletperverlik” kelimelerini yetiştirmeli, bunların kutsiyetini, ehemmiyetini anlatmalı ki, ileride metin, fâideli vatandaşlar yetişsin.* *Ibid*, 71.

The “March of the Girls’ Schools” (*Kız Mektepleri Marşı*), a poem from the book of Sabri Cemil, a teacher and author of various books and textbooks for children, stresses the national importance of motherhood in educating beneficial citizens for the nation, as well:

We are the hope of this land, our homeland lives with us,
Can children live without their mothers?
Yes, we are little now, we are little girls,
But we will feed our babies in our arms tomorrow

.....

These children will grow up, read, and write,
And will be the intelligent people of future
They will work with iron hands and clean hearts,
An will live honorably and proudly

.....

They will gird themselves with swords and die for their
homeland
And will smile, without shedding tears of sorrow while dying
We will also be proud of them;
And say: I have sacrificed a son for this homeland!³³⁸

Therefore, it can be said that the concept of motherhood in the Second Constitutional Era was directly related to the rising Turkish nationalism, and raising patriotic generations was accepted as a way for women to work for the progress of their nation. In the foreword of a History book written for primary schools for girls, the author explains the crucial importance of learning the national history in loving one’s nation, and stresses the educational function of the mothers by saying:

These opinions are not valid only for men. They also include women who are the half of humanity. That’s because women, as well as men, have a national mission. I can even say that the

³³⁸ *Biz vatanın ümidiyiz, vatan bizimle yaşar; / Bu dünyada annesiz yaşar mı hiç çocuklar? / Evet, bugün biz küçüğüz, mini mini kızlarız; / Fakat yarın koynumuzda yavrumuzu besleriz / .../ Bu yavrular büyüyecek, okuyacak, yazacak, / Terbiyeli, anlayışlı birer insan olacak! / Pak yürekle, demir elle çalışacak hep onlar, / Alnı açık, göğsü gergin yaşayacak aslanlar /.../ Vatan için onlar kılıç kuşanacak, ölecek, / Ölürlen de acı yaşlar dökmeyecek, gülecek! / Biz de öyle... Onlar ile edeceğiz iftihâr, / Diyeceğiz: Şu vatana kurban gitmiş oğlum var! Sabri Cemil, *Çocuklara Mahsus Küçük Şiirler* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Orhaniye, 1333),30-31.*

patriotic and nationalist missions of women, who give men their primary education, are much more important and delicate [...] It is required to learn the history of the Ottomans, in order to live as an Ottoman. For that reason, Ottoman History is very important. I am quite sure that you little ladies will prove that you are Ottoman girls by paying attention to this necessary course and raise Ottoman children in the future. May our God praise your work!³³⁹

While the young girls were being inculcated with the national importance of motherhood, the practical usage of education was emphasized, as well. It was told that each moment spent in school would increase their skills, fill their minds with knowledge and carry them to the “highest levels of womanhood”, as they grew up.³⁴⁰ The aim of going to school was “to become a real woman”, and this could only be achieved through education, and learning the art of becoming a good housewife. The girls were warned about their future lives as mothers, wives and housewives, and told to get prepared:

You will not stay like that and continue to be looked after, fed, get dressed by your father and mother all the time. As you grow up, you will enter into different families, different worlds and a new life just like your mother, grandmother, elder sister and aunt. Your own children will replace the dolls and puppets in the house. You will be called as bride, mother, and mother in law. If you do not learn your responsibilities when you are at school, you will find yourself in great trouble in these situations. Yes, if you do not understand them, you will not be able to become a good girl, a loving bride, a caring wife, a useful mother, a good, respected neighbor and a real friend. You will not have a happy

³³⁹ *Bu mütâlaalar yalnız erkekler için değildir. İnsanlığın yarısı demek olan kadınlara da şâmindir. Çünkü kadınlar da erkekler gibi bir vazife-i vataniye ile mükelleftirler. Ve hatta ben diyebilirim ki erkeklere ilk terbiyeyi veren kadınların vatanperverlik ve milliyetperverlik işlerinde vazifeleri daha çok ve daha yüksek ve nâzıktır [...] Osmanlı olarak yaşayabilmek için Osmanlı tarihini iyi bilmelidir. İşte bunun içindir ki Târih-i Osmani gâyet mühimdir. Eminim ki siz küçük hanımlar, bu lüzumlu derse pek ziyâde dikkat ederek Osmanlı kızı olduğunuzu isbât edecek ve ileride Osmanlı evlâdı yetiştireceksiniz. Cenâb-i Hakk say'ınızı meşkûr etsin! Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Târih-i Osmani (kısm-ı evvel), (Dersââdet: Şirket-i Mürettebiye Matbaası, 1333), 2-3.*

³⁴⁰ *Mektepte çalışmakla geçen zaman istidâdınızı açacak, fikirlerinizi malumâtla dolduracak, büyüdüğçe sizi kadınlığın yüksek noktalarına çıkaracak bir vâsıtaadır. Nâzım, Kırâât-i Beytiye Üçüncü Kitap (İstanbul: Kitabhâne-i İslâm ve Askeri, 1328), 144-145.*

life. You will always be exposed to sadness, and your eyes will be full of tears.³⁴¹

As can be seen, according to the textbooks the major aim of going to school for girls was to develop the necessary domestic skills for their future lives, since school was “the preface” (*mukaddime*) of the future life.³⁴² The place and value of women in society was defined according to their relationships within the family and the neighborhood. If we analyze the iconography, we will see that in most of the pictures, adult women are always depicted at home; sewing, cooking, cleaning, and doing all other kinds of housework, “becoming useful”, and praising their domestic position. However, these housewives are always educated and knowledgeable enough to answer all kinds of questions asked by their children. In various stories and dialogues, little girls learn the meanings of important concepts like nation, constitution and election, and the basics of housework “happily and enthusiastically” from their mothers. The same is true for the books prepared for boys, as well. In a Moral and Civic Knowledge book written for boys, the father of a ten year old child sends a letter to his son, and the “educated and knowledgeable” mother reads the letter to the boy.³⁴³ In another book, Cehdi and his elder sister Hikmet receive their first religious lesson and learn how to pray from their

³⁴¹ *Sen her zaman böyle küçük kalmayacaksın, bu halde bulunmayacaksın. Har vakit peder ve vâlden tarafından beslenip, giydirilip bakılmayacaksın. İleride büyüyecek, vâlden, büyük vâlden, ablan, yengen gibi başka ailelere, başka âlemlere, başka hayâta karışacaksın. Şimdi evde bulunan bebekler, kuklalar yerine kedi çocukların kâim olacak. Sana gelin hanım, anne, hanım anne, kâin vâlîde denecek. Eğer sen şimdiden, mektepte iken o zamanlara ait vazifelerini öğrenmez isen o hallere, o vaziyetlere geldiğin zaman kendini pek büyük müşkülât içinde bulacaksın. Evet, bunları öğrenmez, iyi bilmezsen iyi bir kız, sevgili bir gelin, hayırlı bir zevce, fâideli bir vâlîde, hatırlı, muteber bir komşu, hakiki bir dost olamazsın, mesudâne bir ömür geçiremezsin. Her zaman seni behbahtlık karşılar, her vakit gözlerinden ılımlı yaşlar akar. Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye, 5-6.*

³⁴² Nâzım, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye*, 97.

