The London School of Economics and Political Science

Interaction between the International and the Domestic: The case of the 1908 Constitutional Revolution in the Ottoman Empire

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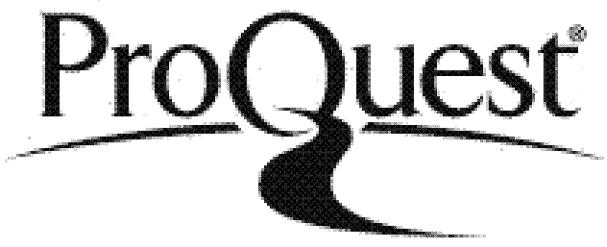

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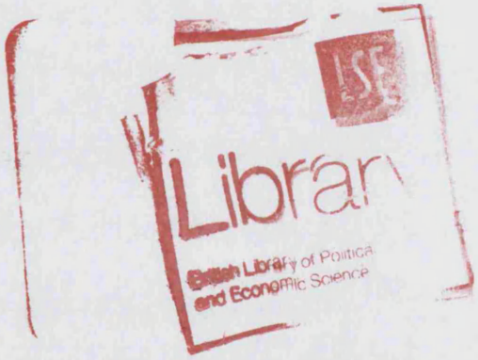

Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the international-domestic interaction within the context of the 1908 Ottoman Constitutional Revolution and examines it in relation to the international dimensions of the social transformation of the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. So the focus of the research is on the extent and the mechanisms of the international constitution of political change within the Ottoman Empire in regard to the historical moment of 1908. The framework for the research question is the ongoing theoretical investigations of the scholars of International Relations into the possibility of using a historical sociological approach to conceptualize the reciprocal constitutive roles of the international and the domestic realms in engendering political transformations, whether in this *longue durée* or in sudden ruptures. As such, the thesis engages with the historical sociology tradition. The main objective is to enable a productive encounter between the case study itself and the general theory: the starting assumption is the impossibility of a purely national account of political changes of this scale. Given this framework, the thesis limits the examination of the case and the discussion of theory to the debate on the interaction between international and domestic dynamics. A creative understanding of how these two dynamics interact and co-constitute each other would contribute to the general analysis of political change within the field of International Relations. At the same time an analytical re-reading of the case study from this angle would locate this turning point in the history of the Ottoman Empire and of the Middle Eastern in a wider analytical context and thereby give it its due theoretical and historical weight.

Acknowledgements

This thesis was only possible through several institutional, professional and personal relationships. First of all, there is the one between the supervisor and the supervisee. Hence, it feels natural to me that my thanks go first and foremost to my supervisor, Prof. Fred Halliday, to whom this project owes its very existence. Prof. Halliday, through his academic work gave me the courage to explore these topics long before I met him in person at LSE. His choice of revolutions as an IR topic, his choice of historical sociology as a tradition to be tackled within IR and finally his choice of Middle East as a region to be studied in a social scientific framework gave direction to this PhD project even before the start of our formal academic relationship. Also, throughout the years of the PhD study, he supported me during my ever-changing plans for the project, patiently listened to me and received the countless synopsises and outlines and with his friendship he turned this PhD adventure to what it should be but easily may not be: a cheerful process of production of ideas, discussions and curiosities about our world as we see it now and as it changed over time. I am forever in debt to him for the very existence of this project and for the teaching example he set out and for his friendship that will no doubt endure the time-span of this project.

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PhD is to a certain extent a lonely experience. It is lonely intellectually and also lonely emotionally as being tied up to a project so long it narrows life I was fortunate. I had the companionship of dear friends, who, with their own unique habits and merits kept my feet on the ground and made me realize that there is more to life. Zelal Özdemir was there for me, physically, intellectually and in solidarity. With her I shared the gloomy weather of London, the moments of paralysis when I could not simply produce anything but also the moments of enlightenment when I was certain that I rediscovered all that there was to my topic. She listened patiently when I complained and also intervened when I needed it. I thank her for all the support to this project that she has given but also for her friendship. Melike Kara read many drafts of this project and called me at the most needed moments with her always supportive comments. Sometimes, it was she who reminded me what I was doing. Her humour and her cheerful attitude to life in general and to academy in particular, her enthusiasm to learn and to produce in many domains of intellectual life and the trust that we have built throughout the years kept me going. Her presence as a colleague and a friend made a huge difference in my life. I thank her for the unique person that she is. Funda Hülagü had to drink many cups of tea and coffee, while listening to my theoretical adventures. Thanks to her patience and calm, she gave me courage, instead being frightened by my confusions and illusions. Our conversations on social sciences, our shared grammar on these issues made me return home

with more ideas to explore. I thank her for her intellectual support and her solidarity. I would also like to thank Murat Ferhat who shared with me some hopeless moments that are bound to occur in such a long and difficult process and kept me hopeful with discussions on philosophy, food and life in general. Ayşe Kurşuncu, my long-distance friend, never let go of me. Her relentless solidarity and support, in her own humorous way, was a true inspiration as to how to support someone you hold dearly. She made me feel loved and cared for, no matter how the thesis was going. I thank her sincerely.

My family contributed a great deal to all my academic endeavours and to this project. This includes not only my parents but also my brothers and sister. They were patient when I was not there for them. They endured all those phone calls when I simply forgot to ask them how they were and instead only talked on and on about the thesis. And they were the ones to turn to when I simply needed to rest. Their support goes a long way back then the time-span of this project. They encouraged my desire to learn and led to me to this path. They also supported me financially. I will be forever in debt for all kinds of support they have given me. And this thesis is dedicated to them.

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To my family

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

"Ben bu kadar kendi zıddı ile beraber gelen ve zıtlarının altında kaybolan nesne [hürriyet] görmedim. Kısa ömrümde yedi sekiz defa memleketimize geldiğini işittim. Evet, bir kere bile kimse bana gittiğini söylemediği hâlde, yedi sekiz defa geldi; ve o geldi diye biz sevincimizden, davul zurna, sokaklara fırladık. Nereden gelir? Nasıl birdenbire gider? Veren mi tekrar elimizden alır? Yoksa biz mi birdenbire bıkar, "Buyurunuz efendim, bendeniz artık hevesimi aldım. Sizin olsun, belki bir işe yarar!" diye hediye mi ederiz?"[1]

I was deeply impressed when I came across these lines in the excellent novel of Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* (*The Time Regulation Institute*). It tells the story of a young boy who grew up in the late Hamidian regime and is complaining about his lack of understanding regarding the coming and going of Liberty in the country. It gives a perfect setting to this thesis and at the time when I read it, it clarified my thoughts. The 1908 Revolution when it triumphed over the Sultan and in the years after, was referred to as the Proclamation of Liberty (*Hürriyetin İlanı*). This paragraph by Tanpınar depicts Liberty as an object that comes from 'outside'. As such it relates to the thesis in two ways: Firstly, it touches upon the central dynamic behind the formulation of the research question of this thesis, where do revolutions come from and how much of them come from what is termed as 'outside'. Secondly, by turning Liberty into an object that can come and go several times, Tanpınar in his own humorous style (the hallmark of this novel) underlines the fact that we do not understand how it comes and goes, as such it does not feel like a part of us but an object outside of us, indeed external to us. Demonstrating the opposite is the intention of this thesis. The coming of Liberty in the summer of 1908, hence the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, partly stems

[1] Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayınları 2008 [First published in 1962]), 21. "I have never seen such an object [liberty] that always comes with its opposite and gets lost under its opposites. In my short life-time, I heard that it came to our country seven or eight times. Yes, although nobody ever told me that it had left, it arrived seven or eight different times; and we have jumped to the streets out of joy. Where does it come from? How does it leave so sudden? Does the giver take it away? Or is it us who are suddenly bored and give it as a present saying "Here you are sir, I have lost my enthusiasm. Have it. Perhaps it will be of some use!"?"(All translations in the text from the Turkish resources are translated by the author). Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901-1962) was a professor of Turkish Language and Literature and also served in the 1940s as an MP in the parliament for a short period.

from the 'outside' but it is not 'external' to us. What is called the 'outside' is actually internal to the events in the individual countries. Indeed the 'outside' and 'inside' mutually constitute each other. This is the fundamental intuition of this thesis, in many ways the starting trigger of this project and what we will be looking for in the following chapters. This intuition is at once theoretical and empirical and that will be how it will be examined in this thesis.

The topic of this thesis brings together questions from multiple areas and disciplines. However, its central focus remains in the field of International Relations as it seeks the answer to the following question: What is the relation between 'outside' and 'inside' in the coming of revolutions? What is the relation between what are perceived as international and domestic realms in the constitution of domestic change of revolutions' variety? My curiosity in this regard started with my encounter with the historical sociology (HS) tradition and with various theories in International Relations (IR). It is impossible not to notice the common ground of research between the two, as HS is investigating macro-sociological change in its world-historical context and as IR seems to be primarily interested in large-scale change in the international realm, and also how states behave and reshape that realm. My interest in the intersection between the two heightened when I studied the HS tradition in IR, had the chance to read those works that examine the international system as they try to historicise it, relate it to the domestic context along the way and focus on how it changes over time and through which interventions.[2] The story of HS in IR goes back a long way, and continues to

[2] Fred Halliday, "State and society in international relations: A second agenda," *Millennium* 16, no. 2 (1987): 215-229; Halliday, *Rethinking international relations* (London: Macmillan, 1994); Justin Rosenberg, *The empire of civil society* (London: Verso, 1994); Forum on Historical Sociology in International Relations, *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no.2 (1998); Halliday, *Revolution and world politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999); Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International systems in world history: remaking the study of international relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson ed., *Historical sociology of international relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Benno Teschke, *The myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics,*

produce fruitful research into the past and future of the international realm, into specific events hitherto deemed to be domestic, covers revolutions as well as long-term changes, and includes historical materialists as well as those who are more adhering to the 'cultural turn'.

It is not difficult to see how these theoretical discussions and their treatment of European history were simply not applied widely to the discussion of Middle Eastern politics and history. As rich and detailed as the literature on the Middle East is, as valuable the contributions to its analysis are, there is still room in Middle Eastern studies to treat the Middle East in general and Turkish history in particular in a more analytical and historical manner. The case is even more so for the history of the Ottoman Empire and how that history relates to the modern Middle East.[3] There is also still room for improvement in the contextualization of Middle Eastern politics and history in a larger world setting. Finally, there are still important turning points in the history of the Middle East that are symbiotically tied to international history and to the politics of the twentieth century but which have not yet been studied with the thoroughness that they deserve. The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 is chief among them.

After the late 1980s the literature on Turkish history witnessed an increase of interest in the Revolution within Turkey that is yet, however, to culminate in a richer

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and the Making of Modern International Relations (London: Verso, 2003); George Lawson, *Negotiated revolutions: the Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

[3] This is one of the claims of Virginia Aksan's article entitled "Theoretical Ottomans": "Let me not be too reductive, as there are always exceptions to the rule, but by and large we have not been able to find a theoretical "fit" for the time span and historical space occupied by the Ottoman dynasty." *History and Theory* 47, no. 1 (2008): 115. There are exceptions to the rule and there are scholars who use an HS framework to understand the history of the Ottoman Empire. For an excellent example see Karen Barkey, *Bandits and bureaucrats: the Ottoman route to state centralization* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994).

literature. One reason for this situation is the lack of the grasp of a simple fact: The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 did not occur in the modern Republic of Turkey to come but in the Ottoman Empire, with causes and outcomes stretching back several centuries and to several geographical spaces which are now perceived as distinct. This geography covered the Balkans, the Middle East and even Caucasia and North Africa to a certain degree. It was also part of European history, firstly due to the integral relations between Europe and the Ottoman Empire and secondly due to the simple fact that the Young Turks were themselves engaged with European politics, culture and philosophy. As such to do justice to the Revolution would mean to acknowledge all these layers, rather than reduce it to a relatively insignificant moment in Turkish history. The historiography on the 1908 Revolution remains largely national. It has not yet completed its escape from the shadow of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey and from the rise of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the founder. This is a specific problem that will be hinted at throughout the thesis and will be tackled in the last chapter, that of retrospective analysis. When we can manage to escape from this kind of analysis and from the borders of 'national' histories, we can begin to see the world-historical context and significance of the 1908 Revolution that stretches from the long nineteenth century of Europe and the Ottoman Empire well into the First World War and into the state formation process in the Middle East thereafter.

The crux of this project lies in the claim that the analytical tools and the general understanding of world politics provided by HS in IR should be our primary resource in such an attempt to locate the 1908 Revolution in its wider context. Moreover, such an analytical rereading of the narrative of the 1908 Revolution would have a great deal to contribute to the improvement of these tools of HS in IR, which are far away from being a rigid box of categories and concepts to be applied to the empirical world without any

further questioning. On the contrary, one of the merits of HS in IR is its tendency to see the political world in its totality rather than cut up into bits and pieces that fit our frameworks nicely and also its emphasis on being time and place specific.

As the thesis will endeavour to show how this intersection between HS in IR and the case study unfolds, it will no doubt face a few limitations that are better spelled out from the start. One obvious limitation is the scarcity of this kind of treatment of single case studies. Our coverage of international history will help in this limitation as we will attempt to contextualize the Revolution in the context of the international turning points that influence other Empires alike. And fruitful points suitable for comparison will open themselves up. However, the adherence of this thesis to this single case study will limit it and prevent it from fully exploring these points of comparison. A limitation hopefully compensated by the richness of the historical detail provided by adhering to a single case study.

A second obvious limitation stems from the lack of similar studies that connect the Ottoman Empire in this way to world history and the absence of any study that links the 1908 Revolution to the century before it and to the world around it. As such, rather than a rich historiography on the 1908 Revolution, studies of the Hamidian era, of Ottoman modernization and reform, of the international history of the nineteenth century and of the localities that were crucial such as the Balkans and the Macedonia question were largely used in this thesis. As such the thesis was not only an analytical attempt to bind the overall narrative to its distinct contexts but also at times an empirical attempt to produce an alternative literature reading.

This brings us to another limitation: not being able to use primary sources on the subject. These are mostly in Ottoman but also in many languages of the Ottoman Empire, (Armenian, Greek, Bulgarian and Arabic among others, though the case benefited from the use of some memoirs printed in the modern Turkish transliterations). The thesis is limited to the secondary sources (in Turkish and English). However, the use of the Turkish literature on the subject proved to be valuable as can be seen in the references to the case study chapters. Moreover, this limitation was to a great deal offset by another issue: the questions the thesis posed could not be based on archival material, though it could have been enriched by them. Certainly this project remains open to contradiction in that regard. Still, this project remained focussed on analytical questions whose answers would require an analytical reading of the secondary sources. Also to be added is the point that the main contribution of this thesis will lie in the encounter between the theoretical insights and the rereading of the empirical material, rather than being a core contribution to the historiography of the 1908 Revolution.

This last point also determined the organizational structure of this project as well as its style of writing. The thesis outline reflects this central interest in the intersection between theory and case study, as well as an insistence on an analytical reading of the case.

Chapter 2 will focus on a general discussion of HS and HS in IR as they related to the central question of this thesis: what is the role of the 'international' in revolutions? The conceptual and analytical tools as developed by the historical sociologist and by the discussion of historical sociology in International Relations will be debated as they relate to this question. The chapter does not intend in any way to be an exhaustive reading of these debates but rather aims to intuit the reflexes of these

debates before the detailed reading of the case begins. In parallel with the nature of HS and HS in IR, we will not attempt to draw a theoretical map wherein which we will then fit the narrative on the case. Rather, the intention is to understand how we can conceptualize the conditions from which the Revolution has emerged. So, we will try to identify the levels, units and methods of analysis from which we can *start* the investigation instead of turning it to a closed discussion from the start.

The following four chapters will take the narrative on the Revolution from the beginning of the nineteenth century up to the summer of 1908 when the revolutionaries finally triumphed over Abdülhamid II, the Ottoman Sultan of three decades. To summarize in a very brief fashion, the 1908 Revolution resulted in the re-declaration of the Ottoman Constitution which was suspended by Abdülhamid II in 1878, only two years after it was proclaimed, and therefore in the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in the Ottoman Empire. It was the work of a combination of actors, mostly from two groups: the Committee of Progress and Union in Europe and (as it pursued propaganda in the Macedonia region and merged with the army members in that region) and the officers in the III Army in Macedonia. Almost a month after the Young Turks had armed and was growing in numbers and had taken the route to the mountains, sending telegraphs on the way to the Sultan pressuring him to re-declare the constitution, the Sultan replied with a positive answer and hence gave up most of his powers. How this revolutionary situation emerged in the first place and why it succeeded rather than failed in the face of the last Ottoman Sultan to rule and reign will be the axis of the chapters on the case study. However, this axis is only complete when we add the other dimension, the one so central for the main question of this thesis, namely the international.

The narrative of the 1908 Revolution throughout these chapters on the case will be linked to the broader international context. Wars, international treaties, other diplomatic and military manoeuvres, the general characteristics of the period, prevalent international political trends, international rivalry all will be part of this international context and will be underlined when they crosscut the emergence of the Ottoman opposition and also the policies of the Sultan against whom the opposition emerged. So, we will follow international history, Ottoman history and the history of the Ottoman opposition and all will enter our discussion. Our focus on the interaction between the international and domestic levels will keep the narrative in order. But this task will be done in even greater extent by the style of writing. The empirical narrative will not be presented as it is but with analytical interventions throughout. Hence, this thesis will not be organized as one theory chapter followed by the case study and a final conclusion. Instead, the theoretical insights from Chapter 2 will be rethought whenever the empirical narrative forces us into such a rethinking. It will involve an interchange between the theoretical themes of Chapter 2 and the unfolding narrative.

The narrative on the case will be deliberately treated in its *longue durée*, in tandem with the reflexes from HS in IR. Chapter 3 will examine the Ottoman transformation in the long nineteenth century and identify those set of practices, habits, institutions as well as ruptures that led to the formation of the Hamidian regime. It will trace these in the interaction of the Ottoman Empire with the wider world and hence will show, in combination with Chapters 4, 5 and 6 that this interaction itself was subject to change: as the components transformed themselves they also transformed the relationship between them. Indeed, what will be displayed is the co-constitution processes in these transformations.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will treat analytically the period of the Hamidian regime, within which the Young Turk movement was founded, developed and finally triumphed with the Revolution of 1908. Again, we will focus on the international-domestic interaction in the widest range possible and not limit the narrative only to the geopolitical realm, for reasons which will be discussed throughout the thesis. The empirical narrative will end in the summer of 1908 with the proclamation of Liberty. This thesis confines itself to the analysis of the long and short term causes of the 1908 Revolution itself. This is so not only because the consequences are to some degree more explored than the causes but also due to the analytical direction of this thesis: the role of the international in the emergence of the revolutionary situations, in the final status of revolutions, hence in the coming of revolutions.

The last chapter will pick this question up once again: it will juxtapose the narrative as produced in this thesis with the initial set of theoretical insights and with the emergent insights from the rereading of the narrative. Hence, it will revisit the whole topic and list the mutual challenges of the theory and the case with each other. The hope is to produce sound yet not dogmatic suggestions as to how to develop the study of revolutions in their international context. Thereby, Chapter 7 will discuss all the possible contributions of this thesis to the discipline of IR and to the study of the 1908 revolution.

The story of a group of Young Turks declaring the Revolution from the mountains of Macedonia and hence changing world history to a certain degree is a fascinating story. What is more fascinating however is that we can, through an analytical re-reading of this story, discover sound ways of discussing revolutions, and of

locating them in world history, the context from which they emerged and in which they intervened.

CHAPTER 2 HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2.1 Introduction

> *"Social life does not consist of a number of realms – each composed of a bundle of organizations and functions, ends and means – whose relations with one another are those of external objects."*[4]

Historical Sociology (HS) had been from its inception the name of the general effort to show the internality of social life without totalizing/reifying it.[5] As heterogeneous it may be, HS is a substantial tradition, one that strives to achieve historically grounded and sociologically minded conceptualizations on the transformation of social relations, using detailed empirical research and (mostly) a comparative methodology. Following Mann's phrasing, from an HS perspective the different realms of the social life are not 'external' to each other but rather it is the analysis of their interrelations (at various combinations and orderings) that are the stuff that HS is made of. We can indeed follow this thread from Marx and Weber, the canonical HS onto the HS after the 'cultural turn'.[6]

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[4] Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Vol.1: A history of power from the beginning to A. D. 1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 18.

[5] Internality of social life here refers to the HS effort to show that most of the boundaries that we take as given, such as the boundaries of the nation-state can be dismissed to a large extent, as there are path dependencies between, contingencies among and as well as structures that go beyond these boundaries. The merit of HS lies in showing that social life on a world-scale is an inter-linked platform and while it demonstrates this intuition HS most of the time manages to escape reification.

