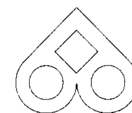
CHAPTER 23

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE MODERNIZATION OF TURKEY



The dissolution of the Ottoman empire was one of the more complex cases in the transition from eighteenth-century Islamic imperial societies to modern national states. The Ottoman regime was suzerain over a vast territory, including the Balkans, Turkey, the Arab Middle East, Egypt, and North Africa. Its influence reached Inner Asia, the Red Sea, and the Sahara. While the empire had gone through a period of decentralization in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and had begun to give ground to its European political and commercial competitors, it retained its political legitimacy and its basic institutional structure. In the nineteenth century, the Ottomans restored the power of the central state, consolidated control over the provinces, and generated the economic, social, and cultural reforms that they hoped would make them effective competitors in the modern world.

While the Ottomans struggled to reform state and society, the empire was slowly being dismembered. For survival the Ottomans depended increasingly upon the European balance of power. Until 1878 the British and the Russians offset each other and generally protected the Ottoman regime from direct encroachment. Between 1878 and 1914, however, most of the Balkans became independent and Russia, Britain, and Austria-Hungary all acquired control of Ottoman territories. The dismemberment of the Ottoman empire culminated at the end of World War I in the creation of Turkey and a plethora of new states in the Arab Middle East. As in the case of Iran, the effects of European intervention would mingle with the Ottoman institutional and cultural heritage to generate a number of different modern Middle Eastern societies.

THE PARTITION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

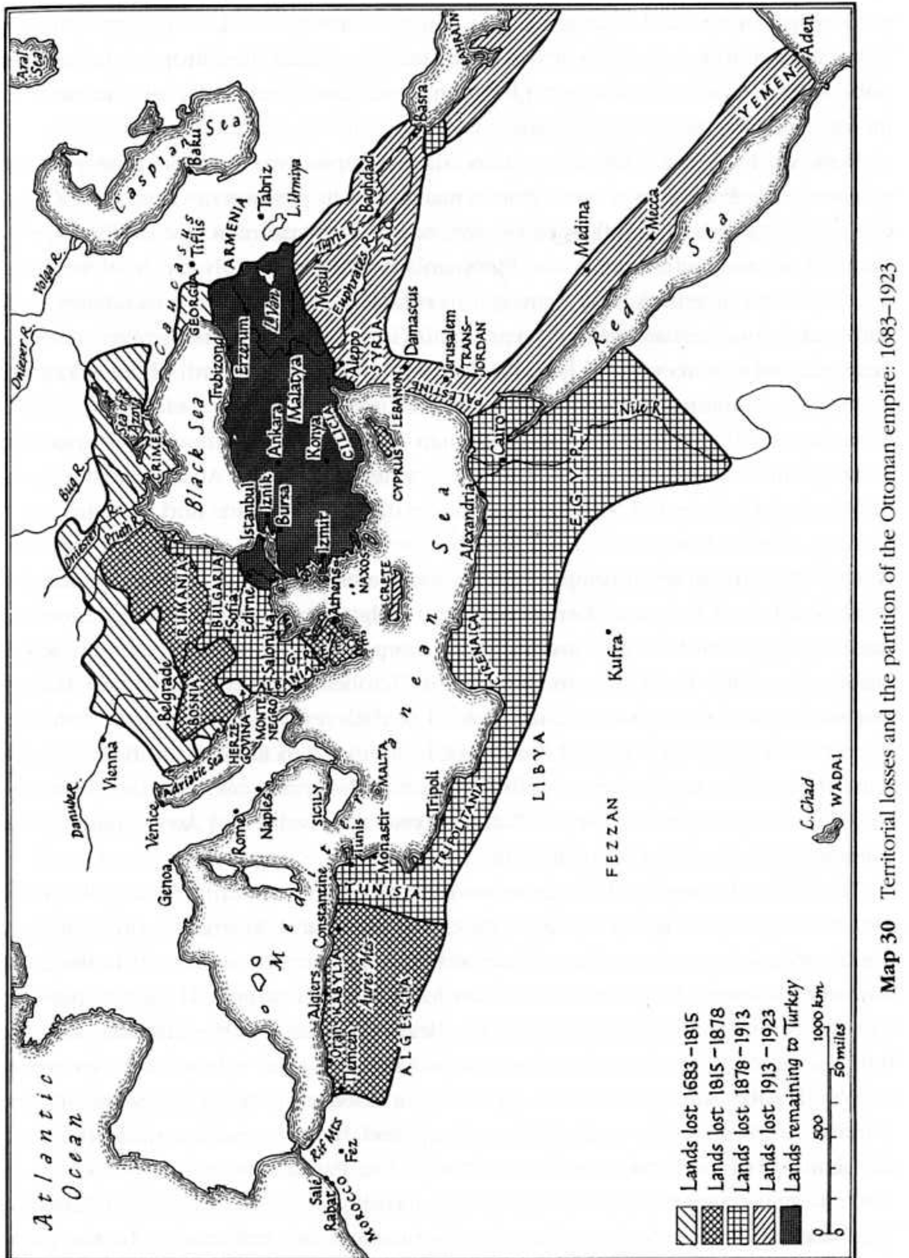
By the end of the eighteenth century the Ottoman empire could no longer defend itself against the growing military power of Europe, or ward off European com-

Black Sea, while Britain, after helping defeat Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, became the paramount military and commercial power in the Mediterranean. Russia wanted to absorb Ottoman territories in the Balkans and win access to the Mediterranean; Britain wanted to shore up the empire as a bulwark against Russian expansion and protect its commercial and imperial interests in the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and India. Thus, the Ottoman empire was precariously protected by the balance of European power. The stage was set for the century-long struggle over the "sick man" of Europe.

The first test of the balance of power came with the invasion of Syria in 1831 by Muhammad ʿAli, the independent Ottoman governor of Egypt (1805–48). In response, Russia and the Ottomans concluded the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (July 1833), in which they agreed to close the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to foreign warships. Britain, threatened by the specter of a Russian protectorate over the Ottomans and possible Russian intervention in the Mediterranean, declared for the territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire and the restoration of Syria to Ottoman control. In 1840, Russia, Britain, and Austria agreed that Muhammad ʿAli would have to retreat from Syria, and framed a new convention regulating passage through the straits. The powers agreed that no warships were to pass the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles in time of peace. Both Russia and Britain would be protected in their spheres of influence. By a supplementary agreement in 1841, the powers allowed Muhammad ʿAli to establish a hereditary regime in Egypt. Thus, the internal crisis of the empire led to a concert of European powers to regulate Ottoman affairs. The Ottoman empire had become a protectorate of Europe and a pawn of the great powers.

The balance of power and the durability of the Ottoman empire were again tested in the Crimean war, 1853–56. Provoked by Russian demands for influence in Jerusalem and a protectorate over all Ottoman Christian subjects, British, French, and Ottoman forces entered the Black Sea and took Sebastopol in 1855. By the treaty of Paris (1856) the Russians were forced to dismantle their naval forces on the Black Sea, but they were compensated by an agreement to make Romania an autonomous province under Ottoman suzerainty.

