SOME SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF THE LALE DEVRI (TULIP ERA): 1718-1730

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The period 1718-1730 which is called the Lale Devri (Tulip Age) and which followed the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 was characterized by a great desire to be at peace with the West in the administration of the Ottoman empire. Sultan Ahmed III (1703-1730) and the grand vezir of the period Damad Ibrahim Pasha favoured avoiding war at all costs because the wars between 1683 and 1718 demonstrated to both the Ottomans and the Europeans that the Ottoman army was not able to compete with the new infantry and artillery of Europe. In this period, the Ottomans had to seek peace often with great losses: first at Karlowitz in 1699 and then at Passarowitz in 1718. After the defeats, the Ottomans suffered also the loss of prestige and morale which was not less important than losing territory. It was the first time that the Ottomans realized and admitted the military superiority of their adversaries, and began to look to the West for the new inspiration which would enable them to recover the strengths of the empire, as previous traditionalist attempts at reform did not give the desired result. Until that time, although they were aware of the rise of a new civilization in Europe, the sense of superiority constantly had kept them away from the need to learn the new developments of Europe. The recognition of defeat yielded the emergence of a new attitude towards the West which was to last and strengthen until the end of the empire. However, the rulers of the empire, in this period admitted that new and decisive reform steps had to be taken, they failed to initiate these reforms, and, ironically, completely gave themselves over to entertainment in the gardens of tulip, so much so that even after two centuries the period is still called by the name of the tulip plant. The revolt of Patrona Halil in September 1730 brought an end to their frivolity. In this paper, we will examine the main events and characteristics of the period, which are: 1) the peace policy of Damad Ibrahim Pasha; 2) the sending of envoys to the capitals of some of the leading states of Europe; 3) the establishment of the first Turkish printing press; 4) the first appearance of ideas on military reforms based on European ways; 5) and the means of diversion in the period. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the condition of the people and, finally, a short analysis of the significance of the period.

1) Peace Policy of Damad Ibrahim Pasha

Ibrahim Pasha, who knew the importance of living in peace with Austria and Russia, both leading adversaries of the empire, used all the power available to him to succeed at that aim as long as he stayed at his post. First, to secure Passarowitz, he gave Austria the same trade privileges in the Ottoman territory as had been given to France. Then, he made the ambassador of Austria more influential in Istanbul. These were at the cost of the privileges and influence of France and its ambassador to Istanbul. The grand vezir cancelled some of the trade privileges given to France and lessened the influence of its ambassador, a policy which he continued until the end of his grand vezirate.3 It can be seen that the grand vezir wanted to be closer to Austria and Russia by lessening the relationship of the empire with France since the latter was an adversary of Austria and Russia. Moreover, Ibrahim Pasha sent two envoys to Vienna; the first Ibrahim Pasha, who wrote a ufuşname - a book of travels as an envoy, in 1719; the second, Kazanlı Zede Ömer Agha, as a permanent consul with a great number of gifts.

To secure peace with the Russian, he assured Peter the Great that the Ottomans would not interfere in the Russo-Swedish war because Peter was afraid that the Ottomans would turn against him after reaching the peace with Austria. And he pressured the Khan of Crimea not to raid into Russian and Polish territory to avoid conflict with Russia. He also sent to Moscow in 1722-1723, an envoy Nishî Mehmed Agha who was instructed to seek an agreement with Russia concerning the partition of the northern and western territories of Iran which since the beginning of the century had been in political turmoil. After he returned, Mehmed Agha wrote his ufuşname, too. The influence of the envoy of Russia to Istanbul was also increased.5 Ibrahim Pasha also believed that knowledge of Europe was very important for both Ottoman fore-
Mehmed Chelebi, who was a member of the negotiating committee of the Treaty of Passarowitz as an ikinci nukhabus (second delegate), reached Paris at the end of 1720. Before he left Istanbul the grand vezir had instructed him to visit and report on fortresses and factories of France and on French civilization generally, in addition to his diplomatic mission which was to seek an alliance with France and persuade it to seek peace with Spain in order to make the alliance stronger against Austria and Russia. Mehmed Chelebi stayed in Paris some six months before realizing that he would not be able to reach his diplomatic aim because of the lack of the interest of French government. Once sure of that, he tried to leave Paris as soon as possible.12