Reification is a phrase widely used in the IR literature and mostly common to the criticism of classical and neo-realism theory in IR. Though it may be used with slight variations, it generally refers to reductionist mentality in the social sciences, whereby a multi-layered social phenomenon with several linkages to other phenomena is reduced to a single level, or unit of analysis. Hence the reification of social life would mean to disregard all the linkages that go into it, and taking it as given, as an ahistorical phenomenon.

[6] For a recent and detailed overview of the HS tradition see *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Engin F. Isin (London: Sage, 2003). Also see Dennis Smith, *The Rise of Historical Sociology*, (Oxford: Polity Press, 1991). For a recent overview of HS in IR see Roland Dannreuther and James Kennedy, "Historical Sociology in Sociology: British Decline and US Hegemony with Lessons for International Relations," *International Politics* 44, no. 4 (2007): 369–389.

The fundamental curiosity of this thesis lies at the following question: What is the role of the 'international' in revolutions, hence in domestic change? How can a social scientific analysis of this relation between international and domestic be produced? Is this relation between two 'external objects' or is it internal to the constitution of these objects? These questions have a dual face in social sciences: one in the discipline of International Relations (IR) and one in the tradition of HS. As such, it is of paramount importance that the central question of this thesis is located in both these areas. This chapter will endeavour to accomplish precisely that task and in turn will provide a brief overview of HS and HS in IR with that focus in mind. It will equip us with the theoretical tools – though not in a very precise and definitely not in a complete manner – to enter the discussion of the case study at hand, namely the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. It will proceed as follows: Firstly, we will follow the general characteristics of historical sociology through a brief overview of Max Weber's approach. Secondly, the Weberian HS tradition, specifically in the works of Michael Mann and Theda Skocpol will be examined. This examination will not be a literature review but rather a focused exploration of their works with the purpose of understanding the international-domestic interaction. Thirdly, the chapter will move on to the similar endeavours in the discipline of IR; the impact of HS on IR's conceptualization of this interaction. Lastly, the chapter will conclude with an overview of the theoretical intuitions which will be clarified only after the case study in the last chapter, where the double challenge of theory and the case will produce more tangible – but not clear cut – directions as to how to study the international in the periods of social change.

In one of its dimensions, this debate is a disciplinary debate of IR. Whether and how IR should be tackling the international-domestic interaction? Specific to this thesis

is the narrower disciplinary question: How to locate the international in the sudden domestic changes, such as revolutions? In another dimension this debate involves the discussion on the impossibility of purely national accounts on political change. In other words, the central claim is that one *cannot* fully explain a revolution, such as the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 while constraining the study to the national borders, which are themselves products of such changes. Although several other sub-themes will certainly emerge in the details of the case study and theory alike, the combined effects of these two questions are the central aim and focus of this thesis. As it will be clear HS and HS in IR constitute the most obvious angle to make an entrance to the subject and to ground the study on, as their intersection is also where these two questions intersect.

Fred Halliday in a discussion of his own study of these and many other related questions on revolutions commented on the evaluation of social scientific works as follows: "The greatest test of any work is not the issues it resolves, but the issues where it indicates further research is possible and needed, in other words a research agenda."[7] Indeed, this study will not be able to and does not strive to resolve the issue of the study of international-domestic interaction at the political level. It is an interdisciplinary and multi-layered question and there is not (and perhaps should not be) a ready-made way or a model from which to study this interaction. Indeed, every model has the potential consequence of reifying the interaction and hence making its integrality fade away in the analysis process. This is certainly not the intent of this thesis. But rather it aims to first, underline the urgent necessity of empirical research and theoretical efforts towards that kind of study; secondly, to see what the available theoretical directions in that regard are; thirdly, to treat a case study in detail from that angle; and lastly, from the collision of the case and the theoretical direction to arrive at further research

[7] Fred Halliday, "The great anomaly," *Review of International Studies* 27, no. 4 (2001): 698.

suggestions. This chapter will be a contribution to the first and second aims, the case study chapters to follow will make up the effort to realize the third aim and the last chapter will summarize the previous efforts and present suggestions for further research.

2.2 Weberian Historical Sociology

2.2.1 Max Weber and the traits of a tradition

> *"Hence, 'politics' for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state."* [8]

Although HS in the 21st century is a multi-faceted approach and 'open society'[9], the legacy of the canonical figures such as Karl Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber is no less heavy on the contemporary historical sociologists, both from the second wave and thereafter. As the HS figures we will engage mostly in this chapter are either from the Weberian tradition (such as Michael Mann) or tackle with Weberian (and neo-Weberian) thinking in HS, an effort to understand the main Weberian insights is indispensable. Weber's influence on social science in general and on HS in particular does in no way match the brief and rough elaboration which will be presented in this chapter. Here, the main concern will be to grasp the Weberian principles – primary propositions – when approaching the issue of social transformation. Some of these principals are more methodological in orientation, i.e. 'multicausality', 'the use of ideal types', and the 'comparative method'. Others are more content oriented, i.e. his handling of 'ideas' and 'structures' and his insistence on the historical character of any

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[8] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* ed. H.H. Gerth and C.Wright Mills (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), 78.

[9] HS as an open society is the characterization of George Lawson in an article titled with the same phrase: "Historical sociology, therefore, is not a homogenous field in which it is possible to lay down definite border positions — the enterprise is a prototypical open society." "Historical Sociology in International Relations: Open Society, Research Programme and Vocation," *International Politics* 44, no. 4 (2007): 356.

sound sociological analysis. While attempting to go over these, the intent is not to delve into the details of Weber's historical sociology, but to find a meaningful entrance point for the discussion of HS perspective as it relates to the discussion of this thesis' central question: what is the nature of international-domestic interaction? Weber's method and analysis are relevant as they laid the ground for the future generations of HS scholars and also because they were the ones that left the deepest mark on the historical sociological endeavours in IR as a discipline. We will start with methodological issues and then move on to the Weberian analysis of the modern state. The following summary of Weber's approach to methodology by Bryan S. Turner is a fruitful starting point:

> "In principle, Weber opposed any notion of general laws in social history, remained skeptical even about the value of general concepts, and employed ideal types as limited, heuristic devices for specific tasks. In addition to having a strong sense of the importance of historically contingent events in social change, Weber adopted a flexible approach to the complex interaction of many causes (both material and idealist)."[10]

Indeed, a multi-causal analysis, the use of ideal-types, and the comparative method are intrinsically linked in Weber's arguments. They bring about each other and mutually enforce each other. Weber's insistence on the need to shy away from the primacy of analysis based on one single cause and the need to rely on the collision of several causes at the same time when explaining any social phenomenon leads the way in this linkage between different methodological standpoints. To put it simpler, because – for example in explaining the rise and character of the modern state – he makes use of several causal explanations, he needs a tool for a rigid conceptualization on this 'messy' social world produced by various realms at the same time, hence the emergence of 'ideal types', not as typologies given directly by the empirical world but as 'types' that the historical sociologist imposes upon the 'messy world' to make it more

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[10] Bryan S. Turner, preface to *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, xxii.

understandable without reifying it. Hence the need to call them 'ideal', to highlight the imposition of the category as opposed to the deductive character of the category from the data. "For Weber, historical and social uniqueness results from specific combinations of general factors, which when isolated are quantifiable."[11] Not necessarily the use of ideal types per se, but this sociological lens that is adjusted to see the 'specific combinations' that are also prone to isolation and the method of analyzing these combinations in a persistently multi-causal manner is one of the hallmarks of Weberianism.

These sociological reflexes remain present in Weberianism, such as in the works of Michael Mann and Theda Skocpol but also passed on to the waves of Weberian historical sociology in IR. These reflexes also compose a great deal of the promise of Weberian historical sociology in IR, as the field develops a more theoretically minded curiosity on 'combinations' and 'multi-causality' especially in one realm where the field seems to be on the edge of transforming itself: namely the international-domestic distinction and how to rethink this dichotomy. This dichotomy stands in opposition to this methodology of historical sociology: to see the factors that go in to a specific social scientific phenomena as combined and to seek an analysis that considers a multiplicity of causes for that one event rather than the primacy and determinacy of one monolithic cause. Whether Weber himself or the Weberians that followed, especially with regards to that distinction, succeeded in making the most out of these sociological reflexes is a matter of debate, one that we will touch upon in the following pages.

Also to be added is Weber's insistence on reconceptualising the ideational and the material distinction, by the help of his multi-causal approach which at least at the

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[11] H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, "Introduction: The Man and His Work," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, 59.

first glance seems to produce no hierarchy between the ideas and the material world when analysing their input in to the formation of a specific social phenomena[12]: hence, Weber's interest in including world religions to his analysis of the modern capitalist society and the nation state.

Indeed the study of the emergence and dynamics of the modern state is a specifically Weberian theme. The widely used definition of the modern state as an institution governing over a distinct territory through a monopoly of force also belongs to Max Weber.[13] Weber detailed the mechanisms of the modern state as an institution and the means of modern politics as they emerged and as they developed; hence his meticulous analysis of the inner workings of the state, his separation between the 'officials' and the 'politicians' and his reading of the power relations through the central position that he attributes to the state. "Hence, 'politics' for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state." [14] This centrality of the state within the political analysis is also a Weberian heritage that passed onto historical sociologists such as Michael Mann and Theda Skocpol. Although Weber was deeply interested in state as a central institution around which politics was organized, and he did historicise the state through the use of comparative method to some extent, as Collins persuasively argues, Weber did not focus on the historical formation of the state per se[15], and thus can be separated from the

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[12] "He developed a multi-causal approach to analysis, designed to transcend previous debates between materialist and idealist accounts of history." Robert Holton, "Max Weber and the Interpretative Tradition," in *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, 28.

[13] "Ultimately, one can define the modern state sociologically only in terms of the specific *means* peculiar to it, as to every political association, namely, the use of physical force." Weber, "Politics as a Vocation", 77-78.

[14] Ibid., 78.

[15] In so doing, Weber was strictly adhering to the yet-to-be named HS tradition as well. Delanty and Isin argue that HS was from the very beginning an attempt to dispense the national history and arrive at an analysis of the modern politics as it emerged. "It was more concerned about the formation of modernity

historical sociologists that followed, especially Charles Tilly and Michael Mann.[16] Collins, when comparing Weber to Mann, stresses this feature of Weber's sociology:

> "Weber, by contrast, was primarily a comparativist using historical materials; although the comparisons are meant to contribute to explaining the crucial divergence in world history which gave rise to modern capitalism, Weber rarely gives much of an account of how processes of change actually worked themselves out."[17]

As such, and despite the Weberian sensitivity towards not producing universal laws, this lack in the historical dimension of the story of the nation-state, combined with his understanding of politics as quoted above, namely as a struggle for power within and among states, leads to a specific conceptualisation of the realm of international. This idea of politics in general marks the Weberian understanding of world politics as an arena of competition among states, and hence always prone to violence and war. This idea of competition and politics as a struggle for power is diffused not only to the international realm but also the domestic realm. The focus on inter-subjectivity is vague in comparison to the focus on personal and group interest and competition.[18] And although several and various factors are at play in a Weberian analysis of a social phenomenon, the agency remains somewhat looming in the background of the evolution of modern politics. Political science, thereby, develops the danger of isolating the factors that go into that competition, through quantified or qualified analysis, with the

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as the essence of the present than articulating 'natural' histories of the nations." Gerard Delanty and Engin F. Isin, "Introduction: Reorienting Historical Sociology," in *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, 1-2.

[16] Regarding the in-depth historical analysis of state formation by Tilly and Mann, see Charles Tilly, *Coercion, capital, and European states, A.D.990-1990* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992) and Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. 1* and *The sources of social power. Vol. 2, The rise of classes and nation states, 1760-1914* (Cambridge: Cambrdige University Press, 1993).

[17] Randall Collins, "Mann's transformation of classical sociological traditions," in *An Anatomy of Power: The Social Theory of Michael Mann,* ed. John Hall and Ralph Schroeder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21.

[18] Holton, "[Weber] emphasized the driving personal force of individual virtuoso performing leadership roles, rather than the inter-subjective negotiation of meaning between individuals." Holton, 35.

help of heuristic devices such as ideal types. Weber's emphasis on the inclusion of the ideational realm does not necessarily translate itself to a sound understanding of inter-subjectivity,[19] as comparative method and competition based understanding of politics alone cannot give the historicisation and theoretical appreciation of agency requires a further social scientific shift.

This vagueness at the level of agency, due to a competitive model of politics is also reflected in Weberian understanding of the international realm. Indeed, it is now a widely referred criticism of neo-Weberian historical sociology in IR: this approach tends to resemble the neorealist conception of international politics; and most important for our purposes is that it cannot succeed in a sound social scientific rethinking of the international-domestic dichotomy. One problem is at the level of sophistication. Halliday, while examining Michael Mann's work and its reflections in IR argues the following:

> "But something both more resilient and intellectually significant may also be at work here – the enduring influence on sociological thinking of Max Weber, mediated via Niebuhr, Kissinger, Morgenthau et al on IR, whose work betrayed a marked disjuncture between the sophistication of his domestic analysis and the unidimensionality of his international work."[20]

Any further detail on Weber's sociology is beyond the scope of this chapter and thesis. But his problematic understanding of inter-subjectivity and the international realm are traits that were reproduced in the neo-Weberian historical sociology. So were his invaluable contributions to the sociological thinking for methodology, such as multi-

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[19] Holton, "One is to draw attention away from interest in inter-subjective moral and political milieu as might be found in collective organizations and social movements."Holton, 35.
"Another consequence of Weber's monologic sociology is to underplay alternative forms or modalities of subjectivity." Ibid.

[20] Halliday, "He Hasn't Finished Yet: Achievements and Challenges in the Work of Michael Mann," *Millennium* 34, no. 2 (2005): 514.

causality and the use of comparative method and for the analysis of the modern politics, especially as it is crystallized and centralized in the modern nation-state. Indeed, these themes would also be the themes of Michael Mann, one of the key figures of historical sociology, Weberian or otherwise. He is also one of the key historical sociologists who had an impact on the discipline of IR.[21]

2.2.2 Michael Mann and multiplicity

With this brief descriptive text on Weber, we had aimed to intuit the preliminary problems and merits of a Weberian sociological thinking in IR. Michael Mann's work belongs to the classical sociology tradition and specifically carries Weberian traits that were underlined above. Two of the most fundamental premises of Mann's historical sociological endeavour are also a good starting point to discuss the linkages of this work to the field of IR. Mann himself lists these as first, the view of the society not as a bounded, closed entity but "as multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power."[22] Here society is removed from the traditional understanding of being a unity, with rigid or soft boundaries and as such the boundaries of societies lose their theoretical primacy in political analysis. "Because there is no bounded totality, it is not helpful to divide social change or conflict into "endogenous" and "exogenous" varieties."[23]

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[21] An evidence of Mann's influence can be seen in the existence of a forum on Mann's work in a key IR journal: "The Work of Michael Mann," *Millennium* 34, no 2. (2006).

[22] Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. 1*, 1.

[23] Ibid., 1.

Even before any further elaboration on the details of the infamous IEMP model[24], this stress on the fallacy of external/internal division when trying to explain social change is tied directly to the main problematic of this thesis and to the way this thesis will approach the case study at hand, namely the 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire. The fact that Mann's great work, examining world history from the beginning until the First World War, starts with this initial theoretical postulate, and the fact that this view of society constitutes a central claim for his whole social scientific endeavour, rather than a note *in passim* as it sometimes is the case, makes it all the more worthy for this specific perspective in IR that this thesis strives to contribute to. In this sense, Mann makes a solid case for the argument that postulates the social world as one, rather than divided into societies and into the space between them. Hence, examining social change, at least at this theoretical level, becomes not an effort of classifying the domestic and international causes – and mostly establishing the primacy of one or the other depending on the social phenomena and on the approach – but establishing a multi-causal narrative grounded in history and sensitive to interactions and interrelations between various processes and structures. Since if one strips the political analysis from this very fundamental distinction, namely what constitutes its unit, the unitary society, one is left with a messier world that can only be grasped with a messier lens. The effort to establish the unity of the social world has the pitfall of ending up with an ever bigger totality put forward as reification. Mann's insistence on viewing the notion of society as almost futile and at the same time on the theoretical protection of the messiness, contingent character and interrelated nature of social phenomena can indeed be considered and utilized as a healthy intervention as to how one can analytically unify the international and domestic without reifying each other.

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[24] "A general account of societies, their structure, and their history can be best given in terms of the interrelations of what I will call the four sources of social power: ideological, economic, military, and political (IEMP) relationships." Ibid., 2.

This messiness leads us to the second fundamental premise of Mann's endeavour, the IEMP model, a reading of the history of power through the use of four ideal types – a la Weber[25] – the ideological, economic, military and political relations that constitute the four sources of social power, in various combinations, changing hierarchies and intersections depending on the time and space of the social phenomena at hand. Hence this model is the device of the social scientist to cope with the messiness of the social world. All these four sources of social power have their own autonomy, a safeguard against reductionism.[26] Once again this is a Weberian trait.

The distinction between the political and the military on the other hand is a divergence from Weber and one that is crucial in approaching the issue of the international in Mann's thinking. By attributing autonomy to the military power, recognizing that it has its own networks, infrastructure and relationality, though always in relation to the other sources of power, Mann opens up a theoretical space for geopolitics and its interconnectedness to the other spheres.[27] Yet, this theoretical move has a two-fold consequence: by attributing an 'autonomy' to the military power and to the military relations among states, he also paves the way for the danger of seeing the international as an 'independent realm' working with its own military competitive logic.

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[25] "Weber, devised a methodology (of "idealtypes") to cope with this messiness. I follow Weber's example. We *can* emerge with a proximate methodology – and perhaps even eventually with a proximate answer – for the issue of ultimate primacy, but only by devising concepts suited to dealing with a mess." Ibid., 4.

[26] John Hall lists the main points of divergence between Weber and Mann with regards to the IEMP model in reference to the issue of primacy among these multiple sources of social power. Mann's insistence on removing the issue of primacy from the analysis belongs to the Weberian tradition: "A second element here is his desire to respect the autonomy of different sources of power. It is here that he is most obviously Weberian, albeit he differs in three ways: in his insistence on the autonomy of military power; in his view of ideology; and in his attempt to replace Weber's view that there is no pattern to the interaction of power sources with a systematic account of why particular sources gain salience at particular points of historical record." John A. Hall, "Political Questions," in *An Anatomy of Power*, 34.

[27] "Mann's move to separate military and political dimensions opens the way for a more systematic theory of both, and of their interaction. Geopolitical relations among states now come into their own." Collins, 21.

To argue that this potential danger is fully actualized in Mann's work would be unfair. To recognize its existence on the other hand is a safeguard for the scholars in IR who seek a social theory that would help them to tackle the international-domestic bifurcation by dispensing the view that sees the international as a realm of ever repeating necessities.

Mann is criticized for this separation and it is argued that his equation of geopolitics with military power reduced the international realm to geopolitics only. "His neorealist conception of geopolitics unavoidably leads to an elevation of the 'M' within the IEMP model, a move which does a disservice to his multi-causal analysis and its evocations to avoid issues of 'ultimate primacy'."[28] In one of his replies to critics, Mann argues that his two 'refinements' had saved his approach from that reduction and that although initially his model could have a tendency to produce such a reduction, this is no longer the case. What are these two refinements? Firstly, he made a separation between inter-national and transnational relations, whereby the latter goes right through the state boundaries and transcends the state – as the main actor in geopolitics – and hence is not blind but rather designed to see the other aspects of the international. Secondly, he made a separation between hard and soft geopolitics. "If the essence of political power is authoritative rule making and enforcement, while that of military power is rule-light lethal violence, then hard and soft geopolitics must be separated into, respectively, military and political power."[29]

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[28] John M. Hobson, "Eurocentrism and Neorealism in the 'Fall of Mann': Will the Real Mann Please Stand Up?" *Millennium*, 34, no. 2 (2005): 520.

[29] Mann, "Response: Sources of power revisited," in *An Anatomy of Power*, 357.