The next crisis was the revolt of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1876 against Ottoman rule. Nationalist resistance to Ottoman rule in the Balkans had begun with the Serbian revolt of 1804–13. Between 1821 and 1829, Greece gained its independence. Serbians, Romanians, and Bulgarians also demanded autonomy. The Balkan campaigns for independence culminated in 1876 with Russian intervention. By the treaty of San Stefano (1878), the Ottomans were forced to concede the independence of Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro. The huge Russian gains provoked the other European powers to call a congress of European states at Berlin in 1878. At the Congress of Berlin a new settlement was imposed. Bessarabia was ceded by the Ottomans to Russia, but in compensation for Russian gains, Austria "temporarily" occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Britain obtained the use of



Map 30 Territorial losses and the partition of the Ottoman empire: 1683–1923

Cyprus as a base of operations. Bulgaria was reduced to a small size and Ottoman suzerainty was restored. Then, in 1882, to protect her interests in the Suez Canal and in the Egyptian debt to British and other European bond-holders, Britain occupied Egypt. Britain had changed from a policy of defense of the territorial integrity of the empire to a policy of partition in order to maintain the European balance of power. Henceforth, the Eastern Question would be handled by the further dismemberment of the Ottoman state.

Between 1878 and 1908, the partition of the empire was postponed only by the rivalries of the European powers. Britain maintained its position in Cyprus and Egypt. Germany established its influence by investing in Ottoman railroads and by supplying advisors and technicians to the Ottoman army. Big-power rivalry, however, centered on the Balkans. Austria managed to establish its diplomatic ascendancy over Serbia and good relations with Romania and Greece; Russia remained the patron of Bulgaria. Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria, however, fought for control of Macedonia.

In 1908 an internal Ottoman political crisis upset the balance of power. Taking advantage of the upheaval in the Ottoman empire, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia, backed by Russia, protested against the Austrian annexation, but Germany supported Austria unconditionally. The Serbians and Russians were forced to back down. The crisis, however, reopened bitter competition between Austria and Russia, and prompted the Balkan states to form their own alliances. In 1912, Serbia and Bulgaria, then Greece and Bulgaria, and finally Montenegro and Bulgaria negotiated treaties, ostensibly to keep Austria in check, but with secret clauses to attack the Ottoman empire. In October 1912, the combined Balkan armies defeated the Ottomans and took all of their remaining European territories except for a small strip around the city of Istanbul. Then in 1913 the Balkan states went to war with each other over the division of the spoils, allowing the Ottomans to regain a small part of Thrace. Within a year the rivalries of Austria and Serbia precipitated a general European war.

World War I completed the process of dismemberment. In December 1914 the Ottomans entered the war on the side of Germany and Austria. German military and economic assistance, the traditional Ottoman fear of Russia, and perhaps an ambition to restore Ottoman control over lost provinces prompted the Ottomans to join the central powers. In response, the British, the French, the Russians, and the Italians agreed to partition the Ottoman provinces. By the Sykes–Picot agreement (1916), France was to obtain a sphere of influence in Lebanon, southwestern Turkey, northern Syria, and northern Iraq, and Britain would acquire Iraq, the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf, and Transjordan. Palestine would be subject to an international regime. Russia was to obtain Istanbul and parts of eastern Anatolia. Italy was promised southern Anatolia. To promote her ambition to be the paramount power in the Near East, Britain also entered other, often contradictory, agreements. In return for Arab support against their Ottoman overlords, the British promised Sharif Husayn of Mecca that Britain would recognize an independent Arab state, with reservations for Lebanon and British and French interests. In 1917,

the Balfour Declaration promised that Britain would also support the formation of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

By 1918 the European allies had defeated Germany, Austria, and the Ottoman empire; Britain conquered Palestine, Syria, and Iraq; and the allies took control of Istanbul and the straits. Britain and France agreed to divide the Middle East into a number of new states, including Lebanon and Syria in the French sphere of influence, and Palestine, Jordan, and Iraq in the British sphere. Italy was conceded southwestern Anatolia. Greece was allowed to occupy Thrace, Izmir, and the Aegean islands. Armenia was to be an independent state and Kurdistan an autonomous province. Istanbul and the straits were put under joint allied occupation. Thus, between 1912 and 1920, the Ottomans lost all of their former empire in the Balkans. New states were set up in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq. Egypt became, under a British protectorate, fully independent of Ottoman suzerainty. The political process, begun more than two centuries before, of reducing and dismembering the Ottoman empire, had reached its climax in the formation of a new system of national states.

OTTOMAN REFORM

While the European powers divided the Ottoman empire into a number of national states, the institutional organization and ideological identity of these states was shaped by the interaction of European influence and the historical legacy of the several Middle Eastern societies. In the late nineteenth-century Ottoman empire, and in the formation of modern Turkey, the primary consideration was the continuity of historical institutional and cultural forms. While European powers exerted a tremendous influence, their impact upon the internal evolution of late Ottoman and early modern Turkish societies was mediated by Ottoman and Turkish elites. Unlike other Muslim empires, the Ottomans maintained their sovereignty and were able to implement their own program of modernization and reform.

As early as the seventeenth century, Ottomans had debated the problem of how to restore the political integrity and military effectiveness of the regime. Two main positions emerged. The restorationists called for a return to the laws (kanuns) of Sulayman the Magnificent, and opposed any change that threatened to give Europeans and Christians, or European and Christian concepts and techniques, supremacy over Muslims. The modernists called for the adoption of European methods for military training, organization, and administration, and for the civil, economic, and educational changes that would be needed to support a modern state. Throughout the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth centuries these two points of view were in vigorous competition, but the dominant view came to be the one that favored modernization along European lines.

As early as the seventeenth century, Ottoman forces were being organized into new ethnic and peasant units. In the eighteenth century, European military advisors were employed to provide technical training for army officers, and a printing press

was set up to publish translations of European technical, military, and geographical works. Selim III (1789–1807) introduced the first comprehensive reform program, called the Nizam-i Jedid, or New Organization, encompassing a modern army corps, increased taxation, and technical schools to train cadres for the new regime. Selim's program, however, was defeated by the opposition of the 'ulama' and the janissaries, and he was deposed in 1807.

In the decades that followed, Russian advances in the Caucasus, the rise to power of Muhammad 'Ali in Egypt, and the Greek war for independence again made the need for reform urgent. Under Mahmud II (1807–39) the reform program was revived. While Mahmud's program of military, administrative, and educational projects began on the base pioneered by Selim III, the new effort to improve military capabilities, rationalize administration, subordinate the provinces, raise revenues, and establish schools was guided by a strong Western orientation and a more radical concept of a centralized state, governed by an absolute monarch. The reforms were intended to revive the absolute authority of the Ottoman rulers supported by new elites who were technically proficient and entirely devoted to the authority of the regime. Conservative resistance was utterly crushed. In 1826 the entire janissary corps was destroyed and feudal tenures were partially abolished. The 'ulama' were weakened by the absorption of many waqf endowments, courts, and schools into new state-controlled ministries. The Bektashi religious order, associated with the janissaries, was dissolved. There would henceforth be little opposition to reform – and even considerable support from the higher-ranking 'ulama'.

