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Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century*

RODERIC H. DAVISON

EVERY modern society has been faced with problems arising from inequalities among the various groups of which it is composed, particularly since the eighteenth-century proclamation in America that "all men are created equal," and the elaboration in France of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. The differences which produced inequality have been various—economic, social, racial, linguistic, religious, political—and variously intertwined. In the Near East until very recent times the major boundary lines between groups, and therefore the principal barriers to a homogeneous society of equals, have been religious. Although today social and economic disparities in Near Eastern society have vastly increased as modern technology and finance have provided greater opportunities for getting and spending, and although nationalist rivalries now challenge the primacy of religious rivalries, it is still often true that religion is the dividing line, and that a man's creed is his distinguishing mark.

In the Ottoman Empire of the early nineteenth century his religion provided a man's label, both in his own conceptual scheme and in the eyes of his neighbors and his governors. He was a Muslim, Greek Orthodox, Gregorian Armenian, Jew, Catholic, or Protestant before he was a Turk or Arab, a Greek or Bulgar, in the national sense, and also before he felt himself an Ottoman citizen. The Ottoman government, by granting official recognition to these *millet's*, as the religious communities were called, had preserved and even emphasized the religious distinctions. The empire itself was governed by Muslims; its law was based on the religious law of Islam. But within this empire the several Christian communities and the Jewish community enjoyed a partial autonomy, whereby the ecclesiastical hierarchy which administered the *millet* supervised not only the religious, educational,

* This paper was presented in abbreviated form at the meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago in December, 1953. Its subject represents one aspect only of a larger study by the author of the reform and westernization of the Ottoman Empire in the later Tanzimat period, 1856–1876. Some of the material both for this paper and for the larger work was gathered during tenure of a field fellowship from the Social Science Research Council, for which the author expresses deep appreciation.

and charitable affairs of its flock; it controlled also such matters of personal status as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, and it collected some taxes. This mosaic pattern, in which a Christian and a Muslim living side by side in the same state under the same sovereign were subject to different law and different officials, had served the Ottoman Empire well for four centuries. In the Near East law was still, as it had formerly been in the West also, personal rather than territorial.

The semiautonomy of the Christian *millet's* did not, however, mean complete equality among the subjects of the empire. The Muslim *millet* was dominant. This did not lead to any systematic persecution of Christians by Muslims, nor to any systematic oppression of Christians by the Ottoman government. Indeed, inefficient or corrupt and extortionate government in the empire often bore more heavily on Muslim Turks and Arabs than it did on Christians. Pasha and tax-farmer alike found the piastres they could squeeze from Muslims just as sound as Christian money and did not vary their harshness or their methods with the religion of the victim. Despite all this, it was still incontestable that Christians were looked down upon as second-class citizens both by the Muslim public and by the government. They suffered unequal treatment in various ways. Their dress was distinctive, and if Christian or Jew wore the fez he was required to sew on it a strip of black ribbon or cloth, not to be concealed by the tassel. Sometimes the unequal treatment was in purely ecclesiastical matters, as for example on those occasions when the Sublime Porte denied permits to one of the Christian sects for the repair of churches. One aspect of religious inequality was particularly galling, though it arose infrequently as a concrete issue—Christians could not so easily make converts from among the Muslims as could Muslims from among the Christians, since Islamic law demanded that apostasy be punished by death. In addition, the Christians suffered certain specific disabilities in public life. They were, for example, denied opportunity for appointment to the highest administrative posts; they could not serve in the armed forces but had to pay an exemption tax; Christian evidence was discounted in a Muslim court of law. Neither the concept nor the practice of citizenship, involving equal rights and duties, existed in the Ottoman Empire before the nineteenth century.¹

After 1800, the attention of the Ottoman government was forcibly directed

¹ There is no adequate study on the status of Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Voluminous sources exist, many of them dealing only with a particular district or period, and many have a distinctive bias. Among the best accounts for the mid-nineteenth century are Abdolonyme Ubicini, *Letters on Turkey*, tr. by Lady Easthope (London, 1856), II; and *Accounts and Papers*, 1861, LXVII, "Reports . . . relating to the Condition of Christians," a collection of statements by British consuls in different parts of the empire.

toward the question of equality in several ways. First, as Christian groups in the empire absorbed Western ideas of liberty and nationality, and as education and literacy increased among them, they complained more frequently and loudly about the lack of equality. Second, they found ready hearers among the several great powers who traditionally acted as protectors of Christians in the Near East and who, for mixed motives of humanitarianism and power politics, magnified the volume of these complaints in the Sublime Porte's ear and pressed for changes. Third, Ottoman statesmen who were concerned to check the territorial disintegration of the empire, and its internal decline, embarked on a program of reorganization and incipient westernization which inevitably brought them up against the same problem of equality as they moved to adopt or adapt elements of the Western state's political pattern. The question of the equality of Christian, Muslim, and Jew was by no means the major question faced by these statesmen, but it ran like a thread through many phases of the larger problem of Ottoman reform and westernization. Should Christians be given equal opportunity as students in the schools to be established in a reformed educational system? Should they be allowed to serve in a rejuvenated army? Should they be admitted to the highest administrative posts as the bureaucracy was improved? Should the contemplated revisions and codifications of law apply equally to Christian and Muslim? And, if any sort of representative government were established, whether on a provincial scale or in the form of a constitutional monarchy, should Christians be represented, and how?

It is, therefore, one of the most significant aspects of Ottoman history in the nineteenth century that the doctrine of equality did, in fact, become official policy. Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839), who took some crucial steps toward reform in his own vigorous way, frequently made it plain that in his view all his subjects, of whatever creed, were equal.² But it was during the Tanzimat period of 1839 to 1876, a new era in Ottoman efforts at reform and westernization, that the doctrine of the equality of Christian and Muslim was proclaimed in the most solemn manner and came to play a prominent role in the central question of Ottoman revival.³

² See the convenient collection of such statements in Harold Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea* (London, 1936), pp. 40-41.

³ The doctrine of equality of course included Jews as well. But Christians were far more numerous in the empire and provided most of the problems. Among the 14,000,000 non-Muslims in an empire of some 35,000,000, Christians were an overwhelming majority. There were perhaps 150,000 Jews. All figures for the nineteenth century are inaccurate approximations. These follow Ubicini, I, 18-26. His estimates, probably low, have found the widest acceptance. For practical reasons, I shall limit the discussion to the status of Christians.