Here again we can see that Mann is genuinely interested in not producing a model that would divide the social world into states and reduce the international only to a repetitive cycle of inter-state war and conflict. But whether that interest and the potential spark towards that aim are fully realized in the actual work is another matter. Here a reference to Lawson's introduction to Mann seems appropriate. Lawson goes beyond just labelling Mann's work as 'neorealist' and makes a more nuanced evaluation. Lawson's interpretation of this disagreement as to how Mann approaches the realm of international is a sober and objective evaluation, giving its due credit to Mann's accusation of the field of IR as one of labelling and paradigm wars but also acknowledging that Mann's conceptualisation or rather lack of conceptualisation of the international-domestic interaction, his under-theorisation of the international realm leads the way to a simplistic view of the international, one that cannot cover all the dynamics of the international constitution of the social world.[30] Despite Mann's several responses to these criticism, he could not yet convince the historically and sociologically minded IR scholars that his IEMP model indeed does justice to the international as a constitutive field of the inseparable unity of the social world. The military power, despite Mann's very consistent historical treatment of that source of power and despite his insistence on the importance of analyzing the infrastructure of military power and hence showing the links towards what is otherwise called the

[30] "Here Mann clearly has a point. IR seems to revel in the mud slinging that accompanies academic labelling games. Much of this is rudimentary in the extreme – to note the power of states and statesmen makes one a realist just as to be interested in meaning, perceptions and ideology denotes one a constructivist. This is a sorry state of affairs and Mann is right to chastise IR's navel gazers. Nevertheless, the bigger question remains – to what extent Mann's limited view of what IR is, and should be concerned with, blinds him to the *multiple* ways in which international processes impact on world-historical development. It may be that this lack of attention to a broader understanding of international relations, both as subject matter and as discipline, is born of Mann's necessarily ruthless interdisciplinarity – a kind of intellectual asset stripping in which Mann carries out what he calls 'looting and pillaging raids' on other disciplines. Perhaps these raids entail too much attention to detail and too little to the debate that surrounds them. Either way, this is certainly an issue that, like a good play, is likely to run and run." George Lawson, "A Conversation with Michael Mann," *Millennium* 34, no. 2 (2005): 483.

domestic realm, still stands to represent the simplicity of Mann's treatment of the international:

> "Secondly, historical sociology, and Mann's work in particular, invokes the international – the global context in which individual states and societies are formed. (...) To put it at its simplest, the four-part distinction of forms of power and structure at the domestic level – ideological, economic, military and political power relations (IEMP) – is, once the frontier is crossed, met by a simplistic 'M-alone' model of the international."[31]

Noting the dangers of this 'M-alone' model of the international, we should now turn to other aspects of Mann's historical sociological endeavour, to those from which we can infer possible suggestions as to how to study international-domestic interaction (or if we shall insist on rephrasing this dichotomy based on our assumption of the unity of the social world: the co-constitution of international and domestic).[32] For that purpose, the other, non-military sources of social power and how Mann utilizes these classifications in his analysis of the state become important: ideology, politics and economics. Mann asserts a very fundamental proposition to his analysis: that power should be analysed not over interest or ends but over means, and it is here that he resembles though not very closely Tilly's theory of mobilization.[33] What becomes crucial in both approaches is the fact that neither ideology, nor politics, nor economics are in themselves explanatory fields of social life, but it is the specific means that each crystallize in themselves – in conjunction with each other and in a constantly changing

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[31] Halliday, "He Hasn't Finished Yet," 513.

[32] What I mean by the co-constitution of the international and the domestic will only be truly clarified at the end of this thesis. However, to separate it from the 'constructivist' thinking in IR, it should suffice to note that this co-constitution is not occurring between units on the same level of analysis, but it is observed and conceptualized between two distinct levels of analysis. As such, it is touching upon a methodological issue as well.

[33] "The four power sources offer distinct, potentially powerful organization means to humans pursuing their goals. But which means are chosen, and in which combinations, will depend on continuous interaction between what power configurations are historically given and what emerges within and among them. The sources of social power and the organizations embodying them are impure and "promiscuous." They weave in and out of one another in a complex interplay between institutionalized and emergent, interstitial forces." Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. 2*, 10.

manner – and present to the actors – who were shaped to a great extent by the historical evolution of these social sources of power anyway – that the social scientists should try to reveal.[34]

This theoretical primacy of the analysis of the means of organization of actors rather than distinct realms of social life paves the way for the prioritization of the analysis of interrelations and interactions between what are generally seen as distinctly different spheres. And this trait of Mann presents the IR scholar seeking the reconceptualisation and methods of study of the international-domestic interaction an opportunity, namely reading this interaction through the means it presents to the actors, who will not use them in an all-wise, all intended way, and at a specific time and place. Hence, Mann provides us one of the initial theoretical steps to go beyond the "either/or" mentality towards the international and domestic and provides a justification as to why the historical sociological minded IR scholars see the international-domestic interaction as one of constraining and enabling, hence of constitution rather than a mere restraint or a one-way determination. Herein lies a perhaps not fully abused opportunity to open up the international, thereby preventing reification and determinism and at the same time covering all the non-M characteristics of the international which is a necessary condition to establish the argument on the constitutive character of the international.

Mann's view of society as non-unitary, his identification of multiple sources of social power without neglecting the issue of primacy or reductionism, and his means-

[34] The issue of how to adjust the empirical research according to this focus should be not neglected. Bryant emphasizes the relation between focusing on the means and the empirical focus on infrastructure: "In any given situation, the exercise of power will feature the deploy of various media – resources, skills, capabilities – that activate or mobilize relations and instrumentalities requisite for the achievement of chosen objectives. It is this focus on the *infrastructures of power*, i.e. logistics, communications, organization, tools and technologies that is the hallmark of Mann's approach." Bryant, "Grand, yet grounded: ontology, theory, and method in Michael Mann's historical sociology," in *An Anatomy of Power*, 74.

based lens of reading the workings of power can be identified as points of inference for those who seek an alternative account of international-domestic distinction. Another fertile area from which one can contribute to this alternative account is the issue of agency. Here again Mann resembles Weber in the attempt to transcend the either/or mentality on the distinction between ideas and material world: "My model abandons the distinction between ideas and materiality in favour of one between 'ideas-and-practices combined' (or 'action and structure combined') in each of four power networks."[35] Indeed, it seems that the means-based explanation, outlined above is directly linked to this issue as agents intentionally and unintentionally exercise their agential powers within the intersecting networks of these four sources of power which mutually create each other. In this narrow sense, the distinction between action and structure are blurred, an inference made from the historical instances of social action rather than a dichotomy imposed upon.

This does have implications for the analysis of the international constitution of revolutions, as in the case study at hand, since the *explanandum* includes *multiple actors intervening* to the world that had conditioned themselves and since it is the priority of this thesis to expand the scope to *the world* rather than a national history. The connections between the meanings they attached, the actions they conducted and the multiple causes of these meanings and actions have to be not rigidly but clearly explainable. Hence, Mann's Weberian insight that ideas versus material world dichotomy is neither productive nor reflective is one of the primary sources of theoretical inspiration, though of course Mann is neither the only one to produce this insight nor can we claim with safety that he did actually treat ideas and ideologies in an equal footing with the empirical investigation of the material. For example, Halliday

[35] Mann, "Response: Sources of power revisited," in *An Anatomy of Power*, 346.

argues that Mann's attachment to structure is a heavy determinant for his approach and hence the approach is not productive in terms of providing us with the mechanisms of understanding the ideas and ideology.[36] However, the fact that Mann, just like Weber before him is aware of the problematic theoretical and empirical status of this dichotomy gives us a justification to further expand the research on this topic and to connect it to the discussion of the 'international'.

2.2.3 Theda Skocpol and the international

> *"Clarification of this issue of agency, in theory and in regard to specific events, would not only serve the explanatory and normative functions mentioned earlier, but would also make a contribution to the broader debate within social science on structure and agency. It might, in so doing, deprive determinists of their favourite source of authority. The international would cease to be the realm of necessity, but like the domestic, a domain where necessity and agency interacted."*[37]

Theda Skocpol, in her grand work on the social revolutions examined the three classic revolutions by the use of comparative method. The work was an example of historical sociological studies and marked the discussion on revolutions for the decades that followed. In addition to having a well-laid framework for the study of the social revolutions, the book also entailed discussion on the nature of the state, the international and on other social scientific themes, such as structure/agency dichotomy. Here we are mostly concerned with how Skocpol located the international in revolutions and what it meant to have a structural account of social revolutions. There should be no harm in telling the last word in the beginning of the debate namely that Skocpol asserted that revolutions are not made, but rather they happen.[38] In this way Skocpol stood against

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[36] "Resolutely attached to concepts of 'system', 'structure' and 'recurrence' as they are, Mann as much as Weber and Comte, Waltz as much as Morgenthau, cannot provide the tools for discussing how ideas and ideologies have *shaped* the modern world." Halliday, "He Hasn't Finished Yet," 515.

[37] Halliday, "For an International Sociology," in *Historical sociology of international relations*, 250.

[38] Two qualifying statements on this judgement can be listed as: "Historically, no successful social revolution has ever been "made" by a mass-mobilizing, avowedly revolutionary movement. (...) In fact, in historical revolutions, differently situated and motivated groups have become participants in complex

what she termed the voluntaristic approaches to the study of revolutions. Although she stands in many debates close to Tilly's model, her approach distinguishes itself by this structuralist emphasis.[39] As opposed to Tilly's political organization model[40], Skocpol's lens is fixated to see structures as *the* point of departure for the analysis. What interests us most for our discussion is Skocpol's inclusion of the international as an integral part of her analysis:

> "Social revolutions should be analyzed from a structural perspective, with special attention devoted to international contexts and to developments at home and abroad that affect the breakdown of the state organizations of old regimes and the build up of new, revolutionary state organizations."[41]

Instead of the agent-based explanations of revolutions, Skocpol proposes and effectively shows in empirical data that one needs to look at the structures that define the world of the agents and these include the international. International from this structuralist account seems to lie on two legs: the political economy and the military conflict, in short economic and military competition that defines state behaviour and has a huge impact on their resources and capabilities. Among these two, Skocpol recognizes the historical character of modern capitalism. On the other hand she locates the international as "the transnational structure of military competition" throughout the 'modern world history' with an "analytically autonomous level of transnational reality"[42] She does recognize another layer of the international, that she calls 'world-

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unfolding of multiple conflicts. These conflicts have been powerfully shaped and limited by existing socioeconomic and international conditions." Theda Skocpol, *States and social revolutions: a comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 17.

[39] Skocpol's definition of social revolutions which is by now a classic is as follows: "Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below." Ibid., 4.

[40] Tilly, *From mobilization to revolution*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978)

[41] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 5.

[42] Ibid., 22.

time', what is also often called 'world-historical moment', which "affect both overall world contexts within which revolutions occur and the particular models and options for action that can be borrowed from abroad by revolutionary leaderships."[43] However her overall structure of analysis does not support the importance of this statement and her lens seems to be adjusted towards this ever-existing military competition – a point she seems to partially share with Mann - in conjunction with capitalist economic system. And therein lays the problem of this structuralist account towards revolutions for our purposes, at the moment when it starts to analyze the international phenomena with a neo-realist logic. "Thus for Skocpol, states have no real choice but to conform to the survival imperatives of the international structure, because failure to do leads to the defeat in war and subsequent revolution."[44]

This emphasis led to the reproduction of a conceptualisation of international system as an ahistorical anarchy, where states are in any period compelled to compete with one another producing an ever-lasting conflict. This autonomous and given structure of conflict shaped the modern state and in many ways became its producer.[45] Skocpol's use of the international context is revealed by the paraphrasing of Dennis Smith from *State and Revolutions*: "International pressures were transmitted to national politics via the political regime, since the state apparatus had a major stake in both spheres" (Smith 1991, 70).

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[43] Ibid., 23.

[44] John M. Hobson, "The Two Waves of Weberian Historical Sociology in International Relations," in *Historical Sociology of International Relations,* 70.

[45] As George Lawson puts it, "Tilly, Skocpol, Giddens, Hall, Mann and others began to see geopolitical conflict, and in particular war, as fundamental to processes of state formation." Lawson, "A Conversation with Michael Mann," 481.

This neo-realist like approach of Skocpol seems to stem from two of her assumptions. Firstly, despite the mentioning of the international political economy, it is the inter-state relations that are overplayed in the *States and Social Revolutions*, which of course leaves the state as the primary actor to investigate in the international context. Secondly, it is her insistence on taking the state's relations with dominant classes in a society as the central conflict that leads to her to neglect any of the international links that 'the rest' may have.[46] This on the other hand she shares with Mann as well. In an interview with George Lawson, Mann states: "I suppose I have been writing predominantly about the leading edge of power, and that therefore it is a consequence that I would tend to downplay the role of the losers!" (Lawson 2005, 493) This has many implications for a theory of social power.

For our purposes, the importance lies in the link between this approach and the possibility of a historical sociological approach to international relations, one that could rethink the international-domestic distinction. When the researcher centralizes the relations between the ruling classes and the international actors, it is most probable that he/she will end up with having an explanation of the inter-state relations rather than international relations that transcend the former. It is in the interaction between multiple layers of the international and domestic levels that we can identify the non-inter-state determinants on the history of a particular society or a particular international system. We will have the opportunity to further open up and detail what we mean by this multiple layers and their interaction in the analysis of the case.

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[46] For a criticism of Skocpol on these grounds, see Farideh Farhi, "State disintegration and urban-based revolutionary crisis: A comparative analysis of Iran and Nicaragua," *Comparative Political Studies* 21, no. 2 (1988): 231-256.

Skocpol's contribution to the study of revolutions, to the comparative method and to historical sociology itself is of course invaluable. Yet it is not without its pitfalls. Halperin concludes as follows: "It [Skocpol's work] is undermined by Weberian orientations toward the state and the international system which obscure the systems of local and translocal social relations within which states operate"[47] The addition to this chapter of this observation is that there is qualitatively more to the 'international' than war and conflict, or in other words 'war and conflict, and competition' have consequences transcending their obvious effects. They, together with other international events go into the constitution of the domestic. In yet another formulation: the international is not a space which specific set of rules that the states fill in and act accordingly.[48] Another imagination of the agency and the international might lead us to a different understanding regarding the international-domestic distinction. Skocpol, despite her meticulous work and despite her inclusion of the international still seems to be working with the former imagination of the international.[49] And the reasons for the use of this imagination can be tied back to the point of Halliday in the quote at the beginning of this subsection, namely only a sound analysis of agency can rescue the international from being this realm of necessity and from being imagined this way. Now we move on to another framework which sets the international, the sociological

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[47] Sandra Halperin, "Shadowboxing: Weberian historical sociology vs state-centric international relations theory," *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no. 2 (1998): 328.

[48] Nor is the international an intervening factor to the continuous flow of domestic politics: "The 'international' is not something 'out there', an area of policy that occasionally intrudes, in the forms of bombs or higher oil prices but which can conventionally be ignored." Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, 21.

[49] This is also Hobden's position as he examines the uses and misuses of HS in IR: "Skocpol's work provides a sophisticated approach to theorising international systems, combining a number of features: economic, political and temporal. However, despite this cogent theoretical position, when it comes to a discussion of the historical material her approach is to reduce international systems to the presence or absence of warfare." Hobden "Theorising the international system: perspectives from Historical Sociology," *Review of International Studies* 25, no. 2 (1999): 259. Another criticism directed in the same vein yet from another angle can be found in Buzan's piece on the wisdom of realism and the attempts of HS in IR. Barry Buzan "The timeless wisdom of realism?" in *International Theory: positivism and beyond,* ed. Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

approach, the social change and revolutions in another picture, one in which they are far more connected.

2.3 Historical Sociology in International Relations

Firstly through Weber, but in later generations through scholars such as Charles Tilly, Michael Mann and Theda Skocpol, HS as a tradition had its impact on IR and also IR had influenced HS' view of the international realm. As mentioned above HS had the emphasis on understanding modernity as a whole rather than an interest in narrow international histories. As such this HS effort to analytically grasp and explain the totality of the social world had to engage with the international and IR, in the midst of paradigm wars, had shown an interest in this effort of locating specific social events and their comparisons within an international context. "The term 'historical sociology' itself is in one respect too condensed, for it contains two distinct claims: the historicisation of the state on the one hand, and the location of that history within an international context on the other."[50]

As we have seen in the criticisms directed towards the Weberian historical sociology by the IR scholars, the tendency that they saw in HS to reproduce the neo-realist paradigm in their handling of 'geopolitics' and hence showing a reductionist attitude towards the 'international', coupled with the merits of the HS tradition, produced a historical sociological framework in international relations that is still in the making. These IR scholars despite their different research agendas on specific topics seem to have a direction: the historicisation of the international system together with the reconceptualisation of the fundamental social scientific debates, such as on the international-domestic and structure-agency binaries, in the light of this historicisation

[50] Halliday, "For an International Sociology," 244.

with an explanatory analysis. As George Lawson vigorously underlines, the aspect of HS that was the most needed in IR was this new usage of history, not as a field to be used randomly to justify the repetitive nature of the international but as the history of the social totality which can be only be seen in layers rather than composed of different realms of social life which then have external relations with each other. "A reminder of the need to study ''in'' history rather than ''outside'' history is a useful corrective to the tendency of scholars in IR to misapply abstract, timeless variables to ill-fitting contexts."[51]

These recent attempts in creating another vein in the IR discipline that might lead to a self-reflective historical analysis stress all but one point: the need for an understanding of the 'totality' of the social reality. Benno Teschke, and Justin Rosenberg produced such accounts of the formation of the modern international politics. There is a direction. Both Teschke and Rosenberg attempted from different yet mutually enforcing angles to historicise the modern international system, not with the formal history of 1648 and not from the repetitive anarchic circle but from relations of production, with Teschke's insistence on social relations of production.[52] Both scholars have the uneven and combined nature of development thesis built in their social scientific approach and as such their call is to fundamentally transform the mainstream IR. For example, Justin Rosenberg's *The Empire of Civil Society*[53] is at once a powerful critique of one of the most dominant paradigms in IR, realism and the assertion of an alternative, namely historical materialism. The attack is to the very foundations of

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[51] Lawson, "The Promise of Historical Sociology in International Relations," *International Studies Review* 8, no. 3 (2006): 416. For Lawson's use of historical sociological framework and his application of that framework with an institutionalist angle see Lawson, *Negotiated Revolutions.*

[52] Teschke, *The myth of 1648.*

[53] Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society.*

realism starting with the positing of international as separate from domestic. And from that criticism an alternative emerges: "Something more fundamental would in fact be required: a reconceptualization of the historical process itself — one in which the geopolitical dynamics of 'international' behaviour are rediscovered as internal to the overall process of social development."[54]

Indeed, this very fundamental need was the objective both scholars have attempted to accomplish. As such, their accounts bolster the historical sociological tendencies in IR and open up new angles of research for IR scholars. As it was mentioned above, the creation of new and productive research questions is indeed a vital criterion of research paradigms. And judged by this, both scholars have shown success. This thesis is inspired by their insistence on the wholeness of social development and on the internality of international and domestic processes. Nonetheless, the central problematic of this thesis is not how to historicise the international system as an integral part of social development but rather how to locate specific social phenomena in international context. The former renders the latter possible but not necessarily provides it in full-fledged empirical and theoretical analysis. For the tools of the latter, scholars such as Fred Halliday and George Lawson come to the fore, since with their special interest in revolutions, agency and ideas combined with their determination to adhere to the difficult task of grasping these processes in their international dimensions, they provide more detailed research question that guided the main direction of this thesis.

In a work that gathered together the discussion on the HS in IR, Hobden argued that for a sound future of HS in IR first and foremost the following question should be

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[54] Rosenberg, "Why is There No International Historical Sociology?" *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2006): 313.

investigated: "A starting point might be to argue that phenomena that are considered to be 'domestic' or 'international' are co-constitutive. However, it is the character of these processes of co-constitution that should be the focus of study"[55] One of the fundamental ways to study the character of these processes of constitution is the study of specific moments of social, political, economic and ideological changes and revolutions are indeed rapid transformations when the crisis are crystallized within a turmoil and these crisis always occur in an international context.[56] As such, the study of revolutions has a lot to offer to the study of the international-domestic distinction within an HS tradition in IR. Halliday sums up this relation between the international and revolutions as follows:

> "Revolutions are themselves necessarily international events—in cause, ideology, consequence and outcome. The very recurrence of international dimension not just in the policies and beliefs of revolutionaries, but also as cause, is often understated in studies of particular revolutions."[57]

Hence, both the study of revolutions and the study of international change in IR neglect the constitutive link between the two. Those who study revolutions within this bigger problematic of IR and social science in general, namely trying to explore how the international plays a constitutive role in the emergence, development and outcomes of revolutionary situations and how revolutionary situations shape back the world within which they emerged have this two-fold challenge. The challenge is to demonstrate these

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[55] Hobden, "Historical sociology: back to the future of international relations?" in *Historical sociology of international relations*, 43-44.

[56] As a result of the theoretical blindness to the domestic-international interaction, IR as a field has only recently engaged with revolutions as international events that require causal explanations at the international level. Two notable exceptions are Halliday, *Revolution and world politics*, and Lawson, *Negotiated Revolutions*. For a discussion on Halliday's work see this issue: *Review of International Studies* 27, no. 4 (2001).