This first phase of reform was followed by the Tanzimat, or Reorganization period, which lasted from 1839 to 1876. In this period the reform program was extended from military and administrative matters to economic, social, and religious affairs. As the Ottomans realized that radical changes in economy and society were needed to support a centralized state, they built factories to manufacture cloth, paper, and guns. Coal, iron, lead, and copper mining were encouraged. To stimulate agriculture, the government undertook reclamation and resettlement. Technical modernization included the introduction of a postal system (1834), telegraph (1855), steamships, and the beginning of railroad construction in 1866. Government monopolies were ended in 1838, and international commerce was stimulated by low tariffs. Though reforms in trade and banking enabled European traders and investors to achieve a dominant position in the Ottoman economy, the principle that a more productive economy was essential for state finances was established.

Important legal reforms were also undertaken. New law codes were promulgated to meet the demands of a new administration and economy, and to respond to the political pressure generated by Ottoman subjects and foreign powers. New commercial and penal codes regulating landowning and commerce were promulgated to supplement Shari'a legal principles. Western types of law courts and law codes were introduced as early as 1840. Laws of 1858 established private ownership of land. In 1870 the Ottoman government issued a new civil code, the *Mejelle*, which in substance followed the Shari'a, but nonetheless dramatically departed

from tradition because it contained changes made on the personal authority of the Sultan and was administered in state rather than in Shari'a courts. The family law of 1917, by adopting a European system of personal law, made a complete break with the Muslim past.

While Ottoman educational reform began with the establishment of professional schools, a new education system, including elementary and secondary schools, was created to prepare students for higher technical education. In 1847 the Ministry of Education undertook to organize middle schools (*rushdiye*); the army created a parallel system of secondary schools. After the Crimean war, the Ministry of Education and the army began experiments in elementary education, introducing arithmetic, geography, and Ottoman history. In 1870 the first efforts were made to create a university to integrate professional, humanistic, and religious studies. Much of the program, however, remained a paper system.

Similarly, extensive reforms were made in the administration of the non-Muslim populations. While Christians and Jews formed autonomous religious communities which administered their own civil laws, the nationalist revolts made it imperative to further integrate the Christian populations and win their loyalty for the Ottoman regime. The first Ottoman response to these pressures was the Hatt-i Sherif (Noble Rescript) of Gülhane (1839), a declaration of principles of government, recognizing the rights of life, property, and honor, and the equality of all religious groups before the law. In 1856 the Hatt-i Humayun (Imperial Rescript) promised equality for non-Muslims and guaranteed their right to serve in the army. In 1867 Christians began to be appointed to state councils.

The non-Muslim communities were also reorganized to shift power from clergy to laymen. In 1850 the newly formed Protestant millet was governed by an assembly of lay members rather than by clergy. In 1863, the Gregorian Armenians were granted the right to form a national assembly with a lay majority and to elect patriarchs and councils. The Ottoman government forced the Greek clergy to form a lay assembly and then separated the Bulgarian from the Greek Orthodox Church. Behind the reorganization of the Christian communities under lay leadership was the goal of integrating the Muslim and non-Muslim populations into an Ottoman nation. No longer would religious differences be a barrier to Ottoman loyalty.

Transcending the statism of the first reforms, the Tanzimat amounted to a change in the very concept of Ottoman society. It repudiated the autonomous functioning of Islamic educational and judicial institutions, and challenged the very concept of Muslim supremacy. In the interest of a strong state, and the integration of its various religious and ethnic populations, the Ottoman authorities were tampering with the fundamental structures of Muslim society and replacing traditional educational, legal, and religious systems with secular organizations. The restoration of the empire was beginning to have revolutionary implications.

The state reforms proved revolutionary because they brought into being a new elite committed to still further change. While the Tanzimat did not deeply penetrate Ottoman society, or affect the masses of people whose lives, beliefs, and loyalties

were still bound up with Islam, it created a "new class." With the destruction of the janissaries, the weakening of the 'ulama', and the adoption of the reform programs, political power in Ottoman society shifted to the *memurs*, or bureaucrats, and within that elite to the Westernized and Westernizing element – the servants of the translation bureaus and the war office who had been educated in secular schools and had traveled in Europe. This group of bureaucrats was led by Mustafa Reshid Pasha (1800–58), the son of a waqf administrator who began his career in religious schools but entered the newly reorganized administrative service of Mahmud II and became a grand vizier, and his protégés, Mehmet 'Ali Pasha (1815–71), the son of an Istanbul shopkeeper, and Mehmed Fuad Pasha (1815–69), a former medical student.

By the 1860s, moreover, Tanzimat had also generated its own opposition. While the "new class" occupied government offices, graduates of the middle and professional schools, middle-level bureaucrats, and sons of poor families who found their careers blocked by the entrenched older generation turned their energies to literature, becoming poets, writers, journalists, and editors of opposition newspapers. Resentful of the established bureaucrats, they sought allies among lower-ranking military officers, liberal 'ulama', and theological students opposed to the Tanzimat program but interested in a different program of reforms.

The new intelligentsia was represented in the 1860s by the Young Ottoman society. In the name of a synthesis of Ottoman tradition and Ottoman reform, Young Ottomans such as Namik Kemal (1840–88), Ibrahim Shinasi (1826–71), and Ziya Pasha (1825–80), were committed at once to the continuity of the Ottoman regime, the revitalization of Islam, and modernization along European lines. The Young Ottomans, dazzled by the successes of Britain, favored a constitutional regime. They believed that the ultimate value of the empire was measured by its contribution to the inherent rights of its citizens, to the security of life and property, to justice, and to the reconciliation of Christians and Muslims. In their view, the empire could not survive unless it became rooted in the masses. Moreover, a constitutional regime was the natural expression of the political and moral values that they held to be inherent both in Islam and in European culture. Thus the Young Ottoman thinkers were, without the designation, modernist Muslims. They held that Islam, properly understood, was compatible with a modern organization of society and a constitutional government. They stressed the aspects of the Islamic heritage that encouraged scientific and technical learning, the value of reason above blind faith, and the importance of an active striving for individual and social improvement. Along with their commitment to Islam, the Young Ottomans also espoused the use of a simplified version of the Turkish language to bridge the gap between the Ottoman elite and the mass of their subjects. While criticizing the program of Tanzimat as religiously and socially insensitive, they were nonetheless committed to a modernized Muslim-Ottoman society.

