



## The Evolution of State Reason of Turkish Islamists and Its Effect on the Justice and Development Party Performance

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**Abstract:** The identity and performance of the Justice and Development Party of Türkiye since coming to power in 2002 has been the subject of much thought and questions. By emphasizing the legacy of the last Islamic caliphate and relying on new economic-political achievements, Turkish Islamists have displayed a new formulation of state reason (*raison d'état*) in the international system under the banner of "Islamic Democracy". They claim to have formulated the requirements of being a Muslim requirements and the secular provisions of today's world together. This formulate of ruling which is based on a new understanding of Turkish Muslim identity contributes to the manifestation of self-confidence in domestic and foreign politics, and this is what have made them to be reckless in pursuing the policy of strategic depth in the Islamic world, the Middle East, Central Asia, North Africa and even Mediterranean area. By applying the theoretical possibilities of the concept of Governmentality in Foucault's thought, this article aims to first shed light on what and how this intellectual and identity transformation is, and then apply it to the politics of the Justice and Development Party.

**Keywords:** Justice and Development Party of Türkiye, Governmentality, Political Islam, Kemalism.

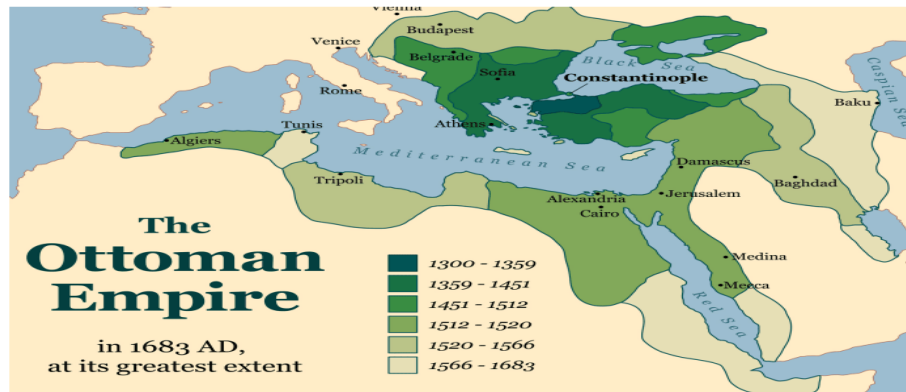
### **Introduction**

The Ottoman Empire was one of the most powerful states in the history of Islamic societies, which ruled from 1299 to 1922. This empire has been the longest and most durable state among Islamic societies, which lasted for about 6 centuries, so that some historians believe it was the only empire in Muslim societies. This empire ruled over 5.6 million kilometers in the 16th century at the height of its power. At this time, the Ottoman Empire expanded in the west to the vicinity of Vienna, in the south to the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Peninsula, in the north to the Dan River, and in the east to the borders of Iran. Therefore, Asia Minor, most of the Middle East, parts of North Africa, the southeastern part of Europe to the Caucasus were among the regions under its rule. If we do not consider the Abbasid state as an empire and consider its type as a caliphate, the Ottoman Empire has the largest empire in the history of Islam. The image below shows the territories that were annexed to the Ottoman Empire over the years.

From the middle of the 16th century, this empire presented itself as the official heir of the Islamic caliphate and the leader of the Islamic world and achieved many successes in this way, so that the image of the glory of an Islamic empire in the minds of the Western world has been Ottoman Empire until now. Unlike the monarchies in the Islamic world, this empire used religion to legitimize itself, but unlike the caliphate system, it also paid attention to modern arrangements in governance, and therefore, it chose a new way to rule in the Islamic world, which somehow tried to maintain the balance of tradition and modernity. Before the emergence of Ottomans, the Islamic world were in a complicated situation. The Crusades and the Mongols and Timur invasions had destroyed Islamic lands. For about two centuries, the Islamic lands were ruled by the Mamluks and there was no unity. The local rulers were unable to control this situation and none of them had the power to unite other rulers under their command. Their long-term struggle with the Mongols and the remnants of the Crusaders and the resistance against the Westerners had caused them many losses and casualties. Therefore, the Islamic world was thirsty for a government that could bring order to its stormy situation, and it was in this atmosphere that Ottoman emerged.

### 3 Islamic Political Thought

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The glory of the Ottoman Empire had a great impact on Islamic societies. Despite the oppression caused by this empire on the people, Sunni Muslims referred to it as a shield against other empires and somehow saw their identity tied to it. However, the Ottoman Empire also disappeared, and with its disappearance, a great void emerged in the political arena of the Sunni religious communities. In addition, the West, and especially the United Kingdom, created many interventions in the Ottoman territories and in a way formed new country divisions based on the strategy of conflict and heterogeneity. In other words, the divisions of the regions of the Ottoman Empire were made in a way that provided the grounds for permanent internal differences among Muslims. This article seek to answer the question of how the destruction of this empire is related to the increase of extremism and Takfir. For this purpose, the introduction of the discussion with Ottoman history is done in order to form the necessary preparations to answer the main question. Then, two important sub-questions are answered: What platforms did the collapse of the Ottoman Empire provide for Takfiri activities? and what opportunities did this collapse provide for the increased activity of takfiri groups?

### **1. Historical Background: The Rise and Fall of the Ottoman Empire**

Ottoman history, like many other entities in international politics, has followed a normal curve that continues from establishment, growth, and rise to weakness, decline, and fall. Of course, it should be noted that this empire, compared to its similar cases in the world, has gone through a longer term of rise and expansion. In general, the Ottoman periods can be divided into the following 8 sections. Among them, the period of ascension or culmination with a period of 152 years is the longest part:

#### **1-1. Before the establishment (1230-1299)**

The origin of the Ottomans goes back to the Turkmen who moved from Turkestan to Asia Minor at the end of the Seljuk rule. This 69-year period was associated with two rulers. Ertugrul Ghazi is called the ancestor of the Ottomans who ruled under the Seljuks. But his son, Osman bin Ertugrul, was able to gain autonomy from the Seljuks by destroying Rome.