I

An imperial edict of reforms, the Hatt-i Sherif of Gülhane, opened the new era on November 3, 1839.⁴ After public proclamation before an impressive assembly of diplomats and Ottoman notables, the edict was sworn to by the young sultan Abdul Medjid [Abdülmeçid] and his high officials in the room where the mantle of the prophet Muhammad was preserved. Much of the Hatt-i Sherif had a profoundly Muslim ring. It laid the decline of the empire directly to the nonobservance of "the precepts of the glorious Kuran." In the next breath it then attempted to reconcile Muslim tradition and progress, promising new institutions which should not contravene Muslim law but should conform to its demands. Security of life, honor, and property was guaranteed, along with reforms in taxing and conscription methods. But the Hatt-i Sherif was most remarkable neither for its Muslim overtones, for its promises of "life, liberty, and property," nor for its pledge to correct specific evils, though all this was important. The most novel aspect of the *hatt* arose from its official declaration of equality. "These imperial concessions," affirmed Abdul Medjid in his edict, "are extended to all our subjects, of whatever religion or sect they may be."

The new policy was confirmed in a more extensive Hatt-i Humayun of 1856, which promised equal treatment for adherents of all creeds in such specific matters as educational opportunity, appointment to government posts, and the administration of justice, as well as in taxation and military service.⁵ An interesting antidefamation clause was included also, forbidding "every distinction or designation tending to make any class whatever of the subjects of my Empire inferior to another class, on account of their religion, language, or race." Legal action would ensue against anyone, whether public official or private individual, who used "any injurious or offensive term." Even name-calling was forbidden in the name of equality.

At frequent intervals the theme was restated, with variations. The next

⁴ Western writers have ordinarily referred to the edict of 1839 as the Hatt-i Sherif [Illustrious Rescript], which was its title in the official French translation distributed by the Sublime Porte to foreign diplomats. See facsimile of French as well as Turkish texts in Yavuz Abadan, "Tanzimat Fermanı Tahlili" [Analysis of the Tanzimat Edict], *Tanzimat* (Istanbul, 1940), I, following p. 48. Turkish historians usually say *Hatt-i Humayun* [Imperial Rescript], or else *Gülhane Fermanı* or *Tanzimat Fermanı*. A *ferman* is a decree or edict. I shall continue here to follow the customary Western terminology in order to avoid confusion and to provide a convenient distinction from the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856 (see note 5). Similarly, where Turkish names first occur, their Western forms are used, followed by the modern Turkish spelling in brackets. The official French text of the Hatt-i Sherif is available in many places, for instance in Ubicini and Pavet de Courteille, *Etat présent de l'Empire ottoman* (Paris, 1876), pp. 231-34.

⁵ Westerners usually call this edict the Hatt-i Humayun, but Turks call it the *Islahat Fermanı* [Reform Edict]. See explanation in note 4. The most useful text, both Turkish and French, is Thomas X. Bianchi, *Khathrhy Humaïoun . . .* (Paris, 1856).

sultan, Abdul Aziz [Abdülaziz], opened his new Council of State [*Şûray-ı Devlet*] in 1868 with a speech which referred to adherents of all creeds as "children of the same fatherland."⁶ His successor, Murad V, echoed these sentiments in his first *hatt*.⁷ The trend culminated in December, 1876, with the promulgation of the first written constitution in Ottoman history, establishing a limited monarchy all of whose subjects were considered "Osmanli, whatever religion or creed they hold." The constitution further affirmed that "all Osmanli are equal before the law . . . without distinction as to religion."⁸

From 1839 to 1876 many efforts—some valiant, some half-hearted, some merely for the record; some spontaneous, some under diplomatic pressure—were made by the Ottoman government to translate the promises of equality into fact. The sultan in 1844 engaged not to enforce the death penalty for apostasy from Islam. Some Christians were appointed, and some later were elected, to local advisory councils [*meclisler*] established in each province, and also to the Grand Council of State [*Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye*] in 1856. Christians and Muslims were accepted together as students in the newly established imperial *lycée* of Galata Saray in 1867. These and many other measures did something to raise the status of the non-Muslims of the empire, but the advance was slow and piecemeal. No genuine equality was ever attained.

Many European writers of the time, and many Western historians since, have dealt with the Tanzimat period, and the equality question that ran through it, in one of two ways. Some look on it from the outside as a phase of the Eastern Question, during which European diplomats in the service of their own national interests had constantly to prod the Ottoman government to live up to its professions of reform and equality, and to carry them out in a French, Russian, or English fashion. Others consider it primarily as a phase of the long-continued internal decay of the empire, when all efforts to restore the "sick man" to health were unavailing. In either case, most writers have assumed the inability or the unwillingness of the Turks to carry out any significant change. Measuring achievement against promise, they have frequently concluded that the Ottoman statesmen either publicly professed what they did not believe or publicly promised what they knew they could not effect. Such viewpoints, together with the abundant evidence of partial successes, failures, and sins of omission in the Ottoman reform efforts, have

⁶ Text in Ignaz von Testa, *Recueil des traités de la Porte ottomane . . .* (Paris, 1864-1911), VII, 521-23.

⁷ Text in *Das Staatsarchiv*, XXX (1877), no. 5702.

⁸ Articles 8 and 17. Text in *Das Staatsarchiv*, XXXI (1877), no. 5948.

often led to the judgment that the promises, particularly the promise of equality, were largely hypocrisy—dust to throw in the eyes of the West, to ward off foreign intervention in favor of the subject peoples of the empire, and to blind observers to the continuance of an oppressive Turkish rule over downtrodden Christians.⁹

Careful reassessment of the Tanzimat period is likely to show that such views are based on an inadequate understanding of the aims of the Ottoman statesmen, of the results actually obtained, and of the formidable obstacles to progress and equality. There is need for more penetrating investigation and analysis of the Tanzimat period than has yet been undertaken either by Turkish or Western historians.¹⁰ Among the subjects demanding attention is that of Turkish attitudes on the various phases of reform. An inquiry into the attitudes of Turkish statesmen and people on the subject of Muslim-Christian equality can help to explain what changes the then climate of opinion might or might not accept and why the official program of equality was only partly realized. A complete explanation would of course involve all aspects of the reform question. It would involve also a reconsideration of the degree and nature of Ottoman lag behind European civilization, of the impediments which great-power diplomacy offered to Ottoman reform, and of the situation of multinational empires in an age of clamoring nationalisms. But Turkish attitudes were obviously among the most important forces at work in this period. Some useful indications can be given in answer to three crucial questions: what in reality were the attitudes of leading Ottoman statesmen toward these promises of equality? what traditions and what experience shaped the basic attitudes of Turks toward Christians, a century ago? and what attitudes were then current among them on the proclamation of Christian equality with Muslims?

II

Four Ottoman statesmen initiated and carried through most of the reform measures in this period—Reshid, Ali, Fuad, and Midhat.¹¹ Each was grand

⁹ Many examples might be cited. Edward A. Freeman, *The Ottoman Power in Europe* (London, 1877), is a gem—three hundred pages of magnificently righteous anti-Turkish tirade. On reform promises see especially pp. 189, 197, 225.