³⁴³ Ali Seydi, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Matbaâ-i Orhâniye, 1334), 27-28.

mother.³⁴⁴ Therefore, the basic motherly function of educating the new generations by “transforming knowledge” was strongly emphasized either with stories, or pictures.

Interestingly, school girls were almost never encouraged to have jobs, especially in a period in which a considerable number of women had been working as teachers, clerics, midwives, telephone company workers, and factory workers in society. Working women are hardly ever present in the schoolbooks prepared for both boys and girls. However, in a story about a lazy girl called Vedia, who did not work hard and learn anything despite going to school, education is presented as an opportunity to earn a living for women. In the story, newly-graduated Vedia starts looking for a teaching job after the early and sudden death of her parents, and a rich woman hires her to give private lessons to her children. Vedia lives comfortably in the woman’s house for a period with a good salary, until she realizes Vedia’s ignorance and incapability as a teacher and fires her. After that, Vedia applies for another teaching job at a school, but cannot get acceptance as a result of her ignorance. Similarly, since she did not learn sewing, embroidery or knitting properly at school, she cannot earn her living by producing and selling handcrafts, as well.³⁴⁵ A very similar story about a girl called Nezhâhât, whose father had lost all his wealth in a fire, suffers from poverty since she did not have any skill to convert into money.³⁴⁶ As can be seen, the knowledge which will be acquired at school was presented as a way of earning money, only under extreme conditions. The young girls had to learn their lessons perfectly in order to be ready for unexpected future

³⁴⁴ Ahmed Cevâd, *Aile Arasında Malumât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye* (İstanbul: Kitabhâne-i Askeri, 1328), 102.

³⁴⁵ Nâzım, *Kıraât-i Beytiye Üçüncü Kitap*, 77.

³⁴⁶ Nâzım, *Kıraat-i Beytiye Dördüncü Kitap* (İstanbul: Kitaphâne-i İslâm ve Askeri, 1330), 26.

obstacles, but a married woman did not need to bother to work. Her primary mission in life was to look after her children and raise them as patriotic citizens, as told above.

Since girls were going to school for the purpose of becoming the “enlightened housewives” of the future, they were not encouraged to have a very high education, as well. As told above, being literate, knowing the basic principles of *Meşrutiyet*, developing necessary skills for housework and being able to provide primary education to their children was more than enough for a girl. The story and poetry books written for children also support this mentality. We can understand the differences between the indoctrination of girls and boys by looking at two poems written by Sabri Cemil:

The Needle: (from a girl)
I love the needle,
This is my gift.
Unless I know how to sew,
What can a pencil do for me?
I am a lady,
Ladies work with the needle,
Sewing, embroidery...
Is there something a needle cannot handle?
Yes, it is naked,
But it gets us dressed.
Long live my needle!
Let me put you on top of my head.³⁴⁷

The Pencil: (from a boy)
What is the needle; I don't like that...
Give me a pencil instead.
Let me write,
And draw pictures
I want many things:
Inkwell, papers and a notebook
So that I can write, erase and draw
I enjoy them a lot.
How beautiful is my book!

³⁴⁷ *İğne (kız ağzından): Ben iğneyi severim/ Budur benim hünerim/ Dikiş bilmezsem eğer,/ Bana kalem ne eder?/ Ben hanımım, hanımlar/ İğne ile iş yapar/ Dikiş, oya, tantana.../ Neler yapmaz şu iğne?/ Evet, kendi çıplaktır,/ Fakat bizi giydirir/ Yaşa iğnem, çok yaşa!/ Gel takayım ta başa! Sabri Cemil, Çocuklara Mahsus Küçük Şiirler, 17-18.*

It is telling me many stories,
Long live the pencil and book
Let us have fun together...³⁴⁸

V.1.2. Responsibilities for the Homeland

As explained in the previous chapter, the most important purpose of the pedagogical indoctrination during the Second Constitutional Era was to create patriotic citizens ready to sacrifice themselves for their homeland, and inculcated with the idea of becoming useful for their nation. The Ottoman girls were also enlightened about their social responsibilities, and told to love their country more than anything else. However, when compared to the textbooks analyzed in the previous chapter, a conspicuous difference about the future expectations and targets can be seen. The little boys, even at the age of seven, were being inculcated with the idea of being useful for the state, and were doing military practice in their spare time, celebrating Ottoman National Fest happily, and were thinking of their future occupations, which will turn them into citizens beneficial for the development and economic progress of the state. On the other hand, Ottoman girls did not have any explicitly mentioned patriotic duty for their childhoods, other than going to school, having good grades and helping their mothers in doing housework. In other words, while Ottoman boys always had various opportunities to express their love against their state as “little citizens”, Ottoman girls could achieve this citizenship status only when they got married and had children:

³⁴⁸ *Kalem (erkek ağzından): Nedir iğne... Beğenmem/ Bana verin bir kalem,/ Gıcır gıcır yazayım,/ Türlü resim çizeyim./ Ben isterim çok şeyler:/ Hokka, kağıt hem defter./ Yazar, bozar çizirim./ Bunlarla eğlenirim./ Kitabım ne güzel!/ Bana söyler hep masal./ Kitap, kalem çok yaşa!/ Gel gülelim baş başa.* Ibid., 18.

Although women are deprived of the honor of (doing military service), they can share this honor in some other ways. For example, they tell the virtue of military service to their sons since their childhood, and advise them not to be afraid of it, they sew and send socks, clothes, and underwear to the soldiers at the battlefield, help a dead soldier's child and wife. And especially when they raise strong and healthy sons to be good soldiers for the nation, they will even have a greater share from the honor of military service, than men.³⁴⁹

As can be seen, raising sons who will be soldiers and defend their country, and helping the ones in need were presented as the most important patriotic motives for women. Similarly, it was told that since most women did not have a regular income, they were also deprived of the honor of paying taxes to be a part of their country's economic development. However, the "mother citizen" formula solves this problem, as well:

In fact, tax-paying women are very rare, since they do not have an income.[...] However, if they raise their children by telling how valuable and important tax paying is, and explain that paying taxes is a result of patriotism, they perfectly fulfill their duty against their government.³⁵⁰

Therefore, we can say that schoolgirls were being inculcated with nationalist ideas, with a strong emphasis on motherhood and child education. Being good mothers was told to be the greatest, most important and sacred patriotic mission, which turned a "woman" into a "citizen".