What Halliday had concluded then seems still partially valid: "Neither the historical importance, nor the theoretical importance of revolutions are as yet given their minimal due within academic IR." Halliday, "The great anomaly," 698.

[57] Ibid., 693.

actual processes in a causally explanatory and theoretically consistent – yet not rigid – way. The demonstration is intended to reveal the fact that the international is not only a structural determinant that operates in an 'either/or' fashion – namely it is not the international structure versus state autonomy (states taken here as the primary actor in the international realm). When one makes the transition to the view that these are constitutive, then one can see Hobden's point in proposing to use a 'both/and' logic: "By applying this 'both/and' logic, we can (re)view the nature of structures (both domestic as well as international and global) as double-edged, such that they 'enable' as well as 'constrain' states."[58] How international structures can increase, decrease or change the features of state's capacities, resources and actions will indeed be one of the questions of the following chapters on the case study. This is so because the specific location of the state within the power networks has a direct bearing on the revolutionary actors and situations. Further elaboration on the links between the international structures, the states and the revolutionaries will be provided after a thorough analysis of the case with these and similar questions in mind.

Another theoretical insight that is linked to this 'both/and' logic is the fact that not only the international structures but also ideas, actors and the contingencies that arise in the international field have this 'enabling'/'constraining' relation with the domestic actors. So 'both/and logic' does not only apply between international structures and states as actors but also to non-state actors and the meanings they attach to their actions. Issues of ideologies, that arise in world-historical moments and then go into the constitution of domestic social, intellectual and political development, such as nationalism and constitutionalism is a crucial example in this regard, again one that will go under an empirical investigation in the case study chapters. Through structures and

[58] John M. Hobson, "The Two Waves of Weberian Historical Sociology in International Relations", 75.

actors; material and ideational factors, "the relation of the state to society is constantly affected by the international function."[59] And when this is the case, the need to study this international function in the emergence of revolutionary actors and situations becomes inevitable and indeed, necessary.

Once again, an intersection of issues is revealed, one that was mentioned in the first section of this chapter, within the discussion of Weberian historical sociology. The debate on the structure and agency is linked to the debate on the international and domestic distinction. The historical sociology as a paradigm gives us the sociological reflex of understanding the world history not one composed of external objects and their inter-relations and the historical reflex of being sensitive to structures and actors alike, despite the variations of different scholars in how to actually apply these reflexes on particular cases or on large-scale historical change. So, the question is at once ontological, epistemological and methodological: how to choose and reconceptualise the units/processes of analysis (the states and non-states actors; the international and the domestic); how to produce a theoretical framework that might best help to produce the knowledge of these processes (when and where to look with which lens, for example revolutions taken as indispensable moments of social change to be explained, by the help of which knowledge of longe durée processes can be attained); and finally how to produce meaningful ways to analyze these processes (comparative method, single case studies, as well as issues of periodisation).[60] The purpose of this chapter was to

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[59] Halliday, "A second agenda," 223.

[60] Steve Smith, in a critical essay on HS and HS in IR argues that HS indeed has a different ontology, different from the rationalist International Relations where the international, the states that operate within and the domestic level are strictly separated from each other. However, in terms of how to look for and study this 'international' they resemble each other, namely epistemologically HS does have a tendency to reproduce the analytical distinction between international and domestic and also between structures and agents. "To reiterate, historical sociology differs from rationalist international relations in terms of its ontology; but for me this is less important than what is shared, namely the assumptions about

acknowledge the existence and development of and the continuing need for the exploration of these insights.

Historically and sociologically minded scholars of IR has been debating and empirically investigating these theoretical insights for at least two decades now. Richard Little had warned IR scholars in 1994 that the structure and agency debate is intrinsically linked to the development of a historical approach in IR:

> "If the work of historical sociologists and world historians is to be successfully incorporated into IR, then it is essential that the significance of the debate is effectively internalized within the discipline. The first steps in this direction have already been taken, and it is likely that the issue will become one of the central areas of concern in IR." [61]

The issue remains one of the vital issues in the discipline. After this brief overview of the HS in IR, which does not do justice to the growing richness of the debate nor to the actual size of the literature and going back to the initial intuitions of this chapter, we can now safely argue the following: The central question of this thesis, namely how to study the international dimensions of revolutions (in our case the 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire) is indeed a question that crosscuts the imaginations of both HS and HS in IR. As such, the multi-causal account of Weber which allowed the sociologists to come to see the world as the mess it was and still is, the historical emphasis that started with Weber and Marx alike, and the effort to not let go of the causal explanatory tools that a social scientists can and should develop remain the most general yet indispensable directionality of this question. Since this is the widest lens that is adjusted to see the multi-layered nature of the question on the international and

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epistemology and methodology." Steve Smith, "Historical Sociology and International Relations Theory," in *Historical sociology of international relations*, 243.

[61] Richard Little, "International Relations and Large Scale Historical Change," in *Contemporary international relations: a guide to theory,* ed. Margot Light and A. J. R. Groom (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994).

revolutions, recognizing the inter-connectedness of the phenomena on the ontological level and trying to reflect this at the epistemological and methodological levels as well will be the guiding principles of this investigation.

Michael Mann and Theda Skocpol gave us somewhat sharper tools and a more adjusted lens, yet this move also brought its own unique pitfalls. Mann's emphasis on the un-bounded nature of societies; on the overlapping and intersecting nature of different sources of power; on the importance of military power as distinct from the political power, and his underlying assumption that it is primarily through the means of power (mostly crystallized through the state) that we can reveal and make sense of social change, of how, why and when it occurred remains also indispensable for developing suggestions as to how the study the international-domestic co-constitution in revolutions. Only when the social world is seen not as a reified and repetitive history but as a totality composed of un-bounded processes and social spaces, we can truly speak of international-domestic co-constitution. Skocpol on the other hand, made a further and more specific step towards the intuition of the central question. She, through her comparative study, linked the emergence of revolutions in a fundamental way to the international context. From a strictly structuralist angle and not in a multi-dimensional way, but she did integrate the international to the revolutions in a theoretical and empirically detailed way.

Yet where she seemed to fall into the trap of 'neo-realist understanding of the international' is precisely where HS in IR has picked on. Namely through the opening of a more focused discussion on the nature of the international, on how to historicise it, how to link it to the major processes of change and how to locate it vis-à-vis the domestic processes. IR scholars with HS reflexes seem to agree on these needs, some

more from a historical materialist reading of HS and some more from the Weberian tradition. Still, they had a direction, and a shift occurred: "what may previously have been seen as discrete, isolated, national histories, now appear much more clearly as the result of international processes, of imitation, competition, defensive modernization and influence."[62] Fred Halliday specifically produced accounts of revolutions, of agency, ideas as well as socio-economic processes from this angle, while Lawson emphasized the role of institutions in these processes. Hobson summarizes the logic of Halliday in this multi-layered analysis as follows: "Halliday employs a feedback loop, invoking an *international–national–international* chain of causality. (...) This trinitarian conception offers an organizing principle around which WHS can reconfigure IR."[63]

If this trinitarian lens is the one we will be using, what Little had argued remains now crucially relevant to the central question of this thesis: how to internalize the structure-agency debate within the historicisation and internationalization of the social phenomena? Indeed this debate will be one of the sub-themes in this thesis, yet will only surface in accordance with the narration of the case study, namely as much as empirical facts and the more analytical question that are imposed on them and arise from them necessitate it. The fact remains that these historical sociological reflexes seem to be the most appropriate and productive method to approach the study of the international in revolutions.

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[62] Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, 120.

[63] Hobson, "Debate: The 'second wave' of Weberian historical sociology - The historical sociology of the state and the state of historical sociology in international relations", *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no. 2 (1998): 298.

2.4. Conclusion

> *"There is a fundamental difference between mitigating the comparative method by having recourse to auxiliary hypotheses about the temporary significance of the international, and a general and systematic attempt to elevate the international from the start to constitutive component of any theory of history, revolutions included."*[64]

The main effort of this thesis is intended to be a contribution to this systematic attempt to render the international as an integral part of the theories of social change and to do so with the tools and insights inspired from the HS tradition and from the studies of IR. This chapter endeavoured to justify the theoretical framework of this thesis, a task only to be accomplished with the actual investigation of the case study and the final combination of the findings of the case in the face of these theoretical directions. The historical sociological reflexes themselves direct us to a path where the true value of a study can only be found in the colliding of the social phenomena to be examined and in the ways of the scholars to examine them. The clarity of and the actual need for the theoretical directions intuited in this chapter will only make social scientific sense when they are justified, opened up and modified by the events under investigation. Yet and in parallel with the theory-ladenness of studies of this kind, the investigation of the case is to some extent already shaped by this direction.

The following chapter will reveal that the historical sociological principle of staying 'in' history made this investigation start with an overview of the long nineteenth century of the Ottoman Empire and of the way this related with the age of revolution in Europe. This will be an exploration of the ways in which the Ottoman Empire interacted with the world around it. This interaction constantly constituted the rapidly changing social realities of the actors in and out of the Empire, hence gave a direction – though

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[64] Teschke, "Bourgeois Revolution, State Formation and the Absence of the International," *Historical Materialism* 13, no 2 (2005): 10.

not definite – to the events to come. This investigation of the long-term international context of the 1908 Revolution will also give us an opportunity to identify the critical juncture wherein the main actors and the pre-existing yet evolving conflicts of the revolution to which they responded emerged. This critical juncture also sets the end of the time-period for the next chapter and the start of the one that follows, namely the start of the Hamidian era, the era of the sultan defeated by the revolutionaries, also the era of the introduction and suspension of the first constitutional regime in the Ottoman Empire, and finally the era of a specific Ottoman interaction with the world, that had continuing and differing aspects from the previous periods. Throughout this chapter and the ones that will follow the focus will be specifically on the constitutive process between the international and domestic – though the position of the Ottoman Empire within the international politics of the nineteenth century forces one to focus more on the international's constitution of the domestic rather than the other way around. A special consideration will be the different layers/processes within this constitution: it is, as this chapter on the theoretical debates has demonstrated, not enough to merely state this co-constitution as a given fact. The value that this thesis will endeavour to provide will be to show how these processes actually occur, by whom they are instigated, through which ideas they are mediated or initiated, and through which conflicts they are crystallized. This requires a more detailed look into these processes of co-constitution whenever possible.

If the central conclusion of this chapter can be stated as the need to internalize historical sociology in IR and the need to internalize the international in historical sociology, the best way to contribute to this task is to challenge this assumption at the theoretical level by an actual case in point. It is the assertion of this thesis that the case at hand, 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire, will prove to be challenging to these

theoretical tendencies and will benefit from being challenged by this historical sociological approach to the 'international."

CHAPTER 3 THE OTTOMAN-EUROPEAN INTERACTIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: POLITICS OF REFORM

3.1 Introduction

In the summer of 1908, Macedonia, a geographically small but crucial province of the Ottoman Empire, became the scene where the revolution that was to change Ottoman politics started. Introducing a new way of ruling a multi-ethnic Empire and shaping to a great extent the path to transformation into a nation-state, this Revolution was a sea-change in the realm of Ottoman politics, extending well beyond the borders of the future Turkish Republic, one of the many nation-states formed after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Carried out by a group of Young Turks in exile and a substantial opposition movement within the army and joined by some segments of the people, especially in Macedonia, this revolution succeeded in abolishing the regime of Abdülhamid II, the last Ottoman sultan to reign and rule (for three decades). After the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, no Ottoman Sultan managed to acquire a significant degree of power in the palace. The civilian and military bureaucracy from whose ranks almost all the members of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP, the dominant faction within the Young Turk movement) originated declared its triumph once and for all. Although the Young Turks never radically questioned the presence and status of the sultanate, the revolution they carried out opened the path to state rule without the dynasty. In some respects, they went on to lead the transformation of the nineteenth century to its conclusion: a centralized state rule on new principles. In other respects, they broke away from this already advanced path of modernization by introducing party politics and by making the sultanate obsolete. These initial observations of course do not do justice to nineteenth century developments or to the Young Turk revolution of

1908. The preparation of the latter will be analyzed chronologically in the next three chapters. The former will be briefly outlined in this chapter.

The period that this chapter will focus on extends from Selim III, the Sultan of the turn of the century, continuing with Mahmud II, to the era of centralization, and lastly includes the Tanzimat era. Selim III and Mahmud II laid much of the groundwork for Ottoman reform, starting with the Rose Chamber Rescript of 1839 when a new understanding of state-society relations was declared by the Ottoman state in interaction with the international context of the time. The Hamidian regime was defined by some crucial highlights of this period. The Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1838 was a watershed in trade relations, and the Tanzimat reforms that were initiated with the Rose Chamber Rescript transformed the state structure of the Empire. The Crimean War (1856) was an important part of Ottoman history, but also a fundamental part of 19th century European politics. The Paris Treaty (1856) that followed marked the Ottoman entrance into the Concert of Europe. Around the same time, the Ottoman state was integrated to a considerable extent into the financial system of Europe and acquired its first foreign debt (1854), which would lead to its bankruptcy (1875) in only 20 years. The Ottoman reforms, in conjunction with the European political and economic order, led to a certain type of transformation, which in turn paved the way for a struggle within the elite. The result was the formalization of the Constitutional Regime, which lasted only two years. Three decades later, the Young Turks would succeed in the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Era.

The immediate politics of the Young Turks is no doubt to be unravelled in the Hamidian era and indeed that will be the main task of the following chapters. However, a sound grasp of the main tendencies in the way Ottoman actors, whether in power or in

opposition, interacted with the world around them, and the evolving nature of European politics can only be achieved after at least a brief overview of the longer history of Ottoman transformation. The Young Turk Revolution is both a part of and a break with this history, and its long-term causes/conditions of emergence lie within this history. In this sense, at least a brief examination of these decades is both chronologically meaningful and necessary for the purpose of explaining the coming of the Revolution in its international dimensions.

With regard to the main theme of this thesis, namely international/domestic interaction in periods of change, this chapter will seed the opportunity for comparison with the main period covered by the thesis (1876-1908). One of the advantages of studying a single case is that this kind of comparison within one case enables us to observe the changing nature of international-domestic interaction and protects us from falling into the trap of reifying this interaction, while trying to escape the reification of its parts, i.e. the state and the international. The events of this period are very fertile for the purpose of observing this interaction between two realms that are in constant transformation while mutually influencing one another. Moreover, the way the Ottoman Empire was integrated into the European system in this period set a pattern for the following decades, although it did not predetermine the course of events. In this sense, this period highlights the difficulty and the rewards of studying at once politics at international and domestic levels and diverse yet mutually reinforcing issues.

With the aim of drawing empirical and theoretical insights from this era, this chapter will be composed of two sections. The first section will outline the beginnings of the transformation, before the Tanzimat era, in conjunction with the emergence of the Concert of Europe. The second section will focus on the Tanzimat era, the international

causes and consequences of these reforms and the peaks in international-domestic interaction, such as the Crimean War.

3.2 The Long Nineteenth Century

> *"By filtering one of the classic narratives of socio-political change and revolution through an unfamiliar lens, the Ottoman ancien regime prods historians to turn questions of socio-organizational change both inward and outward: inward, toward the complex social and economic relationships between a center and its many peripheries; and outward, toward ever greater integration of historical polities within and among adjoining, converging or colliding, cultural and political systems"*[65]

As the quote above from Salzmann demonstrates, the history of the Ottoman transformation in the 19th century is portrayed as the oscillation between two kinds of realms, the external and the internal realms. The international relations of the era were marked by an important event at the beginning of the century, the Congress of Vienna (1815), and the consequent emergence of a new European diplomacy. "What emerged after 1815 was a system of collective Great Power supremacy and security designed to contain international violence and to prevent another hegemonic threat – the so called Concert of Europe."[66] The Concert of Europe brought the long peace of Europe, which was to be interrupted by the Crimean War (1856) and later by the processes of German and Italian unification. This European peace was not necessarily translated into the Ottoman-European interaction. The Empire continued to suffer territorial losses (most notably Greek independence in 1828, Serbian autonomy and the Egypt affair under Mehmet Ali) and experienced overt and covert pressure, formulated as "reform or perish". Besides, the Ottoman century had opened with dramatic events, such as the clash between the urban notables (*Ayans*) and the central government, the coming of Mahmud II, the Sultan who held the balance between the centre and centrifugal forces,

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[65] Ariel Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 9.

[66] Antony Best et al., *International History of the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2004), 13.

the abolition of the Janissary corps (1826) and the transition to a whole new model of army.

In the political analysis of the specific interaction between these external and internal threats and the responses of the Ottoman Sultan and bureaucracy, an opportunity arises to conceptualize the long-term international-domestic interaction. The European system of the first half of the 19th century and the developing relations of the political economy had their impact on the Ottoman Empire, as on other peripheries and colonies of European states. Although not to the same extent, the impact of the Ottoman Empire on European politics is also tangible. Here lies the nuance between an exaggeration of this relationship and not acknowledging its existence at all. What Halliday argues for the Middle East is surely also valid for the history of Ottoman-European interaction: "The Middle East has not, therefore, been a distant, or passive, participant in the history of Europe, but neither has it been a constant 'enemy' against which Europe has defined itself."[67]

Only if we see how the particular characteristics of Ottoman politics went into that interaction and transformed this relationship, as well as transforming themselves in the process, can we achieve a sound historical-sociological background against which to locate the Young Turk Revolution and Ottoman and international politics in the last quarter of the 19th century. With this latter purpose remaining the main consideration, we now turn to the details of external and internal pressures and Ottoman responses to these.

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[67] Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 78.

The late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth indeed saw a sea-change in European politics. The French Revolution of 1789 and the Napoleonic Wars that followed gave shape to the already ongoing process of modernization of international relations. European diplomacy took a new form with the formation of the Concert of Europe at the Congress of Vienna. Although the Concert did not work, perhaps was never intended to work as initially planned, it was an important international institution, one which the Ottoman Empire would resort to and finally enter in the aftermath of the Crimean War. The peace settlement of 1815 seems to be based on a mutual fear of revolution. "The long nineteenth century in Europe has a coherence — a dynamic — that stems from the diffusion of political innovations associated with the French Revolution."[68] And it was these political innovations that threatened Great Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia in various ways. So the peace they reached "is not incidental, but it is a by-product of the desire to avoid revolution."[69]

While Europe was experiencing the turn of the century as a combination of revolution and war and later as an ostensible peace, the Ottoman Empire was struggling with the threats that this European conjuncture was posing, alongside the long-term conflicts within the Empire itself.[70] Post-revolutionary France occupied Egypt in 1798. In this specific instance we can observe the intersection of two threats. An external

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[68] Hudson Meadwell, "The long nineteenth century in Europe," *Review of International Studies* 27, no. 5 (2001): 169.

[69] Ibid., 172.

[70] Findley lists the two most traumatic external threats in the eighteenth century that informed the rulers of the nineteenth as follows: "For the Ottomans, the need for new ways to defend the empire became unmistakable with a series of crises in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The Ottoman-Russian War of 1768-74 definitely established Russia as the empire's most dangerous enemy; ended the Ottoman monopoly of the Black Sea and Ottoman suzerainty over the Crimea, which Russia soon annexed as a result; and raised doubts among Muslims everywhere about the sultans' ability to defend Islam. The Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798 showed that the danger was not limited to the European peripheries of the empire." Carter Vaughn Findley, *The Turks in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 157.

threat from France led to the emergence of the semi-independent regime of Mehmed Ali Pasha in Egypt. "Napoleon's occupation encouraged two processes, of indigenous autonomy, later Egyptian independence, from Istanbul, and of European competition for the spoils of the Ottoman Empire."[71]

Within this European competition, which was not yet at the level of fierceness it was to reach towards the end of the century, Great Britain and Russia emerged as the most formidable powers. Great Britain was the traditional power, with commercial hegemony and a strong navy. Russia, on the other hand, profited from the ways in which events unfolded during and after the Napoleonic wars and from its military power, which masked the internal conflicts and weaknesses for the time being. Anderson explains the emergence of Russia as the power in the continent as follows:

> "The destruction of Napoleon's Grande Armée in 1812, the advance of Russian armies across Poland and Germany in 1813 culminating in their triumphal entry into Paris with the forces of the other allies in April 1814, seemed to mark Russia as a power whose military strength, and therefore whose political potentialities, were of a different order of magnitude from those of the other states of Europe."[72]

Unlike Great Britain, Russia constituted a more crucial geopolitical threat to the Ottoman Empire. All these were alarming political and military developments. These years, with intense intra-European rivalry and with the rise of local notables in the provinces, were to inform the choices of Ottoman rulers, the Sultans and bureaucrats, for decades to come. The need to master the art of diplomacy, an aspect of politics that the Ottoman Sultans had not until then felt the need to master, would compel the Sultans, from Selim III onwards, to give due weight to this and to restructure Ottoman

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[71] Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, 79.