Mehmed Chelebi wrote a small book on his visit to the French capital in which he mentioned everything he saw there: military establishments and techniques, new technical arts, hospitals, parks, theaters, observatories and social habits of the people such as the position of women in society. He mentions these as though he had discovered a new world. Moreover, in the book, he compares every item with similar institutions of the Ottomans. The outstanding point of the work is the absence of the sense of superiority which was present in the writings of earlier times.13

The book was to have a very significant effect on the grand vezir, who, as a matter of fact, after reading the report was to imitate the French capital, and if occupies a very important place in the westernization process of the empire. Alh. Tanpinar has commented, "No book occupies so much important place in the history of the westernization of the Turkey as this little report. It contains almost the whole program of subsequent changes."14

Mehmed Chelebi, in addition to his reports, brought plans of Versailles and Fontainbleau, which would shortly be imitated in Istanbul, and astronomical tables given to him by the official directors of the Paris observatory which at that time had not yet been printed.

The influence of Said Chelebi, the son of Mehmed Chelebi who accompanied his father to Paris, was no less than that of his father. He circulated more widely than his father around Paris in which he made friends and went to plays and entertainments. He may perhaps have been the first Ottoman conversant in French. "He brought back to Istanbul books, costumes and items of furnishing that stimulated the passion for western ways."15 But the enthusiasm for the use of printing press which both father and son brought to Istanbul was to make the most permanent impact on Ottoman culture. In fact, it seems that even before they left Istanbul they had the idea from Ibrahim Muteferrika, who was to operate the first Ottoman Turkish printing press in partnership with Said Chelebi in 1727.16

2) Ibrahim Muteferrika and the First Muslim Printing Press

Ibrahim Muteferrika (1670-1745) was perhaps the first of the European intermediaries who played a role in the westernization of the Ottomans by carrying new ideas between the cultures. We do not know certain about his early life or about his Hungarian name; however, it has been suggested that the traditional story that he was captured by the Ottomans in war around 1692-1693 and sold in Istanbul where he converted to Islam and immigrated to the Ottoman capital under his own power in 1692, preferring not to live under the oppression of Catholic Habsburgs in Kosovo, in Transylvania, where he was born.17 He wrote the Risale-i Islamii (Treatise of Islam) in or around 1700 in which he narrated the story of his religious life and conversion. The book presumably was not written to defend Islam.18

We do not know when he entered the service of the Ottoman government. It seems that he was employed in various governmental capacities, and was probably promoted to the rank of müteferrika (royal quartermaster) between 1705-1711.19 He, perhaps, became acquainted with Damad Ibrahim Pasha in this period. Ibrahim Muteferrika's career in Ottoman service in various capacities continued until his death in 1745.20

Ibrahim was perhaps acquainted with almost all kinds of the new sciences in the West; for this reason, as he knew the importance of them, he devoted himself to the introduction of these sciences to the Ottomans. In order to achieve the cultural awakening of the Ottomans, he wrote several books on various topics from philosophy to astronomy, but especially geography.21 The works he printed in his printing house are the results of this effort. He was also the first known European author of a book written concerning the reforms which should be undertaken in the empire. The book, entitled Uşul al Ilahom fi Nizam al-Umum was presented to Mahmud I immediately after the revolt of Parnuma Halil in 1731. In the book he used the term nizam-i cedid (new order) which then would be the name of all the reforms that took place in the reign of Selim III (1789-1807). And he discussed not only what military reforms the empire needed but also administrative reforms. He also warned the sultan about the kind of innovations which taking place Russia asserting that if the empire failed to achieve the reforms, it would face the strong threat of Russia.22