³⁴⁹ Kadınlar bu şereften (askerlik) mahrum iseler de onlar da başka cihetten yine bu şerefe iştirâk edebilirler. Mesela: erkek çocuklarına tâ çocukluktan itibâren askerliğin faziletini anlatırlar, askerlikten korkmamaları için onlara nasihat verirler. Muharebede bulunan askerlere çorap, mintân, don dikip gönderirler, şehit olmuş bir askerın çocuğuna, karısına karşı iânede bulunurlar, ve hele iyi bir asker olacak surette vatana gürbüz, kuvvetli evlâd yetiştirirler ise askerlik şerefine erkeklerden ziyâde iştirâk eylemiş olurlar. Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye, 57-58.

³⁵⁰ Vâkıa kadınlar içinde vergi verenler pek azdır. Çünkü onların kazancı yoktur. [...] Lâkin çocuklarına verginin nasıl kıymetli, ehemmiyetli bir borç olduğunu ve bunu vermenin hamiyet-i vataniyeden ileri geleceğini güzelce anlatırlar, onları öyle yetiştirirler ise işte hükümete karşı olan vazifelerini, vazife-i medeniyelerini tamamiyle ifâ etmiş olurlar. Ibid., 58.

V.1.3. Health

Hygiene and health protection methods were among the most important issues an Ottoman girl had to know, since “a healthy man is born from a healthy mother.”³⁵¹ Therefore, the future mothers had to be careful in protecting their bodies in order to have children with perfect minds and bodies:

Our material duty is to keep our body strong, clean all the time, and to do the things which are necessary to have an orderly life: to respect the rules of health protection while we are eating, drinking, and sleeping, to care for cleanliness and do gymnastics. The body of a person who cares about these will always be healthy and strong; and he will always be cheerful and full of life. Both the mind and descendants of a person with a healthy body will be strong. Such people see and perceive everything well. Their children are also born strong and powerful. If you look carefully, you will see that the mothers of thin, sick children are thin and sick as well.³⁵²

Except for the emphasis made on motherhood, the advices given to students about having a healthy life are quite similar in textbooks prepared for boys and girls. It was repeatedly told that boys had to pay attention to their health in order to become good and straight soldiers in the future, in most books for boys. In A. Rıza’s book, which was written for the primary schools for boys, it was also stated that a man who wants to get married must not have serious genetic illnesses which were possible to be transmitted to

³⁵¹ It is important to note here that only the book of Ali Seydi makes an explicit emphasis on the direct relationship between the health of the mother and her offsprings. The other books, although stressing the importance of cleanliness, open air, and proper nutrition, do not explicitly mention the importance of the health of the woman’s body and the harms of abortion.

³⁵² *Cismâni vazîfemiz: vücudumuzu dâima kavi, sağlam, temiz, pak bulundurmak, hayâtı intizâm içinde geçirmek için yapılması lâzım gelen şeylerden ibârettir ki bu da: yiyip içmek, yatıp kalkmak hususlarında hıfz-i sıhhate riâyet, nezâfete dikkat ve bir de cîmnastik, idmân yapmakla olur. Bunlara dikkat eden adamın vücudu dâima sağlam ve kavi olur, neşesi yerinde bulunur, dünyadan, hayattan haz duyar. Sağlam vücudlu bir adamın fikri de, zürriyeti de sağlam olur. Böyle adamlar her şeyi iyi görür, iyi düşünür, ileride doğuracağı çocuklar da sağlam, gülbüz olarak dünyaya gelir. Dikkat ederseniz görürsünüz ki: ekseriya sıska, marazlı çocukların vâlideleri de sıska, marizedir. Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye, 5-6. Also see Nâzim, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye, 185-189.*

his children.³⁵³ As can be seen, the health of the future mothers and fathers was vitally important in the construction of good generations. However, as told above, the education and discipline of the descendants were totally related to the mothers.

On the other hand, an important aspect of a “healthy lifestyle”, gymnastics, was emphasized in almost all Moral and Civic Knowledge Books for boys. Nevertheless, the domestic position of schoolgirls was also reflected to this topic. While school boys were walking, running, ball-playing, racing and playing games in the woods during their spare time³⁵⁴, girls were told to do housework to have a healthy body: “Cleaning battens, doing the laundry, and walking a little bit in open air every morning and evening can be counted as gymnastics for women and girls.”³⁵⁵

Every Ottoman citizen had to have a healthy body, since they were responsible for their country: “We do not belong only to ourselves, because we were not born with our free will. We belong to ourselves, our fathers and mothers, and our nation at the same time.”³⁵⁶ Therefore, committing suicide was a betrayal towards the nation, since it meant: “depriving the homeland and the nation of one’s body and service.”³⁵⁷ Similarly, all women were responsible to give birth to healthy, strong and clever children, especially *male* children who will be the future citizens of the state. Therefore, abortion, which was both against the law and the rules of Islam, was the work of “thoughtless, ill-mannered and immoral women” who are not ashamed of killing a person:

³⁵³ A. Rıza, *Ahlâk ve Malumât-i Medeniye Dersleri Birinci Kitap* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Jirayir Keteon, 1328), 128.

³⁵⁴ See Ahmed Cevâd, *Mektepte Malumât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye Dersleri*, 10-12, Ali Seydi, *Vezâif-i Medeniye*, 19- 20 and A.Rıza, *İbtidâilere Malumât-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye* (Dersaâdet: Necm-i İstiklâl Matbaası, 1328), 10-11.

³⁵⁵ Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye*, 12.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

...This is a great betrayal for the homeland and the nation. Because, that aborted child belongs to the homeland and nation, as well as his/her mother. He/she would be born, and grown up. If it was a boy, he would protect his country by becoming a soldier. He would pay taxes by becoming a merchant or farmer; or serve his nation by becoming a civil servant. If it was a girl, she would raise many children beneficial to the state, and create numerous descendents. The hundred millions of people on earth have born from Adam and Eve. Therefore, a man and a woman are capable of being the parents of millions of people. In this case, abortion is a murder and betrayal not only against the country and the nation, but also against all humanity [...] women who engage in abortion torture themselves as well. Most of them who engage in this evil act die, and the ones who manage to survive become physically disabled.³⁵⁸

As can be seen from this quotation, motherhood was presented as the one and only way of becoming a good citizen. “Giving birth to men”, or to “women who will give birth to men” was the sole purpose of being a mother. When we compare these words with the information included in a Hygiene book for girls written during the Hamidian Era, only three years before the Young Turk Revolution, we will see that the latter did not include any information or reference regarding motherhood, or abortion.³⁵⁹ The strong emphasis on motherhood during the Second Constitutional Era can be explained as the nationalist policies of the Young Turks, aiming to construct healthy, strong and beneficial generations in order to guarantee the continuation of the nation. We know that marriage was made mandatory for Ottoman women by the age of 21 and men by the age of 25