#### **1-2. Establishment (1402-1299)**

This 103-year era begins with Osman I and ends with Bayezid I. The name of the Ottomans goes back to Osman I, who was the founder of this empire. He moved from Merv to Anatolia with 400 horsemen to help the Seljuks against the Romans (Shaw & Shaw, 1977: 13). Osman I settled the Turks, who were nomads, and by attacking Bursa, this city fell and renamed the Ottoman Emirate to the Ottoman Empire. Gradually, the power of the Ottomans expanded in the western regions of Anatolia. At first, they allied with the Seljuks, but with the development of their power, they replaced them in those areas.

#### **1-3. The era of stability (1451-1413)**

This 38-year period begins with Muhammad I and ends with Murad II. This era has faced less changes than other.

#### **1-4. The peak period (1451-1603)**

This 152-year period begins with the second reign of Mehmed II (Muhammad Fatih) and ends with Mehmed III. During this period, Ottoman power gradually increased. Unlike his first period, which was not very successful, Muhammad II was nicknamed Mehmed the

Conqueror in the second period of his reign - 1444-1446 and 1451-1481 - with the conquest of Constantinople. Salim I defeated the Safavids in the Chaldaran War, annexed large areas of Iraq, Kurdistan and Diyarbakir to the Ottomans and was nicknamed "Yawz" - which means victorious, decisive and powerful. Suleiman I spent the longest reign among the Ottomans, and with the restoration of the judicial system, he became known as Süleyman the Lawgiver or Süleyman the Magnificent. He made many parts of the Middle East, North Africa and Europe his own, he advanced to Vienna but stopped there. Strengthening and creating an organized navy was also done during his time.

#### **1-5. Depression era (1603-1703)**

This 100-year era begins with Ahmed I and ends with Mustafa II.

#### **1-6. The period of decline (1703-1789)**

This 86-year era begins with Ahmed III and ends with Abdul Hamid I.

#### **1-7. Collapse of Empire (1789-1922)**

This era is the second longest era that lasted for 133 years and starts with Selim III and ends with Muhammad VI. Muhammad VI was the thirty-sixth and last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, who succeeded his brother, Muhammad V in 1918, and in 1922, by order of the Constituent Assembly, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Ottoman Empire were abolished, and in 1923, the Republic of Turkey was established. During this period, Ottoman borders were limited to present-day Turkey. The Ottoman Empire was mismanaged during this period and had effectively abandoned reliance on domestic sources of power in favor of foreign ones. At the end of this period, Ottoman Empire entered the First World War with the support of Germany and Austria against United Kingdom, Russia and France. However, the war turned in favor of the The Allies of World War I and against the Central Powers, and therefore United Kingdom, Russia and France tried to put pressure on the Ottomans by attacking from outside and imposing treaties. Therefore, in 1916, the Sykes-Picot Treaty was concluded, and as a result, the Arab lands of the empire were divided. In 1918, the Ottoman Empire surrendered in

the world war by concluding the Mudras Treaty, while many parts of the country's territory were in the possession of the enemies. In 1920, the Treaty of Sur was signed, as a result of which the Dardanelles and Bosphorus straits became international, and Armenia, Izmir and several other states and its European territories were separated from the Ottoman Empire. Supporting the anti-Ottoman movements inside was also another way to attack it. Therefore, they supported the Young Turks led by Kemal Atatürk. Their support was so serious that they agreed to cancel the provisions of the Treaty of Sur by concluding the Treaty of Lausanne. During the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, the current borders of Turkey were determined. In the same year, the Turkish National Assembly deposed Sultan Mehmed V, the last Ottoman sultan, and proclaimed the Republic, bringing Kemal Pasha to power.

#### **1-8. Caliphate period (1922-1924)**

This era was associated with only one ceremonial position called the caliphate, which Abdul Majid II held for a very short period.

### **2. The Ottoman Empire Pillars**

Ottoman Empire not only had a long history, but it had longer ascension and peaking than other empires. But which factors caused this? In the following, these factors are examined. These factors are important in the sense that with their destruction, the ground and platform for the activities of other groups, including Takfiris, has been provided.

#### **2-1. Religion**

Although political and national interests were also involved in the acceptance of Islam by the Turks, and from the Battle of Manzikert onwards, the Turks advanced towards the west with the goal of Jihad in the way of God and opened the borders of non-Islamic entities, but the Ottomans tried from the very beginning to have a good relationship with religion. Osman I was a religious person and from the very beginning, in order to strengthen his power and form a unified system, he started religious measures such as serving Ulama, establishing and rebuilding mosques. In the will of Osman I to his successor, the religious approach of the founder of this empire can be clearly observed: "O my son, refrain from engaging in actions that God

has not ordered, and whenever you face a problem in the matter of governance, Consult religious scholars. My son, we are not among those who consider the purpose of fighting to be government and domination over people, but we are those who live with Islam and die with Islam." Also, Tariqa and Sufi groups played a significant role in gaining power and forming the Ottoman Empire. The formation and survival of Sufi sects and groups had a direct and close relationship with the local powers of the time, which was the result of a kind of mutual need (Naderzadeh, 2013: 90). The ruling jurisprudence in the Ottoman land was Hanafi. Of course, the Ottomans had Ash'ari religion in their belief tendencies (Firouzabadi, 1392 AD: 374). Religion has had a prominent role in the Ottoman government since the beginning. Until the end of the Ottoman era, the sultans had maintained their proper relationship with religion. For example, Sultan Muhammed I was a healthy religious person who had a good relationship with Ulama. He was the first Ottoman sultan who sent a huge part of his wealth to Mecca every year for the purpose of distribution and spending among the poor of the two shrines. Also, in the conquest of Anatolia, religion played an effective role. Of course, it should be mentioned that at that time the goal of the Turks was not to achieve the leadership of the Islamic world. The Muslim Turks who conquered Anatolia and settled in different parts of it and succeeded in establishing an independent state, mixed with the native inhabitants of Anatolia and became a great nation with the spread of Islam in Anatolia. In addition to jihad in the countries they conquered, the Muslim Turks built mosques, schools, baths, markets, and caravanserais.