Muteferrika's fame rest not on his efforts to awaken the Ottomans culturally, but on his achievement in establishing the first Turkish printing press. Before attaining this aim, he had written in 1726, a small book on the importance of the printing press as he was acquainted with the art of the
printing press in his country. The book was called Wasiat al-Thi'a (means of printing) in which he explained the benefits of printing press and showed what the Ottomans would lose if they failed to introduce it.21 He presented the book to the grand vizir and the sheykh al-Islam (Chief mufīt of the empi- re) Abdullah Efendi (1717-1730) to convince him of the necessity of it. Upon his request, a firman and a fera'a were issued by the sultan and the sheykh al-Islam, respectively about the legitimacy of establishing a press against any possible threat from adminis- trative and religious circles. Abdullah Efendi was aware of the benefits of the printing press. For this reason, he supported the idea and even appointed a committee to help him in proof reading of the printed works. He also wrote a sābrīz (appreciatory preface) to the first printed book of the press which was a dictionary entitled Kitāb-i Layghā-i Wankəlī which came out in January, 1729.24 The printing of religious books, like Qur'an, hadis, tafsir, however, were excluded, since the class of alims (Muslim learned men) of the time thought that the holy words were sacred and not to be printed with machine. In addition to that, there was another reason for not allowing the printing of these kinds of books namely that there were a quite number of hattats (calligraphers) who were making their living by copying these books for the students of madrasas (Isla- mic religious schools).

After receiving the assurance of imperial app- roval, Ibrahim set up the press in his house in the Sultan Selim district of the capital and began to work on December 16, 1727 partnership with Said Chelebi. He published his first book which its na- me is given above in 1729. Thus, some 280 years after the invention of the printing press in Europe, the first Turkish printing press was established in Istanbul. It seems that Ibrahim may have been in- volved in printing in Istanbul before the opening of his press, perhaps in the printing houses of the Je- wish community: we know that he had presented two maps to the grand vizier one of the Marmara Sea (1719), and the other, of Black Sea (1724-1725).25 Ibrahim published 17 books in his prin- ting house before his death in 1745.26

Why were the Ottomans so late in establish- ing one of the fundamental innovations which played such a vital role in the cultural awakening of the West? What were the reasons behind the de- lay? Was it the avarice of Ottoman governors, or the religious fanaticism of the ulama and the people- le as has always been claimed? The printing press was known to the Ottomans since the early years of its invention, and successive Ottoman governments had allowed other religious communities in Otto- man territory to use it.27 As we saw, the class of alims did not oppose the opening of the press; moreover, the so called religiously motivated revolt of Patrona Halil did not cause any harm to it. Thus the assumption that the opposition of the ulama prevented the introduction of the press because it was against the sharia (code of Islamic revealed laws) cannot be sustained.28 Berkess concludes that the real reason was that the Ottoman sultans saw what kind of important role the press played in the religious conflicts of Christian world,29 and they were fearful of the same kind of influence in the Islamic world. He also attributes the exclusion of re- ligious books from being printed for the same rea- son, in addition to that of protecting the income of the calligraphers.30 Certainly, there were other reasons for the delay in introducing the press, but most important of them was the lack of technical advancement in the empire to establish a press and maintain such necessary supplies for operating it, as paper. The latter also was among the main rea- sons for why the printing press of Ibrahim did not produce any great number of works. The economic and scientific backwardness of the Ottomans pre- vented them from introducing the press and using it effectively.31

3) First Appearances of European Inspired Reform Ideas

After the treaty of Pasewicz, reforms based upon western ideas began to appear at the Ottoman court. The traditional method of reform essentially had been to make the institutions work by force. As the Ottomans did not examine the real reasons for the decline of the empire, they failed to unders- tand the inherent problems of the empire and the means of solving them.