³⁵⁸ ...Sâniyen- Bu hâl vatana, millete karşı büyük ihânettir. Çünkü: o düşürülen çocuk; yalnız vâlidesinin malı değil vatanın ve milletin de malıdır. O doğacak, büyüyecek. Erkek ise asker olup vatani muhafaza eyleyecek, tüccâr, zürrâ olup vergi verecek, memur olup millete hizmet verecek idi. Kız ise ileride vatana bir çok hayırlı çocuklar yetiştirecek, ondan birçok zürriyet hâsıl olacak idi. Dünya üzerindeki yüz milyonlarla insanlar bir Hazret-i Adem ile bir Hazret-i Havvâ’dan vücûda gelmiştir. Demek ki bir erkek ile bir kadın milyonlarca insanın anası, babası olmak kuvvetini, kâbiliyetini hâizdir. Bu hâle karşı çocuk düşürmek elbette vatana ve millete ve belki bütün insâniyete karşı bir ihânet, bir cinâyet demektir. Sâlisen, Çocuk düşüren kadınlar kendi nefislerine de büyük zulüm etmiş olurlar. Bu fenâlığı irtikâp edenlerin bir çoğu ölür, telef olur. Ölmeyip kurtulanlar da hiç olmazsa sakat kalır. Ibid.,16-17.

³⁵⁹ See A. Rıza, *Kızlara Mahsus Hıfz-i Sıhhat* (İstanbul: Karabet Matbaası, 1321).

during the World War, as a result of the loss of a great portion of the male population.³⁶⁰

However, it is important to note that the passages about mother health and abortion quoted here were derived from the book of Ali Seydi, which was printed even before the Balkan Wars. Therefore, it is possible to say that the importance given to motherhood was related to the “citizen creating project” of the Young Turks.

V.1.4. Housework

As told above, in the textbooks housework was presented as one of the most important duties of an Ottoman woman, and it was stated that young girls had to learn its basics during the Home Economics (*İdâre-i Beytiye*) courses at school, and make practice by helping their mothers at home. Since most of the girls who had the opportunity to receive secondary public education were the daughters of the middle or upper-class Ottoman families employing maids for cleaning, cooking and other kinds of housework, warnings like this were added into the school books:

You probably have witnessed some thoughtless women say “I do not even know how to cook an egg, to make coffee, to wash a handkerchief or to cover a bed”, as if they are behaving politely. You should not even treat such women as human beings! Knowing how to cook, how to do the laundry, how to cover a bed are among the duties of all women [...] A rich man naturally would not make his wife cook, wash the clothes, or cover the beds. However, nobody knows how long wealth will exist. One day, a person can find himself/ herself in a position unable to hire cooks, washerwomen or servants. Who will do all these jobs then? Of course the woman, not the man!³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ Deniz Kandiyoti, *End of Empire*, 31.

³⁶¹ *Bazı ham fikirli kadınlar, “ben bir yumurta, kahve pişirmesini, bir mendil yıkamasını, bir yatak sermesini bilmem” gibi güya kibarlık ediyormuşçasına sözler söylediklerine elbette tesâdüf etmişsiniz. Bu kâbil kadınlara insan nazarıyla bile bakmamalısınız! Yemek pişirmek, çamaşır yıkamak, yatak yapmasını bilmek her kadının cümle-i vezâîfindendir. Bunu bilmemek vazîfeyi bilmemek demektir. Zengin bir adam, elbette zevcesine yemek yaptırmaz, elbette ona çamaşır yıkatmaz, elbette ona yatak yaptırmaz.*

A good housewife, regardless of her social and economic position, had to learn cooking in order to be capable of controlling the work of her servants, and must be skillful enough to cook the meals of her family in extreme cases, without asking for someone else's help. Housework was as important as education for a woman, since an educated woman would not be able to maintain happiness in her family, unless she had the domestic skills necessary to keep her household clean and orderly.³⁶²

It was also told that women from all classes must be skillful in handcrafts such as sewing, knitting and embroidery, to produce the clothes of the family members at home, instead of buying from stores, or paying for a tailor. These advices can be explained with the “national economy” policy explained in the previous chapter. The mothers of the future were inculcated with the importance of home production, and thriftiness:

When your mother gets tired, you take her place in order to fix a set of table linens or fix a cloth. By doing so, you serve to use the money that would be paid to the tailor, for another necessity of yours. Learn the handcrafts, this way you will get rid of many expenses and become a skillful woman.³⁶³

The Home Economics books include numerous other stories and topics on the importance of thriftiness, and it was always told that a good housewife must be aware of the expenses of her home, and control them for the purpose of saving money. Buying things from stores were the major sources of waste, which diminished family wealth:

Lâkin zenginliğin ne kadar bekâ bulacağını kimse bilemez. Öyle bir gün gelir ki: insanın aşçı, çamaşırcı, hizmetçi tutamayacağı olur. O zaman bu işleri kim yapacak? Elbette erkek değil, herhalde kadın! Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve Medeniye, 37.

³⁶² Ahmed Cevad, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye* (İstanbul: Kitaphâne-i İslâm ve Askeri, 1330), 91.

³⁶³ *Vâlidiniz yorulduğu vakit bir sofrâ takımını veya bir söküğü bıraktığı işleri tamir etmek üzere onun makamına geçersiniz. Böylece terziye verilecek paraların başka bir ihtiyacınıza sarf edilmesine hizmet etmiş olursunuz. El hünerleri öğreniniz, bu sayede masraftan kurtulur ve marifetli bir kadın olursunuz. Nâzım, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye ve İctimâiye, 101-102.*

Most young housewives buy food which they do not know how to cook, and some useless things from outside. By doing so, they waste their domestic income. However, a housewife must behave prudently in the procurement of the food, like in all other issues, and buy the primary necessities in reasonable amounts.³⁶⁴

Therefore, an ideal housewife was also responsible for saving money and checking the expenses of the household in detail everyday. Otherwise, she would fail to control the family budget and waste resources.³⁶⁵ As well as controlling the expenses of the household, she had to minimize her personal expenses without having a desire for fancy clothes and luxury:

Some women count the expensive things for the upper-class people as a part of their necessities and do not hesitate paying huge amounts for them. On the other hand, some others, although not having a desire for various clothes and promenades, make lots of unnecessary expenses at home. As a result, they spoil their savings for their primary necessities.³⁶⁶

Young boys were also told to marry with girls who were skillful in housework and thrifty enough to control the family budget:

...well-educated wives who have realized the meaning of real life are required. Women who only think of their costume to wear at a wedding, or the sample clothes they ordered from the dressmaker, or who never think or ask where the money earned by their husbands come from, are not good family women, and housewives. A wife, with the position of life companion, must be aware of her husband's sources of income. She must know how to manage a wealth which must be acquired honorably, and must

³⁶⁴ *Ekser genç ev kadınları nasıl pişirileceğini ve ne yolda muhafaza edileceğini bilmedikleri gıdaları ve bazı lüzumsuz şeyleri satın alırlar. Bu yüzden varidât-ı beytiyelerini suistimâl ederler. Halbuki ev kadını her şeyde olduğu gibi mevadd-ı müstehlikenin tedârikinde dahi müdebbirâne hareket etmek, birinci derece lâzım olan şeyleri fazla ve noksan olmamak üzere almak mecburiyetindedir. Nâzım, İktisâd-i Beyti (Dersââdet: Orhaniye Matbaası, 1336), 168.*

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 159.