¹⁰ There is as yet no scholarly history of the Tanzimat period. The best account of the reforms is still Edouard Engelhardt, *La Turquie et le Tanzimat* . . . (Paris, 1882–84), 2 vols. The most satisfactory general history on the first half of the period is Georg Rosen, *Geschichte der Türken von dem Siege der Reform im Jahre 1826 bis . . . 1856* (Leipzig, 1866–67), 2 vols. Many Turkish scholars have studied aspects of the period, but none has yet produced a full-scale consecutive history. The most important single volume is a 1000-page product by some thirty Turkish scholars, *Tanzimat, Yüzcüncü Yıldönümü Münasebetile* [The Tanzimat, on the Occasion of its Hundredth Anniversary], I (Istanbul, 1940). Volume II never appeared.

¹¹ Mustafa Reşid Paşa (1800–58); Mehmed Emin Ali Paşa (1815–71); Keçecizade Mehmed Fuad Paşa (1815–69); Ahmed Şefik Midhat Paşa (1822–84).

vizier [*sadrâzam*] at least twice, and each occupied high public office throughout most of his adult life. As individuals they were completely different, and often rivals for power. But they were alike in their lack of bigotry and fanaticism.¹² Each had a fair acquaintance with Western political ideas and practices, and with some phases of European life and culture, though Ali was less "Europeanized" than the others in his manner of life and of speech. Each of the four, in his struggles with the administration of the unwieldy empire, came to believe that a degree of westernization was necessary to strengthen the empire. They agreed, further, that this process of reform demanded that all subjects of the empire be treated alike, regardless of creed. They differed as to how fast and by what measures the goal of equality might be reached. Often they waited to be pushed by events. Midhat, who had the greatest energy but the least finesse of the four Tanzimat statesmen, was the most inclined to brush aside legitimate doubts and the cautions born of experience, and to shoulder his way ahead against general prejudices.

It is quite true, as their Western critics charged, that the Tanzimat statesmen used some of the great declarations involving the principle of equality as weapons of diplomacy in times of international crisis, and not solely as programs for domestic reform. The Hatt-i Sherif of 1839 was proclaimed at a time when Muhammad Ali of Egypt threatened the empire's integrity and when the Ottoman government sorely needed the European support which such a promise of reform might help to secure. The Hatt-i Humayun of 1856 was issued under diplomatic pressure as a means of avoiding foreign supervision of Ottoman reform after the Crimean War. Again, the constitution of 1876 was announced dramatically just as a conference of European diplomats got under way in Constantinople to draw up a reform program for parts of the empire. Midhat, who was both the principal author of the constitution and grand vizier at the moment, used his constitution to thwart foreign intervention by proclaiming that the empire was already reforming itself in fundamental fashion. But specific crises alone did not dictate the content of reform promises or the views of the Ottoman statesmen, although they often dictated the time and manner of proclamation. Sometimes, as in 1876, crisis facilitated reform, since at other less turbulent periods there might be more objection from the sultan, from other ministers, or from the public on the score that no such radical measures were warranted. Crisis, therefore

¹² It is interesting to note that Reshid, Ali, and Fuad were all Freemasons: Ebüzziya Tevfil *Mecmuai Ebüzziya* [Ebüzziya's Journal] (Haziran, 1911), cited in Mustafa Nihat, *Metinler Muasır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* [History of Contemporary Turkish Literature with Texts] (İstanbul, 1934), p. 27 n. I am not sure whether or not Midhat was a Freemason, but he came from a family with Bektashi affiliations and heterodox proclivities. See below, p. 855, on the Bektasî

helped to crystallize and precipitate reform projects already considered by responsible viziers, and also to induce a readier reception. The impact of crises on the Tanzimat statesmen was also, naturally, a strong influence on their attitudes toward equality, but their attitudes did not then fluctuate constantly.

Ali was the most conservative Muslim of the four and cautious in moving ahead with reform measures. His views, therefore, are probably the most significant gauge of the advance of attitudes among leading statesmen on Muslim-Christian equality. Ali believed firmly that the Ottoman Turk was best fitted to govern the conglomeration of peoples in the empire.¹³ He believed further that the prestige of this government rested on the prestige of Islam, against which he would allow no propaganda, though he was quite willing that Christians should enjoy freedom of belief and worship.¹⁴ But under the pressure of events, including both the rebellions of native Christians and the interventions of the great powers, Ali's views on the status of Christians changed slowly. In 1867, when he was dealing with the rebellion in Crete, Ali wrote for the Sublime Porte a remarkable memorandum recommending a speedier application of the policy of equality. The Christians would cease to be revolutionaries, said Ali, as their hopes were fulfilled. Therefore they must be given every opportunity for education and tenure of public office, for which they were well fitted, even better prepared than Muslims generally at the moment. The Christians would then no longer regard themselves as held in subjection by a Muslim state but as subjects of a monarch who protected all equally. "In short," concluded Ali, "the fusion of all subjects . . . with the exception of purely religious affairs . . . is the only means."¹⁵ There is no reason to question Ali's sincerity here, though it is obvious that he was pushed to his conclusions by the rush of events and not by thinking in a vacuum about the virtues of equality.

The other three statesmen came more easily to such opinions. Reshid was certainly influenced by a desire for praise for his liberal views from European courts but was apparently convinced that reforms which should guarantee equality to all peoples of the empire would ensure their devotion to the Ottoman government.¹⁶ Fuad expressed in a private memorandum his belief that the grant of liberties to the non-Muslim peoples of the empire would dull

¹³ See Ali to Thouvenel, Nov. 28, 1858, in L. Thouvenel, *Trois années de la question d'Orient* (Paris, 1897), p. 316.

¹⁴ Ali to Musurus, Nov. 30, 1864, enclosed in Morris to Seward, no. 108, Mar. 29, 1865, Turkey no. 18, State, U.S. Archives.

¹⁵ Text in Andreas D. Mordtmann, *Stambul und das moderne Türkenhum* (Leipzig, 1877-78), I, 75-90. Ali recommended also new educational measures, a reformed civil law code, etc.