[72] M. S. Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe 1815 – 1914* (London: Longman, 1985), 6.

foreign policy accordingly.[73] This occurred in parallel with a second development: the need to master the art of modern warfare. The Ottoman Empire had been losing most of its recent wars and the battles it engaged in with rebels in the provinces; with the usual consequence of loss of territory. Issues of prestige aside, territory loss also meant huge damage to revenue flow to the capital. Acquiring the ability to halt this retreat meant even closer engagement with Europeans, as the new armies were to be designed on successful European models, mostly under the leadership of European commanders brought into the Empire. Hence, Zürcher argues, these two necessities brought by the new European age, forced the Ottoman Sultan to open new channels of communication with Europe.

> "More important, perhaps, than Selim's actual measures, were the increased opportunities he created for the flow of Western ideas into the Ottoman Empire. The European, mainly French, instructors attached to the different army corps that Selim had founded or reformed produced one channel of communication. (...) The new Ottoman embassies in Europe provided a second major channel of communication. (...) Now Selim for the first time established permanent Ottoman embassies in London (1793), Vienna (1794), Berlin (1795) and Paris (1796)."[74]

Indeed, this change in the nature of Ottoman-European diplomatic interaction is among the several long-term causes of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. The establishment of permanent embassies in Europe and later exchange of students, university teachers and military trainers would create an atmosphere whereby future generations of the Ottoman bureaucracy – whose ascendancy would mark the Tanzimat era – would be intrinsically linked with European developments in various fields, most

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[73] For the classical system before the diplomatic revolution see: "Chief among the factors that rendered the classical system inadequate was the inability of the Ottoman Empire in obtaining intelligence about Europe and other countries and in acquiring sources of intelligence; in other words, lack of communications. (...) Until the year 1793, it did not have permanent representation in the capital cities of other countries. (...) The sources of knowledge were, the exceptional representatives, the travelling Muslim merchants, the translators which came from Phanariot Greeks, etc." Ali Akyıldız, *Osmanlı Bürokrasisi ve Modernleşme* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004), 21.

[74] Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005), 23.

notably science, philosophy and politics. This diplomatic revolution also marks a shift in Ottoman attitudes towards the surrounding world. Hanioğlu captures this revolution as follows:

> "Ottoman behaviour under Selim III illustrates the strategic premise that a meaningful alliance with a major European power, however unpleasant, was necessary to secure the future of the empire. As Bonaparte's attack on Egypt in 1798 underscored, the Ottoman state, in order to survive, would have to harness European power and turn it against any potential attacker."[75]

From this observation it follows that the opening of embassies, the increased communications with Europe were part of this wider process of adjusting to a new Europe and hence adjusting the Empire's ways of interpreting international politics, as a result of the new European realities that the Empire could not escape. So, as we will see below, from institutional build-up to cultural exchange, the turn of the century and its transformative effect on the already changing Empire would be constitutive of Ottoman politics in the time to come, as new reflexes in politics (such as this kind of alliance-building) began to emerge. Indeed, this European "age of revolution" is a causal factor in the Ottoman transformation in various fields. Both Selim and his predecessor, Mahmud II, were informed by and reacting to a new world, one that was marked by 'alien' relations of production, warfare, culture and diplomacy.

An analysis of the international scope of the constitution of that long Ottoman century is beyond the limits of this thesis, since its focus remains on the international's role in the coming of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and its theoretical repercussions. Nonetheless, the recognition of the international – not as an 'outside' force, but as part and parcel of all major domestic changes and ruptures, is indispensible for our purposes. This should not mean that the international is viewed as autonomous

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[75] M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 48.

from the domestic actors and structures that essentially form its content; and secondly it should not be taken to mean that there should be a hierarchy in the analysis of international-domestic interaction. These dichotomies mask and fracture the co-constitution of the two realms.

The Deed of Agreement (1808)

In the context of the international conflicts and tensions that merge with internal ones, the Deed of Agreement (*Sened-i İttifak*) (1808) stands out as the culmination of a long-lasting internal tension that occurred at the end of Selim's regime and the coming of Mahmud II. More importantly, it marked the centralization process in the Ottoman Empire. Here two tensions may be observed: firstly Selim III's response to the European encroachment, in the form of his attempts to modernize the army and his consequent clashes with the traditional military structure, the Janissaries, and the reactions of the Janissaries to Selim's solution, which was to establish a new military unit. Secondly, the decentralization in the 18th century, when the way the tax system and the administrative system had evolved had led to the empowerment of the provincial notables, the *ayans*. In the Deed of Agreement, these two tensions merged and the revolt of the Janissaries, backed up by the *ulema* was confronted by the powerful Alemdar Mustafa Pasha "who was a typical example of the provincial notables from Rumelia that had emerged in the 18th century of the Empire."[76] He was not able to reinstate the defeated Selim III, but did succeed in enthroning Mahmud II and in halting the process of reaction to reform. However, this moment of the *Ayan*'s entrance to the capital also revealed the increasing influence of the provincial notables and hence left Mahmud II with the task of reinforcing the Porte's control alongside the attempts at

[76] İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2001), 33.

reform. This incident marks a particular moment in the integration of the Empire's internal conflicts with those of the international political realm. From then on, centralization, reform and the context of European-Ottoman interaction can be seen as constitutive elements of Ottoman politics that contradict or mirror each other at times, but never cease to be in symbiotic relationship.

3.2.1 Centralization and modernization in the Ottoman Empire

Mahmud II's reign started with the Deed of Agreement that enabled him to take power. Consequently his policies cannot be grasped except in the context of this beginning that had shown the weakness of central power. This was even more evident in the mere fact that the Palace had entered into an agreement with the provincial notables, promising to preserve their status and the status of their families in exchange for their promise to contribute to the safety and integrity of the Empire. In this way Mahmud's reign tackled the issue of diminishing their powers for the following three decades. Among other areas of politics where the Sultan had to produce a response were the issue of the Serbian and Greek revolts, the rising power of Mehmed Ali Pasha in Egypt, the delicate dealings with European powers such as Russia and Great Britain and the ongoing reforms as a potential remedy to all these issues. Sultan Mahmud II was more successful in some of these areas than others, but overall it was his reign that created the political, institutional and ideological conditions for the Tanzimat era that followed. He established certain Ottoman responses to the problems that Selim III had identified and tried to manipulate matters in an international atmosphere of increasing European economic penetration. The end result was that: "Sultan Mahmud II thus established a neo-absolutist regime of a sort that had been absolutely unknown to his predecessors in

the 17th and 18th century."[77] The Palace, the bureaucracy, the urban notables, the military and the *ulema* were all undergoing a deep transformation that was to be a long and in many respects not a linear process. But the neo-absolutism of Mahmud demonstrates the stream of change in the Sultanate which connects the long nineteenth century to Abdülhamid II, the sultan targeted by the Young Turks and defeated in 1908.[78] The following quote from Hanioğlu gives us a perspective on the understanding of reform in the reign of Mahmud II and demonstrates this continuing link, despite many oscillating tensions and differences, within the Ottoman nineteenth century. Westernization and modernization of the state and the elites that were raised to govern it had indeed started in the preceding century, but Mahmud II took these to a new level of policy-making:

> "The institutionalization of Westernization under Mahmud II differed considerably from previous attempts to confront European ideas. For the first time, Westernization appeared as a formal policy linked to extensive bureaucratic reform and implemented with brutal force. The new schools provided the necessary manpower, while a government newspaper supported the effort with appropriate propaganda. These important changes had a lasting effect on the new generation that came of age under Mahmud II, and provided the foundation for the cadres of the later Tanzimat movement."[79]

The contingent elements of historical personalities notwithstanding, this difference in the pace and content of Westernization and centralization under Mahmud II's reign seems firstly to stem from the failures of the reformists of the previous era, the deposition and death of Selim III being the most obvious component. The previous era

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[77] Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire: A Short History* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2009), 114.

[78] "The autocratic regime of the 19th century looks to its subjects not as a flock of herds like the 17th-18th century monarchies but as a group necessary to be controlled, yet also as having earned the rights to live under the security of law and order and to be exposed to humanely treatment. These words of Sultan II. Mahmud imply a lot: 'I want the sultanate to be a support to the 'millet' (nation) rather than a source of fear and horror'." Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*, 41.

[79] Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 63.

revealed the failure of non-structural reform. Secondly, this also had roots in international politics, including the start of the revolts in the European provinces and Russia's growing influence in Europe and especially in the periphery of the Ottoman Empire. In a sense the need for structural change was more urgent than before, as Europe in the aftermath of the French Revolution was only accelerating its political, military and economic encroachment. It was now, in the way the Serbian, Greek and Egyptian revolts unfolded and in the shape of international affairs around these revolts, more clear than ever that the new way of politics was there to stay. Hence, Westernization was linked to Ottoman state reform, as the Empire in all its aspects was establishing new links to Europe, forced or otherwise.

The Serbian Revolt (1804-1817)

The Serbian and Greek revolts revealed this new relationship between Ottoman and European politics. The Serbian revolt originally started in 1804 as a reaction to the repressive ways of the Janissaries. "From the moment in the fall of 1805 when the Janissaries were defeated to a great extent, the revolt turned into a rebellion against Ottoman administration."[80] Even then, it seems hard to link this revolt strictly to a national awakening. We can perhaps link it more appropriately to the desire for autonomy in an Empire that was disintegrating as the economic structure deteriorated. The difficulties with the agricultural administration, combined with a certain level of repressive policies, seem to have triggered this first revolt of the Balkan peoples, under Black George (1760-1817).[81]

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[80] M. S. Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001), 65.

[81] This long quote from Hobsbawm is demonstrative of the lack of nationalist elements at the turn of the century in this Balkan revolt: "Nothing was more natural than to revolt, where necessary or desirable, against a local administration or a weakening Turkish Empire. However, little but a common economic

As Mahmud was enthroned, the attitude of the Serbian rebels was changing. What was to be a pattern until the First World War and an integral part of Ottoman politics thereafter emerged: the tendency of the rebels to ask for the support and intervention of the Great Powers. Black George even himself wrote to Napoleon, asking for the help of France. Help came only, and in a very limited way, from Russia. More than a decade of rebellion had produced a kind of understanding between the Serbs and the Ottomans whereby Serbs shared power with the Ottoman representative in Belgrade. "In 1817, although very weak and primitive, a Serbian state was in the making."[82]

The Auspicious Event (1826)

A crucial event which occurred during the long Greek revolt – which will be elaborated upon below – that had an impact on the subsequent course of events was the bloody abolition in 1826 of the Janissary troops by Mahmud II, who had long been planning this move. The immediate effect was a temporary weakening of the Ottoman forces during the revolt and therefore Mehmed Ali's support became even more vital – this resort to Mehmed Ali would have its own consequences regarding Mehmed Ali's own battle against the Ottoman state in later years.. The long-term effects of the abolition of the Janissary troops on the other hand reached further than the Greek revolt. It both symbolized and solidified the modernization of the Empire, as a new

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backwardness united what we now know as the Yugoslavs, even those in the Turkish Empire, and the very concept of Yugoslavia was the product of intellectuals in Austro-Hungary rather than those who actually fought for liberty. (...) The first of the Balkan peoples to rise in the nineteenth century were the Serbs under a heroic pig-dealer and brigand Black George (1760-1817) but the initial phase of his rising (1804-1817) did not even claim to be against Turkish rule, but on the contrary for the Sultan against the abuses of the local rulers. There is little in the early history of mountain rebellion in the Western Balkans to suggest that the local Serbs, Albanians, Greeks and others would not in the early nineteenth century have been satisfied with the sort of non-national autonomous principality which a powerful satrap, Ali Pasha 'the Lion of Janina' (1741-1822), for a time set up in Epirus." Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848* (London: Abacus, 2006), 173.

[82] Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 67.

professional army was in the making and the educational and administrative reforms needed for the establishment of such an army would be transformative of many internal balances within the Empire's ruling elite. This was one of the crucial turning points leading to the emergence of the Young Turk opposition, whose nucleus was in the academies established for the training of the cadres necessary for the new politics. Paving the way for military and educational reforms was not the only long-term effect of this event (also known as Vaka-i Hayriye – The Auspicious Event). The Janissaries also had relations with the guilds and their specific position within commercial activities, coupled with their military power, made them also opponents of free-trade policies. In this sense, "1826 eliminated the most powerful and best organized advocates of protectionism. Thus, the 1826 event paved the way for the subsequent evolution of Ottoman economic liberalism."[83]

Hence, in the Auspicious Event we can observe the intertwined nature of Ottoman reforms. The developments in the international field and the pressures from localities forced the Ottoman state to revise its military organization. The specific location of the military cadres within the social formation enabled their choice for protectionism, which was countered by pressures from European merchants and diplomats for a more liberal trade regime in the Empire. Additionally, the new military forces reduced the dependence of the Sultan on the soldiers of the provincial elites, furthering centralization. Consequently, "it regained for Istanbul a greater share of the economic surpluses from the urban and rural economics."[84] This stream of related

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[83] Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, Vol. II: 1600-1914*, ed. Halil İnalcık with Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 764. Protectionism here is mostly used to refer to the economic mentality that revolves around state monopolies, the effort to keep the raw materials within the Empire and generally against free-trade policies.

[84] Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914", 768

developments was to continue throughout the nineteenth century and within it the presence of international, the specific choices of international actors; thus the tense nature of Ottoman politics and the choices of those in power converged.

Also to be mentioned among the long-term effects of the Auspicious Event is its total elimination of coercive powers on the part any possible opposition from within the Ottoman establishment. From now on, "those with vested interests in the old order could resist only with words, but not with the kind of violence and force that had disrupted all previous Ottoman reform initiatives."[85] As such, the abolition of the Janissaries stands out not simply as the elimination of an unsuccessful military unit, but as a moment within the longer process of Ottoman transformation and is linked by causes and consequences to the international conjuncture. It connects with the emergence of the opposition from the young military cadres in later decades and why these were largely unsupported by any other source of coercive power. As such it partially reveals the road from the first quarter of the century to the last.

The Greek Revolt (1821-1832)

The Greek Revolt that started in 1821 was a more multi-layered event than the Serbian revolt before that and very revealing for the purposes of deciphering the pattern of international-domestic interaction in the Ottoman nineteenth century. Although every event has its own unique parameters, the following characterization of the pattern by Quataert is appropriate, not only for the Greek revolt but for many to come, some of which would have a direct bearing on the Young Turk Revolution:

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[85] Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kuran Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Vol. II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 21.

> "The overall pattern in the Balkans is confusing in its detail but clear in overall direction. Often a local revolt would meet success or the Russians would drive very deep into the southern Balkans. But then a troubled international community, fearful of Ottoman disintegration or Russian success, would convene a gathering, undo the worst results but allow some losses to ensue."[86]

Indeed, such a gathering in 1830 resulted in the London Treaty which recognized the independence of Greece after years of rebellion. The actual process entailed not only the involvement of the Great Powers, but also another important threat to the Empire which in the 1820s was still a source of support against the Greek rebels, namely Mehmed Ali Pasha,[87] who after the French invasion of Egypt had established control and was on his way to expansion. He had also helped the Empire in its struggle against the Wahhabi occupation of the holy cities, Mecca and Medina, in 1812-1813. "The operations against the Greeks in Crete who had revolted in solidarity with their brothers in the Greek peninsula in 1822 was being trusted to the control of Mehmed Ali Pasha. In February 1824, the Morean peninsula was also under the control of Mehmed Ali."[88] Part of the initial success of Mehmed Ali lies in his successful establishment of a new military force in Egypt, a point envied and resented by the Ottoman capital. Another part is the lack of foreign support in the initial phases of the revolution, similar to the absence of this in the Serbian revolt.

This absence of foreign support was due to the state of affairs in Europe after its successful alliance against Napoleon and to the divisions and emerging ways of interpreting issues such as sovereignty, intervention and balance of power. Despite

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[86] Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 56.

[87] Zürcher summarizes the rise of Mehmed Ali Pasha as follows: "Mehmet Ali was an Albanian from Kavalla (now in northern Greece), who had come to Egypt as an officer in the Albanian contingent in the Ottoman expeditionary force against the French. In 1803 he had become the leader of that corps and had established himself as the de facto ruler of Egypt. In 1808, he was officially recognized as governor of Egypt by the sultan." Zürcher, *Turkey: A modern History*, 32.

[88] Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 76.

Russia's apparent interest in forcing the Greek issue to its conclusion, any intervention had to be calculated within the bigger scheme of politics. Supporting a rebellion against a multi-ethnic empire had foreseeable repercussions for other empires and for the whole European order. It makes perfect sense in this context that Metternich did not applaud the Greeks and that Russia was late to act.[89]

Militarily vulnerable and surrounded by threats from the Greeks and from Russia, the Ottoman Empire was dealing with yet another new political phenomenon, that of nationalism and public opinion around it in Europe. The Greek revolt was different in this respect from the Serbian revolt. There was a strong will displayed for total independence and the Greek cause received much sympathy in European circles. Bromley identifies this as the second phase in Ottoman-European interaction and in what was increasingly called the Eastern Question. "A second phase was opened with the Greek War of Independence in the 1820s, representing the spread of 'nationalist' ideas into the European parts of the empire and the entry of public opinion (in the form of the Romantic nationalism of revolutionary Europe) into Western decision-making."[90] This, combined with the rather unexpected advance of Ottoman troops on Athens, finally brought about the foreign intervention that the international character of the revolt had been demanding from the start.

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[89] Anderson, explains the attitude of Alexander, Tsar of Russia within the parameters of European politics. The same reasoning holds for Metternich as well, though in a more rigorous and hostile manner. "No matter how righteous a war against the Sublime Porte could be, it would be a war supporting the rebels against their legitimate rulers and hence would weaken the fragile, conservative order founded in Europe in 1814-1815 and as such would allow the anti-systemic, revolutionary forces centred in France to wipe off the continent once more." Ibid., 80.

[90] Simon Bromley, *Rethinking Middle East Politics: State Formation and Development* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 63.

The Empire under Mahmud II was not completely unprepared for this new realm of negotiation with the Great Powers, a negotiation on the nature of Ottoman administration of an Ottoman province. Mahmud II had paid more attention than Selim III to 'foreign relations'. In 1821, he had established the Translation Bureau[91], a service crucial to the conduct of diplomacy and one that had hitherto been entrusted to the Phanariot Greeks in the capital, the traditional dragomans. So, at the very beginning of the revolt, Mahmud II had taken these measures. He continued to invest in the infrastructure of Ottoman diplomacy in the 1830s and in 1834 officially founded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Greek revolt ended officially in 1830 under these international and Ottoman conditions. The crucial development that led to a settlement was the Battle of Navarino between the allied fleets and the Ottoman fleet joined by Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Mehmed Ali Pasha. This battle "completely destroyed the new Ottoman fleet, cut Ibrahim Pasha off from reinforcements and supplies from home, and assured the Greek rebels of ultimate victory."[92] Defeated yet uncompromising, the Empire found itself at war with Russia and in an extremely weak situation. The war led to the Treaty of Edirne in 1829. The treaty recognized important territory losses to Russia, but perhaps more crucially established the autonomy of Serbia and of Greece. Later, at international conferences in London, Greek independence and the future monarch and government were to be decided by the Great Powers.

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[91] Quataert explains the crucial position of the new cadres of Ottoman diplomacy within the bigger bureaucratic structure of the Empire: "Personnel of the Translation Bureau rose to become among the most important bureaucrats of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, as it increasingly integrated into the international state system of continuous diplomacy." Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922*, 81.

[92] Shaw and Shaw, 30.

The Greek revolt and road to independence reveals many themes of the 19th century and sheds light on the developments that will be of key importance in explaining international-domestic interaction in the coming of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. The Russian advances in the war of 1829 did not lead to a total occupation, due to European balances, but were themselves brought about by the situation that the Greek Revolt had created. Great Britain and France did not allow Russia to take total control of the situation, but also did not let the Ottoman Empire be rewarded for its military resistance which was created first and foremost with the help of Mehmed Ali Pasha - another international crisis in the making.[93] The Greek revolt, as explained above, also triggered further administrative reforms and in the immediate context of these events Ottoman diplomacy and military structure underwent radical change. This pattern of combined development in Ottoman politics - combined at the global, imperial and local levels - will be seen again in 1876-1878, at the critical juncture that this thesis will identify for the emergence of the Young Turk opposition. The presence of this pattern does not constitute a pre-determination, but rather a chance to observe the fluctuations in international-domestic interaction, once its constitutive effect is recognized. Another example worth mentioning is the war waged by Mehmed Ali against Ottoman central authority in the 1830s, to which we now turn.