In the conquest of Constantinople, Muhammad II considered himself to be the representative of Muslims on the path of Jihad. In his letter to the Sultan of the Mamluks, in which he informed him of the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Muhammad wrote that it is your responsibility to keep the Hajj pilgrimage routes open for Muslims. And on the other hand, we are obliged to provide the necessities of Ghazians (Inalcik, 1388: 97-96). It was from this time that Osmani became the leader of the Islamic world. One of the most important points in the Ottoman Empire of the 7th and 8th centuries was the



existence of religious places and religious schools. An example of these cities that was conquered by Murad is Angoriya, in terms of famous mosques and schools, it is possible to mention Haji Bayram Mosque and Mustafa Pasha, Seif Eldin and Tash Koprizade schools (Porgeshtal, 1367: 153).

## **2-2. Knowledge**

The Ottomans, especially during their rise, paid great attention to the Knowledge. In this regard, it has been acknowledged that its schools were more advanced than all the European nations of its time, except in terms of freedom and credit. The first Ottoman school was founded by Orhan Ghazi after the conquest of the city of İznik (Nefieh) (1330-31 AD) (Âşikpaşzade, 1984: 64). Also, "what makes Ottoman scholars virtuous and reliable is the fact that among them there is no person without academic education and they all know Arabic and Persian" (Toderini, 1789: 1-2).

Recruiting scholars from other countries to Anatolia and sending students to study in other countries continued during the Ottoman period. Such scientific trips show cultural dynamism. The first professors of Ottoman schools were either born and educated in other parts of Anatolia, or were born in Anatolia and studied in the main centers of Islamic culture such as Egypt, Iran and Turkestan and returned to Anatolia. Of the 115 known scholars and teachers between the 14th and 15th centuries who studied in Anatolia or other Islamic countries, Iran is in the first place with 43.3%, Egypt is in the second place with 23.4%, Anatolia is in the second place with 14.7%. Transoxiana with 8.6%, Bilad al-Sham with 7.8% and Iraq with 1.7% were in the next places. By examining the homelands of the authors of 33 different lesson texts that were taught in Ottoman schools, it becomes clear that many centers of Islamic culture were the source of Ottoman educational progress. According to a statistical research that has been conducted on this issue, Iran with 39.3% and Egypt with 30.3% were again in first and second place, and Transoxiana, Iraq, Khorezm and Ferghana each with 6.06% and Anatolia. and Khorasan each shared 3.03 percent (Jaafari Madhab, 2012).

From the beginning of the 14th century until the beginning of the reign of Mehmed II, there were 42 schools in big cities. 25 schools in Bursa,



13 schools in Edirne and 4 schools in İznik. During this period, there were 40 schools in smaller cities as well (Jaafari Madhab, 2012). Between the years 1331-1451 - a period when higher education in the Ottoman Empire was in its early stages - a total of 82 schools were established, which is a clear example of the rapid expansion of educational and scientific fields in the Ottoman society. The existence of these schools means that at least two schools are established every three years. Since the number of schools in certain cities increased, related institutions were graded together. Schools were graded based on their importance in the era before Mehmed II.

City	14th Century	15th Century	16th Century	Schools without a specific date	Total
İznik	4				4
Bursa	19	11	6		36
Edirne	1 Dar-ul- Shifa	20	10		31
İstanbul		23	113	6	142
Anatolia	12	31	32	13	88
Balkan	4	12	18	5	39
Syria			3		3
Hijaz			6		6
cheman			1		1
Total	40	97	189	24	350

**Table 1:** The number of schools in Ottoman cities during different centuries (source: authors)

The construction of Ottoman schools has been parallel to the political and economic development and progress of the Ottoman Empire. These developments continued almost exponentially until the 16th century and reached their highest level in this century (Jaafari Madhab,

2012). Also, the number of schools at the time of each Ottoman sultan was as follows.

sultans	number of schools
Orhan	10
Murad I	7
Bayezid I	23
Mehmed Çelebi	7
Murad II	38
Mehmed II	30
Bayezid II	33
Selim I	8
Suleiman I	106
Selim II	17
Murad III	42
Mehmed III	5
Schools without a specific date	24
Total	350

**Table 2:** The number of Ottoman schools according to the sultans (source: authors)

### 2-3. Public Utility Activities

The Ottoman government tried to attract people's attention by Public Utility Activities. One of them which played an important role in the Ottoman Empire, especially at the beginning of the establishment of the government, and was a model for the construction of buildings was an endowment building that was established by a sheikh or a dervish for the well-being of travelers in cities or often on long and lonely roads and passages. The sheikh or dervish who founded it received a small piece of land from the ruler for free and left it as an inheritance for his building. He and the dervishes who gathered around him, in order to provide for their livelihood expenses, the sheikh and his children, like the trustees of other endowments, were the managers who worked on this land. In the early Ottoman period, this buildings played an essential role in the settlement of Turkish immigrants in the border areas and the areas conquered by the Ottomans. Dervishes or poor emigrants who pretended to be dervishes came from Anatolia to the newly conquered region and selected a part of the land and after obtaining an order from the Sultan, built a corner in it. Since the members of buildings enjoyed tax exemption, a flood of new immigrants poured into the lands belonging to it and formed the core of a newly founded Turkish village. This was the origin of most of the

Turkic villages that appeared in Western Anatolia and the Balkans in the 14th century. At the same time, these corners served as shelters for newly arrived immigrants and even Ghazis (Inalcik, 2008: 251-253). Also, the Ottoman sultans built kitchens that cooked food for the poor, which was an example in the city of Nice, where the management of this kitchen was given to holy people, sheikhs and young disciples, for their specific goals, which were the promotion of Islam and the help of the poor. (Purgstall, 1367: 112-106).

#### **2-4. Expansion of the territory**

The expansion of the territory is important because it played a role in creating the glory of the Ottoman Empire more than other axes. This matter was especially important for Europeans, because the internal affairs of the empire had little to do with them, but the conquests greatly affected them. Therefore, they emphasized this from the very beginning. (Brockelmann, 1977: 410-409). For these conquests, a powerful and well-equipped army was needed, which Ottomans had. In the conquest of Constantinople, you can see the most magnificent Ottoman army. In this war, Mehmed II used a large and destructive weapon called Orman cannon. His army was more than 300 thousand people. His raw materials and military equipment were more than needed to conquer Constantinople. Of course, the Ottoman army was not always at the height of its glory, but its glory had a direct relationship with its conquests. The Ottoman military history is divided into 5 parts, and the Ottoman army played a great role in opening up the country and creating glory in the first three periods. These periods include:

##### **2-4-1. Founding period**

This period covers the time period of 1300-1453, which lasted from the campaign to Byzantium until the fall of Constantinople. This army was composed of Turkmen horsemen who settled in the western regions of Anatolia and was organized by Osman I. It was during this period and in 2009 that military service was made compulsory.