¹⁶ See for instance his memorandum of Aug. 12, 1839, printed in Frank E. Bailey, *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement . . . 1826-1853* (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), pp. 271-76.

their nationalist and separatist enthusiasms.¹⁷ Midhat had as a provincial governor in Bulgaria (the Tuna or Danube *vilayet*) shown that he believed in treating Christians and Muslims on an equal basis, while at the same time he suppressed ruthlessly any separatist or revolutionary moves among the Bulgars. He continued to maintain, even after his political star sank in Abdul Hamid II's reign, that the chaotic condition of the empire could be remedied only by a rule of law under which Christians were brought to complete equality with Muslims.¹⁸

What the four Tanzimat statesmen believed boiled down to this—that to save the empire, a new egalitarian citizenship and concept of patriotism, *Osmanlılık* or "Ottomanism," had to be created. Sometimes they expressed this as the "fusion," sometimes as the "brotherhood" of all Ottoman subjects. Official documents began to speak more of "imperial subjects," "subjects of the Sultanate," and "subjects of the Exalted [Ottoman] state," in a composite or collective sense, as if to convey a concept of Ottoman citizenship unbroken by *millet* boundaries.¹⁹ The idea of patriotism, or "compatriotism," was also expressed in the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856.²⁰ Though the statesmen knew that the concept of *Osmanlılık* was a break with the past, it is hard to say whether they fully realized what a tremendous revolution in traditional views was involved here, and what the logical outcome would be. They were not consciously trying to undermine the dominant position of the Muslim Turk. Yet by fostering an egalitarian citizenship, and by attempting to blur the demarcation lines between *millet*'s, they were taking a significant step on the road to a purely secular concept of state and citizenship. A nationality law of 1869, intended to combat the evils of the foreign protection of native Ottoman subjects, had also the effect of putting the acquisition and retention of citizenship on a purely territorial basis, unconnected with religion.²¹ When the 1876 constitution specified that all peoples of the empire were to be called Osmanli, the unspoken corollary ran that henceforth their primary allegiance was to the state, and only secondarily were they Muslim, Jew, or Greek.

¹⁷ Holographic draft of a memorandum on reforms for the state, in private collection of Salih Keçeci, cited in Orhan F. Köprülü, "Fuad Paşa," *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, p. 679.

¹⁸ Yıldız Palace Archives, Midhat's reply to interrogation of May 8, 1297 [1880], partly reproduced in İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal İnâl, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamları* [The Last Grand Viziers in the Ottoman Period] (Istanbul, 1940-50), III, 339.

¹⁹ The Hatt-i Humayun of 1856 used all these expressions: *tebaai şahane*, *tebaai saltanati*, *tebaai Devlet-i Aliyye*. See the note on this trend in Reuben Levy, *Introduction to the Sociology of Islam* (London, c. 1930-33), II, 259.

²⁰ The term used was *vatandaş*, which Bianchi (*Khaththy Humaïoun*, p. 4 and n.1) says was a new form. The basic word, *vatan*, had meant "native place" or "home" but was coming to be equated to *patrie*, fatherland, since the permeation of French ideas after 1789. See the comments on the meaning of *vatan* in Bernard Lewis, "The Impact of the French Revolution on Turkey," *Journal of World History*, I (July, 1953), 107-108.

²¹ Text in George Young, *Corps de droit ottoman* (Oxford, 1905-1906), II, 226-29. See below, p. 857, on the abuses of the capitulations at which the law was aimed.

With this program of *Osmanlılık*, which would swallow up the narrower concept of Christian equality with Muslims, the Tanzimat statesmen sought to promote reform, fend off the powers, and forestall rebellion. They knew that reform measures would be hard to put across. "*L'on ne saurait improviser la réforme des moeurs,*" said Fuad in 1867, explaining to the European powers why more had not been accomplished in the way of reform since the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856.²² But in the view of the statesmen, Ottomanism was necessary for the salvation of the empire. They wanted to regain a viable and competitive status in a world increasingly ordered by European power and civilization and to prevent the Balkan provinces and Egypt, in particular, from breaking away. Like Winston Churchill, none of them took office in order to preside over the liquidation of empire. Because this was a self-interested version of the doctrine of equality, it was no less honestly meant by its proponents. They are open to criticism not so much on the grounds of hypocrisy as because they failed to understand the driving force of the nationalistic spirit which at this very period was growing stronger among the Greeks, Serbs, and Rumanians of the empire and beginning also to infect Bulgars and Armenians. Because the virulent forms of modern nationalism were not fully comprehensible to them, the Tanzimat statesmen tended to regard such movements as discontent with local conditions, or the product of foreign agitators, or plain insolent rebellion.

One might proceed from this point to argue that the program of equality between Christian and Muslim in the empire remained largely unrealized not because of bad faith on the part of leading Ottoman statesmen but because many of the Christians wanted it to fail. The demand in Crete was basically for autonomy or union with Greece, not for equality. Other Greeks in the empire wanted the same thing. In 1862, for instance, five thousand of them held a banquet on the Bosphorus, agitating for the extension of Greek rule to Macedonia and Thessaly.²³ Serbs wanted not equality but union with the autonomous principality of Serbia. Serbia and Rumania, still within the empire, wanted no sort of equality but national independence. When Midhat Pasha in 1872 began work on a scheme of converting the Ottoman Empire into a federal state like Bismarck's new Germany, with Rumania and Serbia playing Bavaria and Württemberg to the Porte's Prussia, he got a blunt rebuff from them.²⁴ They were not interested even in a sort of corporate equality within the empire.

²² "Considérations sur l'exécution du Firman Impérial du 18 février 1856," in Grégoire Aristarchi Bey, *Législation ottomane* (Constantinople, 1873-75), II, 26.

²³ Morris-Seward, no. 33, Nov. 6, 1862, Turkey no. 17, State, U.S. Archives.

²⁴ "Zapiski Grapha N. P. Ignatyeva (1864-1874)," *Izvestiia Ministerstvo Inostrannykh Dyel*, 1915, I, 170-72.

The ecclesiastical hierarchies that ruled the Christian *millet's* also opposed equality. *Osmanlılık* would both decrease their authority and lighten their purses. This was especially true of the Greek Orthodox hierarchy, which had the most extensive prerogatives and by far the largest flock. When the Hatt-i Sherif was solemnly read in 1839 and then put back into its red satin pouch it is reported that the Greek Orthodox patriarch, who was present among the notables, said, "*Inşallah*—God grant that it not be taken out of this bag again."²⁵ In short, the doctrine of equality faced formidable opposition from Christians of the empire who were leaders in the churches and the nationalist movements. Ottoman brotherhood was only a remote possibility, if the Christians continued in these directions.

But equality and brotherhood had also to contend with the fundamental Turkish view of Christians. Not only the specific reactions of the Muslim Turks to the proclamations of equality but their basic attitudes toward Christians showed from the beginning that *Osmanlılık* would have hard sledding.

III

If there were a possibility that Muslim Turks could accept an Ottoman fusion in which Christians were their equals, it would be owing to two strong currents in their religious tradition and development. As Muslims, the Turks inherited an attitude of toleration for "peoples of the book" [*ehl-i kitap*]²⁶—those who, like Christians and Jews, possessed a book of divine revelation and paid tribute to the Muslim government. At various times the Ottoman government had offered sanctuary to non-Muslims, notably in the sixteenth century to the Jews driven from Spain. A Turk was likely to say to a Christian that "your faith is a faith, and my faith is a faith."