We know that a Frenchman by the name de Rochefort visited the Ottoman capital in 1716-1718 with a group by Protestant Huguenots escap- ing persecution of the Catholic government of France. The aim of their visit was to seek Ottoman permission to establish a Huguenot colony in Transylvaa- nia or in any other territory of the empire. It seems that they met with Damad Ibrah- im Pasha while he was sadar-ı hasanaskari (acting secre- tary of the grand vizier) as- king the permission of the government for their settle- ment. In return, they offered to supply military and econo- mic services to the govern- ment. Huguenots were a class of men learned in technical and economic as well as in military sciences. It seems that they knew the condi- tions of the Ottoman army; for this reason, they especially offered the government instruction of the army in modern military methods. The proposal seemed attractive to Ibrahim Pasha since he brought the offer to the Divan-i himayun (imperial council) for discussion. The project, how- ever, seems to have failed because no one at that time dared launch such military reform by using foreign military experts, and there was fear of the reaction of the Janissary corps whose members would think that their position was threatened. The- re is another possible reason for the failure of the project. Marquis de Bonnac, the French ambassa- dor of the period to Istanbul (1716-1724) who was very close to and influential with Ibrahim Pasha should have played important role this failure of the project because the emigration of Huguenots was opposed by his government since it did not want to lose so many of learned men to the Ottoman em- pire.32

There is another account concerning western based reform ideas which comes from the early years of the grand vezirate of Ibrahim Pasha. The document is the record of a conversation, real or imaginary, between an un- named Muslim and a "Christian officer."33 They discussed the reasons for the defeats of the Ottoman mi- litary. At the end, the Christian officer concludes that it is vital for the Otto- man army to be trained in western methods, and since the training of native offi- cers in modern sciences and techniques would require takes a long time, it should be allowed to employ Chris- tian officers from Europe to train the army. The em- phasis was on military re- forms. They did not touch on the economic and adminis- trative problems of the empire. Although we have no clear information on the identity of the author of this report in Ottoman sources, it has been suggested that the paper might have been written by Ibrahim Muteferrika because he presented to Mahmud I a report named Nizams al-Umum fI Uzul al-Hikmen which he mentions much the same topics.34 It is also suggested that perhaps Ibrahim Pasha had someone prepare the re- port to persuade the sultan that the country needed peace and military reform by showing the situation of the army as bad as possible.35
The grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha was a learned man, poet and calligrapher. He was especially fond of history. For this reason, he established a translation committee in his early years as grand vizir and instructed its members to translate into Turkish important history books of the Muslim east. Among the proposed leading works to be translated were the Mekk-i Janam of Bedir al-Din Mahmud, known as Ayin, c. (1515) and Abd al-Razzak’s Matba‘at al-Salatin. Among the achievements of the committee, in addition to these two history books, was the translation of some works of Aristotle. He also saw the need to build a library for the books located in the Topkapi Palace. After building the library, he collected some 4000 books and had them beautifully illuminated. He then appointed Nezim, the most outstanding poet of the era, as director of the library which was named the "Library of Eyin". Ibrahim Pasha also opened four other public libraries and banned the removal of important and rare manuscripts from the empire. Nevertheless, none of the innovations introduced by the grand vizir flourished as much as did the ma-nis for the cultivation of the tulips.

The Lale Devri perhaps was characterized by the mutual understanding of sultan and grand vizir. It might be difficult to find another example in Osmangazi history if the two leaders sharing the same tastes. Ahmed III was a cultured man, a poet and a calligrapher but his pursuit of money and pleasure dominated all his other ambitions. After spending fifteen years to secure his throne, he desired to spend the rest of his reign in the pursuit of pleasure. This inclination of the sultan was matched by that of the grand vizir. Thus the grand vizir was ready to satisfy his master's and his own hedonistic tendencies. In return, the sultan gave up all interest in ruling and left responsibility for the affairs of the empire with his son-in-law, the grand vizir Ibrahim Pasha.

Ibrahim Pasha, as the sultan’s favourite, even when he was sadaret kıyamet, began early to appoint like-minded individuals, chosen mostly from among his relatives, to crucial positions in order to ensure a peaceful cabinet before he became grand vizir. He continued to appoint favourites and relatives to important positions until the last days of his grand vizirate. Among them, his son Mehemet Pasha and his nephew Ali Pasha first married Aziz a woman and Umme Gulsum, daughters of the sultan, respectively, and they were appointed as vezirs. His son-in-law Mehemet Pasha was appointed sadaret kıyamet, and another son-in-law, Mustafa Pasha, was appointed as kaptan-ı askeri (grand admiral of the fleet).