##### **2-4-2. Classic army**

This period covers the period from 1451-1606. During this period, soldiers were paid for the first time. Before, they were given booty or

land. This period has been associated with an increase in the number of soldiers. The Ottoman Empire had the largest number of soldiers in 1607-1609.

#### **2-4-3. Military reforms**

This period lasted from 1806 to 1826. The industrial revolution in the West led to the creation of new weapons and changed the armies accordingly. Therefore, in order to maintain military power, the Ottoman Empire had to carry out military reforms. In this regard, the Ottoman governments welcomed the arrival of Western military advisers. Claude Alexandre Bonval was a Frenchman who was hired by Sultan Muhammad I to provide military advice. He played an effective role in the establishment of the cannon iron smelter, gunpowder and fuse factories, and the military school (Watson, 2003: 11). Francois Baron Dutot was another Frenchman who worked in the field of establishing a mortar factory and creating mobile military units and launching maritime studies (Shaw, 1977: 255). Of course, the traces of these reforms can be attributed to before this era. For example, Napoleon Bonaparte was sent to Constantine as a junior officer to provide advisory services to the Ottoman army in 1795 (Jacob Lehmanowsky, 1832: 4).

#### **2-4-4. The era of modernization**

It includes 1826-1858. During this period, the German military system was superior to the French military system, and therefore, Ottoman wanted to replace the German system in his army. A military academy was established in 1834 and the first graduates received degrees from this academy in 1841. In the early 1880s, Abdullah II hired German military advisers. However, this era has been accompanied by many ups and downs. For example, in the last 15 years of his rule, sultan abdul-hamid II had reduced the budget of the army.

#### **2-4-5. The decline era**

which goes back to the period of 1861-1918. Despite the efforts of politicians to strengthen and modernize the army, the body of the army did not adapt much to these changes. The beginning of this era was associated with the kingdom of Abd al-Azim and its end was associated with the Armistice of Mudros.

## 2-5. Law

Regarding the importance of observing the law in the Ottoman Empire, it should be said that the first ministers were chosen from among the judges who invited them from the central cities of Anatolia to these areas (Naderzadeh, 2013: 84). Also, there were powerful mechanisms to prevent corruption in the Ottoman political structure. For example, except for the Sultan himself, other members of his family were removed from government positions. Also, from the time of Sultan Süleyman the Lawgiver onwards, unlike other men who had the right to marry 4 conjugal wives, the Sultan had only the right to have one conjugal wife, and this woman should not be from a famous family. This woman should have been among the maids who were trained for this job. The wife of the current sultan and the mother of the later sultan should not be related in order to provide the grounds for the occurrence of nepotism in the government (Porgeshtal, 1367: 1808). For this reason, the Ottoman people sometimes called him a concubine to humiliate their sultan. Also, despite the power of Sultan Muhammad I in conquering the country, he had to recognize the emperor of Byzantium as his superior according to the treaty he had with the Byzantine Empire, and he was loyal to this promise until the end of his life, while Byzantium was destroyed due to the attacks of Timur and the civil wars were severely shaken and there was a good opportunity in the hands of Muhammad I to acquire Byzantine lands.

After the conquest of Constantinople, Mehmed II also tried to observe humanitarian laws, and therefore he gave peace to the people of the city and none of the houses or commercial centers were looted or violated, he ordered to rebuild the destroyed castles of the city and himself Edirne, its future capital, returned. Even many prisoners of the Roman government and army were able to buy their freedom by paying a small sum of money. Mehmed spent a lot of effort to organize the situation of the defeated Romans and left Bulgaria, which was subordinate to the Synagogue, to its independence according to the method of his fathers, and also declared according to Islamic standards that the followers of religions can freely imitate their religions and even the administration he left the judicial and civil matters to themselves (Waltari, 2007). Legalism reached its peak during the reign

of Sultan Suleiman I. He ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1520 to 1566 and had the longest reign among the Ottomans. He is known as Süleyman the Lawgiver or Süleyman the Magnificent. He completely rebuilt the judicial system of the empire. The laws he established would form the foundation of the Ottoman Empire for centuries after his death.

## 2-6. Economy

Although the economy was of less importance to the Ottomans, they created conditions that, with the help of it, people could more easily deal with their affairs, the weak groups of the society could gain some strength, and the non-Muslims, considering the economic benefits of the Ottoman government prefer its rule. In general, it should be said that for the Ottoman government, the expansion of the territory and the development of religion was the main thing, and the people's economy was important because it strengthened the grounds for gaining popular support for them in the path of these two goals. In the following, some of their actions in the field of creating suitable economic platforms will be reviewed.

With the fall of the Ilkhanate Empire of Iran in the 14th century and the rise of the Ottomans in western Anatolia, the economic approach was transferred to western Anatolia as an independent political and commercial center, and this development caused a change in the pattern of trade routes. Brusy, which was both the political center and the commercial center of the Ottoman Empire until the end of the 14th century, became the most important commercial city of Anatolia and the port of trade between East and West. In the 15th century, the cities of Amasya and Toqat, which were located on this route, became the most important economic and cultural cities of Anatolia after Brusy (Inalcik, 2008: 208-207).

Muslim merchants were able to come to Saudi Arabia, Iran, Brusy and other places in the security created by the Ottomans' actions, and for European merchants such as Venetian, Genoese, and Florentine merchants residing in Constantinople and Goleta, they were two important trade centers in the Mediterranean area. Brusy was the nearest market where oriental goods and European woolen fabrics

were traded. The famous traveler Ibn Battuta wrote in his memoirs that Orhan is the richest Anatolian Turkmen sultan. At the end of 1352, the Genoese concluded a trade agreement with the Ottomans, and at the end of the 14th century, Schiltberger compares and notes the trade and silk industry of Brusy with the silk trade and industry of Damascus and Mecca, Iranian silk from Brusy to Venice and Lucca and from there it was sent to the silk industry centers in Europe. Iran's silk trade was the main focus of Brusy's material development and prosperity at this time. In the 15th century, the European silk industry developed significantly and entered the international market for the raw material of this industry. That is, the high silk of Estrabad and Gilan in the north of Iran was changed (Inalcik, 2008: 209).