The tolerant attitude was often reinforced among the people by the remarkable degree of religious syncretism which had existed in Anatolia, and also in the Balkans, since the earliest days of Turkish penetration. The racial mixtures of the Ottoman Empire had been accompanied by religious mixtures of all sorts. Folk-Islam among the Turks was unorthodox in many ways, bearing marks not only of Shiite mysticism but of belief in various Christian miracle stories, saints, and shrines. The widespread Bektashi order, which claimed some seven million adherents, embodied in its beliefs many heterodox notions and helped to provide a climate which might be sympa-

²⁵ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi V: Nizam-i Cedit ve Tanzimat Devirleri* [Ottoman History V: Periods of Nizam-i Cedit and Tanzimat] (Ankara, 1947), p. 191. Engelhardt, *La Turquie*, I, 142, attributes a similar remark to the archbishop of Nicomedia at the proclamation of the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856. It should also be pointed out that the Greek hierarchy opposed a democratization of its own *millet* structure whereby lay participation in *millet* administration would increase.

thetic to Christianity and Christians. During the Tanzimat period, American missionaries at work in the Ottoman Empire were occasionally excited to discover what they at first thought might be a fertile field for their evangelism—groups of Muslims who read the Christian scriptures or heard Christ preached by their leaders. Some of these were Bektashi. One such group, not specifically Bektashi, was reported to have 10,000 adherents and twice that number of sympathizers.²⁶

Despite the toleration and the syncretism, however, there remained among the Turks an intense Muslim feeling which could sometimes burst into open fanaticism. Such outbursts characteristically came at times of political crisis, particularly in the 1870's, when the internal chaos in the empire, and the external pressures on it, produced a distinct Muslim reaction, the counterpart of what later would have been a nationalist reaction. More important than the possibility of fanatic outbursts, however, was the innate attitude of superiority which the Muslim Turk possessed. Islam was for him the true religion. Christianity was only a partial revelation of the truth, which Muhammad finally revealed in full; therefore Christians were not equal to Muslims in possession of truth. Islam was not only a way of worship, it was a way of life as well. It prescribed man's relations to man, as well as to God, and was the basis for society, for law, and for government. Christians therefore were inevitably considered second-class citizens in the light of religious revelation—as well as by reason of the plain fact that they had been conquered by the Ottomans. This whole Muslim outlook was often summed up in the common term *gâvur* (or *kâfir*), which meant “unbeliever” or “infidel,” with emotional and quite uncomplimentary overtones. To associate closely or on terms of equality with the *gâvur* was dubious at best. “Familiar association with heathens and infidels is forbidden to the people of Islam,” said Asim, an early nineteenth-century historian, “and friendly and intimate intercourse between two parties that are to one another as darkness and light is far from desirable.”²⁷

Islam embodied also a strong prejudice against innovation [*bid'at*]. A declaration of equality might encounter this prejudice not only among Muslim theologians but among the ruling group of the empire who traditionally

²⁶ The missionary reports are in the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), Armenian Mission, VIII, nos. 79, 88, 92, 93, all Schaufler to Anderson, of Mar. 11, Nov. 16, Dec. 12 and 27, 1859. On the Bektashi order see John Kingsley Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London, 1937). It would serve no purpose to cite here a bibliography on Islam. There is a considerable and scattered literature on syncretism. Frederick W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* (Oxford, 1929), 2 vols., is full of information.

²⁷ *Asim Tarihi* (Istanbul, n.d.), I, 376, quoted in Bernard Lewis, “The Impact of the French Revolution on Turkey,” *Jour. World Hist.*, I, 118, n.35.

served faith and state, not state alone. And to the popular mind the promotion of second-class citizens to equal status would undoubtedly be innovation, even if considered only against the background of popular conservatism, rather than as the sort of innovation proscribed by Islam. The whole reform program of the Tanzimat period inevitably ran up against these two intermingled conservatisms of inertia and Islam. Not only that, but the trend of the Tanzimat toward new institutions carried a profound psychological shock in its implication that the traditional Ottoman way of life was not in all respects the best, and that in Christian Europe some things were done better. Imponderables like these confronted the doctrine of Muslim-Christian equality.

Attitudes from their Muslim and Ottoman past were strengthened by the Turks' reactions to the recent impact of Christians on Ottoman life and affairs. The impact seemed generally bad. The Christians of the empire made constant trouble with their sectarian squabbles, whether argument over privileges in the Holy Places, the question of whether Bulgars should be subject to the Greek hierarchy, or the Hassounist controversy over papal authority among the Catholic Armenians. Some Christians made trouble by shifting from one *millet* to another in search of political advantage and foreign protection. The Christian sectarian quarrels were not only unedifying to the Muslims; they were positive nuisances to the Porte and offered in addition excuses for great power intervention.

The other general experience which Muslim Turks had of native Christians was that increasingly the latter tended to become rebels against legitimate authority. It is true that many Turkish and Arab lords had defied central authority, but the matter was not quite the same in Muslim eyes. Turkish *derebey*'s, or "lords of the valley," had governed various districts without regard to the Porte's decrees, but many were benevolent despots who held the esteem of their subjects and whose downfall at the hands of Mahmud II was often regretted. Muhammad Ali of Egypt was a rebel, but he was a Muslim, and many Turks had thought of him as a possible saviour from the infidel ideas of the reform edict of 1839.²⁸ Christian rebellion, on the other hand, antagonized Muslim sentiment and eventually provoked among some Turks a reaction which was Ottoman and patriotic but would later become Turkish and nationalist. The events of 1867, for example, when Crete was in revolt and when the last Turkish garrison was forced to withdraw from Belgrade, aroused some Turks to a pitch of frenzy.²⁹ Their anger mounted both

²⁸ Edouard Driault, *L'Égypte et l'Europe, la crise de 1839-1841* (Cairo, 1930—), I, letter 79, Sept. 20, 1839, and II, letter 7, Nov. 19, 1839. These Turks did not realize how much of a reformer Muhammad Ali was in Egypt.

²⁹ Prominent among them the New Ottomans, on whom see below, pp. 862 ff.

against the rebel Christians and against the weakness of the Ottoman government in dealing with rebellion. A similar reaction was natural in the critical years 1875-76, when uprisings in Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria were followed by open war against the sultan by two of his vassal states, Serbia and Montenegro.