In the early years of his grand vizirate, Ibrahim Pasha devoted himself to enriching the imperial treasury in accordance with the inclinations of the sultan. To achieve that, he carried out a series of financial operations. We can refer to some of important ones of them here. First, he reduced the number of the bureaucrats and members of the jasiyis corps. Next, he decreased the salary of fortress guards by one quarter. Thirdly, for the first time in over a century, cadastral surveys were carried out all around the empire so that hitherto untaxed revenues could be taxed. Also, although, the country was neither in conflict with any country and nor intending to be so, he did not give up the collection of the imdad-i沟teriy (the campaign assistance tax) which was usually applied in times of war.

4) Excisam: The Lale Devri

The report which Yirmisekiz Mehmed Celebi wrote after his visit to Paris, and the plans of Versailles and Fontainbleau which he brought back with him initiated a period of intense imitation life in the French capital. The effects of both the report and the plans were so intense that a short time after Mehemet Celebi returned (October 8, 1721), Sar‘ul-adhad (the auspicious place) the most famous of the entertainment palaces of the era was built in Kaghranhane (the sweet-waters of Europe) on the northern end of the Golden Horn. Inspired by the sketches of Fontainbleau and finished within two months (May-June 1722), its opening was celebrated by many festivals in which both the sultan and the grand vizir participated. It's environs were to be the scene of elegant parties of pleasure, music, and poetry whose spirit was portrayed joyfully by Nedim. The French ambassador de Bonna was presented the sultan with forty orange-trees which were planted around the palace. Later the grand vizir distributed parcels of land around the Golden Horn to the ruling class and ordered them to build palaces and pavilions on these parcels. Hundreds of palaces and pavilions sprang up around Istanbul, especially on the shores of the Golden Horn and Bosphorus. Such building continued until the end of the era and the structures were given romantic names like Evn-ahad, Nihat-ahad. The palace of the grand vizir was in Kandilli on the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus. This and another palaces were surrounded with beautifully designed gardens adorned with colourful flowers, especially with tulips. Competition among the people in cultivating this flower was to reach such a point that some, 200 kinds of it appeared in a short time, some of which were imported from Holland and Iran. The cost of some varieties of the flower even reached about 1,000 akshu. The government had to fix a price for each kind of the flower to prevent speculation in 1722. This tulip craze was so pervasive that the period came to be known as the "Tulip Age.

The building activity was not limited only to pleasure palaces. Mosques, medreessas and fountains were also built, but mostly to embellish the environs of these pleasure places. The most notable of these are the mosque built for the mother of the sultan at Uskudar and the fountain built for and named after Ahmed III outside of the Topkapi Palace and for which Ahmed III composed the chonogram himself. Many governmental buildings were repaired, and extensive rebuilding of the walls of the city were undertaken. (1722-1724). Plans had been made to bring water from the Belgrade Foresto Istanbul and to build roads and harbour installations. In these buildings, European architects were also employed. The grand vizir also devoted himself to rebuilding and decorating his town of Musharaka to such an extent that the town was renamed Nershehir (new city). The era also saw the first inspirations of European architectural styles.

The first of these festivities arranged by the grand vizir dates back to before the building of Sar‘ul-adhad. He invited the sultan to Kaghranhane where he gave a party on April 15, 1719. The first feast which lasted one week was held in Yeni Saray (new palace), in the Beshiktash district, which was recently decorated with tulip gardens. It was not unusual until that time for a sultan to visit the grand vizir, but Ahmed III was not so reserved and even would stay for many days in palaces of the grand vizir. These parties continued day and night and were provided by musicians, poets and dancers. The next year, the festivities lasted ten days beginning on May 5, 1723. These parties were mostly organized during the tulip season. Such entertainments began a tradition for different celebrations, for example, the opening of a new palace, the visit of foreign representatives, special religious festivals, and launching of a new ship etc. Following each occasion, the sultan and the grand vizir would distribute jewels and robes to the attendants, and the sultan would return to his palace in a specially arranged parade. Over time, the entertainments and feasts got longer and more frequent. There were different types of entertainments in the spring, the summer and the winter or by day and by night. In the spring, the tulip season was considered a special holiday, in addition to parties, special trips were arranged in tulip gardens. Some of these gardens were provided with singing birds and patrons, and at night toursists would go around the tulip beds carrying candles on their back. The gardens of Chirazhan Palace (Palace of Candles), near the southern end of the Bosphorus, were illuminated with costly lanterns, hence the name given to this palace. The festivals held at Kaghrane were of a spe-
cial importance. Along with the ruling class, the people of Istanbul would also participate in these festivals. Swings were built for the amusement of the people. Horse races and shooting, competitions were among the ways of the entertaining of the public in Kaghishe. Mock of sea-battles by imperial navy and fire works in the Golden Horn were added attractions for the people in summer. In the winter the sultans and members of the ruling class could forget the cold with the feasts of biyr (sweets) accompanied with music and poetic discussions.