³⁶⁶ *...(bazı kadınlar) hâricen kibarlara mahsus pahalı şeyleri ihtiyaçlarından addederek bunun için külliyetli paralar sarf etmekten çekinmezler, bazıları da bunlar gibi çeşit çeşit libâslara, gezmelere, yürümelere meyl ve rağbet göstermezler; halbuki evlerinde isrâfa ve bir çok beyhûde masârıfa kapılırlar. Böylece hevâîç-i asliye üzerinde yaptıkları idârenin semeresi- mukâvemetsiz bir hevesle- lüzumsuz ve beyhûde şeyler için hebâ olup gider. Ibid.*, 160.

control her expenses, not only thinking of her own desires, but also the needs of her husband and family.³⁶⁷

V.2. Family Life

V.2.1. Marriage and Gender Hierarchy

As told above, family was presented as the smallest social unit, which had the power to determine the fate of the whole society. Similarly, women were presented as important social agents who were maintaining peace and order in the family, therefore playing a crucial role in the happiness, health and peace of the society. However, Ottoman girls were frequently warned about their real status in the family, and told that they were going to have a relatively “inferior” position when compared to the father of the household, in their future lives. According to the school books the father, being the “breadwinner” of the family, had the greatest authority at home; and the mother’s authority was defined within the limits determined by the father’s role. In other words, although the mother was the “director” of the household (*evin reisesi*), she was always responsible to obey the orders of a higher authority, her husband:

In a family, the dominant person, the minister is the man. The woman is the director. There is a great difference between a minister and a director. Therefore, men are superior than women in terms of power, solidity, courage, education, and talent. For

³⁶⁷ ...iyi terbiye görmüş, hayât-ı hakiki nedir anlamış zevceler lâzımdır. Yalnız düğüne giderken giyecek elbisesini, modistradan getirttiği numuneleri düşünmek, kocasının verdiği paraların nereden geldiğini anlamak, sormak hatırına bile gelmeyen kadınlar aile kadını, ev sâhibesi değildir. Bir zevce refika-i hayât sıfatıyla kocasının menâbi-i varidâtına vâkıf olmalıdır. Nâmuskarâne kazanılmış olması gereken bir serveti hüsn-i idâre etmenin tarikini bilmeli, yalnız kendi arzusunu değil, kocasının, ailesinin ihtiyacâtını da düşünerek sarfıyâtını ona göre tanzim etmelidir. Hakkı Behiç, *Malumât-i Medeniye ve Ahlakiye*, 116.

that reason, women have to be respectful and obedient towards their husbands.³⁶⁸

Since men were maintaining the needs of their family members by working hard, women always had to be aware of their own inferiority:

In most cases, the wife makes her living out of the money her husband earns, and meets all her needs with it. Therefore, the man is the benefactor of his wife. Respect and obedience towards one's benefactor is a duty in terms of religion, reason and morals.³⁶⁹

However, economic dependence was not the only factor determining the secondary status of women. According to the textbooks, women had a much lower capacity to learn, think and work, which was a result of their nature (*hilkât*). Ali Seydi gave some "scientific" examples from the animal world, for the purpose of persuading the little girls about their weak nature as "females":

If we look at all the animals in the world, we will see that the males of all animals are victorious over their females. They are more dominant, powerful and clever than the females. The females are always defeated in front of and obedient to their males. Therefore, this is a rule of the nature, which includes all creatures with souls.³⁷⁰

Similarly, the status of women as "educated housewives" was explained by giving examples from the birds. The author told that it was the male bird who brought the necessary materials to make a bird's nest, and it was the female bird who prepared the

³⁶⁸ *Bir ailede hâkim, nâzır olan erkektir. Kadın ise müdürdür. Nâzır ile müdür arasında fark-i azim vardır. Bundan anlaşılıyor ki, erkekler kuvvetçe, metânetçe, cesâretçe, tahsilce, mârifetçe kadınlara fâiktirler. Onun için kadınlar kendi zevclerine hürmete, itaâte mecburdurlar. Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye, 36-37.*

³⁶⁹ *Ekser ahvâlde erkeğin kazandığı para ile kadın geçinir, bütün ihtiyacâtını o para ile tedârik eder. Şu halde erkek zevcesinin velinimeti demektir. Velinimete hürmət ve itaât ise dinen ve alken ve ahlâken farzdır. Ibid., 37.*

³⁷⁰ *Dünyadaki bütün hayvanâta dikkat edecek olursak görürüz ki: her hayvanın erkeği dişisine gâliptir. Dişisinden daha hâkim, daha kavi, daha zekidir. Dişiler dâima erkeklerin önünde mağlup, onlara muti'dir. Demek bu bir kânun-i tabi'dir. Zi-ruh olanlar bu kânuna tâbidirler. Ibid., 36.*

nest and fed the baby birds.³⁷¹ As can be seen, for the purpose of reinforcing the traditional gender roles in the society, the issue was explained “by reason”, depending on the scientific “facts”. On the other hand, the boys were also inculcated with the idea that they always had to be superior to girls:

The holiday came, and both children had good grades. However, since she was older and more hardworking, Hikmet’s grades were a bit higher than Cehdis’. Seven year old Cehdi was jealous about the superiority of his elder sister, who was two years older than him. Although he did not say anything, a girl’s superiority, even though it was his own sister, was bothering him; and he was promising himself to study harder and receive better grades in the future.³⁷²

Therefore, the relationship between the partners in a marriage had to be in accordance with these gender roles, and women always had to be in an inferior position when compared with their husbands.

The greatest duty of a wife in a marriage was to behave truthfully and obediently towards her husband, since the honor and virtue of a family was directly related to the behaviors of the wife. Wives who engage in the shameful act of cheating on their husbands were defined as “dishonorable”, and the other undesired immoral behaviors of married women were listed:

Wandering in the streets with revealing clothes, staying behind an open window without shame, smiling at the behaviors of some ill-mannered and cruel men who bother women in streets and call this as “compliment”, intermingling with men... are all against unfaithfulness.³⁷³

³⁷¹ Ibid., 31.