In 1876, taking advantage of the Ottoman defeat by Russia, the constitutionalists staged a coup d'état and brought to power 'Abd al-Hamid II (1876–1908), who

was forced to accept a constitution limiting the powers of the Sultan, establishing a representative government, decentralizing administration, and mandating equality for all religious groups. 'Abd al-Hamid, however, was unwilling to surrender 500 years of Ottoman authority. Turning the tables on his constitutionalist supporters, he suspended parliament and established an authoritarian and religiously conservative regime. This regime was based on the absolute power of the Sultan, the bureaucracy, and the police. The Sultan was considered the head of Islam, and laid claim to a worldwide authority over Muslims. The new regime, however, combined conservative Islamic loyalties with the continuation of technical Tanzimat reforms. New schools, legal codes, railroads, and military techniques were introduced.

The generation of Turkish intelligentsia raised in the 1880s and 1890s took shape in reaction to the conservative regime. Continued economic and educational development swelled the ranks of the intelligentsia. The number of white-collar, technical, railroad, and telegraph workers increased. Poor and middling families were made occupationally mobile. The opportunities for communication were enlarged despite government controls and censorship. The press disseminated European ideas about science and politics, and popularized Western attitudes. Ideas spread from the capital to the provinces as students brought home a larger vision of the universe.

In 1889 exiled journalists, writers, publishers, and agitators formed the Ottoman Society for Union and Progress in Paris. The Young Turks, as they were now called, maintained their allegiance to the Ottoman dynasty, but agitated for the restoration of a parliamentary and constitutional regime. The Young Turks were divided into a group led by Ahmad Riza, who favored a strong Sultan, centralization of power, and the predominance of the Turkish-Muslim elements of the Ottoman population; and a group led by Prince Sabaheddin, who emphasized decentralized forms of Ottoman rule. The latter gave less emphasis to the Turkish and Muslim peoples of the empire, and stood for a federated society with autonomy for Christians and other minorities.

Within the empire, army officers, bureaucrats, and physicians, outraged by the inefficiency of the government, by defeats suffered at the hands of European and Balkan powers, and by their exclusion from participation in power, formed revolutionary cells in Damascus, Salonika, and elsewhere. The Fatherland Society was founded in 1905 by Mustafa Kemal, an Ottoman army officer later to be president of Turkey; a Young Turk congress created the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) in 1907. In 1908 the CUP cell in Monastir mutinied and forced the Sultan to restore the constitution of 1876. The military coup established a facade of parliamentary government, but the new government was actually run by the CUP and by the army, and proved to be authoritarian and highly centralized. Between 1908 and 1912, a three-way struggle for power among the army, the CUP liberals, and Muslim conservatives ended with the army in control. From 1912 to 1918 the CUP ruled by decree.

In bitter reaction to the Islamic veneer of the reign of 'Abd al-Hamid, the CUP was resolutely secular. Between 1913 and 1918 it adopted a program of aggressive secularization of schools, courts, and law codes, and passed the first measures for the emancipation of women. In 1916 the CUP government reduced the powers of the Shaykh al-Islam, transferred jurisdiction over Muslim courts to the Ministry of Justice, and control of Muslim colleges to the Ministry of Education. In 1917 a new family code based on European principles was promulgated. While the regime of 'Abd al-Hamid had been bolstered by appeals to Islam, the opposition intelligentsia moved from the Young Ottoman position, which synthesized Islam and constitutionalism, to a more radically secular position. The struggle for power among the various segments of the Ottoman governing elite and intelligentsia led to a radicalization of the reform program along secularist lines.

The CUP program was Ottoman and secularist, but it was also increasingly Turkish-oriented. Between 1908 and 1918 the idea of Ottoman reform was overtaken by a new concept. CUP leaders began to conceive of the Ottoman empire in terms of Turkish nationality. For more than a century, Christians had pursued national goals and demanded that peoples who shared an ethnic, linguistic, and religious heritage have a territorial state of their own. By the late nineteenth century there were already several Christian nations – Greece, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Montenegro – in what had once been the domains of the Ottoman empire. Albania was soon to revolt, and Armenians were claiming territorial autonomy. For the Christians, it was easy to form a national identity in opposition to Muslim and Ottoman domination and in frank emulation of the Christian nations in the West. For the Muslims, however, it was difficult to disentangle nationalism from Islam and from the Ottoman empire. They could make no ready distinction between Muslim interests and Ottoman authority. Furthermore, the peoples we now call Turks had no concept of themselves as an ethnic group. They thought of themselves either as Muslims or as subjects of the Sultan. The word "Turk" only meant peasant, nomad, or rural bumpkin – someone without education.

Still, the idea of a Turkish nation began to take shape in the late Ottoman era. Loyalty to Islam and to the Ottoman empire came to be considered a kind of patriotism, described by the word *watan*, or fatherland. Pan-Islamic identifications inspired a sense of political unity. Muslim and Ottoman vocabularies could thus express a political concept akin to, but not identical with, the national ideal. A Turkish cultural consciousness also began to take shape. Young Ottoman writers were concerned with the reform of the Turkish language and the adaptation of the high-cultural style of Ottoman Turkish for mass use. In the 1890s, under the stimulus of European students of Turkish language and culture, and of Crimean and Inner Asian intellectuals who were refugees or students in Istanbul, the Ottomans were introduced to the idea of the "Turkish people." The press glorified Anatolia as the homeland of Turks, and peasants as the backbone of a Turkish nation. The Turkish idea was being propagated by literary clubs such as the Turkish Homeland

Society and the Turkish Hearth. These organizations waged a "national" campaign to simplify the Turkish language, make it more accessible to the masses, and persuade the populace of its own Turkish nationality. Ziya Gokalp (1875/76–1924) emerged as the spokesman of Turkish nationalism. Without regrets for the declining Ottoman empire, he celebrated the folk culture of the Turkish people, and called for the reform of Islam to make it expressive of the Turkish ethos. 'Abdallah Jevdet (1869–1932) presented a secular basis for Turkish nationalism. The Turkish concept made it possible to define a new civilization which embodied the historical identity of the Turkish people but was not Muslim, and was modern but not Western.

Between 1908 and 1918 political events put an end to the possibility of a multi-national, multi-religious Ottoman empire, and made the Turkish idea more relevant. By 1908 the majority of the Christian population was already independent. Albania revolted in 1910 and its autonomy was conceded in 1912. The Balkan wars then stripped the Ottoman empire of virtually all of its European possessions, and during World War I the Armenian population of eastern Anatolia was decimated by the hardships of war, deportation, and Turkish and Kurdish massacres. Even among Muslims, Kurdish and Arab national feeling was growing, and there were Arab conspiracies against the empire. By the end of World War I all that was left of the Ottoman empire was Anatolia, with its majority Turkish population, and Kurdish and small Greek and Armenian minorities. The realities of Ottoman political life now corresponded to the nationalist concept of a Turkish people. The war had cut the Gordian knot of Ottoman loyalties by stripping away most of the non-Muslim and non-Turkish populations. It also left the remaining territories of the empire occupied and divided among the allied powers.