The marriage ceremonies of the thirty-one princes and princesses of the sultan were celebrated with splendid parties and amusements for long days. The grand vezir gave special importance to visits by foreign emissaries to show them the magnificence of the empire, and he invited them to participate in the ceremonies. He used to distribute costly robes to these representatives after each ceremony.

In spite of the peace policy of the grand vezir, the empire was forced to participate in the conflict in Iran when the Russians invaded the northern territories of that country. Although the grand vezir, with the intervention of the French ambassador de Bonnais on June 24, 1724, had achieved an agreement with Russia on the partition of Iran which was the first and last time that the Ottomans and Russia reached an agreement to divide up a neighbor country the Ottoman army had to fight to gain control of the lands in their part of the agreement, and in the next few years the army gained victories against the rulers of Iran. It has been suggested that the joys of victory made an important contribution to the increase of the entertainment parties. This ambience of continuous festivity gained such appeal among the members of the ruling class that they did not realize the arrival of Ramazan, (the month of fasting in Islam) in 1727. In addition to the palaces and entertainments, the era manifested a tendency towards extravagance for everyone who had money to spend. In contrast to previous Ottoman opposition to the habits and customs of Europe, now such became fashionable for the wealthy. Articles representing the Western life were imported, replacing the softas and chairs of the divans. Trouser and gowns also were fashionable. The sultan and the grand vezir did not hesitate to have their portraits painted employing Van Mouret (1671-1737), famous painter, for that. The artist painted portraits of the most of the members of the ruling class and his paintings became very famous both in Istanbul and Europe. Western artists were employed in painting not only the walls of the new palaces but also the walls of Topkapi Palace covering over the monasteries that had adorned the palace until that time. Under the influence of the behavior of the ruling class, moral restrictions among the common people also relaxed. The people’s love of luxury and pleasure became more apparent. This new appreciation of life began to make changes in the moral values of the people. A new "spirit of worldliness" rose among the people. People began to compete with each other in living in luxury, a practice which led numerous households into ruin. The clothing of women was especially very expensive. It seems that the Ottoman women had already begun to imitate the clothing of foreign or non-Muslim women by that time. As a result wedding ceremonies went beyond the affordable means of many people. For this reason, the grand vezir had to pass a law regulating the clothing of the people according to social classes and prohibiting changes in women’s attire and their appearance in public places. Another manifestation of this tendency towards luxury was the growth within the numbers of bars and coffee houses, thus effecting the ruin of fundamental Ottoman ethos a mixture of the ghazi spirit and religion. The poems of Nefis (d. 1730), who was a prominent figure of the era and a constant member of the parties of the sultan and grand vezir, reflected vividly this transition from interest in religion to this secular experience of deriving joys from the senses and nature. He glorified the sultan and the grand vezir, and the beauties of Seîd-ânad. Along with other poets of the time, he developed a new understanding of the poetry in which the subjects of wine and love were exalted. This secular nature of the themes furthered the acceptance of new forms of derv (court) poetry, such as the sharkz (ballad) form which gained a great deal of popularity, and in which Nefis achieved the greatest success of the form. He devoted himself to glorifying the pleasures of life through the art of poetry.