The Ottomans followed the principles of feudalism. At first, they only demanded a small annual tribute from the subordinate rulers as a sign of their subjection to the Islamic government. Later, they demanded that the son of subordinate rulers should be kept as a hostage. Subordinate rulers must come once a year to pledge allegiance to the Ottoman court and send an auxiliary force on the eve of every Sultan's campaign. The princes were obliged to treat the friends and enemies of the Sultan as their friends and enemies. If subordinate rulers failed to fulfill these duties, his territory would again become a war zone and would be attacked mercilessly. Research has shown that the decline of central power in the Byzantine Empire and its successor governments in the Balkans coincided with the rise of feudalism. Monasteries and wealthy individuals in the states were acquiring the ownership of Pirnoya lands, which were distributed among the soldiers before them. By receiving financial and legal privileges from the government, they turned these lands into lifetime properties and were able to increase the taxes and feudal funds collected from the peasants.

In the areas under the direct supervision of the Ottoman court, these lands were again given to the government and were distributed among the Turkish peasants who served in the army in return for military service. All local taxes that were not included in the simple Ottoman tax laws were eliminated. Only the decree of the Sultan could establish any income or privileges. The Ottoman legal system



established a centralized court instead of feudal decentralization and comprehensive laws instead of taxes and privileges that were determined at the discretion of the feudal lords. In an interesting comparison for a better understanding of the Ottoman court in relation to the local economic administrative system of the Balkans, we compare the Ottoman laws with the law of the Serbian king, Stefan Dušan, in whose law the peasants were obliged to work two days a week for their lord, but in The Ottoman law required the subjects to work only three days a year on the lands of the army, at the same time, protecting the peasants against the profiteering of the local authorities was a fundamental principle of the Ottoman court (Inalcik, 2008: 27-28).

Since the time of Suleiman I, the Seljuk divided the land that belonged to the Byzantine nobles or their owners were missing, among slaves and landless villagers, and in this way they gave them both land and freedom. Thanks to this property system, which was the basis of the agricultural and land policy of the Seljuk and Ottomans, it became much easier for local people or immigrants to stay, and agricultural production was secured, and the Turkification of Anatolia became possible. This system, which was administered under the supervision of a military apparatus, helped to establish a strong and harmonious social system and prevented the existence of landed nobles on one side and slave-owning villagers on the other side. This system continued until the middle of the 15th century without any fundamental changes in it. Because the Turks settled in the first century, they still lived in a nomadic state and gradually became settled, they needed native villagers for agriculture, and they even moved groups of 5,000 people, and their name were registered in a special office and by giving them farms, houses, tools, agricultural tools, seeds and a 5-year exemption from taxes, they were encouraged to They used to stay and work, thus hiring cheap and expert labor for those jobs. These concessions made the Christians think of moving to the Seljuk lands and freeing themselves from the oppression of the Byzantines, and witnessed the arrival of legions of these Christians in the borders of the Seljuk territory, who wanted to use and accept their subjugation.

## 2-7. Pragmatism

Some Ottoman sultans showed interest in building mosques and various religious places, with their own goals and strategies and benefiting from it to achieve their own interests, which shows their pragmatism (Naderzadeh, 2013: 90). The pragmatism of the Ottomans was especially visible in creating a balance between the military, gaining the support of the people of the conquered lands, and using military techniques in wars.

Also, unlike the European colonialists who treated the inhabitants of the colonies inappropriately, the Ottomans in most cases allowed them to treat them well and therefore many of their inhabitants were attracted to Islam and were even willing to join the Ottoman army. These people had the rights of citizenship, security and comfort, and for this reason, they tried to support the Ottoman side in the face of the Europeans' intrusion into their lands, since they saw the governments based in them as powerless against the excesses of the Europeans. During the Ottoman period, the Latin Catholics, who previously constituted the ruling class of the island, lost their power and property, and their churches were converted into mosques or used for non-religious purposes. Also, the Greek Orthodox churches were handed over to their priests and some of those churches were repaired by the Orthodox congregation. At this time, the Orthodox clergy were able to dominate the Christian Cypriots. They received power from the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman court guaranteed its power on the island by choosing archbishops who were loyal to the Ottomans. On the other hand, in order to maintain their position, the Orthodox spiritual leaders were obedient to the orders of the Pope (Bagheri and Azimzadeh, 2013: 238).

Sultan Mehmed II's methods for conquering Istanbul are one of the exceptions to military methods, and he showed his genius in realizing his long-standing dream, and one of his masterpieces is transporting more than 20 warships from land to the Golden Horn Bay, which made the Sultan's dream in terms of Naval warfare is convenient, and another is the construction of defensive fortifications in the Bosphorus, which are still visible. In some traditions, it is stated that Sultan Muhammad himself made clay, did construction work so

that there was no excuse for others, and they equipped the Bosphorus Strait with the safest fortifications in less than a year.

Appropriate pragmatism is to take action based on goals based on the circumstances. Therefore, it has not always been the case that a similar behavior was done with the people of the conquered lands. With the occupation of Cyprus by the Ottomans and after the visit of an Istanbul delegation to Famagusta, a decree was issued according to which the residence of Latin Christians in Cyprus was not allowed and they were forbidden to have churches, farms and houses. It seems that such an order was issued to deal with the Venetians. In this way, for Catholic Christians, there is no other way than choosing the Orthodox religion or the Islamic religion; this means that there are no two religions allowed in Cyprus. However, after the peace treaty with Venice in 1573, in which Venice accepted the cession of Cyprus to the Ottomans, Latin Christians were allowed to remain on the island of Cyprus. On the one hand, the support of the Orthodox Christians was due to the association with the native population of Cyprus, and on the other hand, due to the hostility of the Ottoman government to the Latin governments; Because these states were united against the Ottomans and defeated the Ottoman navy in the Lepanto War in 1571 (Vucinich, 1346: 37). Before, the Latin Christians put a lot of pressure on the Orthodox majority of Cyprus, and this pragmatic approach of the Ottomans led to the majority of the people of this region going along with it.