³⁷² *İşte tâtil gelmiş, çocukların her ikisi iyi numerolar kazanmış idi. Hikmet daha büyük ve daha gayretli olduğu için kazandığı numerolar Cehdi’ninkilerden biraz fazla idi. Ancak yedi yaşında olan Cehdi kendisinden iki yaş büyük olan ablasının bu takaddümini bir türlü çekemiyordu. Bir şey söyleyemiyorsa da ablası dahi olsa bir kızın fâikiyeti ona pek dokunuyor, ilerde çalışmaya ve iyi numerolar kazanmaya içinden ahdediyordu. Ahmed Cevâd, Aile Arasında Malumât-i Ahlâkiye, 26.*

³⁷³ *Sokaklarda açık saçık gezmek, bilâ pervâ açık pencere önünde dolaşmak, sokaklarda şuna buna söz atan bir takım terbiyesiz, vicdânsız erkeklerin “iltifât” dedikleri hallerine gülümsemek, güler yüz*

It was also stated that if a married woman, who is under the “possession” of her husband “becomes and instrument for another man’s desires”³⁷⁴, this would require a divorce (*talâk*). Interestingly, unfaithfulness and its result, the *talâk* are explained according to the traditional norms of the society rather than religious rules. It was told that women should not be dishonest to their husbands primarily for their own benefit and reputation:

Nobody will marry a woman who has divorced because of unfaithfulness. Even if she returns to the household of her father, she will not be respected as before. She will be disagreed and shameful; and will not be able to achieve worldly happiness.³⁷⁵

V.2.2. Finding the Ideal Companion of Life: Partner Selection

Since most Muslim Ottoman women were not actively selecting their marriage partners at the beginning of the twentieth century, clues for selecting the ideal husband were very rare, in the textbooks prepared for girls. Although the duties of a husband were explained in most books, and it was told that the would-be husband, the benefactor of the family, must have either an occupation or a considerable amount of family wealth to maintain the needs of his children, the essentials of partner selection were excluded. Only in the Moral and Civic Knowledge book prepared by Ali Seydi, there is a footnote warning the girls about men who abuse their right of divorcing their wives:

There are many cruel men who divorce their wives without any reason. Therefore, the primary duty of a girl or woman who is going to get married with a man is to investigate in detail

göstermek, erkekler ile lâubâli olmak... hep sadâkate mugayirdir. Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye, 36-37.

³⁷⁴ Hakkı Behiç, *Malumât-i Medeniye ve Ahlakiye*, 127.

³⁷⁵ *Böyle sadâkatsizlik yüzünden boşanan bir kadını bir daha kimse almaz. Pederinin hânesine gitse de eski itibârını bulamaz. Müsteskil, mayûb olur, saâdet-i dünyeviyeden mahrum olur. Ali Seydi, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye, 24-25.*

whether that man had divorced a woman before and if he had the reason for him to do so. If they do not investigate this, they will throw themselves into danger and trouble. If he had divorced his wife for a good reason, then there is no problem.³⁷⁶

On the other hand, the features of an ideal wife were explained at length in most of the textbooks for boys. Since the boys were the ones who will most probably select their partners in the future, they had to be aware of the basic social rules and necessities of establishing a household. I will analyze these parts regarding the selection of the ideal bride, since they are useful in discovering the characteristics of an idealized twentieth-century Ottoman woman, the “*Meşrutiyet* woman” according to the norms set by the rulers.

In the textbooks, young school boys were strongly encouraged to get married and have a family of their own, in order to have a regular life and fulfill one of the most important social responsibilities of an Ottoman citizen, to have children:

Raising a beneficial successor is a service which is much more important than leaving a library full of eternal books. [...] A person needs to include a woman into his life, in order to fulfill this duty [...] The natural motives which make a person have a relationship with a woman are much stronger than the others. If it is not turned into a legitimate marriage, it may have ill results in terms of body health and morality. Therefore, by including a respected wife into our private sphere, we protect ourselves from the disgusting gaps of dissipation and philander.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁶ *Bizde pek çok vicdânsız erkekler vardır ki: sebepli sebepsiz karı boşarlar. İşte kocaya gidecek bir kız veya kadının en evvel tahkik edeceği cihet o adamın evvelce karı boşayıp boşamadığı ve boşamış ise ne için boşadığını etraflıca tahkik etmelidirler. Eğer böyle yapmazlar ise Kendi elleriyle kendilerini tehlikeye, belâya atmış olurlar. Eğer mazeret üzerine karı boşamış ise onun zararı yoktur.* Ali Seydi, *Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye*, 34.

³⁷⁷ *Bir hayırlı halef yetiştirmek bir kütüphâne dolusu asâr-i mühellede bırakmaktan daha büyük bir hizmet addolunur [...] İnsan bu vazife-i ictimâyesini hüsn-i ifâ için hayatına bir kadını teşrif etmek lâzım gelir [...] İnsanı bir kadınla tevliid-i minâsebeti sevk eden sevâik-i tabiye sevâik-i sâireden daha şedit, daha tahammülsüzdür. Bunu meşru bir dâire-i izdivâca ircâ kabul olmazsa hem sıhhat ve selâmet-i beden hem de ahvâl-i ahlâkiye nokta-i nazarından fenâ neticeler verebilir. Binaenallehy dâire-i mahremiyetimize bir zevce-i muhtereme almakla kendimizi sefahâtin, çapkınlığın iğrenç uçurumlarından vikâye etmiş oluruz. Hakkı Behiç, *Malumât-ı Medeniye ve Ahlâkiye*, 109.*

The crucial importance of selecting good wives was emphasized, since the families which were going to be established as a result of this critical selection would have an important role in the development and elevation of the nation.³⁷⁸ First of all, since it was the mother who had the greatest effect on the education of children, young boys were told to marry their social equals (*küfv*)³⁷⁹ and investigate the cultural formations of the would-be brides prior to the wedding, in order to have a peaceful and harmonious marriage:

If a person marries a woman whose parents have a much lower or higher status than his, he will not be able to share the same ideas and customs (with his wife). Therefore, since the husband and wife will not have a perfect union and the relationship between their families will be deficient, achieving a harmony will be very difficult.³⁸⁰

After that, they were told to analyze the nature and personality of the would-be bride, since the happiness of the family depended on the behavior and attitudes of women:

In selecting a wife, referring to an honorable family whose status is similar to yours is not enough. Considering especially the morality and nature of the would-be wife is also necessary. A man marrying a naive woman knows that the money, which is supposed to maintain the prosperity and happiness of his family, will be wasted for dissipation and adornment.³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ A.Rıza, Birinci Kitap, 129.

³⁷⁹ Ahmed Cevâd, *Musahabât-i Ahlâkiye, Sıhhiye, Medeniye, Vataniye ve İnsâniye* (İstanbul: Hilâl Matbaası, 1330), 104.

³⁸⁰ *Ebeveyni kendisinin mevkîinin pek mâ-dûnunda veyahud pek mâ-fevkinde bulunan bir kadınla izdivaç eden aynı efkâr aynı itiyadâtı göremeyeceğinden ve iki ailenin münasebâtı nâkıs olacağından hüsn-i âmeyzîş pek müşkûl olur.* A.Rıza, Birinci Kitap, 129.

³⁸¹ *Bir zevce intihâbında nâmuslu ve mevkîi kendi mevkîine şebih olan bir aileye müracaât etmek kâfi olmayıp bâhusus izdivâç olunacak kadının ahlâk ve tabiatını nazar-i dikkate almak iktizâ eder. Bir safiye kadınla izdivâç eden ailesinin refah ve saâdet hâlini temin edecek paranın sefahate, süse sarf olunacağını (bilir).* Ibid.