After the war Mustafa Kemal carried the principles of the Young Turk generation into action. Under Kemal's leadership, the national elite was able to mobilize the Turkish masses to fight against foreign occupation and to support the national idea. Kemal organized the movement for the Defense of the Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia, established a Grand National Assembly at Ankara (1920), promulgated a new constitution (1921), and established a republican regime in most of Anatolia. The new regime defeated the Armenian republic in the Caucasus, the French in Cilicia, and the Greeks in central Anatolia, and in 1923 the European powers agreed, by the treaty of Lausanne, to recognize the independence of Turkey in its present boundaries. Turkey alone of the Muslim-populated regions of the Middle East emerged from World War I as a fully independent country. Already provided with a national intelligentsia of army officers, experienced administrators, politicians, lawyers, and intellectuals, and a unified national movement, modern Turkey came into being with a coherent state structure, a unified elite, and a strong sense of its cultural and political identity.

The dominance of Ottoman military and bureaucratic elites, their turn toward nationalism, and their absolute leadership in the creation of the Turkish Republic may be better understood in terms of the historical weakness of alternative national

elites. The turn toward a concept of a secular national state was abetted by the inability of Ottoman religious leaders to articulate an effective Muslim opposition. The destruction of the janissaries and the weakening of the ʿulamaʾ in 1826 proved decisive. After that the ʿulamaʾ continued to support the Ottoman state, the defender of Islam. The Sultan was still considered the religious chief of Muslim peoples. Selim III and Mahmud II built mosques and tombs, attended mosque prayers and Sufi ceremonies, and appointed religious teachers for the soldiers. ʿAbd al-Hamid revived the identification of Sultan and Caliph, and based his authority on the claim that he was the *padishah* of the Ottomans and the Caliph of all Muslims. The Ottoman state was able to persuade Muslim opinion that the empire, despite its apparent assault on Islamic educational and legal institutions and its willingness to grant political and economic equality to non-Muslims, was still a Muslim regime.

Furthermore, many leading ʿulamaʾ were sympathetic to the need to make Islam effective in the modern world. Spokesmen for an Islamic modernism continued to believe in the validity of their faith, but felt that it had to be revised to make it compatible with changing conditions. On one side, they opposed the traditionalists who failed to recognize the importance of the new military, economic, and technical civilization of the West. On the other side, they opposed the secularists who did not value the religious and communal inspiration of Islam. The Islamic modernists wished to persuade the traditionalists to accept modernization as consistent with Islam, and persuade the modernists to accept Islam as a moral force. The Ottoman reform program, then, was presented in a framework of loyalty to Islam and of shared concern for the adaptation of Islamic values to the modern world.

Moreover, the ʿulamaʾ remained loyal to the Ottoman regime because they were the servants of the state and were committed to an ideology of obedience. Leading ʿulamaʾ were also personal friends of the Sultan, enjoyed his financial favors, and were connected by family ties to the military and bureaucratic elites. Through the middle decades of the nineteenth century the only religious opposition came from lower-ranking functionaries, theological students, and rural Sufis. At the end of the century, when the initiative passed to the radical secularists, Muslim religious leaders were not in a position to resist. The tradition of subservience to state initiative, and the ambivalent recognition of the need for modernizing reforms, made it impossible for them to oppose the powerful forces, national and international, that led toward the dissolution of the Ottoman empire.

Nor did the Ottoman military and bureaucratic elites have to contend with a Muslim bourgeoisie or commercial middle class. In part this was due to the legacy of state domination of the society and in part to European economic penetration of the Ottoman empire. The Anglo-Ottoman treaty of 1838, which led to the removal of Ottoman monopolies and high tariffs, marked the full integration of the Ottoman empire into the international economy. Entry into world markets stimulated the production of cash crops such as grain, wool, raisins, tobacco, and opium, though cotton declined owing to American competition. By 1913 Anatolian agriculture provided 55 percent of the agricultural income of the Ottoman empire and

48 percent of the gross domestic product. Some 80 to 85 percent of exports were agricultural products.

Manufacturing also prospered. Though the trade treaty of 1838 is usually taken to have been a disaster for Turkish handicrafts, in fact Turkish cloth weaving and carpet making flourished in the nineteenth century, partly owing to investments by Austrian and British firms in a putting-out system of production. Industries, however, were very little developed except for state-owned factories which produced guns, clothing, and footwear for the soldiers, and sold the surplus to the general public. Ottoman efforts to create their own industries for cotton, textiles, iron, and weapons had limited prospects in the face of the high cost of imported raw materials and technicians. Nevertheless, Ottoman industrial output grew at a rate of 1.85 percent a year, about twice the rate of growth of the gross domestic product. In all, Ottoman engagement in the world economy led to intensified production for export, but to the failure of domestic industries and crafts in competition with Europe.

Ottoman engagement in the world economy also led to state indebtedness and financial dependency. The first Ottoman loans were contracted in 1854, and Ottoman economic development came to depend upon European loans for the construction of railroads, mining, and public utilities. Foreign capital also financed military expenditures and the formation of Ottoman banks. By 1882 the Ottoman state could no longer pay the interest on its debts and was forced to accept a foreign debt administration. Henceforth foreign bankers controlled the Ottoman economy. However, from 1880 to 1914 there was increased prosperity in the Ottoman empire owing to the centralization of state power, security in the provinces, and the foreign stimulus to internal investment and trade.

This foreign-stimulated and foreign-regulated economy had important consequences for the social structure of Ottoman society. It favored Greek, Armenian, Jewish, and other minorities involved in international trade, but the dependence of the Ottoman empire on the world economy did not change the distribution of political power within Ottoman society. These groups could not challenge the state elites. Control of taxation, major investments, and ideological and military power remained the prerogative of the Ottoman establishment. On the eve of the formation of the Turkish Republic, the military and administrative elites alone determined the destiny of the state.

REPUBLICAN TURKEY

Thus, the Ottoman tradition of a strong centralized state and military leadership was transmitted to the Turkish Republic. The history of modern Turkey can be divided into two phases. The period from 1921 to 1950 was the era of presidential dictatorship, religious reform, and the first stages of industrialization. From 1950 to the present is the era of a dual military rule and multi-party political system, increasing social differentiation, rapid economic change, and resumed ideological conflict.

The Kemalist period began in 1921 with the Law of Fundamental Organization which declared the sovereignty of the Turkish people. In 1923 Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was named president of the Republic for life. He was head of government, and head of the Republican People's Party. Despite brief experiments with an organized political opposition – the Progressive Party of 1924, and the Liberal Party in 1929 and 1930 – the regime proved intolerant of opposition. The party was its main instrument in the countryside, and its offices disseminated information about agricultural improvements, organized educational programs, and taught the secular and national ideology to the country people. The regime thus continued the Ottoman system in which a highly educated, urban, bureaucratic, and military elite dominated the rest of the country. 'Ulama' and local notables were excluded from political power, but landlords were allowed to retain and consolidate their economic position. It was a regime in the name of the Turkish people, but without close connections with them.