### **3. Ottoman decline and collapse**

Although the era of Süleyman the Magnificent was one of the most brilliant times in the Ottoman Empire, the signs of decline appeared from the peak of the glory of his rule (Nadzadeh, 2013: 52). The successors after him, instead of strengthening the aforementioned principles, replaced pleasure and power seeking. The factors of Ottoman decline were obvious to many people. One of them was Kochobik, one of the officials of the Balkan court, who in 1040 A.H. pointed out some of the factors of decline and wanted to fix these issues. The following are the main causes for Ottoman decline and collapse:

### 3-1. Ottoman decline alongside the growth of Europe

Even from the period of stagnation until its collapse, Ottoman had a significant power compared to many of its other competitors, and it was this power that prevented Iran from dominating its regions. If we want to examine the Ottoman power alone and without paying attention to European rivals, maybe its collapse and disintegration would never have happened. But the challenge of reducing the Ottoman power is created when we know that its most important rivals, that is, the Europeans, who had a lot of grudge against this empire for dominating their lands, were getting stronger day by day. By entering the 17th century, the era of Ottoman heyday started to decline, while the Europeans started their heyday by passing the Middle Ages and entering the Ottoman Empire. For example, while Europe, upon entering the Renaissance era, paid more attention to science, schools and universities, the conditions suitable for scientific and educational development in the Ottoman Empire changed in the opposite direction from the 17th century onwards. The factors that encouraged the scholars in the early periods disappeared and they gave their place to people who were very worried about providing their basic needs in life.

In addition, the Europeans gradually achieved unity against the Ottomans and thus turned the balance of power in their favor. The renaissance had transformed the foundations of European political thought and created a new political system that was more effective and more profit-oriented, and directed interests from the ideological axis to the economic and national axis. This intellectual change led to increased attention to industry to create maximum economic benefit, and hence the Industrial Revolution occurs in Europe in the middle of the 18th century. The industrial revolution greatly prepared the conditions for Europe to surpass the Ottomans in the military and economic fields. In addition, since the end of the 16th century, Western Europe had entered America, and through this, they got infinite wealth. This wealth provided a strong support for the kingdoms of Spain, Holland, Portugal and U.K against the Ottomans. It was by relying on this wealth that the Habsburg dynasty in Spain was not only able to overcome its European rivals, but also prevented the Ottoman

advance in Europe. These developments, together with the union of the Europeans, along with the Ottoman decline, should be considered the most important reason for the fall of the empire.

The Europeans sought to weaken this empire by any means and were even ready to unite with Iran against them. The Iran-Habsburg alliance in the 16th century is one of the most obvious examples. Based on this alliance, as soon as the Ottoman campaign to Europe, Iran attacked the eastern borders, forcing the Ottoman sultan to quickly return to Istanbul. However, at the time when the Ottomans were declining, their most important rival was entering its heyday and the Renaissance era. Strengthening the internal opposition was another tactic of the Europeans. For example, Saudi Arabia was one of the regions that faced a lot of unrest. Therefore, the empire commissioned Muhammad Ali Pasha, the ruler of Egypt, to suppress the Saudis and Wahhabis, who did not achieve lasting success due to the support of the British against the opponents and the weather conditions of the region, and again the supporters of Muhammad bin Saud and Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab with the help of the British ruled were (Hakki, 2008).

### **3-2. Population Growth**

Population growth can be considered as one of the sources of power, as long as it has appropriate economic and social supports. Otherwise, this increase is challenging and will be accompanied by an increase in social, economic and political problems. In the 16th century, the population of the Ottoman Empire grew so much that the agricultural land was unable to meet them. Of course, this increase came from the period of peace and security and the reduction of disease during the peak of this empire's power (Shaw, 297: 1370). Although the increase in population was useful in wars, it became a factor for disorder when the Ottoman conquests in Europe stopped at the end of the 16th century. This population needed work and income. Therefore, some of them joined the ranks of the military, some of them entered the government, and some entered the seminaries. However, the seminaries were unable to provide the students with the minimum living expenses, and therefore, they went to the villages in large groups to collect funds. In this way, gradually the dissatisfactions increased

and Ottoman not only lost his popular support, but social problems, increase in crime and looting were also fueled by it. This is despite the fact that the Ottoman kings had made a lot of efforts to create a lawful military and internal peace and stability during their heyday.

### **3-3. Weakness of the economic approach**

As mentioned, the Ottoman economy ultimately remained traditional. Even in their conquests, they did not have an economic approach and therefore, unlike the Europeans, they did not colonize. They aimed at the development of Islam and land territory, and therefore, they did not try to establish their economic prosperity by using the land resources of the conquered lands. Unlike the Europeans who enslaved and displaced the native population in their colonialism, the Ottomans did not do this except in a few cases - the occupation of Cyprus, Azerbaijan and Sharvan. In addition, they had no plans to trade and use the resources of the conquered lands. Meanwhile, their Portuguese, Dutch, and British competitors had made a lot of money by trading the products of the colonial lands. The slave trade was another way to use the free human resources of the occupied territories, which never became official and institutionalized for the Ottomans due to adherence to Islamic laws. This is despite the fact that their European competitors also got a lot of economic benefits in this way.