The Ottoman-Egyptian Wars

One of the intriguing aspects of Mehmed Ali Pasha's Egypt is the hostility it provoked in the Ottoman Empire and in the Great Powers alike (with the exception of

[93] Zürcher demonstrates the Great Powers' insistence on manipulating the situation, mostly due to their uneasiness with the Russian advances: "That the Greece that emerged on the map was only a very small state, and fell far short of the designs of the Greek nationalists, was only due to the fact that Britain, France and Austria preferred a malleable Ottoman Empire to a strong Greece dominated by Russian influence." Zürcher, *Turkey: A modern History*, 35. The former countries, with the addition of Germany, were to have a very similar attitude towards Bulgaria at the Berlin Congress of 1878, for similar reasons.

France, which saw Egypt essentially as a French ally and was seen as such by Mehmed Ali himself.) That his outright call for independence would create Ottoman enmities was only to be expected. Faroqhi also points to one of the reasons for the tension between Europe and Egypt at the time: "The industrialization of Egypt posed a threat to European, especially British, markets and sources of raw materials. Moreover, many Europeans were dismayed at the notion of an "Oriental" ruler, who ought to be "put in his place",[94] competing for equal power and status. As such, Mehmed Ali was posing both an economic and a political threat and this despite his obvious attempts at reform and Westernization – more successful most of the time than those of the Ottomans. He was a source of both envy and hostility from the capital. Having shown his ability to found a modern army both against the Wahhabi occupation and against the Greek rebels, Mehmed Ali Pasha and his son Ibrahim Pasha demanded more from the capital in terms of governing positions in key provinces such as Crete and Syria. Facing the unwillingness of the capital to grant these positions, he launched his attack on the Ottoman Empire. There were to be two phases of the war he waged and both of these would cost the capital dearly, not only in terms of military losses but perhaps more importantly in creating the urgent need to ask for the support of first Russia and then Great Britain.

The chain of events that started when, in 1831, Ibrahim Pasha advanced as far as Konya, well into the centre of Anatolia, was to last for a decade. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to give a detailed account of the many delicate oscillations within these ten years. Two elements of the narrative stand out for our purposes: the attitude of the Great Powers and the two consequent treaties signed with Russia and Great Britain in exchange for their support against Mehmed Ali Pasha's troops: the Treaty of Unkiar

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[94] Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire: A Short History*, 115.

Skelessi (Hünkar İskelesi - 1833) and the Anglo-Turkish Convention (Baltalimanı Anlaşması – 1838). There is a reason for this specific sequence. Russia was not the obvious first choice on which to call for help. However, "The British government whose whole attention was drawn to Iberia and Netherlands was surprisingly disinterested in the events in Syria 1831-1832."[95] The landing of "15,000 Russian soldiers to the shores of Bosporus"[96] was traumatic at best and only undertaken out of necessity. It also proved to be only a temporary solution to the Egyptian problem, as Mehmed Ali Pasha managed to attain the governorships that he desired and was stopped, but not destroyed. It also proved to be costly, as the 1833 Unkiar Skelessi Treaty confirmed the influence of Russia over the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, it was not the immediacy of the Egyptian situation but this emerging treaty favouring Russia that would trigger Great Britain's involvement. "Britain was outraged: the 1830s saw the genesis of a mass Russophobia which created the image of Russia as a sort of hereditary enemy of Britain. Faced with British pressure, the Russians in turn retreated, and in the 1840s reverted to proposals for the partition of Turkey."[97]

Great Britain was indeed the protector of the Empire in the second phase of the Ottoman-Egyptian war, when Mahmud was defeated in 1839, a year after the Anglo-Turkish Convention of August 1838, the importance of which will be highlighted below. Mahmud II passed away in 1839 and Abdülmecid was enthroned the same year. Ibrahim Pasha was to retreat to Egypt and his family would have to be satisfied with the governorship of that country. The two repercussions of this, namely the 1838 Treaty and

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[95] Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 97.

[96] Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*, 55.

[97] Hobsbawm, *Age of Revolution*, 134.

the 1839 Rose Chamber Edict (Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu) that started the Tanzimat era in Ottoman politics, require a closer examination.

The Anglo-Turkish Convention (1838)

> *"The bureaucracy, in the narrow space that it possessed made such a manoeuvre that was favouring capitalist integration model which could render this possibility real: the ability of the state officials to continue to uphold their class privileges."*[98]

The 1838 Anglo-Turkish Convention was signed in the face of a political and military crisis on the part of the Ottoman Empire, as outlined above. The Convention is crucial in many aspects. It "prohibited all monopolies, allowed British merchants to purchase goods anywhere in the Empire without payment of any taxes or dues other than import or export duty or its equivalent in interior duty."[99] This convention was followed by other trade treaties of the same kind with other European countries. As Stefanos Yerasimos argues, together with internal developments of the 19th century, these treaties enabled the industrial revolution in Europe to have its impact in a deeper way on the Ottoman economy.[100] By abolishing all the limitations facing the activities of foreign merchants, these treaties enabled the further commercialization of agriculture and had a devastating impact on some manufacturing activities.[101] They caused some latent tensions in the Empire to rise to the surface and new types of conflicts, intra-class and inter-class, emerged. The free trade regime bolstered the position mostly of the non-Muslim merchants, and hence created another pressure on the flow of surplus to the

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[98] Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2000), 44.

[99] Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey 1800-1914* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 74-75.

[100] Stefanos Yerasimos, *Azgelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye* (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2001), 63.

[101] "Geographically speaking, the expansion of agricultural commodity production and the decline in handicrafts-based manufacturing activities remained limited to the coastal areas" Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820-1913* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 12.

Palace treasury. The opportunities of these merchants were even furthered by the offer of citizenship of Russia, England and France, which meant not only protection from the authorities but also considerable degrees of tax exemption, as a result of the trade concessions given to the European powers.

In sum, "when looking at the long-term effects, we see that this treaty diminished the chance of an independent foreign trade policy of the Ottoman governments."[102] Yet it would be incorrect to assume that the Ottoman bureaucrats had no clue about the repercussions. Here, we should turn to the quote from Keyder at the beginning of this section, and note that the bureaucracy paid this price, perhaps not fully aware, but for a partial purpose, namely that of strengthening their own position. Indeed, the Tanzimat era that followed this treaty would witness the reign of the Sublime Porte, as opposed to the Palace. That was the mode of Ottoman integration. It was mediated through the bureaucracy and this had its impact both on the bureaucratic structure and on the nature of the Hamidian regime that was to follow the Tanzimat era. To reiterate this point, Keyder argues: "The bureaucracy accepted a version of reformism which accommodated its class nature by allowing it to be the principal intermediary of incorporation, while they sacrificed, rather too readily, various social groups privileged in the traditional order and the overall integrity of this order."[103] That the bureaucracy was the main intermediary of this integration is also the position of Pamuk:

> "The societies in question were often characterized by a struggle between the central bureaucracy and those social classes favoring more rapid and direct integration into the world economy, namely merchants and export oriented landlords. (...) As a result of this particular configuration of power, greater integration into the

[102] Pamuk, *Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 209.

[103] Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey* (London: Verso, 1987), 28.

> world economy could not proceed through an alliance between dominant interests in the center countries and those social classes in the periphery whose interests lay in the same direction. Instead this process could advance only through an accommodation between the former and the central bureaucracy"[104]

And herein lies an important aspect of the linkage between the international and the domestic. The political economy of the era is, as one can see even in this single example of the 1838 Treaty, not a separate current flowing parallel to the political realm. On the contrary and similarly to the relation that this thesis asserts between the international and the domestic, the political economy of the nineteenth century is constitutive of the political world into which the Young Turks will come and which they will reshape. Moreover, the political economy is also a crucial network of relationships that constitutes the very relationship between the international and the domestic. It is no coincidence that the long nineteenth century of Ottoman transformation is also the long process of Ottoman integration into Western capitalism. Political economy gives the international-domestic interaction a substantial content, so much so that it is inherent in that interaction, but neither subordinate to it nor autonomous from it.

3.2.2 Tanzimat: Reform and War

In exchange for the protection of its privileged position, the ever-growing Ottoman bureaucracy actually became the champion of the integration process, though not without hesitations and ambivalences. Their reformism came to be known as the Tanzimat [Reorganization] reforms [1839-1876]. The intentions of the Tanzimat bureaucrats were ambitious in many respects, however the actual implications of their proclaimed aims were a completely different matter. It was an extensive programme of centralization through tax reform, land reform, trade reform and reform in the

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[104] Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820-191,* 6.

ideological legitimation of the state itself, coupled with modern techniques of statecraft such as censuses, property registration, the increasing importance attributed to diplomacy and to playing the internal as well as external challengers to the bureaucracy's position against one another in order to consolidate their status within the fluent dynamics of the nineteenth century. It is no coincidence that the Rose Chamber Edict of 1839 was announced in the middle of the war against Mehmed Ali Pasha and that it was preceded by the 1838 Anglo-Turkish Convention. Although this was part of the ongoing transformation process, its timing and direction was calculated according to the needs of contemporary international politics.[105] As such, and similarly to the Greek Revolt, it was to enter the list of Ottoman diplomatic reflexes. A similar timing and similar concerns were present in the Imperial Rescript (1856) and in the proclamation of the first constitution of the Ottoman Empire (1876). The latter will be part of the critical juncture identified for the emergence of the Young Turk opposition; the former will be briefly outlined in the following pages.

Designed by the ascending Ottoman bureaucracy, the Rose Chamber Edict was different from the earlier reform movements, at least with regard to the change in political will. Also, as Ortaylı notes, it was a plan for the future rather than an attempt to return to the glories of the past. "For the first time in Ottoman history, this edict was reflecting the rulers' vision, which was planning the future; as opposed to the classical reformists, it was not envisioning a restoration but a whole new order."[106]

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[105] "To an extent, the edict was directed at European ears. Its architect, Mustafa Reşid Pasha, was well known to be the foremost proponent of Ottoman accession to the European Concert. In a sense, the document served as an assurance to the Great Powers that demanded domestic reforms in return for future recognition of the Ottoman Empire as a member of the Concert of Europe." Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 73.

[106] Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*, 100.

At its core, the Edict was changing the relationship between the Sultan and his subjects, whereby the Sultan was now guaranteeing their security, honour and property. It also included promises of reform of the tax system and the military system, including conscription. It embodied the idea of equal rights for all citizens. As such, it would be the ground upon which modernizing Ottoman politics, with its conservative and more liberal factions would rise.[107] The edict provided the Palace, the bureaucracy, the *ulema* and the urban notables with a new paradigm of politics. It brought a new stream of thought which, when followed, leads to the first constitution of the Empire, another sea-change which would render the Young Turk opposition possible after 1878. The content of the Edict and what was actually realized in the decades that followed are of course not identical. Some provisions could not be realized: there were not yet enough state cadres to apply and control them. Some others were lost in the internal and external political struggles. Perhaps one of the most concrete effects of the Edict is the way it transformed the struggles within the state, with bureaucracy on the winning side. Zürcher's notes are illuminating in this respect:

> "The call for guarantees for the life, honour and property of subjects, apart from echoing classic liberal thought as understood by the Ottoman statesmen who had been to Europe and knew European languages, also reflected the Ottoman bureaucrats' desire to escape their vulnerable position as slaves of the sultan."[108]

In this regard, the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1838 and the Edict of 1839, though at different levels, served a specific purpose, that of strengthening the

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[107] Anderson underlines the conservative character of the Edict, which does not take away from its novel character within Ottoman history, but locates it within European history. Indeed it is a sound intervention: "What Reşid Pasha and those like him actually wanted to do was to increase the status and efficiency of the Ottoman bureaucracy. Their aim was to create a more talented, more educated and most importantly a more independent civil servant class than what had existed in the Ottoman Empire. This was actually a very limited and in some aspects a very conservative aim. In this respect, it is very meaningful that Metternich was the first European statesman to congratulate Mustafa Reşid Pasha on the Rose Chamber Edict." Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 126.

[108] Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 51.

bureaucracy's position. The bureaucracy found itself and located itself in a mediatory position within this wide network of reform acts, economic regulations, diplomatic moments and wars. The Tanzimat era is an integral and important part of Ottoman transformation and a thorough analysis of the era is not the intent of this chapter or thesis. What is significant for the narrative leading up to the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 is the strengthening of the bureaucracy amidst the internal and external turmoil, and the intuition here is that it is that turmoil and the specific combination of international and domestic elements that created the conditions of this bureaucracy. Two aspects follow from this: firstly, it supports the central theme of this thesis, that the relation between the international and the domestic is one of constitution, rather than of mere restriction, facilitation or detachment. Secondly, and with regard to the case study at hand, it bolsters the intuition of the framework used in this thesis, that of a historical sociological approach to international relations, and gives us the clue as to where to look for the bits and pieces that created the world in which the Young Turk opposition and revolution was possible: namely in the specific moments when the international and the domestic merged in a certain fashion. These will be outlined in detail in the next three chapters. Now we turn to the repercussions of Tanzimat and to another crucial event in European and Ottoman history, the Crimean War.

3.2.2.1 1856: Crimean War, Paris Treaty and Imperial Rescript

The Crimean War of 1854 is considered as a break from the European peace of the nineteenth century. Involving the Ottoman Empire, Russia, Great Britain and France, it entails several international issues, such as the status of the Holy Places, but also the wider balance of power in Europe, and the Eastern Question. Although it is an event of great magnitude for European history, our limitations lead us to focus on the repercussions of the war on the Ottoman Empire, which included the Paris Treaty

whereby the Ottoman Empire was accepted into the Concert of Europe and the Imperial Rescript of 1856 which is another turn in the Ottoman transformation.

The Crimean War is linked to the 1848 revolutions in Europe. As the rebels in Hungary were suppressed by the Tsar, they took refuge in the Ottoman Empire. The Danube Principalities also witnessed rebellion and "as the Ottomans were no happier about this than was Czar Nicholas, the sultan accepted the latter's offer to suppress the Wallachian revolt, which his troops did as they marched against the Hungarian revolutionaries. (...) Hundreds of revolutionaries now fled into Ottoman territory, not only from Hungary and Wallachia but also from Poland, leading to a major international crisis."[109]

Though this crisis did not turn into a major war, it laid the ground for the tensions half a decade later. Britain and Russia experienced more open conflict and when these factors merged with the dispute over the Holy Places, the result would be the Crimean War. Even this crisis over the 1848 revolutions shows how linked the Empire was to European affairs, not only overtly diplomatic affairs, but all those with a transformative historical character. In fact, from the French Revolution to the Revolutions of 1848, the Ottoman Empire was in a genuine interaction with the world around it and at several levels, including the military[110], the political, the economic and the cultural.

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[109] Shaw and Shaw, 136.

[110] Quataert's following note is enlightening as to the nature of the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Europe: "It certainly was one characterized by war: between c. 1463 and 1918, the Ottomans fought at least forty-three wars, and thirty one of them were with the various European states." Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922*, 85.

The dispute over the Holy Places had at least a two-decade-long history and is considered as the final trigger of the Crimean War. The details of the dispute are irrelevant for our purposes, suffice it to note that it was over the protector status of the Ottoman Christians of various sects and involved France on the Catholic side and Russia on the Orthodox side. Both powers competed for concessions from the Ottoman Sultan in order to bolster their religious status over that of the Christian population. In between the two powers there was another formidable force, Great Britain. British refusal to cooperate with Russia on this matter formed the crucial antagonism of the conflict. The status of the Danube Principalities was also part of the negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and Russia. Shaw notes that there was strong anti-Russian public opinion in the Empire and this was at least partially backed by Great Britain.[111] The war was declared in the midst of several diplomatic negotiations and was joined by France and Great Britain. M. S. Anderson underlines the 'accidental' element in the start of the war, noting that it was based on misunderstandings and mistakes rather than on a clear intent of war on the part of all parties.[112] Nonetheless, it is easy to observe that the war was rooted in the tensions of the Eastern Question, in the discussion over the fate of the Ottoman Empire and in Russia's differing opinion from the other powers, under a Tsar who had coined the term "Sick Man of Europe" for the Ottoman Empire.[113]

In the battle that lasted for almost two years, Russia lost and had to negotiate with the allied powers at the Paris Peace Conference (February 1856). The Conference

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[111] Shaw and Shaw, 138.

[112] "Therefore, the Crimean war was more a result of a series of miscalculations, misunderstanding, failures, sillyness, pride and stubbornness than the result of malicious intent. It was more accidental than many of the big wars of the modern times." Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 149.

[113] "In conversation with Sir Hamilton Seymour, the British ambassador to St. Petersburg, on January 9, 1853, he famously characterized the empire as the "Sick man of Europe," and indicated that Russia and Great Britain should prepare for its peaceful partition in the near future." Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 79.

is famous for recognizing the Ottoman Empire as a European power and it is in this Conference that the Empire became an official member of the Concert of Europe. It fits into the *longue durée* pattern of international conferences over Ottoman military and political affairs. The Berlin Conference of 1878 will be identified as the critical moment that partially constituted the conditions of the Young Turks' opposition. The Paris Treaty that followed the Conference did not involve a great deal of territory exchange. "All sides agreed to evacuate territory taken during the war. The Russians left eastern Anatolia and the allies surrendered the Crimea and areas of the Black Sea coast."[114] So, it was not the territorial disputes but the political importance of the Conference that was to leave its mark on the transformation of the Empire. Two other aspects of this crisis are important: firstly, the burden of the war forced the Empire to resort to foreign debt, thereby instigating a chain of events that would lead to bankruptcy and to the establishment of the Public Debt Administration in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Secondly, the crisis played a role in the declaration of the Imperial Rescript of 1856. During the conference "the sultan communicated the text of his Reform Decree, and the powers declared their full support, with no provision being made for individual or joint intervention to secure Ottoman fulfilment of these promises."[115]

This collision of the Paris Treaty and Imperial Rescript of 1856 is not unprecedented, as it was seen in the Rose Chamber Edict and the Anglo-Turkish Convention and will be seen in the Declaration of the Constitution of 1876 and the Istanbul Conference. Even the temporal coincidence of these events is evidence of the need to investigate the international-domestic interaction in the Ottoman Empire in an in-depth and theoretically informed fashion and to make this an object of research

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[114] Shaw and Shaw, 140.

[115] Ibid., 140.

within the discipline of International Relations. As was seen in the beginning of Tanzimat, here in 1856, it is clear once again that the issue of foreign debt, the issue of war, the issue of diplomacy and the complex phenomenon called domestic transformation are intrinsically linked. To notice the multi-layered character of this linkage is an important prelude to our investigation of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, which this thesis will attempt to see in the light of this linkage, between the global, the imperial and the local.

The Imperial Rescript of 1856 confirmed the Rose Chamber Edict of 1839, introduced the option of conscription or payment in exchange for conscription for the non-Muslim population, underlined the equality of all subjects and promised further administrative, economic and political reforms. "The process of integration, which began originally as a drive towards administrative centralization, was broadened to become concerned with the basic question of political loyalty."[116] As the Empire was admitted to the Concert of Europe, it was expected to adjust its transformation accordingly. The Rescript is presented in the literature as the moment in the Empire's history that is linked to European demands in the most extraordinary fashion. It was able, however, to prevent neither the contingent nor the structural tensions with Europe. It also failed to halt the disintegration process of the Empire itself. "After 1856, the quest for centralization clashed with the reality of progressive dissolution. Several regions, provinces, and principalities remained nominally within the Ottoman world, but increasingly loosened their ties to the center."[117] It did, on the other hand, further accelerate the ascendancy of the Ottoman bureaucracy, as it played the key role in

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[116] Kemal Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3, no. 3 (1972): 261.

[117] Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 85.

managing this network of interactions, while the non-Muslim commercial bourgeoisie played the key role in managing foreign trade. Thus began the reign of Ali and Fuad Pashas, the two Pashas of the late Tanzimat era, against whose reign the Young Ottomans would direct their opposition during 1860s.