The continuous interference of the great powers of Europe in Ottoman affairs also angered the Turks. These powers were all, of course, Christian by profession, if not in conduct. Russia, an enemy of long standing, was in a category by itself. But England and France also, despite the fact that they had assisted the empire with their armies in the Crimean War, and at other times with diplomatic pressure, were often detested because these services were overshadowed in the Turkish view by frequent and often high-handed interference. One such instance, which rankled particularly in connection with Muslim-Christian equality, was the fact that the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856 was not purely an autochthonous edict, but that large parts of it had in effect been dictated by the British, French, and Austrian ambassadors. The British ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, had in many ways done great service for the Ottoman Empire, but in this period Ali three times asked London to recall him. Stratford would not allow the sultan to reign along with him, said Ali, and demanded that his own influence should be "so paramount and notorious" that the Porte lost prestige in the eyes of its own public.³⁰ Years after Stratford had left Constantinople, Ali still spoke of him with real hatred.³¹ Fuad, who with his social graces, fluent French, and Europeanized witticisms got along well with foreign diplomats, nevertheless voiced almost the identical criticism of a sympathetic French ambassador, M. Bourrée, because "the French will never be satisfied with giving friendly advice in an unassuming way; . . . whatever good thing was done must be advertised as a benefit conferred by France. . . ."³²

Foreign interference rankled particularly when it was based on the capitulatory privileges which the great powers stretched and abused. Many ordinary Turks became aware of this when they saw the support given by Christian diplomats and consuls to thousands of protégés, largely Ottoman Christians who had never seen their protecting country but who were shielded against the taxes and courts of their own state and were often granted foreign passports. Many of the protégés were decidedly shady char-

³⁰ Clarendon to Stratford, Jan. 4, 1856, Private Stratford MSS, FO 352/44, Public Record Office (PRO), quoted in Harold Temperley, "The Last Phase of Stratford de Redcliffe, 1855-58," *English Historical Review*, XLVII (1932), 218.

³¹ L. Raschdau, ed., "Diplomatenleben am Bosphorus. Aus dem literarischen Nachlass . . . Dr. Busch," *Deutsche Rundschau*, CXXXVIII (1909), 384.

³² Elliot to Stanley, no. 68 conf., Dec. 17, 1867, FO 78/1965, PRO.

acters, and their number was considerably augmented in the Crimean War period by riffraff and adventurers of European origin who raised the crime rate in Constantinople.³³ At the end of the Crimean War the Austrian inter-nuncio felt that "the only respectable people, at least so it appears, are the Turks whom we are going to civilize and initiate into the mysteries of our progress."³⁴

The conduct of the more respectable representatives of Christendom in the empire might elicit Turkish approval but might also arouse resentment. It is not apparent that the little colonies of foreign workers, such as the English dockyard workers at Hassköy or the German Swiss at Amasya, had any noticeable impact. Some of the Polish and Hungarian refugees who came after the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 fitted in well with the Ottoman scene, and some became Muslims. There were always respected individual westerners like the English merchant of Beirut, James Black. It was reported that when a Muslim of the area wanted to use an oath stronger than "by the beard of Muhammad" he swore "by the word of Black, the Englishman."³⁵ But westerners of the utmost personal respectability could often rub Turks the wrong way. Some of the British consuls in the empire were found even by their own superiors to be shallow and vain, and to supply their personal deficiencies "by borrowing largely from the national dignity," which they then dragged into every private affair.³⁶ Missionaries of impeccable character often annoyed Muslims by their evangelical persistence. An extreme example concerns two English missionaries who one day affixed a poster to the mosque of St. Sophia advertising that on the morrow from its steps they would denounce the prophet Muhammad as an imposter.³⁷

IV

Given such a background of the innate Muslim conviction of superiority, and the unfortunate experiences of Turks with Christians, a preponderance of opinion against the official doctrine of Muslim-Christian equality was natural. Turkish resistance to the doctrine varied with the individual, the locality, and the moment. Some Turks, quite a few of them in the Ottoman bureaucracy, accepted it at least superficially, but wholehearted acceptance was rare. No great uprisings against the reform edicts occurred, though in

³³ See, for example, the comments of Sir Edmund Hornby, judge of a British consular court in this period, in his *Autobiography* (London, 1928), p. 93. (Marco Antonio) Canini, *Vingt ans d'exil* (Paris, 1868), pp. 111-42, gives a good picture of the riffraff in the capital.

³⁴ Prokesch to Buol, Jan. 10, 1856, Politisches Archiv XII/56, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv.

³⁵ Henry Harris Jessup, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria* (New York, 1910), I, 49; II, 465.

³⁶ Bulwer to Russell, no. 177, Sept. 27, 1859, enclosing Bulwer to C. Alison of same date, FO 78/1435, PRO.

³⁷ Hornby, pp. 124-25.

some localities there was rioting. In part, the opposition came from the mere fact of the proclamation of unpopular principles, whereas the slow introduction of specific measures, with no fanfare, might have gone unnoticed. Many Turks muttered their resentment against the authors of the doctrine of equality and other infidel concepts. Each of the four Tanzimat statesmen was called the "*gâvur paşa*," the "unbeliever of a pasha," though Ali probably less frequently than the others. The mere idea of equality, especially the antidefamation clause of 1856, offended the Turks' inherent sense of the rightness of things. "Now we can't call a *gâvur* a *gâvur*," it was said, sometimes bitterly, sometimes in matter-of-fact explanation that under the new dispensation the plain truth could no longer be spoken openly.³⁸ Could reforms be acceptable which forbade calling a spade a spade?

Events which followed the two great reform proclamations serve to illustrate the general antipathy to their promises of equality. One example is related to the touchy question of military service. Both in 1839 and 1856 the sultan proclaimed that his Christian subjects should be equally privileged to serve in the armed forces along with the Muslims, instead of paying an exemption tax as they had previously done. It soon became obvious that the Christians would rather continue to pay than serve, despite the step toward equality which military service might mean. It also became obvious that the Turks wanted Christians to be equally liable to service so far as sharing the burdens and dangers went but balked at giving the Christians equal opportunity for promotion to the officer corps. Muslim Turks did not want to serve under native Christian officers. In theory the equal right to serve in the armed forces remained, but in fact the whole matter was quietly buried, and the old exemption tax reappeared under a different name. Both Turks and Christians were satisfied to see the inequality continue.³⁹

Another illustration of Turkish reactions is found in the experience of the considerable group of American Congregational missionaries in the empire. They reported in general a decrease in Muslim fanaticism and in interference with their work. One missionary who knew the country well observed that only the *ulema*, the Muslim theologians, kept up any semblance of old-style bigotry by the 1860's, and that merely in order to keep what influence they could among the people and "sponge" off the wealthy.⁴⁰ Another calculated

³⁸ See the story from Abdurrahman Şeref in Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi V*, p. 190; also Gad Franco, *Développements constitutionnels en Turquie* (Paris, 1925), p. 12.