On the other hand, the entry of American silver into world markets lowered the value of Ottoman silver and increased inflation in this empire. This situation, in turn, brought hoarding, usury, smuggling and other economic diseases to the Ottomans (Robinson, 2010: 344). The import of sugar, tobacco and coffee from America not only made Europe rich from the need for the Ottomans to fulfill these products, but the Ottomans themselves gradually reduced the production of these products instead of importing them and practically became dependent on the western colonies, because the price of imported goods were cheaper than the price of their production inside the Ottoman Empire. At first, the Ottoman government was indifferent to the arrival of these goods and the increase in their domestic consumption and the flight of cash from its borders, but from the 1630s, with the arrival of Ottoman scholars, it began to deal with this

phenomenon. Ghazizadeh, a jurist of the era of Murad IV, ruled to ban coffee and tobacco (Hakki Uzuncarsili, 1368: 461). However, this fatwa did not last long, because other scholars, including Baha'i Effendi Mufti of Ottoman, had ruled against the ban (Porgeshtal, 1367: 462-461). Also, from the 17th century onwards, sea trade replaced land trade. This affected the Ottoman economy. Until now, Ottoman was the most important land for connecting the West to the East, but from now on, Western traders would directly transport their products from East to West without entering the country's soil and through the sea.

#### **3-4. Failure to create systematic thinking based on religion**

Although the Ottomans made use of religious support and the presence of scholars from the very beginning and even made their laws, dismissals and installations according to religion and the opinion of scholars, but considering that the use of religion was a tool to maintain their power, Religious thought could not grow independently and many scholars have tried to maintain their positions in favor of what the Sultan wants, which has led to not paying attention to long-term national interests. After some time, they themselves became corrupt and only wanted Sharia observance from the common people. Ghazizadeh and his followers were clear examples of these behaviors. Religious strictures were imposed on the people while the scholars and courtiers did not actually observe the Sharia law, and this led to a change in people's attitude towards the scholars and sages. The Jalali rebels were the ones who rose up to oppose this contradictory situation (Shaw, 1370: 357).

#### **3-5. Political and economic corruption of rulers**

Although the Ottoman kings always had a lot of properties, they always prioritized the interests of the state and religion over wealth and luxury. However, from the time of Süleyman the Magnificent, which was the height of the empire's power, we see a change in the primacy of kings. Unfortunately, this change of approach was evident at the same time as Süleyman the Magnificent. Giving priority to harem issues led to the increase of harem women's influence in state affairs is one of these examples. The abuse of office and the increase in political corruption was another evil that spread since the time of Chancellor Rostam Pasha. He made it common to give bribes, offers,



and buy and sell positions (Shahbazi, 1377: 305). As mentioned, there were powerful mechanisms to prevent nepotism from entering the government. However, Osman II was the first to marry one of his subjects and somehow violated the laws against nepotism in state affairs.

Another example is that the rulers who sent to Damascus appointed other people to rule by receiving money and bribes, and they used all kinds of oppression to get what they had spent and to get more profit. The subjects were paying and the weak Ottoman government was not able to deal with them. Sometimes the people rose up against these oppressions, and of course they were suppressed by the local governments and sometimes by foreign interference, which resulted in the increase of people's dissatisfaction (Porgeshtal, 2017: 91).

### **3-6. Weakness of Reforms**

The Ottomans, who were aware of their weakness, turned to reforms. Reforming the affairs of the army and weapons was their first move in removing and eliminating weaknesses. However, in these initial steps, the reforms were distorted by unilateral action and the choice of the French model. Therefore, there were many problems with reforms. In 1826, Sultan Mahmud II massacred the opponents of the military reforms - janissaries or Christian soldiers of the Ottoman army. In 1839, the order known as Khat Sharif Golkhaneh was issued by the next sultan, which was completed by the order known as hatt-i sharif or imperial edict called the Edict of Gülhane or Tanzimât. These decrees recommended financial, civil, military, and educational reform based on French laws, as well as the abolition of slavery, the granting of rights to religious minorities, and the observance of citizenship rights. In these two decrees, the complete safety of life, honor and property of all nationalities and minorities was guaranteed. Reforms or in other words, adjustments reached their peak with the formulation of the constitution. But with the rise of Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1876, the reform process was ignored and collapsed (Yaghi, 1389: 128).

#### **4. The effects of Ottoman decline and collapse**

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire brought effects that the Takfiri groups took advantage of to strengthen their position in the Sunni kingdom separated from the empire. These works are reviewed below.

##### **4-1. Dignity Collapse of the biggest symbol of Sunni societies identity**

The Balkans was the first part that was separated from the Ottomans with the joint coordination of Christian minorities and European powers. The failure in the Balkans brought dire consequences. Among other things, it broke the aura of Ottoman invincibility and this issue increased the courage of the enemies for subsequent attacks on Ottoman territory, perhaps because of this, in 1798, Napoleon attacked and occupied Egypt in order to reach India and cut U.K's hand from it. However, the economy was deteriorating, but Muslims still respected Ottoman as a symbol of their identity. In this condition, the defeat of the Europeans and their domination over the empire destroyed the Ottoman image as a symbol of Muslim identity, and therefore the patience of the people in the face of economic and social problems decreased and the identity crisis of the Muslims spread. This crisis actualized the potential discontents and thus even the Turks, who were more dependent on the empire than other ethnic groups, launched the biggest anti-Ottoman and even anti-religious movements. The most obvious of these movements occurred during the reign of Abdul Hamid, when a group of soldiers and intellectuals who called themselves the Young Turks started the establishment of the Union and Development Committee in 1889 and started working against the Sultan by relying on Western tendencies and the idea of Turkism.

##### **4-2. Dependence on enemies and insulting the political identity of the Islamic world**

With the emergence of crises, the Ottoman rulers turned to the Europeans instead of returning to their constructive elements and relying on their human power, religious power and territorial capabilities. They thought that their main problems were caused by foreigners and that the internal power was insufficient to solve these problems, and therefore the best way was to use the policy of negative balance and bring one of the European powers into their problems, to

use the power of the rival power to balance. This greatly disappointed the religious and popular community of the Ottoman supporters, because their role in political processes was neglected and they, who considered the Ottomans as their own for centuries, gradually felt the gap between themselves and the rulers. The closer the rulers got to the Europeans, the further away they were from the people, and in this way, they turned their bases of political trust from genuine internal supports to foreign deceptive elements. In fact, the government of Ottoman men, like Iranian politicians, instead of relying on the people, turned to alliance with the European countries and continued lose-lose game until the fall of this empire (Hakki, 2008: 86).