3.2.2.2 The Young Ottomans

> *"Although Abdülhamid II found little of use in the Islamic constitutionalism of the Young Ottomans, as will be seen, their ideas dominated Ottoman intellectual life for decades. Theirs was an original response to the challenges of Western modernity that was to inspire future Muslim constitutionalist movements, such as that of Iran."*[118]

The Young Ottoman movement is a novelty in Ottoman politics in many respects and their ideas, although an amalgamation of several political trends rather than a clear cut programme, inspired several later developments, including, of course, the Young Turk movement. The writings of Namık Kemal especially stand out in this context. In their opposition to the Tanzimat era, we can observe not only the characteristics of this new tradition of political opposition in a novel form, but also the characteristics of Tanzimat itself. The seminal work on the Young Ottomans is by Şerif Mardin: *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought.*[119] Here this work will be used extensively, as it is a study both of Young Ottoman thought and of the political world that produced it and was shaped by it in the 1870s. The main conflict between the Young Ottomans and the Ottoman government was formulated as a regime discussion, where the Young Ottomans demanded constitutional rule, which they in part based on the Islamic tradition of consultation. The justification for the demand, on the other hand, was the accelerated dissolution of the Empire and what they perceived as the inability of the Tanzimat regime to reverse that process, a failure solidified in the personalities of

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[118] Ibid., 104.

[119] Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A study in the modernization of Turkish political ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962).

Ali and Fuad Pashas.[120] Their collective political efforts started in 1865, at a picnic in Istanbul attended by six young men.

The 1860s were a time when despite the two Rescripts, perhaps even in part because of them, the Ottoman Empire was facing continuous rebellions in its Western territories, including the Danube Principalities and later Romania. As summarized by Mardin, "In general, the early 1860's were a time when the Ottoman Empire was beginning to feel the increasing tug of Balkan nationalism and when more and more its international relations were conducted under the surveillance of the Concert of Europe."[121] It was also very probable that this surveillance by the Concert of Europe would be blamed on those who made the Paris Treaty and all the other binding agreements, namely the men of Tanzimat. Also, internal revolts and the many failures of centralization resulted in a huge state machine with insufficient resources to allow it to function. The Young Ottomans emerged at the culmination of the centralization process, when all its inherent inconsistencies and contingent and structural failures were revealed. Hanioğlu explains the paradox of Tanzimat as follows:

> "Paradoxically, the very reforms designed to create a more coherent society unified by a common ideology, and a more centralized polity founded on universal, standardized laws, had the effect of exposing and deepening the fissures within the Ottoman state and society. Local resistance to the center's determined attempts to penetrate the periphery accentuated the fragmentation of identity throughout the empire."[122]

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[120] "What united these young conspirators was a common knowledge of European civilization and an equal concern at the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Responsibility for the accelerated pace of the decline of the Sick Man of Europe was now laid by them at the door of a small group of statesmen headed by Âli Paşa and Fuad Paşa." Ibid., 11.

[121] Ibid., 16.

[122] Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 107.

So the emergence of the Young Ottoman movement, similarly to the emergence of the Young Turk movement – though they were never as coherent, as well equipped or as successful as the Young Turks – can be located at the intersection of European and Ottoman politics, at the changing logic of international and domestic politics when each transformed the other and when the Empire to which they belonged was troubled in a visible way. As the quote at the beginning of this section notes, theirs was an original response[123], one that was not exactly followed but which inspired. Theirs was a patriotic, Islamist-minded modernism towards politics that questioned the 'tyranny' of the leading men in the bureaucracy. Politically they could not achieve much and after a certain time in Europe they all turned back to the Empire, especially after the death of Ali Pasha, a figure of genuine hatred in their eyes. Despite their personal (the exclusion from the bureaucracy with which they had literally been brought them up) and political reasons, they did not have what the Young Turks later would have: a revolutionary mentality and revolutionary resources and capabilities; with the help of the Hamidian educational reforms and an increased degree of European interaction, a much more refined analysis of political problems, international and otherwise; a Sultan who facilitated their rise with his failures and successes alike, and finally an example of a Constitutional Regime that, despite its short life of two years, provided a clear-cut objective around which to unite. However, the Young Ottomans had a profound influence on Ottoman politics and only through this political knot that they had tied can we grasp in part the political world of the Young Turks. Mardin brilliantly explains the specifics of this knot:

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[123] This originality is also reflected in the need for a new political vocabulary to express the new political ideas. Zürcher has listed the following, with regards to Namık Kemal, the most influential of the Young Ottoman writers: "To expound his ideas to an Ottoman public, Kemal created a new vocabulary giving old words new meanings corresponding to the terminology of nineteenth-century liberalism. *Vatan*, the Arabic word for one's birthplace, became the equivalent of French *patrie*, *hürriyet* (being a free man, not a slave) that of *liberty*, *millet* (community), that of nation. This new terminology would be the ideological instrumentarium for later generations of Muslim liberals and nationalists." Zürcher, *Turkey: A modern history*, 68.

> "The most important result of their propagandistic efforts was not so much the proclamation of the Ottoman constitution as the establishment of the belief that Sultan Abdülhamid had perpetrated a crime in suspending it. It is this belief, which would not have been widely held before the appearance of the Young Ottomans, which fed the underground opposition to the sultan between 1878 and 1908."[124]

The next chapter will attempt to understand both the Hamidian response to the international context, the Tanzimat era and the political inputs of the Young Ottomans and the Young Turk reaction to the Hamidian regime and to the world around them. Meanwhile it will try to reveal the international's constitutive role in making these responses possible in the first place.

3.3. Conclusion

The long nineteenth century of the Ottoman Empire in its world-historical context is an excellent example of the combination of the 'international' and the 'domestic', a combination without which the subsequent transformation could not be explained. The mere intuition of this combination was the only aim of this chapter. Any discussion of the century beyond this aim is the topic of great works on the Empire and more detailed future research. What interests us most in this period, between the reign of Selim III and the coming of Abdülhamid II, is its explanatory power in the narrative of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. It was historical-sociological directionality that led this narrative to start with these basic observations on the nineteenth century. To reiterate, the long-term causes of the 1908 Revolution are to be found in the mode of Ottoman integration into the Western political, economic and cultural context; in the mode of Western encroachment into the Empire; in the Ottoman responses to the international context and what these responses meant for and how they transformed the already existing tensions within the Empire; in the ascendancy of new social forces,

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[124] Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 403.

such as the bureaucracy and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, and finally in the emergence of the nucleus of modern opposition to the Ottoman government. These streams will be followed in the coming chapters, which will have their focus not necessarily on any single one, but on the intersections and interactions among them. These will be referred to as the linkages between the global, the imperial and the local.

This history of the nineteenth century up until the last quarter provides the background for many of the reflexes of the Ottoman actors in the latter period, of those in power and of those in opposition, and for the past of Ottoman-European interaction, which will be of value to both the Ottoman and the European actors. Nevertheless, only after a thorough analysis of both periods will we have a genuine opportunity for comparison within a single case and a real chance to approach this constitutive relation between the international and the domestic. An explanation of the international dimensions of the coming of the Young Turk Revolutions will bind this chapter to the next three chapters on the period between 1876 and 1908.

CHAPTER 4 THE CRITICAL JUNCTURE: THE POLITICS OF THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will try to examine both the actions of the regime and of the Young Turks and the interaction between them and the wider world, before concentrating in the next chapters on the immediate revolutionary process As such it will be part of this thesis' attempt to do what very few works on the causes of the Young Turk Revolution have done, to put the Revolution into its international context with reference to its emergence and success.[125] Although the rather small bibliography on the causes of the Young Turk Revolution presents a detailed picture of the ideational development of the Young Turk leaders, their internal struggles and factions, their transformation into a more rigid and efficient political organization and their relations with the military, it lacks the kind of treatment given by world history to other revolutions, no matter what their scale: the investigation into the linkages between the world and the revolutionary process.

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[125] The most important works in this area are: Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri: 1895 – 1908* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1983); M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation For a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902 - 1908* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Aykut Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey* (Leiden: Brill, 1997). Mardin presents an excellent analysis of the political ideas and sometimes the lack of them that drove the Young Turks in the emergence, evolution and transformation of their political organization. The works of Hanioğlu are larger in scope, based on an extensive use of primary sources, and are works of perfection in terms of attention to details and covering the Young Turk activities in the periods examined. Kansu's work is more argumentative in style and investigates not only the revolution but also its place, importance and distorted image in official historiography. Also to be mentioned are the two articles by Donald Quataert that focus on the economic and social situation in the Empire before the Revolution and link these to the coming of the Revolution. "The Young Turk revolution: Old and New Approaches" and "The Economic Climate of the 'Young Turk Revolution' of 1908" in *Workers, Peasants and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire 1730 – 1914,* ed. Donald Quataert (Istanbul: İsis Press, 1993). Perhaps a notable exception is Nader Sohrabi's unpublished PhD thesis, as he investigates the Iranian, Russian and Ottoman Constitutional Revolutions in the context of an international constitutionalist revolutionary wave: Nader Sohrabi, "Constitutionalism, Revolution and State: The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906 with Comparisons to the Russian Revolution of 1905" (PhD diss., the University of Chicago, 1996). Also to be mentioned is the work of Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, *Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu (1890 – 1918)* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2008).

4.1.1 The Themes

Throughout this chapter, the international elements that influenced the Young Turks' choices and their continuous political, ideological and cultural transformation will be highlighted. That should not mean that the emphasis here is on the external determinants at the expense of crediting the Young Turks with the appropriate characteristics of agency. On the contrary, this chapter will argue that it was the international elements which enhanced and enriched their political powers as agents. These elements will vary from the escape of a substantial group of Young Turks to Europe to the international diplomacy that contributed deeply to the special political importance of the Ottoman military, especially the III Army in Macedonia. Yet, even before their escape to Europe, and indeed this was the reason for it, these young students had already started their political activities and the army's position in the political dynamics of the Empire rested on a long history. As we will see, the international setting interacted with the existing, yet constantly evolving, political and social cleavages in the Empire. As such, it was a constitutive factor in the emergence of a Young Turk agency that was to topple the Hamidian regime and open a new era in the Ottoman Empire. Hence the underlying theme of this chapter is the interaction between the international and the domestic in the emergence of the Young Turks as the predominant group in opposition to Abdülhamid II and the way in which the Young Turks were themselves part of that interaction, especially in later years.

Another theme of this chapter is that to view 'external determinants' as a constraint on 'internal agency' – whether one holds one or the other as stronger – is misleading and creates an illusionary dilemma. The agency that surely arose both in Ottoman central rule - in the actions of Abdülhamid II and the bureaucrats who conducted his policies - and in the Young Turk opposition to his regime was the product

of the world-historical moment in the late 19th century[126]. That these historical agents have made choices in a rather tight realm of manoeuvring constitutes a challenge but not a problem for analysis. In his excellent study of education in the Hamidian era, Benjamin Fortna argues the following: "Restoring the notion of agency is vital to the overcoming the misperception that outside influences determined the 'fate' of the late Ottoman Empire."[127] This is a much needed warning to Ottoman historiography in particular and to all political analysis of non-European peoples and states in general. Nonetheless, juxtaposing 'outside influences' to 'domestic agency' from the start of the analysis is not the intent of this thesis. Indeed, this chapter will try to highlight the fact that it was a specific combination of outside-inside interaction that constituted the construction of late Ottoman agency.

4.1.2 A brief account of the events

The overview of the 19th century provided in the previous chapter revealed many of the crucial elements of the causal relationship between the international setting and the developments in the Ottoman Empire that led to the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. However, the Revolution cannot be grasped without first laying out the world in which the revolutionaries, military and civilian alike, were brought up and politicized. Secondly, the task in this chapter is to find the more immediate international causes of the Revolution of 1908. This task should be conducted both by looking at the most crucial international interventions and other sorts of linkages to the Ottoman Empire

[126] Indeed, with regard to the category of Ottoman agency, one should not neglect to add all the Ottoman subjects who demonstrated their political choices, including the Muslim and non-Muslim minorities such as the Albanians, Arabs and Armenians and also the remnants of those peoples who had gained their independence, such as the Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks, whose activities will be especially important in the Macedonia issue. Although the main focus of the case study is the opposition of the Young Turks (a group which included many non-Turks and non-Muslims) Ottoman agency should be enhanced to include all the actors, not necessarily only those that became part of the post-empire Turkish Republic, such as the Muslim Turks.

[127] Benjamin Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the state, and education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3.

and by investigating the reactions and choices of the Ottoman state and the Ottoman opposition in this context. The impact of Western capitalism and the way in which the Empire was integrated into a still emerging and evolving European state system were in a sense 'out there'. So are the repercussions of the dissemination of new political ideas, such as nationalism, constitutionalism and liberalism – mostly as a result of the French Revolution and of the modernization in the imperial education system.[128] However, for the purpose of this chapter – and indeed one of the purposes of the thesis – the argument should go beyond the obvious and establish a causal relation based on the political history of the late 19th century. Concurrent with the years of the revolutionaries' upbringing and also the years of their main politicization is the Hamidian era (1876 – 1909). The first part of the Hamidian era will be the limits of the time period of this chapter, since it seeks the causes of the 1908 revolution as it intersects with the wider world. However, it will stop before the end of the Hamidian era, so that a special focus on the revolutionary years can be provided in the next chapter.

This time period is one of the turning points in the political history of the Ottoman Empire: its exclusiveness can be seen in its label, no other period in Ottoman history is named after the sovereign sultan. Abdülhamid II is still a topic of debate not only among historians, but also in contemporary political circles in Republican Turkey. Comments vary from the 'red sultan' to benevolent modernizer, though the last three decades of Ottoman historiography produced more objective work on his reign.[129] It is also a time of change in Europe and in intra-European relations. The period witnessed a unified Germany under Bismarck joining the world scene after the Franco-Prussian war

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[128] For an outstanding study of the modernization of the education system under Abdülhamid II. see Fortna, *Imperial Classroom.*

[129] François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid* (Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2006); Selim Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri ve İdeoloji* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002); Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet, Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet, 1876-1914* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004).

of 1870. Ottomans experienced European diplomacy under the influence of Bismarck at first hand. After the devastation of the 1877- 1878 war against Russia came the Berlin Congress of 1878. Indeed, the Hamidian period is shaped in a post-Berlin-Congress world and it is these rapidly changing European political, military and diplomatic alliances that Abdülhamid reacted to and that the Young Turks came into.

The politicization of the Young Turks continued in an environment heavily charged with European and Ottoman diplomacy over crucial issues such as the diplomatic crisis of the Armenian revolts and the Ottoman suppression of these upheavals, the emerging issue of European public opinion – mostly finding the Empire uncivilized and barbaric, the issue around Crete and the Greco-Ottoman war and, last but not least, the Macedonian issue. The Young Turks were not simply observers of these international moments but engaged, if not major, actors in these processes, actively involved in the growing network of European politics (media, secret and overt organizations, ministries of foreign affairs, etc.), as well as still in communication with Ottoman statesmen and sometimes even with the Sultan. They were also part of the wider world of the Ottoman Empire, with branches in the Balkans, Cairo, Syria, Beirut, and part of a more extended political map, with their appeals to the Anglophone, Francophone and Arabophone press. Nonetheless, they were not transnational actors. They were symbiotically tied to Ottoman politics and to an Ottoman agenda and were players in a game that was mostly laid out by the policies of the Great Powers and of Abdülhamid II.

This chapter will try to concentrate on the politics of the late nineteenth century as it affected both the Ottoman state and the Ottoman opposition. It will not delve into the details of all the international incidents of the period. It will capitalize on the peaks

of the international crises that have conditioned the conduct of the Hamidian regime and the emergence and transformation of the Young Turks as political actors. The Constitution of 1876 and its suspension by Abdülhamid II set the stage for all the factions of the Ottoman opposition, while the Russo-Ottoman war and the Berlin Congress that followed set the stage for the main themes of international politics of the Eastern Question in the last quarter of the 19th century. These two events were devastating to the Empire and to the new Sultan's authority and prestige.

Following the Congress and the perceived humiliation of the Empire in the eyes of its young professionals, an opposition was sparked in the Royal Medical Academy and, while exploiting the crises around the Armenian issue and the Greco-Ottoman war, it recruited members from varying backgrounds in the Empire. As the Sultan managed to prevent another wholesale European intervention in the Empire's politics, mostly due to his success in the Greco-Ottoman war, he found the perfect timing for a wholesale attack on the opposition. The 1897 arrests forced a further wave of opposition members to flee abroad, mostly to Europe. Aided now by the Sultan's brother-in-law, Damad Mahmud Pasha,[130] and by two Princes (Sabahaddin and Lütfullah), the years until 1902 were years of conspiracy, plotting and negotiations with the Sultan, all of which were conducted in a European diplomatic setting and in interaction with a range of European political activists, from Italian anarchists to Armenian revolutionaries. Although these were years of disarray for the organization in Europe, the conditions for its future success were seeded within the Empire, most notably through the Westernization and modernization of the Sultan – who preferred to view himself as an 'enlightened despot'.

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[130] Damad Mahmud Pasha (1853-1903): The brother in law of Abdülhamid II. He was a very critical statesman and escaped to Europe in 1889 with his two sons (Sabahaddin – later known as Prince Sabahaddin – and Lütfullah). He and his sons were involved in the Ottoman opposition movement abroad. He did not return to Istanbul and died in 1903 in Brussels. *Yaşamları ve Yapıtlarıyla Osmanlılar Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. II, s.v. "Damad Mahmud Pasha."

So, while the opposition in exile was debating the issues of foreign intervention, decentralization and the issue of minorities and international politics in general, the congress of Ottoman Opposition in 1902 crystallized these different factions and resulted in a split in the organization. The split occurred between the majority group under the leadership of Prince Sabahaddin[131] who had advocated a pro-interventionist, pro-decentralization stance with attempts to collaborate with the minorities, most notably the Armenians, and the minority group under the leadership of Ahmed Rıza,[132] who had anti-imperialist tendencies with a strong positivist outlook. It was the latter that would actually hold the monopoly of the opposition and merge with the revolutionaries within the military in later years. This chapter will try to follow the story of the emergence of this opposition and the involvement of the international setting in this emergence.

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[131] Prince Sabahaddin (1878-1948): the Grandson of Sultan Abdülmecid and the son of Damad Mahmud Pasha. He received an education in French, Arabic and Persian in Istanbul and was brought up in an intellectual environment. He was in voluntary exile in Europe from 1889 until 1908. He joined the Ottoman opposition abroad and helped to convene the 1902 and 1907 Young Turk Congresses. He founded the League of Private Initiative and Decentralization. As he did not achieve the success that he expected from politics, or that would have been commensurate with his abilities, Prince Sabahaddin increased his social scientific activities. After the revolution, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) was rather annoyed by his presence and he found himself in forced exile between 1913 and 1920. During the Independence War (1919 – 1923) and the establishment of the Republic, he was residing in Istanbul and was one "of the chief members of the royal family who had given an overt support to the National Struggle." Mehmet Ö. Alkan, preface to *Prens Sabahaddin* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), 11. However, this did not save him from being forcibly exiled again, as all the members of the royal family were now banned from the Republic. He spent the rest of his life in Europe in economic and intellectual hardship. *Osmanlılar Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Sabahaddin (Prens)."

[132] Ahmed Rıza (1858-1930): his father, nicknamed 'English', was a member of the Provincial Council and his mother was an Austrian who had converted to Islam. He was educated in Galatasaray (*Lycée de Galatasaray*), a Francophone school that was educating pupils for service in the Palace. He then studied agriculture in France and upon his return to the Empire he took a post in the Ministry of Agriculture. Disappointed in the Ministry and convinced that progress could only be achieved through education, he became an educator in Bursa province. However, his expectations were not fulfilled there either and he went to Paris in 1889 and decided not to return. (This is also the year when the nucleus of the CUP was formed in the Royal Medical Academy in Istanbul, which was to establish contact with Ahmed Rıza later). After writing several letters with reform proposals to Abdülhamid II, he started to publish the journal *Meşveret* and its French supplement (*Mechveret*) in 1895. The details of his life thereafter will be analyzed in this and the following chapters. Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 129-162; *Osmanlılar Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Ahmed Rıza."

4.2 1876 – 1897: The world in which the Young Turks were politicized

> *"The relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the European Powers was dialectical in nature. On the one hand, this relationship was destructive and corrosive in its impact on traditional Ottoman society; on the other hand, it provided the very basis for its renewal so as to enable it to cope with a world in rapid change."*[133]

4.2.1 A new era

The 1870s were a decade of fundamental change both in Europe and in the Ottoman Empire and also in their relations among themselves. Starting with the Franco-Prussian war and the unification of Germany, European politics had entered a new era with the entrance of a new Great Power under the guidance of Bismarck, who was to influence international diplomacy heavily until the year of his resignation (1890). With the rise of a unified Germany, the interval to the long peace of the nineteenth century had ended and the years between 1871 and 1914 were to be described as the second period of peace in Europe[134]. The interval consisted of the Crimean War and the wars that paved the way for the unification of Germany as well as Italy. The 'peace' on the other hand signifies the lack of large-scale military conflict among the Great Powers, mainly England, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and finally Russia. The 'peace' also denotes the continuation of the 'Concert of Europe' that came into being after 1815 with the Congress of Vienna. However, 'peace' does not necessarily translate into an absence of conflict worldwide. Well summarised by a distinguished international historian, the 'peace' referred to a specific European arrangement: "The nineteenth century international

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[133] Feroz Ahmad, "The Late Ottoman Empire," in *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Marian Kent (New York: Frank Cass, 1996), 26.