³⁹ Dr. K., *Erinnerungen aus dem Leben des Serdar Ekrem Omer Pascha . . .* (Sarajevo, 1885), pp. 47, 252. Ömer served on this commission. For a sample of Turkish complaints on Christian exemption see Felix Kanitz, *Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan* (Leipzig, 1875-79), III, 151.

⁴⁰ Henry J. Van Lennep, *Travels in Little-Known Parts of Asia Minor* (London, 1870), I,

that "before the Hatti-Humayoun [of 1856] there were more cases of persecution reported to us every week than there are now in a whole year."⁴¹ This situation continued until the new rise in Muslim sentiment with the recurrent crises of the 1870's.

But most of the proselytizing efforts of the Congregationalists, and most of their converts, were among the Armenians. Muslim opinion, therefore, was not directly touched. When, however, any case of apostasy from Islam was involved, public fury could easily be aroused. Governmental protection might be secured in such cases, especially in the capital, but the Turkish public was not willing to recognize equal opportunity of conversion in either direction despite the Porte's assurance that "the Musselman is now as free to become a Christian as the Christian is free to become a Musselman. The government will know no difference in the two cases."⁴² The outstanding case of a fanatical Muslim outburst over transfer of religious affiliation came in the Saloniki incident of 1876. A Bulgarian girl of dubious morals came to Saloniki from her native village to register with the authorities her conversion from Orthodoxy to Islam. When some Greeks of the city kidnapped her, apparently to prevent the transfer of allegiance, an angry Muslim mob sought her out. In the process the mob murdered the French and German consuls who had taken refuge, along with the Turkish governor, in a mosque. The incident occurred at a time when the empire was under great strain from the rebellions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴³

When the question of religious equality and conversion involved only competing Christian denominations, Ottoman officials were more likely to act to preserve fair play, and undoubtedly proclaimed equality with greater conviction and delight than when Muslims were involved. A classic example occurred in a town near Ankara following a local persecution of Protestants by Armenians. The governor investigated, and then sent forth a herald to cry: "It is commanded by the ruling authorities that all subjects cease to deride one another as Moslems and Rayahs, as Armenians and Protestants, since all are equally the dependent subjects of the royal government, and it is further commanded that mutually respecting and honoring one another, all shall dwell together in brotherly love."⁴⁴ In its way this pithy proclamation was a

118-19. Some of the *ulema* were bigoted and narrowly educated, but not all. Jevdet [Cevdet] is an outstanding example of one of the *ulema* of this period who was a staunch Muslim but no bigot.

⁴¹ Goodell to Anderson, Nov. 6, 1860, ABCFM, Vol. 284, no. 382. Much of the reported persecution was by other Christians, not Muslims.

⁴² The statement of a government commission investigating one of the rare cases of conversion from Islam to Christianity: Hamlin to Anderson, Sept. 5, 1857, ABCFM, Armenian Mission, V, no. 276.

⁴³ Documentary account of this in *Das Staatsarchiv*, XXX (1877), nos. 5733-58.

⁴⁴ Farnsworth to Board Secretaries, Sept. 21, 1865, ABCFM, Vol. 284, no. 331. *Râya* or

masterly summary of the official policy of equality among adherents of all creeds, of the concept of Ottoman citizenship, and of the antidefamation clause, revealing that the provincial governor understood perfectly what the central government had announced. That the civil authority should also command all men to live together in brotherly love was undoubtedly commendable—and unenforceable.

Another measure of Turkish attitudes on the question of Christian equality is provided by the views of participants in the conspiracy of 1859. The plot, directed against Abdul Medjid and his ministers, was betrayed to the authorities. Some forty-odd participants, many of them army officers and Muslim theological professors and students, were arrested. Interrogation revealed that through their rather fuzzy ideas there ran a general dissatisfaction with the Ottoman government, caused more by the proclamations of Christian equality than by any other single factor. The conspiracy's leading spirit and theoretician, one Sheikh [Şeyh] Ahmet, indicated that he regarded the reform edicts of 1839 and 1856 as contraventions of Muslim law, the *Şeriat*, because they allowed Christians equal rights with Muslims. According to the deposition of another conspirator, Sheikh Ahmet had been teaching in the *medrese* that the Christians got these privileges with the help of foreign powers.⁴⁵ The Kuleli incident, as this abortive conspiracy has since been known, provides a good index to widespread Turkish attitudes. It revealed an ill-defined resentment against the mere concept of equality, a conscious support of "religious law," and condemnation of the government both for its reform edicts and for its apparent submission to foreign influence.⁴⁶ The doctrine of equality seemed bad if for no other reason than that it proclaimed to be equal adherents of religions that were not equal. And *Osmanlılık*, as a purely political concept of the allegiance of peoples of all creeds to a ruler who treated them equally, was unreal, because the traditional concept of "Osmanli" had always carried strong implications of Muslim orthodoxy as well as of loyalty to the Ottoman state.

Any sample of Turkish opinion in the Tanzimat period must include the one group which was forward-looking, politically conscious, constantly vocal, and therefore influential out of proportion to its small size. This was

reaya was the customary term for the tributary non-Muslim peoples of the empire, and originally meant "cattle" or "flocks." Presumably the Hatt-i Humayun banned this term also.

⁴⁵ The conspiracy is analyzed on the basis of documentary evidence, chiefly the interrogation reports, in Uluğ İğdemir, *Kuleli Vakası Hakkında bir Araştırma* [An Investigation of the Kuleli Affair] (Ankara, 1937). The *medrese* is a school for instruction in Muslim law and theology.

⁴⁶ The whole reform program was of course often condemned as contrary to religious law by men whose interest was not at all in the *Şeriat* but only in their vested interests in sources of power and income. Such were numerous officials, tax-farmers, moneylenders, etc.

the New Ottoman Committee, composed principally of writers and would-be reformers who for a short time in the late 1860's coalesced into the nearest approximation to a political party that existed in the empire. Its members were an extraordinary collection of individualists. They quarreled among themselves but were united in their ardent desire to preserve the Ottoman Empire. This group has often been called the "Young Turks." Its members were, in fact, the spiritual fathers of the true Young Turks of 1908, and the spiritual grandfathers of the Turks who created the nationalist republic of today. From their writings the later development of a genuinely "Turkish" consciousness derived great impetus. But by preference the leaders of this group of the 1860's called themselves the New Ottomans [*Yeni Osmanlılar*]. The name is a good indication of their outlook.