Also, it was stated that an ideal house wife was a woman who was knowledgeable in housework, regardless of her family's wealth or social status. Being the director of the household, the wife should have all the authority to maintain the order, cleanliness, and happiness of the house, and she definitely must be talented in housework. An ideal wife also had to be warm, caring and gentle towards her husband: "She must first of all be a good companion for her husband. She must provide consolation for his sorrow, join his happiness, and make him full of life."³⁸²

As can be seen, the schoolboys of the Ottoman Empire were also told about the importance of motherhood in the happiness of the family, and were given clues about selecting the best wives, who will raise good citizens, manage the family budget, and provide happiness to the whole family by using their knowledge, personality, culture and skills as housewives.

V.2.3. Women's Rights in Marriage

Especially in the textbooks for boys, the students were warned about being polite and gentle towards their future wives, since their psychology directly affected the upbringing of children in the family. The primary reason for protecting the personal rights of women, and treating them well was presented as the vital importance to raise children in a peaceful and intimate environment. Women and girls were always seen as "potential mothers" who would help construct the new generations of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, their peace and mental health were important components of a peaceful society:

³⁸² Hakkı Behiç, *Malumât-ı Medeniye ve Ahlâkiye* (Dersaadet: İkdâm, 1327), 115.

There are some fathers who do not respect the rights of their poor wives and torture them by behaving despotically in their intimate spheres. Since woman is the most emotional element in a family, her sorrow destroys the happiness and order of the whole family. A mother who complains about her husband from time to time cannot hide her unhappiness from her child, no matter how she tries. The child, before understanding the meaning of life, realizes the conflict between his/ her parents [...] and has a tendency to fear from his/her father [...] eventually, he/she becomes deeply pessimistic and cannot find the strength and desire to work and live, as a result of his/her unhappiness. These results destruct the young bodies to be raised for the future of the society.³⁸³

It was also told that the mother of a family must concentrate on the education and discipline of her children, and become a good wife rather than spending all her time doing housework. The father had the responsibility to hire servants and maids within the limits of his economic power, for the purpose of providing his wife the opportunity to fulfill her primary duties of becoming a good mother and wife:

We must not forgive that if we make women live like servants doing the laundry, cooking, and being instruments for all our desires, our children would be degraded as well. No woman has to wash the clothes of her husband and cook his meals by herself. Her duty is to be a wife and a mother. Women who are good cooks, washing women and ironers; these poor women, who are forced to be like that, cannot be good mothers and wives.³⁸⁴

³⁸³ Bizde ne pederler görülür ki zavallı zevcesinin hiçbir hukukuna riayet etmeyerek ailesinin o mukaddes dâire-i samimiyetinde tatbik ettiği müthiş istibdâd ile biçâre zevceye hayatı zehir eder. Kadın bir ailenin en mütehessis unsuru olduğu için onun bedbaht olması, bütün ailenin sükût-i intizâmını, saâdetini zâyî etmiş demektir. Ara sıra tâ kalbinden kopup gelen bir cümle-i feryât ile pederden şikâyet eden vâlide evlâdına ne kadar göstermek iste(me)se de bu bedbahtıyesini yine belli eder. Çocuk daha hayâtın ne demek olduğunu öğrenmeden pederiyle vâlidesi arasındaki bu uygunsuzluğa dikkat eder [...] babasından korkmaya.. başlar [...] Yavaş yavaş yaşanaktan derin bir bedbinlik hüsn eder. Mesut olamamak illetiyle çalışmak, yaşamak için kuvvet ve iştiyâk kalmaz. Bu iki netice de cemiyet-i beşeriyenin istikbâli için yetiştircek zavallı nev-nihalâtı ifsad eder. Ibid., 110-111.

³⁸⁴ Kadınları evlerde çamaşır yıkayan, yemek pişiren, her arzumuzun icrâsına vâsıta olan birer hizmetçi gibi yaşatırsak istikbâle hediye edeceğimiz çocuklarımızın da bu zilletten tamamen nasibdâr olacaklarını unutmamalıyız. Hiçbir kadın kocasının çamaşırlarını bizzât yıkamak, yemeğini bizzât pişirmek mecburiyetinde değildir. Onun vazifesi zevce ve vâlide olmaktır. İyi bir aşçı, iyi bir çamaşırcı veya iyi bir ütücü olan kadınlar, böyle olmaya mecbur edilen zavallılar hiçbir zaman iyi bir vâlide olamazlar, iyi bir zevce vazifesi göremezler. Ibid., 113-114.

The reasons for backwardness and internal and external crises in the Ottoman Empire were explained with the inferior status of women in society, and the importance of elevating their status was presented as a key to develop the family, therefore the whole society:

We have the old custom of treating women in an insulting way. Since we do not respect our women, we could not elevate and lost the order in our families and progress in our society [...] The most important responsibility of a husband is to respect the rights of his wife.³⁸⁵

V.3. Fashion and Luxury

The spread of the European fashions and the increasing number of shops selling fancy and trendy clothes had created a great interest among Ottoman women, as told in the second chapter. Starting from the second half of the nineteenth century, Muslim women tried new ways of following these fashions, without totally abandoning the Islamic style of veiling.

Since the educating cadres of the Second Constitutional Era aimed to inculcate the new generations with the importance of thriftiness, they warned the young girls about the harms of having a strong desire in fashion. Almost all textbooks for girls tell the school girls to abandon the usage of fancy and expensive clothes, which were defined as frivolity, and concentrate on more serious and important things:

A person who spends her time on useless and unnecessary things, instead of concentrating on the serious and important things in life is called “flighty”. I know a girl who enjoys being concerned

³⁸⁵ *Bizde öteden beri kadınlara nazar-i hakaretle bakmak itiyadı vardır. Ve kadınlarımıza hürmet etmediğimiz içindir ki şimdiye kadar teali edemedik, ailelerimizde intizâm, heyet-i ictimaiyemizde terakki kalmadı [...] Bir zevcin en büyük vazifesi zavcesinin hukuk-i nisvîyetine riayet etmek, ona hürmet eylemektir. Ibid., 113.*

with such useless things. She does not think of anything except her own amusement. This girl can spend two hours in front of the mirror to fix her hair, without getting bored or tired! As she grew up, her interest in such things increased. Now, she spends every Thursday and Friday concerning about her looks, in order to impress the women she will come across in Fenâr Bağçesi or other promenades.[...] Today, she is at the age of becoming a housewife, but how can she maintain the happiness of the family that she is going to establish?³⁸⁶

As can be seen, popular culture and the fashionable promenades which were explained in detail in the second chapter were presented as serious threads for establishing a happy family and becoming a good housewife. Therefore, the “mother citizens” of the future had to concentrate on more serious things, such as having education, and raising their children.