The primary goals of Kemalist Turkey were economic development and cultural modernization. In the course of the nineteenth century, European competition forced Muslim elites out of commerce and into reliance on the state as the main vehicle of economic activity. Between 1908 and 1918, however, foreign capital was withdrawn, Greek and Armenian merchants were pushed out, and the way was opened for the growth of a new Turkish commercial elite. In the 1920s, however, foreigners still controlled Turkish banks and the import–export trade.

In the 1920s, the Kemalist regime resumed state sponsorship of economic development. It promoted agricultural production by reducing taxes and by investing in roads and railways. Exports of cotton, tobacco, and dried fruit rose. The Turkish Republic also took the lead in building textile factories with Soviet loans and expertise. Traditional crafts, however, floundered. With the collapse of the export market in 1929, Turkey turned to more energetic state control of the economy and planned economic development. The inspiration was at once Ottoman and Soviet. In the 1930s the state nationalized the railroads, utilities, ports, and mines. The first five-year plan (1929–33) promoted consumer substitution industries. The Sumer Bank was founded to finance textile, paper, glass, and sugar enterprises. Great Britain helped finance the construction of iron and steel works. In the 1920s and 1930s, the foundations were set for a modern industrial economy.

At the same time, Mustafa Kemal sought to absorb the masses of the people into the ideological and cultural framework of the republican regime, break the attachment of ordinary people to Islam, and win them to a Western and secular style of life. The new regime abolished the organized institutions of Islam. The Ottoman Sultanate was abolished in 1923 and the Caliphate in 1924. Waqf endowments and 'ulama' were put under the control of a new office of religious affairs. In 1925 the Sufi orders were declared illegal and were disbanded. In 1927 the wearing of a fez was forbidden. In 1928 a new Latin script was introduced to replace the Arabic script, and an effort was begun to purify the Turkish language of its Arabic and Persian content. In 1935 all Turks were required to take surnames in the Western fashion. In the course of this period, a new family law based upon Swiss legal codes replaced the Shari'a. "People's Houses" were set up all across the nation to teach literacy, disseminate the new ideology, and inculcate a Turkish national identity. Thus, Islam was "disestablished" and deprived of a role in public life, and the ordinary symbols of Turkish attachment to the traditional culture were replaced by new legal, linguistic, and other signs of modern identity.

Part of these changes was the transformation in the status of women. The nineteenth-century Tanzimat program had already provided elementary education for women, but at the turn of the century secular nationalists made the women's question a crucial concern. Ziya Gokalp theorized that equality of women was essential for the development of a modern Turkish society. He advocated equality in education, employment, and family life, allowing women equal rights in divorce and inheritance. In the first decade of the century urban women began to dress in European fashion. The first *lycée* for women was established in 1911, and schools for teachers, nurses, midwives, and secretaries expanded rapidly. The war years, which drained the Turkish male population, brought women into new professions and factory labor. Family legislation in 1916 and 1917 broke with the Shari'a, restricted polygamy, and allowed women to obtain divorces in specified conditions. Still, women remained segregated in public places, including transportation. Theatrical entertainments, education, and many other activities were still carried on separately for men and women or in partitioned rooms.

The reforms of the 1920s and 1930s brought still more radical changes. Family laws of 1924 abolished polygamy, made the sexes substantially equal in rights to divorce, and required that divorce be subject to court rulings on specified conditions rather than a male prerogative. The constitution guaranteed the right of women to equality in education and employment, and in 1934 women were accorded the right to vote in national elections. In 1935 women deputies were elected to the Turkish parliament. The changes in attitude and legal principle have been the basis of an ever-expanding participation of women in Turkish public life.

Radical as were the economic and cultural policies, the Kemalist regime was not revolutionary. The position of women was improved for the sake of the state and national development rather than as a commitment to women's rights. The dominant elites and organizations retained their authority. No effort was made to mobilize the peasantry. The cultural revolution, imposed from the top, had relatively slight penetration. It served to divide the country into an urban, modernized elite, and rural peasant masses oriented toward Islam. The combination of a radical cultural policy with conservative statist political and social policies made Turkey one of the first of a new type of modern Asian nation – an authoritarian regime attempting to carry out radical economic and cultural reforms.

23 Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (left) and the Shah of Iran

The postwar Turkish Republic

The Kemalist legacy was a state dominated by a corporate elite with a monopoly of political power committed to transforming and modernizing Turkish society. When Mustafa Kemal died in 1938, the regime continued under his loyal colleague, Ismet Inonu (1938–50). The period between Kemal's death and the end of the

Inonu regime prepared the way for a new political system. Economic development generated new groups of businessmen, factory managers, rural landowners, prosperous peasants, and a new generation of intellectuals who wanted political recognition. Also, Turkish legislation after World War II relaxed government controls over commerce and the universities and increased the expectation of political participation. The Inonu government permitted the formation of the Democrat Party, and in 1950, free parliamentary elections.

Thus a new regime came into being, a representative state alongside the military bureaucratic guardian state established by Ataturk. The military, at the head of a centralized state with strong controls over the industrial economy, trade associations and labor unions, committed to secularism in cultural policy, now governed through a parliamentary system. Parliament represented the free-market sector of the economy, the ever-growing interests of independent peasants, businessmen, and professionals, who favored a mixed development policy combining state direction and market expansion, and a flexible cultural policy in which aspects of Islam, appealing to peasants, small-town populations and migrants, would be tolerated. The political parties were expected to give allegiance to Kemalism. In turn the state extended its patronage to the middle classes and the populace by a policy of legislative subsidies and welfare payments. The Turkish government became an ever more elaborate system of patronage and top-down controls.

After World War II the United States, as the main protector of Turkish political security and economic development, reinforced these trends. The USA favored a less paternalistic and more democratic multi-party system. American intervention was prompted by the expansion of the Soviet Union into Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Soviet backing for the Communist Party in the Greek civil war, and direct threats to Turkey and Iran. In 1947 President Truman declared the US determination to defend Turkey, Iran and Greece, and by 1950, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had been formed to counter-balance Soviet power.

The organization of the double state led to a series of crises. The opening up of the political system led to a democratization of participation, but also to a fragmentation of political parties and factions, ideological polarization, confrontations between left and right, secular and Islamist forces, Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups, and to contradictory economic policies. The history of the Turkish Republic ran in phases of parliamentary government, each ending in a crisis in which the military seized power. Each time, the army gave new direction to the economy, suppressed political conflict, revamped the constitution, and then partially relinquished power to a civilian government. Such crises took place in 1960, 1970, and 1979-83, and again in 1997 the military intervened to ban an Islamic party from participation in the parliamentary system. Though the issues have changed, the structural problem remains unresolved.