The New Ottomans represented a more deeply felt patriotism, a devotion to *Osmanlılık* as they conceived it, than such statesmen as Ali and Fuad were hoping to inculcate. New Ottoman patriotism meant an equal co-operation of peoples of all creeds in a devoted effort to preserve the empire, but opposition to any special concessions to Christians. The New Ottomans believed that the empire could be reformed and revived within the framework of Muslim tradition and religious law, which they thought was sound enough, and progressive and elastic enough, to allow also the adaptation of new institutions from Europe. Most of them seem also to have believed in Muslim Turkish superiority among the united peoples of a united empire. Sometimes, therefore, their writings seem self-contradictory. Ali Suavi, probably the most extravagant and fanatic Muslim among them, could write that "all the populations composing the Ottoman Empire today form only one nationality: the Osmanli."⁴⁷ Mustafa Fazil Pasha, an Egyptian prince of broad views who was for a time leader of the New Ottomans because his financial resources supported the group, said in a public statement for them that "it does not matter whether one is Muslim, Catholic, or Greek Orthodox to be able to place the public welfare ahead of private interests. For that it suffices to be a man of progress or a good patriot."⁴⁸ In a bold letter to Abdul Aziz, he contended that the Christian revolts in the empire were but a symptom of a malady—backwardness and bad government—that afflicted the uncomplaining Muslims even more than the Christians. The line of division ran, said Mustafa Fazil, only between oppressors and oppressed, not between Christian and Muslim.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ali Suavi, *A propos de l'Herzégovine* (Paris, 1875), p. 16.

⁴⁸ Letter of Feb. 5, 1867, in *Le Nord* (Brussels), Feb. 7, 1867.

⁴⁹ S. A. le Prince Mustapha-Fazyl Pacha, *Lettre adressée à S.M. le Sultan* (n.p., n.d.) [presumably March, 1867], pp. 1-11.

This emphasis on Ottoman patriotism, on preservation of the fatherland from internal decay and external attack, led the New Ottomans to voice retroactive approval of the Hatt-i Sherif of 1839, since in their view Reshid Pasha had with the Gülhane edict started the empire on the road to progress and self-preservation. But they tended to regard the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856 and most of the subsequent acts of the Porte as harmful, seeing in them concessions to Christians in response to pressures exerted by great powers and by domestic rebellion. This, in the New Ottoman view, led to inequality, not equality. Namik Kemal, the most admirable of the group, castigated the Porte and the powers for enumerating the privileges of Christians in the edict of 1856 when, he said, there should rather have been progress toward constitutional government and the elimination of foreign intervention.⁵⁰ Namik Kemal here reflected a view common to many Turks which led them to argue against reform programs proposed by European powers for particular peoples or provinces of the empire, such as the proposals for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875-76, by saying that these measures represented special privilege, injustice to Muslims, and therefore inequality.⁵¹

In 1867, the year when New Ottoman criticism of the government forced many of the group into European exile, Ali and Fuad were unmercifully excoriated for making concessions to the Cretan rebels and for agreeing, under pressure, that the last Turks would evacuate Belgrade. Again the New Ottomans raised the point that this was inequality, that Muslims in Belgrade and Crete were being unfairly treated.⁵² Obviously the weakness of the Sublime Porte in the face of European pressures only increased the exasperation of the New Ottomans over the inequities of the situation. Ziya, next to Namik Kemal the most influential of the New Ottoman writers, expressed the common complaint that equality could never be attained so long as Christians within the empire could have recourse not only to the Ottoman government, and to their *millet* representatives, but also to foreign protectors. For example, said Ziya, if a guilty Christian is jailed, he is suddenly released without cause because some one influential has intervened. But if an innocent

⁵⁰ In *Hürriyet*, no. 4 (July 20, 1868), reproduced in Ihsan Sungu, "Tanzimat ve Yeni Osmanlılar" [The Tanzimat and the New Ottomans], in *Tanzimat*, I, 795-96. Sungu's chapter, pp. 777-857 in this volume, is almost entirely a collection of newspaper articles by Namik Kemal and Ziya on questions of the day.

⁵¹ See, for example, the "Manifesto of the Muslim Patriots," of Mar. 9, 1876, probably written by Midhat or one of his entourage: *Le Stamboul*, June 2, 1876.

⁵² In their newspaper *Muhbir*, date of issue not given; translation in FO 195/893, no. 120, Mar. 25, 1868, PRO. In his poem, the "Zafer-name," Ziya uses heavy irony to attack Ali on the same issues of Crete and Belgrade. He further proclaims acidly that Ali has brought the equality of rights to perfection not only by such concessions but by appointing Greeks and Armenians to high office. English translation and Turkish text of about half the poem are in Elias J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry* (London, 1900-1909), V, 96-111, and VI, 370-78.

Muslim fall into the toils of justice and be imprisoned without cause, who is there to help him? "Is this equality?" he asks bitterly.⁵³

V

In the face of such attitudes, the realization of Ottoman equality, involving the equality of Muslims and Christians, faced extraordinary difficulties.⁵⁴ Though Reshid, Ali, Fuad, and Midhat hoped to find salvation for the empire by creating among its peoples the bond of equal citizenship based on Ottoman nationality, the obstacles they faced were too great and the time too late. The Turkish mind, conditioned by centuries of Muslim and Ottoman dominance, was not yet ready to accept any absolute equality, much less to endorse the grant of particular privileges to Christians. And the Christian minorities of the empire continued to push toward separatism. Despite the various steps taken toward it, Ottoman equality was not attained in the Tanzimat period, nor yet after the Young Turk revolution of 1908 when, for a few wild and enthusiastic days, Ottoman brotherhood seemed to have arrived with the end of Abdul Hamid's personal rule and the resurrection of Midhat's constitution of 1876. Then, after this short emotional spree, competing nationalisms again crowded out the concept of *Osmanlılık*. This was true not only among the Christians of the empire but now among the Muslims as well. While Arab nationalism developed, like the Christian nationalisms, as a reaction to Ottoman Turkish control, the Turks themselves found the source for a nationalism of their own in the *Osmanlılık* of the Tanzimat, especially in the more patriotic version of Namik Kemal and other New Ottomans.

In the end, the sort of Ottoman equality at which the Tanzimat statesmen aimed, though it had never been given a full and fair trial, was discredited as an idea both among Muslims and among Christians. Instead of the equality of Christian and Muslim within a heterogeneous empire, based on "fusion" and "brotherhood," there emerged finally a different sort—the corporate equality of competing national sovereign states.

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⁵³ In *Hürriyet*, no. 15 (Oct. 5, 1868), reproduced in Sungu, p. 797.

⁵⁴ There were of course many obstacles to the realization of a doctrine of equality other than those discussed here as "attitudes." One of the most important, especially as it affected the relations of Christian and Muslim in the Balkans, was the system of land tenure, with resulting social and economic inequalities and groups which had a vested interest in maintaining them. A good analysis of this situation in a part of the Balkans in the period up to 1850 is Halil Inalcik, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* [The Tanzimat and the Bulgar Question] (Ankara, 1943).