#### **4-3. The spread of racial division among the non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire**

According to the Treaty of Adrianople, the Russians supported the Balkan Slavs. When the Serbs rose up against the Ottomans, Russians assistance them and this led to the autonomy of the Serbs. The British and the French did the same. The result was the independence of Greece from the Ottomans. In Romania, with the rebellion of the nobles and foreign support, an autonomous government was established. Albania and Bulgaria also rebelled against the Ottomans and became independent.

#### **4-4. The spread of religious divisions among the non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire**

The Russians in the Balkans supported the Orthodox living in the Ottoman Empire based on the Treaty of Adrianople. They also supported the revolt of the Orthodox Greeks. In the Middle East, the Russians also supported the Jerusalem Orthodox Church. By sending cultural missionaries, the French supported the Maronites and helped them to own a Catholic church in Lebanon. The Pope re-established the office of the Catholic Bishop of Jerusalem, which had been closed after the Crusades. In this situation, the Americans also engaged in cultural-educational measures in Lebanon. Instead, the British reached out to the Jews of Palestine and began to implement a long-term plan to establish a Jewish state. The French support for the demands of the Lebanese Maronites led by the Shihab dynasty and the British support

for the Lebanese Druze led by the Jumblat dynasty fueled bloody conflicts and finally the Ottoman government formalized the influence of foreigners in Lebanon by accepting a dual Druze-Maronite government. The conflict between the Maronites and the Druze in 1860 once again led to the intervention of the French and this time their campaign, which was forced to evacuate Levant, especially Lebanon, due to the opposition of Russia, U.K, Germany and Austria. But after that the Ottoman government promised to give the administration of Lebanon to a twelve-person group of representatives of different religions (Hakki, 2008: 86).

#### **4-5. The spread of division among Muslims**

The Ottoman problems was not only in the Balkans, but also in some Middle East lands, which created important problems for the government of Turkish men. The Christian minorities of Lebanon, the Druzes of Syria, and the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia were part of these problems. However, the most serious Ottoman problem among the ethnic groups was the Arabs. The Arabs saw themselves more deserving of the leadership of the Islamic world than the Turks. They considered themselves superior to the Turks in the Islamic caliphate based on the fact that they were the first Muslims and also, based on the Arabness of the Prophet, the Arabicness of the Qur'an and the establishment of the Kaaba in the land of Arabs. Of course, the subsequent opposition of the Arabs had racial motives rather than religious ones (Hakki, 2008: 91).

#### **Conclusion**

The Ottomans had a pragmatic approach in which they properly utilized the existing capacities in the Islamic societies, and although they did not seek to lead the Islamic world at first, they gradually realized their position as a symbol of identity for all Sunni Muslims, both Turks and Arabs. In the path of their growth in Islamic societies, they should have emphasized the relationship among themselves and the preservation of Sharia and the greatness of Muslims. They knew very well that Islam is the only element that can create the unity of all Arab, Turkish, Kurdish, etc. ethnicities. But they also paid attention to other elements. They correctly understood the place of economy, science, rule of law, people in attracting the opinion of all Muslim and

non-Muslim ethnic groups. However, after Süleyman the Lawgiver, their decline does not begin, and the lack of attention to the aforementioned elements provides the necessary grounds for their withdrawal and the emergence of other groups in Islamic societies. Wahhabism was one of these groups that created the most important internal problems in Saudi Arabia for the declining empire. However, the weakening of the elements that built the power of the Ottoman Empire could only provide the necessary grounds for the growth of Wahhabism. In other words, the weakening of the Ottoman pillars only heralded the withdrawal of Wahhabism and other groups that could emerge in this space. But the actualization of Wahhabi power required it to take advantage of the opportunities caused by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in Arabia.

Creating divisions in the territories under Ottoman rule was one of the opportunities that the Wahhabis along with House of Saud took the best advantage of this chaotic situation. Ethnic and religious divisions among the non-Muslim communities and territories annexed to the Ottoman Empire took a lot of time and energy from this old empire to organize it in an unsuccessful attempt. Thus, Ottomans could not deal with the issues of separatists in Islamic lands, including Wahhabism and House of Saud, without concern and with a free hand. On the other hand, the Ottomans knew very well that the Arabs were their rivals in terms of ethnicity, and therefore, if an investment was to be made to silence the unrest, it would be better to do so in areas where the risk of failure would be lower. Saudi Arabia is a land that has the prejudices of the Arab people more than other lands, and therefore the chance of Ottoman success in that land was much lower than in other regions. Therefore, the Ottomans preferred to manage the critical situation of other lands, considering the multitude of issues facing them. Therefore, from the 18th century onwards, Arabia was almost a pristine and trouble-free place for the complementary activities of Wahhabism and House of Saud. In this atmosphere, the Wahhabi and its allies not only started an uprising against the Ottomans, but also eliminated their other local rivals with the help of their British supporters. The increase in foreign interference was another effect of the weakening of the Ottoman Empire, which facilitated the

interference of U.K in the internal affairs of the Islamic world and the support of the Wahhabis in Arabia.

Also, Muslims saw the loss of the most important symbol of their political identity as a result of the Ottoman Empire. They saw themselves as puppet of the Europeans and were looking for a native force to rely on. On the other hand, the majority of Muslims were Arabs, who themselves were the advocates of the Islamic world. Now, an apparently indigenous force called Wahhabism was being replaced by the Ottoman Turkish Empire, which was also Arab. In this situation, the Arabs supported Wahhabism to give themselves an identity. Of course, it should be noted that Wahhabism had serious opponents in the Arab Muslim world, but with the support of U.K and Saudi Arabia, and by using brutal coercion and creating extreme fear and terror among the Arabs, they were able to attack Mecca, Medina, and Karbala and stabilize their position. The chaos of the situation also left the hand of Wahhabi to commit such heinous crimes. The loss of the identity symbol of the Sunni Muslims and the collapse of the social order as a result of various internal rebellions reached its peak with the Ottoman conflict in the World War I. At the end of the 19th century, the chaotic situation of the Ottoman government had turned into a global crisis, and hence the name of the Eastern Problem was given to it. The Ottoman conflict in the World War I made more opportunities for Wahhabi activity, and in this situation they were able to form a government under the banner of the Saudi Kingdom in 1932, but also provide the grounds for expanding their influence in other Arab regions of the Middle East.

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