What were the living conditions of the people in the era? Were they rich enough to supply money for the extravagant festivities of the government? What was their reaction to this way of governing the country? As mentioned above, the grand vezir spent extensive effort to collect all available money to satisfy the greed of the sultan for it, and to spend in the festivities. But the people were in such a bad economic situation that thousands of peasants preferred to leave their lands and move to the cities as they were unable to pay the taxes and survive. The excessive taxation of the government became an intolerable burden; for instance, the government did not suspend the extra campaign assistance tax until 1727 even though there was no war before 1724. The torture to collect the taxes by local governments and soldiers were among the other reasons for the degradation of the people since they were mostly in resistance to pay the taxes because of poverty. Most of the people who moved into the cities to make their living, however, were unable to find employment. Moreover, there was always a scarcity of food in the cities because of the decline of agriculture occasioned by the flight of the peasants. As a result, food prices began to rise continually both in the cities and all around the countryside. Debasement of the coinage was another cause of anger among the people. The expenditure on luxuries by the government further inflated the prices of food and other material goods. These conditions left the people to live with very high inflation. It reached such an extent that the government had to issue a law to force people to return to their lands, and to cancel the campaign assistance taxes which caused conflicts between the taxed and the tax collector brought out. Ibrahim Pasha who understood the complaints of the people, tried to satisfy them occasionally by distributing money and food. These undertakings, however, were beyond the solving the problems of people. As a result of the resistance, a group of people in the spiring of 1727 stormed Çiğnemâ Palace in which the sultan and other members of the ruling class were entertaining. These social and economic conditions were one of the reasons for the failure of the campaign that the grand vezir wished to launch against Iran in August-September 1730 because the necessary equipment and number of soldiers was in sufficient. The people refused to send what the government asked for because of bad economic living conditions. There is an interesting account to show the bad living conditions and one of the most important reasons of the resistance of the people. It is that when, after the revolt of 1730, the new sultan Mahmud I asked Patrona Halil, leader of the revolt what the forces of rebellion wanted, his first request was a halt to overtaxation. Ironi- cally, in contrast with the poverty of the people, on the death of Ibrahim Pasha during the revolt on October 1, 1730, a huge amount of treasure found in his palace, like Ahmed III left a great treasure to his successor.
On the other hand, the grand vezir who paid great attention to the affairs of the empire in the early years of his grand vizirate had lost interest in the affairs of the state; as a result, the government lost its efficiency. For instance, after 1725 the government failed to prevent the overtaxation of the village of Kayaköy in Sminnu, in spite of several protests of the sultan resulting from the villagers' protests in several letters. Another interesting example is that of the French ambassador, Miquel de Villeneuve who came to Istanbul in 1728 failed to present his credentials to the grand vezir until 1730. Moreover, the negotiations with Iran were left to the regional governors and administrators who were officials of second or third rank.69 On the other hand, the grand vezir who successfully diverted the attention of the sultan continually into dissension70 began to make the parties more frequent to obscure news of military defeats in Iran began to reach Istanbul after 1727. Moreover, Ibrahim Pasha suppressed the opposition to his government through his agents.71 No one dared to ask the reasons why Kara Mustafa, kahidevi of the grand vezir, killed numerous people.72 In addition, the men of Ibrahim Pasha ignored those individuals that the people respected; disposed officials, alemes, etc.73

The alienation of the sultan from managing the affairs of the empire and his blind trust in the grand vezir were so great that when the sheikh al-Islam Abdullah Efendi secretly told him that the affairs of the empire were not what they should be, he reported to the grand vezir what Abdullah Efendi told him. Certainly, the grand vezir told him that everything was all right.74

The tulip era ended with the revolt of Patroon Hall and his followers on September 28, 1730,75 and the complete change of government within the next few days. The grand vezir and his son-in-law Mehmed Pasha, sadaret kaymakam, and Mustafa Pasha, hujjat-i dersya, were strangled on October 17, 1730, and Sultan Ahmed III declared himself the next day. He regretted that he had left the control of the empire to the grand vezir and suggested to his successor not to leave the control of the empire to anyone else.24