The first phase ran from 1950 to 1960. In the 1950s the Democrat Party, led by Jelal Bayar and Adnan Menderes, took power from the People's Republican Party,

ounded by Ataturk. The Democrat Party mobilized a new coalition of small usinessmen, landowners and their peasant dependents and clients, and middling nd rich peasants. It was tolerant of Islam, and permitted religious instruction in urkish schools. Mosques again received state support. The Sufi orders, however, vere held in check and waqf endowments were not restored. The Democrat Party hus compromised the Kemalist dogma that only by secularization could Turkey ecome a modern country. It also favored economic modernization, and promsed to curtail state intervention in the economy, transfer enterprises to private ontrol, and increase marketing opportunities for peasants. In the course of the 950s agriculture was modernized; production of sugar, cotton, and tobacco was ncreased. Turkish–American military collaboration led to the construction of oads, railroads, airfields, ports, and communications. The villages were transormed by the introduction of roads, electricity, tractors, bus transportation, and chools. Hectic and chaotic growth, however, was marked by inflation, trade eficits, and an enlarged public debt. In 1958 the International Monetary Fund orced Turkey to cut back wages and social services, and to devalue the currency.

With Turkey in economic collapse, a military coup on May 27, 1960 overthrew the Ienderes government. The army, representing the Westernized elite defending Kemalist secularist policies, aligned with bureaucrats and students against the rural, mall-town business, and Islamic interest groups, took control of the government. 'he army regime, and the National Unity Committee that it spawned, stayed in power, owever, only a year. This was long enough to abolish the Democrat Party and to romulgate a new constitution and parliamentary regime and a new economic policy.

The 1960s marked the second phase in Turkey's postwar development. Turkey's conomic growth then was based on state-sponsored and protected consumer ndustries. Industrial production and the industrial working force grew considerbly. Agricultural exports and the remittances of Turkish workers in Europe conributed heavily, but these earnings failed to pay for the capital, raw materials, and ther imports needed to maintain Turkey's consumer substitution industries. This ed to economic unrest and another foreign exchange crisis in 1971. The army temorarily took control of the state, but soon restored a civilian government. In the 970s the Turkish economy grew in an irregular and highly vulnerable way, ependent upon foreign loans, and provoking conflicts of interest among large and mall domestic capitalists, workers, and peasants. Rising oil prices and a general lowdown in the European economy led to inflation, unemployment, foreign debts, nd exchange problems, and eventually to a new International Monetary Fund proram of wage freezes and imposed deflation in 1979–80.

Also, in the 1960s and 1970s Turkey returned to multi-party conflict. This was betted not only by uneven economic development, but also by increased social nd economic differentiation, and an increased tendency toward political awareess and activism. A new technical elite composed of engineers and industrial vorkers, a large worker movement, and militant ideological groups on both the ight and the left entered the political arena. The Republican People's Party under

Bulent Ecevit came to represent the bureaucratic, intellectual, and technical elite of the country, including industrial workers and other urban groups. The party of Mustafa Kemal maintained its statist orientation, but became, in effect, a democratic socialist party appealing to a professional civil service and industrial clientele. The Justice Party, led by Sulayman Demirel, was heir to the legacy of the Democrat Party. It was oriented to large-scale private enterprise and rural development. Alongside the two major parties, new parties formed on both right and left, including the Agrarian Capitalists Democratic Party, the small-town petit bourgeois Islamist National Salvation Party, the elitist and fascist National Movement Party, and the Turkish Workers' Party and other left-wing worker, Maoist, and Soviet-oriented groups. By the late 1970s the right wing was openly at war with leftist groups. The parliamentary system failed to mediate among these conflicting interests, and again, in 1980 the army intervened to restore political and economic order. In effect, economic and cultural development has made Turkey a highly pluralistic society which lacks effective political means to give coherent economic and ideological direction to the development of the country.

In 1983, under the eyes of a watchful army and with a new constitution, the government was again returned to civilian hands under the presidency of Turgot Ozal (1983–93). The vigilance of the military was institutionalized in the National Security Council which gives the army a powerful role in the formulation of government policy and a veto over policies of which it disapproves. The new constitution is authoritarian and outlaws parties based on class, religion, and ethnicity, and restricts freedom of the press and rights of labor organization.

The 1980s also brought a return to liberal economic policies and export-based growth. Import-substitution development – that is, development based on an industrial infrastructure shielded from international competition, catering to consumer needs, and a welfare or clientism policy using industry to provide employment for government officials, managers, and workers, welfare and other services – became too costly to sustain. State intervention was reduced, foreign investment welcomed, and private enterprise encouraged. Minority interests in the Turkish airline and in hotels and telecommunications have been sold to investors. Nonetheless, the state continues to subsidize housing, and to provide benefits for the military, bureaucrats, and other favored groups. The liberalized economy remains vulnerable due to the inability of the government to effectively tax the wealthy, curb its own expenditures, or control inflation.

While economically productive, this transformation has imposed economic hardship and insecurity upon downsized segments of the population. The result is a cultural and political counter-attack in two forms: Islamism and Kurdish nationalism.

Islamic revival and Kurdish nationalism

Islam holds a nuanced place in Turkish society. The ideology of the republic is secular, and the Turkish urban educated upper classes consider Islam a symbol of backwardness. The urban 'ulama' tradition has largely been destroyed, and has no

influence upon public life. However, the rural-Sufi tradition has survived and the Islamic loyalties of ordinary people were never seriously disturbed. The Turkish populace continued to identify itself as Muslim, and even in the Kemalist period continued to carry on worship in mosques and at the tombs of saints.

Moreover, the economic and political stresses of the postwar era led to the rise of new movements and parties committed to the re-Islamization of state and society. These movements appeal to students, especially in technical and medical subjects, as an expression of alienation from an authoritarian state, of concern over economic prospects, and of moral doubt which stems from social and educational mobility. They appeal to provincial small-town bazaar traders and artisans, especially in central and eastern Anatolia, and to rural or small-town populations who have migrated to the larger cities and who preserve in the new environment a small-community orientation and old values. The *gececondu* (shanty-town) migrants in Ankara and Istanbul find in Islam the basis of a new identity, social cooperation, and political representation as they struggle to organize new lives in a new environment.

One of the most important is the Said Nursi movement, founded by a religious preacher and writer, the author of the *Risale-i Nur* (Epistle of Light), which achieved a wide underground distribution in Turkey despite government opposition and the prosecution of Said Nursi for religious agitation. The *Risale-i Nur* integrates science, tradition, theosophy, and mysticism, and appeals especially to technically educated people and to a less well-educated public that is nonetheless familiar with Western scientific ideas. While Said Nursi was himself concerned about politics the movement currently postpones political action in favor of religious self-cultivation.

The National Salvation Party, also formed in the 1960s, advocated the reestablishment of an Islamic state in Turkey. It was hostile to capitalism and big business, and called upon the state to work for a moral and just society. Puritanical in moral tone, it represented both an effort to protect Anatolia's petite bourgeoisie from the encroachment of the state and large-scale economic enterprises and an effort to increase its constituency's share of economic development. The National Salvation Party won a small percentage of the vote in Turkish elections in the 1970s. The National Salvation Party rallied old Sufi networks and rural support, and expressed the political and economic grievances of its backers, but accepted the liberal, parliamentary, and human rights aspects of secular political culture.