In this chapter, I analyzed selected topics from various textbooks written for both male and female students, for the purpose of presenting the gender dimension of the “citizen creation process” during the Second Constitutional Era. After comparing the indoctrination of boys and girls on education, patriotic duties, family life and social roles, we can say that girls, unlike boys, did not have citizenship status as children. While boys, who were presented as the “little citizens”, always had the chance to express their patriotism in various ways, (like celebrating the Ottoman National Fest, making military practice in their spare time and planning for their future careers as beneficial citizens), girls did not have an explicit way of proving their love towards their homeland. It is

³⁸⁶ *Hayâtın ciddi ve ehemmiyetli şeyleriyle meşgul olarak zevk alacağı yerde boş ve bi-esas mevâdd ile vakit geçiren bir kimseye “havai meşrep” denilir. Böyle fâidesiz şeylerle uğraşmayı seven bir kız tanırım ki, tuvaletinden, eğlencesinden başka bir şey düşünmez. Bu kız başının saçlarını intizâma koymak için vakit olur ki iki saatini ayna karşısında geçirir! Usanmaz, yorulmaz. Büyüdükçe merâkı büyütmeye başladı. Artık haftanın Perşembe ve Cuma ertesi günlerini, ertesi günü fenâr bağçesinde ve sâir tenezzüh mahallinde tesâdüf edeceği hanımlara gösteriş yapmak için kendisine ne yolda çeki düzen vereceğini düşünmekle geçirir. [...] Bugün bir aile reisesi olabilecek bir yaştadır. Fakat teşkil edeceği ailenin esbab-i saâdetini hangi meziyetle taht-i temine alacak? Nâzım, Kızlara Mahsus Terbiye-i Ahlâkiye, 164-165.*

conspicuous that girls achieved the citizenship status when they got married, and had children. Therefore, the importance of motherhood for the future of the state was strongly emphasized, and the school girls were inculcated with the idea of becoming “mother citizens”, who will prove their patriotism by raising the citizens of the future. Women were regarded as the most important social agents who had the power to change, develop and elevate the whole nation, by controlling its smallest unit, the family. For that reason, the importance of female education and health was repeatedly emphasized, and abortion was condemned since it deprived the nation of the service of many future citizens.

The crucial importance of motherhood and its relation with the rising Turkish nationalism during the Young Turk Era was expressed in many ways, in the textbooks. It was mentioned that Turkish women had to receive education in order to be able to inculcate their children with patriotism and the basic principles of *Meşrutiyet*, while they were in their cradles. Giving birth to healthy babies, doing housework, protecting wealth by producing the clothes of the family members at home were presented as the sacred missions of a mother citizen.

On the other hand, the relative inferiority of women when compared to men was always emphasized either explicitly giving “scientific” examples from the nature, or through stories including implicit messages directed towards the sub-conscience. Therefore, an ideal *Meşrutiyet* woman was an educated, self-confident, patriotic housewife, who was proud of her domestic position and secondary status in the family. It is possible to say that there was a gendered division of labor in a *Meşrutiyet* family, in which domesticity was highly praised. Since men were still presented as the benefactors of the Ottoman families, women had to be obedient towards the orders of their husbands, and concentrate on child rearing.

Despite a considerable amount of Muslim Ottoman women had been working in public service and in various charity organizations at the time, the educators of the Second Constitutional Era chose to inculcate the school girls with domesticity. Therefore, we conclude that although the public female education during the Young Turk Era praised motherhood and housewifery, it also reinforced the traditional gender hierarchy, by totally neglecting the feminist movement, which had its genesis in the late nineteenth century, and the continuous emancipation of women through legal and social achievements.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The woman question emerged as a result of the changes in the Ottoman society during the nineteenth century. As the process of modernization accelerated, women were seen as the protectors of the traditions, by the intellectuals of the time. Since women were given the duty to educate and discipline the new generations, they were always expected to behave within the limits of the religious rules and the traditional moral values. The moral degeneration and ignorance of women were accepted as the most important reasons for the backwardness of the state. To put it differently, the problems in the society and the undesired political and economical situation of the Empire were always explained by the situation of women. As we have seen in the second chapter, “woman” was often used as a metaphor of the state, for the purpose of explaining the problems of the state during the Tanzimât period and the Hamidian Era. Especially the Young Ottomans advocated that women had to receive good education in order to become capable of educating their children properly.

Similarly, the “social engineers” of the Second Constitutional Period perceived women as “constructive social agents”, crucially important for the realization of their

social projects. The Young Turks tried to reform the Ottoman educational system, for the purpose of transforming the former “subjects” of the Empire into self-confident, creative and free “citizens”, attached to the new regime. For that purpose, they concentrated on the education system, particularly the education of girls, who would be the mothers of the future generations. Although the Islamist, Turkist and Westernist intellectuals had different ideas on the emancipation of women, there was a consensus on the importance of female education. They targeted to inculcate the mothers of the future citizens with the principles of Meşrutiyet, in order to spread their ideologies easily.

During the nationalist atmosphere in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, the success of the Balkan nations was explained by the quality of education given in their schools, and an educational reform was inaugurated. As we saw in Chapter IV, the textbooks which were written under the influence of Ottomanism were replaced with new ones with a much more nationalist tone. At the same time, Turkish mothers were given an important duty: to indoctrinate their children with Turkish nationalism when they were in their cradles.

Therefore, the concepts of motherhood, womanhood and citizenship were reconstructed in a nationalist framework, for the purpose of educating the “mother citizens” of the state. When the Second Constitutional Period Textbooks are analyzed through the gender lens, it is easy to recognize that being beneficial for the homeland was equated to having children, in most books for girls. In other words, girls, unlike boys, did not have citizenship status as children. While boys, who were presented as the “little citizens”, always had the chance to express their patriotism in various ways, (like celebrating the Ottoman National Fest, making military practice in their spare time and planning for their future careers as beneficial citizens), girls did not have an explicitly

stated way of proving their love towards their homeland. It is conspicuous that girls had the chance to become beneficial to their state, when they got married, and had children. Having children and inculcating them with patriotism were presented as the most important duties of a female citizen.

On the other hand, little girls were oriented towards domesticity, by exalting the classical gendered division of labor in the society. In an era in which a significant number of women had been working in civil service, the textbooks for girls were not even mentioning female labor, except for some extreme cases. Therefore, we can say that the status of women in society was defined according to their relationships within the family. Little girls were indoctrinated with the crucial importance and sanctity of becoming caring mothers and successful housewives, to become beneficial to their homeland.

After analyzing the ideologies of both the nineteenth and twentieth century intellectuals regarding the woman question, we can conclude that emancipation of women was desired for utilitarian purposes. In other words, it was widely accepted that "women had to be educated for the development of their nation, not for their individual development." Female education of the Second Constitutional period, although praising motherhood and housewifery in a nationalist spirit, was just a reinforcement of the traditional gender hierarchy.

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