What did the period bring to the empire? Did it bring peace to the country, and did the military reforms which had prompted the grand vezir to take the Treaty of Passarowitz take place? Did the social and economic turbulence of the country cease, and did such new institutions of the era, as the printing press and the translation committee get enough support? Unfortunately, none of these events was fully achieved. On the contrary, the country was first of all dragged into restless war against Iran which increased trouble for both the empire and the people. Then, the bureaucratic and mundane inclinations of both the sultan and the grand vezir which found their expression in festinism led to the creation of an era which is remembered by the term "seljukism." There was growing interest in European architecture and decoration among the ruling class. Also, few civilizations of the era, in fact, were the results of personal efforts of some discerning people of the time, rather than the initiatives of the government. For instance, it seems that the printing press would not have been established in this era if Ibrahim Mereferika nor promoted the idea. In spite of its relentless zeal, however, the institution did not flourish, partly because of the lack of support by the government, and partly because of the lack of the necessary technical and cultural advancement. Nevertheless, the change had been gained in learning of the European institutions through the envoys sent to some European capitals. The reformist ideas of European gained strength but were mostly concerned with the specific needs of the empire, such as military innovations. This effort was paralleled by a growing interest in Turkish and Islamic history. At least the translation of a few important works on the history of the Islamic era was achieved through the efforts of the translation committee. It can be said that there were two real achievements in this period, one the establishment of Turkish printing press, and the other the initiation of discussions about military reforms which would be realized in the reign of Mahmud I (1730-1754) largely through Ahmad ibn Ali Pasha (Claude Alexandre Comte de Bevois) (1645-1747) a French convert to Islam.
LITERATURE AS THE REFLECTING AREA OF NEW IDEAS

(1859-1923)

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In the midst of the 19th century, Turkish writers abandoning the old (classical) literature gave an active role to literary material in establishing of new values which led to a set of changes not only in the literature but the in social and political life. The basic concepts of transmission from despotism to democracy, from Ottoman to Turkish and from theocracy to secularism -laissez faire came from Western thought. The footprints of this long, tiresome development and change were reflected in the literature. It was almost impossible to segregate the Turkish literature from the social and political issues.

The ones who learned French attempted to translate books or wrote the similar ones; so new genres of literature or expressions began to appear. Though short story, novel, drama and new poetry could be tied to the alike in the old literature, the newspaper and articles are completely new. In the old days folk stories and plays both helped to create the public opinion and enjoy the people. These works belong to the folk literature. Divan poetry, the great poetry was weakened in the 19th century.

The novel and drama were enjoyed as new literary genres. Some authors were closely related to the European models (Samipazade Seyzay, Nihisade Nazım, Halit Ziya, Mehmet Rahaf) and some such as Şenem-Sami in his Taşçı-yı Taldat ve Farnat (The Love Story of Talat and Farnat); Ahmet Midhat in all of his novels largely made use of the folk tradition; and Namık Kemal in his İnfılah (The Awakening) used some of the elements of the D{"u}nt poetries.

In drama, Şinasi wrote Sayr Evlenci (Marriage of a Poet) which was a good model for the ones who shared his ideas. Ahmet Vefik Pasha by translating and adapting Mollière's plays, introduced Mollière into the Turkish theatre repertoire. Like Şinasi, Vefik Pasha also saw the starting point in recasting the traditional folk drama with the European drama. Unfortunately these models could not be influential when encountered by the impressive personality and the works of Namık Kemal whose impact in didactic/political drama, which was absolute.

Two translations, both published in 1839 were significant in regards to the change of mentality.

1. Muharrem-i Hilmiye (Philosophical Dialogues) by Müfit Pasha (1838-1910)

2. Teröret-i Mansuz (Translation of Verses) by Şinasi (1836-1871)

The themes and ideas of the texts in Muharrem-i Hilmiye were: education of women, conflict of nature and civilization, conflict of Church and free thought, concepts of society, patriotism, and morality. These continued to appear in abundance in the Turkish literature during the last quarter of the 19th century. The