The Refah (Welfare) Party was the direct successor of the National Salvation Party. In the 1990s this party became the vehicle not only for Islamic values but for a broader protest against economic downsizing, the unfair distribution of wealth and opportunity favoring Istanbul and Ankara rather than the provinces, government and administrative corruption, and the authoritarian controls of the state. The Refah Party, with some 20 percent of the electorate, became the country's biggest vote-getter and, taking advantage of the inability of the secular parties to agree among themselves, formed a governing coalition. In 1996 and 1997 the head of the Refah, Necmettin Erbakan, became Prime Minister of Turkey.

Still, the seeming opposition between Islamic movements and the national state is not absolute. While there are radical secularists and radical Islamists, and while Islamic rhetoric and Kemalist principles conflict, the state has also tried to incorporate Islam within the system. The initial policy of the Republic was to institutionalize Islam as a department of state by taking over courts, waqfs, and the education of imams. In the 1950s the Democrat Party lent legitimacy to Islam by setting up *iman-khatib* schools, allowing voluntary religious courses in schools, and radio broadcasts and calls to prayer in Arabic. The military regime of 1960–61 saw enlightened Islam as a bulwark against Communism. From 1965–71 the Justice Party also expanded imam-khatib schools, and encouraged Islam as a personal religion for conservatives and technocrats, and as a bulwark against the left. Post-1980s governments have tried to coopt Islam and keep it under state supervision. The state is not so much anti-Islamic as hostile to expressions of Islam not in its own control.

The second focus of opposition is the Kurdish population of the economically backward provinces of eastern Turkey, who demand cultural autonomy, self-government in a federal framework, or national independence. Kurdish-speaking peoples, who number some 20–25 million, are distributed among Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Kurdish ambitions for a national state were blocked by the post-World War I partition of the region into the several existing states, and Kurds in each country have waged a decades-long struggle for autonomy, independence, and union. However, the Kurds fight as much with each other for leadership and for local economic and political advantages as they do against the existing states. In turn each of the states manipulates the Kurdish factions against each other, and uses them in their rivalries with other states.

Kurdish resistance to the Turkish state goes back to 1925, when Kurdish Naqshbandi chieftains fought against the Republic. Kurdish separatism became intense in the 1980s, and the Gulf War gave Kurdish separatists and nationalists a new opportunity. The Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) intensified its ongoing violent struggle for regional autonomy and a federalized state structure for Turkey, and the Turkish government responded with repressive policies. Kurdish terrorist attacks and Turkish incitement of tribal and factional strife, relocation of Kurdish populations into so-called "strategic villages," and military attacks on Kurdish bases in Iraq, escalated into an all-out war. The capture of 'Abdallah Ocalan, the leader of the PKK in 1999, has broken militant Kurdish resistance, and forced the more radical elements of the movement to retreat from the goal of separatism to the goals of cultural autonomy and regional development.

The struggle with the Kurdish resistance creates great complications in Turkish foreign policy. Throughout the cold war era Turkey was an integral supporter of NATO's policy of containment. With the breakdown of the Soviet Union, the emergence of independent states in Central Asia, neo-nationalist wars in the Balkans, and the Gulf War (1991), Turkey has moved cautiously in several arenas. In the Balkans Turkey avoided direct engagement, though it gave strong diplomatic support to

the Bosnian Muslims, because of the danger of a polarization into a Muslim – Bosnian–Albanian–Turkish coalition versus an eastern Christian – Serbian–Greek–Russian entente. In the Caucasus and Central Asia, Turkey attempted to assert its leadership for a new group of independent and underdeveloped nations. It promoted a Black Sea Economic Cooperation Council, made extensive investments in the infrastructure of the new Central Asian republics, promoted student exchanges, and took part in the creation of a new western alphabet for Central Asian Turkic languages. In this region, Turkey's influence, however, is relatively limited. Turkish initiatives have been checked by Russia which considers itself the patron power of the former Soviet states. Russia and Turkey remain rivals for the development of alternative pipeline routes for the export of regional oil and gas. Its relations with Russia are also constrained by the Kurdish problem. Russia sponsored conferences of exiled Kurds as a warning against Turkish intervention in Chechnya and the former Soviet republics. Vis-à-vis the Arab world, Turkey has several times invaded northern Iraq to try to crush the PKK. Turkey threatens to divert the Euphrates water supply and has developed ties with Israel to forestall Syrian support for the Kurds.

The Turkish modernist dream of integration into Europe is undermined by its responses to the Kurdish problem. Though Turkey is a member of the European Customs Union, and though 52 percent of Turkish exports go to and 44 percent of its imports come from the European Union countries, Turkey is held on probation for membership in the EU, many of whose members are critical of Turkey's undemocratic constitution and its human rights abuses. There are, of course, other factors in this opposition. Greece resists Turkish participation. Germany fears opening up to Turkish labor migration, and there may also be an unspoken reluctance to accept a Muslim country as part of Europe.

Militant secularist opinion in Turkey refuses to accept the legitimacy of either Islamic religious commitments or separate ethnic identities. In the high tensions of the 1990s, the army reverted to a rigidly authoritarian and secularist policy. It forced the Refah Party to relinquish its place in the government. The courts have declared it illegal, and some of its leaders have been prosecuted or banned from politics. A new group, the Virtue Party, has succeeded Refah, but its influence and voter appeal seems to have declined. Furthermore, the military opposes Kurdish demands for autonomy as a threat to the survival of the Turkish state, and so justifies tight police control over the country, and widespread human rights abuses. The military also opposes political and legal system liberalization, and implements close government controls over the media and the schools in order to maintain the secular, authoritarian Kemalist heritage. Thus, Islamic and Kurdish interests are largely excluded from the political process.

The polarization of Turkish society among secularists, Islamists, and Kurds calls into question its national identity. Behind the army's resistance to Muslim or Kurdish political and cultural demands and its repressive policies lies a concept of the Turkish nation as a unitary, homogeneous entity. Turkish nationalists do not allow for minority rights or for plural ethnic and cultural identities, and Turkey seems to be committed to the assimilation and homogenization of the population regardless of its diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. Embedded, then, in the issue of Islam and Kurdish rights is the issue of Turkey's political identity. The repressive policies of the government and the Kurdish and Islamic challenges to its authority test Turkey's commitment to democratic and parliamentary government and the rights of citizens.

The formation of the Turkish Republic was prepared by the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ottoman empire. The republican bureaucratic and military elite committed to the secular modernization of the country was a direct outgrowth of the late Ottoman elite. The defeat of Islamic interests and their subordination to state control was similarly the result of the subordination of the religious establishment and the acceptance by the 'ulama' of the intrinsic legitimacy of the Ottoman regime. Furthermore, European intervention worked to strip away the Balkan Christian populations, and World War I led to the partition of the Ottoman empire in a way that substantially resolved the historical tensions between tribal and ethnic minorities and the Ottoman government. In the twentieth century, Turkish economic and social change has led to a highly pluralistic, secularized, and national society, but one in which Islam and Kurdish ethnicity continue to have profound religious and social meaning for much of the Turkish population The conflicts created by Turkish pluralism have become a test of the nation's modern identity.