[134] Antony Best et al., 5.

system, it is true, did not stop European powers from expanding at the expense of the non-European world; it did stop them from fighting one another in the process, and this involved real restraints."[135]

The military, as well as diplomatic, conflicts that were spreading out to other parts of the world, gained a new layer of importance with the rise of 'new imperialism'[136]. The Far East, Africa and the Americas were the new regions over which the Great Powers quarrelled and these quarrels had consequences for the periphery of Europe, such as the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Indeed, acquiring any legal or commercial rights to any piece of soil anywhere in the globe had become a matter of prestige, a *sine qua non* for the definition of 'Great Power'.[137] This was to be of great importance in the post-Bismarck period of German politics, where the statesmen under William II would map out a *Weltpolitik* for the German state coupled with the later *Drag Nach Osten* policy. This 'new imperialism' is also significant in representing the political spirit of the age. "Every great European people was now thinking, more naturally and consistently than ever before, in terms of a world political and economic balance, in those of world strategy and worldwide interests."[138] So, the 'peace' of Europe was impregnated with diplomatic and military

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[135] Paul W. Schroeder, "How Russia was Restrained," in *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe*, ed. David Wetzel, Robert Jervis, and Jack S. Levy (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 123.

[136] Although colonialism was an old phenomenon and so was the Great Power rivalry that surrounded it, the imperialism of the late nineteenth century had unprecedented connotations to it. Chief among them was the link between imperialism and the economy. "The word (...) first entered politics in Britain in the 1870s, and was still regarded as a neologism at the end of that decade. It exploded into general use in the 1890s. (...) It was at any rate, felt to be new and was discussed as a novelty." Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875 – 1914* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 60.

[137] Ibid., 67

[138] Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe,* 39.

conflicts over political and economic issues in the non-European world. It was also a period of armament. The armed forces of the Great Powers were doubling and trebling, paralleling the development and enhancement of war technologies.[139] 'Public opinion' had entered into all political calculations and the 'public image' of governments and dynasties was a concern shared by many Empires, including the Ottoman Empire.[140] The 'press' became a political tool, open to manipulation by rival governments and agendas and effective on 'public opinion' worldwide.[141] The modernization of education made it accessible to the masses at a level unknown before. This had both desired and adverse consequences for the regimes which had facilitated it. Although it was certainly constructive in terms of disseminating the official outlook and in terms of the centralization efforts, especially in the latecomers to 'modernization', it also created the conditions for an educated opposition outside the ranks of the official, traditional elite. In terms of public opinion and in terms of outright opposition to government, domestic politics and international politics were now intertwined at unprecedented levels. "To an increasing extent international affairs became the concern of ordinary people."[142]

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[139] C. J. Bartlett, *The Global Conflict: The International Rivalry of the Great Powers, 1880 – 1990* (London: Longman, 1994), 7.

[140]Selim Deringil points to an 'international competition' among the dynasties in terms of their public image. "The ceremonies started to get standardized as part of the process of increasing international competition. They began to resemble 'long live the Queen!' in Great Britain or Tenno heika bonzai! in Japan." Deringil, 39.

"The Ottoman Emperor, the Meiji Emperor, the Russian Tsar and the Habsburg Emperor all entered the 20th century at a different pace but generally through the same paths. All tried to create a state mythology that was equipped with new predicaments. (...) All were observing each other to see how their counterparts were playing out the role of civilized monarch." Ibid., 216.

[141] "Not only Ottoman society, but also all the smaller states were manipulated by the press of the Great Powers which was now the biggest tool of international diplomacy." Orhan Koloğlu, *Avrupa'nın Kıskacında Abdülhamit* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 9.

[142] James Joll, *Europe Since 1870* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 25.

Parallel to these developments, the republican and constitutionalist spirit was also on the rise. This can be observed in the constitutional monarchies that were established in the newly independent states of the Balkans and in the First Constitutional Era in the Ottoman Empire. Although it did not last long (two years), the Sultan never really officially annulled the constitution. Not only had the spirit of the constitution, but also its enactment had international dimensions. So intertwined was the constitutionalist wave with international politics that "while the unprecedented institution of constitutional rule stemmed from changing internal dynamics of the Ottoman Empire, its announcement was timed with international objections in mind."[143]

In the section below, the connections between a new era in Ottoman politics and a new era in world politics will be investigated. Broadly, this period starts with a Balkan crisis that had an indirect impact on the Young Ottomans, a group of bureaucrats and intellectuals who were advocating a constitutionalist monarchy for the Ottoman Empire. The specific combination of an international crisis and the Sultan's and the Young Ottomans' actions at the time allowed for the dethronement of Sultan Abdülaziz (1861-1876) - the Sultan of the late Tanzimat era who in his later years had sought to regain the supremacy of the Porte over the bureaucracy. While Sultan Murad (May – August 1876) was brought to power mainly for his known liberal tendencies, he was unable to remain in power long. An unlikely candidate, Abdülhamid, was enthroned by the senior reformist bureaucrats with the condition of his agreement to the constitution. This all coincided with the efforts of

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[143] Benjamin Fortna, "The Reign of Abdülhamid II," in *Cambridge History of Turkey: Turkey in the Modern World,* ed. Resat Kasaba (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 45.

the Great Powers to find a solution to the upheavals in the Balkans, mainly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Bulgaria. The timing of the declaration of the constitution was deliberately arranged so that it was announced during the Istanbul Conference, where the representatives of the Great Powers were present. It was hoped that this overlap would result in the prevention of further foreign intervention in what was conceived to be an Ottoman affair. However, the following Russo-Ottoman war and the consequent St. Stefano and Berlin treaties would prove that the politics of the Ottoman Empire was a European affair, as the Ottoman opposition would be in the years to come. The details and specific impacts of these events will be explained below. It should suffice for now to state that, although the Berlin Congress had frozen the Eastern Question to a certain extent, no peace had arrived in the Balkans or in the Ottoman Empire as a whole.

The activities of the Ottoman opposition in general would also increase concurrently with these events and indeed would be embedded in these international affairs to a certain point. In 1889, the nucleus of the later Committee of Union and Progress would be established by four students at the Royal Medical Academy and they did succeed in recruiting various members of the Ottoman elite, until the all-out attack of Abdülhamid on Committee members in 1897 and their exile to Tripoli (Libya). Overall, this section will try to explore the interactions between international diplomacy and politics, the establishment of the Hamidian regime and the opposition to it.

The period from the 1870s to the 1890s was a new era for the Ottoman Empire and the wider world. It is in these new beginnings that the Ottoman opposition began to

take a particular shape which in the following decade culminated in the 1908 Revolution.

4.2.2 The Constitution and the Istanbul (Tersane) Conference (1876)

"International politics provided the milieu within which empires were threatened."[144]

As was the case with many international crises in late Ottoman history, the events that caused the chain reaction leading to the Berlin Congress were triggered by the upheavals in the Balkans. The Balkans constituted a special province of the Ottoman Empire in many respects. Their heavily Christian population; their complicated agricultural system which had differed from those of other core Ottoman areas for many decades now; their dense political, economic and cultural interaction with Central Europe; their Slavic characteristics that rendered them open to influences from Russia as the 'Elder Brother' with the rise of pan-Slavism, but perhaps most importantly their diversity in terms of ethnicities, sects and languages, turned the region into a battleground for the political, commercial, religious and national interests of the Great Powers as well as those of the smaller governments of the Balkans themselves.[145] Its geopolitical position also meant that this was a vital area, not to be left to the total control of one's rivals.

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[144] Karen Barkey "Changing Modalities of Empire: A Comparative Study of the Ottoman and Habsburg Decline," in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World,* ed. Joseph W. Esherick and Hasan Kayali (London: Rowan and Littlefield, 2006), 193.

[145] "Before the reforms of the nineteenth century could take root, however, capitalist accumulation had already created its own autonomous space in most of the Balkans, thanks to the inability of the centre to improve its precapitalist logic. (...) That most of these newly enriched groups in the Balkans were non-Muslim was a significant factor in attracting the protection, encouragement and support of various European powers, who both helped to prepare the political and intellectual case for nationalism, and provided crucial diplomatic and military assistance. This is the story of Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian nationalisms." Çağlar Keyder, "The Ottoman Empire," in *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-building: the Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires,* ed. Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 33. This rather lengthy quote from Keyder not only supports the importance of the Balkans for European and Ottoman politics, it also hints at the reason why for most of the period under examination the Balkans (with the notable exception of the Armenian issue) were the main intersection point of European-Ottoman interaction at many levels. Perhaps its close rival in terms of their respective weight in international affairs is the Straits question, though the latter remained dormant for most of this time. Of course, again as hinted at in the quote from Keyder, the reasons for this importance cannot be

The possible collapse of the Ottoman Empire that arose in diplomatic discussions among the Great Powers in these decades always included a possible partition plan for the Balkans, in which all the Powers took special care that no large Balkan state would come to dominate the others. So the general tendency, especially after the Berlin Congress, was to uphold the *status quo* in the Balkans. Since Balkan politics, especially and most importantly Macedonia's, would be an immense factor in the politicization, political planning and methodology of the Young Turks, and would be the recruiting ground for the Young Turks among the Ottoman army officials in Macedonia, and since it would be where the revolution started and was declared, it is essential for the purposes of this chapter to achieve a clear grasp of the political and military process that led to and followed the Berlin Congress.

As important and shaky as the Balkan territories were, the Ottoman Empire actually put very little effort into integrating the conquered peoples and territories. However, the second half of the nineteenth century, as exemplified in the Austrian case, was hardly the time to leave the imperial elements in peace. Multi-ethnic empires like Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, and also Russia to a certain extent, were dealing with pressures from both their centres and their peripheries and one of the fundamental debates was that of centralization and reform. This had economic, political and ideological repercussions. In the words of Barkey: "Empires are dominant so long as they can maintain the combination of an ideological/cultural form of legitimation, with appropriate mechanisms of rule over cultural diversity and

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reduced to diplomatic or even economic affairs. They should be extended to the struggles of the various Balkan peoples, some examples of which will be provided below.

modes of appropriation of political and economic resources."[146] As the Ottoman Empire was losing its dominance in all the aspects of Barkey's description, the Balkan upheavals became an international affair. The 1875 Bosnia and Herzegovina upheavals and the 1876 Bulgarian upheavals were cases in point.

Contrary to upheavals in the previous centuries, the rebellions in the Balkans now started to produce an almost automatic response from the Great Powers, which demanded more radical reform from the Ottoman state. Hence, upheavals usually led to suppression by the Ottoman Empire and various kinds of international gatherings to discuss what was to be done and to a note or a memorandum to be imposed on to the Empire. The mid 1870s experienced exactly this kind of an event sequence. Moreover, this sequence had far-reaching implications both for European diplomacy and for the course of Ottoman politics thereafter. As the demands of the Balkan peoples for the Great Powers to be forced to intervene in the political crises increased, they found themselves heard, though not always in ways to their liking. They succeeded in having the Great Powers involved and they learned from each other in terms of how to achieve this involvement. The result was, in the words of James Joll, that: "It was their aspirations which caused many of the international crises of the period between the Franco-Prussian and the First World Wars."[147]

When the events in Bosnia and Herzegovina were followed by the rebellion in Bulgaria, the Ottoman state acted harshly and in April 1876 used coercion not only on the rebels but also in a large part of the country area. "Approximately 60 villages

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[146] Barkey, 175.

[147] Joll, 22.

had been destroyed and 12-15.000 people had been massacred."[148] One of the consequences of this harsh act was the change in public opinion in Great Britain, one of the traditional allies of the Ottoman Empire and a protector of Ottoman territorial integrity. The opposition within Great Britain acted quickly and Gladstone published in September 1876 his pamphlet, entitled "The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East", which sold over 200,000 copies.[149] When Austria-Hungary and Russia decided to force the Ottoman Empire into general reform in the Balkans and when they came up with a formula under the name of The Andrassy Note[150], this created frustration both on the side of the rebels and on the side of the reformist bureaucracy. The reformist wing of the bureaucracy was struggling with Sultan Abdülaziz, who was trying to regain the powers of the Sultanate from the bureaucratic establishment of Tanzimat. So great was the frustration that the Young Ottomans had sent a public statement to European diplomats and statesmen urging general reforms that would encompass all 'citizens' of the Empire and not only the non-Christian population in the European territories.[151]

In May 1876, the Austrian and Russian diplomats (most famously Andrassy and Gorchakov) had come together and issued the Berlin memorandum. Two weeks after this gathering, Midhad Pasha and Hüseyin Avni Pasha succeeded in their

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[148] Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 200.

[149] Ibid., 200. The Prime Minister at the time was Disraeli, a conservative and much more sympathetic to the traditional strategy of preserving Ottoman territorial integrity than Gladstone, who had served and would serve again as the Liberal Prime Minister and was not particularly fond of the Ottoman Empire.

[150] The Note was suggesting a reform that would include: "complete religious freedoms, the abolition of iltizam, and improvements in agriculture (...) yet were rejected by the rebels as they did not envisage autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina." Fikret Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 83.

[151] Ibid., 84. "The demand for general reforms, had remained as a distinctive characteristics of the Muslim bourgeoisie that was on the rise up until the 1908 Revolution." Ibid., 84.

conspiracy to dethrone Sultan Abdülaziz. They also succeeded in enthroning their favourite candidate, the liberal-minded Sultan Murad, who had Masonic tendencies. This incident, and the declaration of the constitution which was enabled by this dethronement, form one of the cornerstones of the *critical juncture* that occurred in the late 1870s in the Ottoman Empire. This juncture would reach its full presence with the replacement of Murad by Sultan Abdülhamid II. Since these incidents were symbiotically tied to the situation in the Balkans, as well as to the state of European diplomacy and politics, they are important clues to the empirical as well as the theoretical analysis of this thesis. The elements of this critical juncture that led to the emergence and success of the Ottoman opposition came into sight in the years between 1875 – 1878: *The constitutional regime*, although suspended shortly afterwards in 1878; the new *Sultan* who found himself enthroned – perhaps even to his surprise; the *alliance of bureaucracy and intellectuals,* which tasted victory and then faced resentment and which thought and acted always in a dialectical relationship with Europe; *the peoples* and their political organizations in various provinces of the Ottoman Empire who were both affected by and pushed European and Ottoman public opinion, as well as the respective governments, to acknowledge and solve their problems; and last but not least *the international political scene,* which carried within itself a new impetus for imperialist rivalry that was to endure until the First World War.

This 'critical juncture' and its repercussions will be revisited throughout this chapter. When we return to 1876, two major events can be detected. One is the Istanbul Conference – also known as the Tersane conference – convened by the representatives of the Great Powers with Ottoman participation in Istanbul to discuss

and solve the Balkan issue. The second is the declaration of the First Ottoman Constitution (Kanun-i Esasi), which coincided with this meeting. The Sultan who signed the constitution was Abdülhamid II, who owed his throne to his agreement with the reformist bureaucracy that had dethroned his uncle, Sultan Abdülaziz, just months previously. After promising to rule the Empire as a constitutionalist monarchy and to commit himself to the necessary reforms, he was brought to power by Midhad Pasha when the constitutionalists concluded that his brother Murad was unable to rule due to diminished mental capacity.[152]

The entirety of 1876 was a testament to the importance of one of the sub-themes of this thesis: the need to include the international realm, not merely as a *restraining,* but rather as an *inherent,* element in considering the rise and conditioning of domestic agency. The Young Ottomans and their political campaign had been operative for at least two decades in the Empire; however, it was the international crisis in the Balkans that merged with the internal power struggle between the Palace and the bureaucracy and thus facilitated the dethronement and enthronement of Sultans. Abdülhamid's approval of the declaration of the constitution had much to do with the fact that this came as a condition of his enthronement, but the urgency and the timing that lay behind the declaration were shaped by the Balkan crisis and the Istanbul conference convened in December 1876

[152] Abdülhamid II is known for the general fear of his life, his power, and it is usually claimed that all this had reached the level of paranoia. In the recent literature it is acknowledged that he had some justified reasons for all that fear, most notably regarding the circumstances of his enthronement. He himself lists those reasons in his memoirs, published by Ali Vehbi Bey: "They are accusing me of cowardice as I am not enthusiastically participating in the national reform movements. They must be forgetting the catastrophes that I had to endure! Firstly, the dethronement of my uncle Abdülaziz, then the way he committed suicide in a rather strange way; and later the insanity and imprisonment of my brother Murat." Sultan Abdülhamit, *Siyasi Hatıratım* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1999), 49. Also, on his 'shy' and 'secretive' personality, he commented that "When I came to power after my brother, I was surrounded by people who wanted to hold me hostage in a net of conspiracies. (...) If, as alleged, I am running away from people, it is a natural consequence of my life experiences." Ibid., 155.

in Istanbul. The reformists, and probably the Sultan as well, approached the issue of the constitution not only in terms of internal affairs but also in terms of the international political milieu. The Great Powers were pressing for reforms and it was obvious that the rebels in the Balkans were asking for even more than that. Also the constitutionalist movements in the recently formed Balkan states, including Romania, Serbia and Greece, were of interest and inspiration to the Ottoman reformists.[153] There is a nuance between the earlier reforms and the constitution, observed by Bülent Tanör, which is supportive of the conclusion here. "The external element here, unlike the 1856 Imperial Script, does not appear in the form of an overt 'coercion' or 'imposition'. Hence phrases such as 'to inspire confidence' or 'appeasement' of foreign powers are more appropriate, given the conditions of the situation."[154] In conclusion, the constitution was tied from its inception to provincial, imperial and international affairs. This in no way takes away from the fact it was a genuine action on the part of the Ottoman agents. It is in the context of this 'critical juncture', composed of a new Sultan, a new wave of reformism, a new wave of rebellions and a new composition of international affairs, that we can begin to understand Ottoman agency in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

As to the underlying theme of this thesis, namely the constitutive character of the international in domestic changes, such as a revolution, and the importance of the interplay between the two, this critical juncture is again relevant. In 1876 the nucleus of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 was seeded. *The Sultan* in the context of

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[153] Bülent Tanör, *Osmanlı-Türk Anayasal Gelişmeleri* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008), 128. Also Mount Lebanon had formed an assembly in 1864 and Tunis already had its constitution in 1861. Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 113.

[154] Ibid., 128-129.

whose policies they would emerge as political actors and whose policies and personal power they would fiercely oppose, Abdülhamid II, came to power. It was his policies of modernization combined with ideological suppression that created the particular brand of student in the Royal Schools who would form the in 1889 Committee that would later come to be known as the *Committee of Union and Progress*. The dynamics around which *international relations* would evolve were set in motion after 1870, along with the specific repercussions for the Ottoman Empire, which were already to be observed but would become clearer with the Berlin Congress of 1878. The structural conditions of the Ottoman Empire's diminishing financial, but also political, capacities were also 'there', especially in the declaration of bankruptcy in 1875 and later in the establishment of the Public Debt Administration. And the continuous but growing *separatism and internal strife* in the Balkans, together with political developments throughout the Empire, were threatening the Empire more than ever. *The juxtaposition of these elements was to make the Young Turk movement possible in the first place.*

4.2.3 The Russo-Ottoman war (1877-1878) and the Berlin Congress (1878)

> *"It would be during this long final half century, from the 1856 promulgation of the Tanzimat to the demise of the Sultanate in the wake of the First World War, a phase replete with contradictions between progress and violence, national and imperial, that 'Europe' would take shape in contrast to the 'Balkans' and the 'Middle East.'"*[155]

While Russia was preparing its war against the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of 1877, neither the Istanbul Conference nor Midhat Pasha's attempt to outfox the Great Powers by the declaration of the constitution produced any conclusive results for the situation in the Balkans. It was hoped that, with the

[155] Christine Philliou, "The Paradox of Perceptions: Interpreting the Ottoman Past through the National Present," *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no. 5 (2008): 669.

constitution, there was nothing to discuss in the context of the reform in the Balkans, as reform was coming from within the Empire. However, the foreign representatives were not impressed. They were also far from being unified. The British had their own internal quarrels regarding the future of the Ottoman Empire. The Conservative government of Disraeli wanted to soften the pressure on the Ottoman government for reform, whereas the Liberal opposition led by Gladstone was campaigning for the rights of Christians in the Balkans.[156] The parties to the Dreikaiserbund agreement were in an even more difficult position, as one of the parties to this was the aggressive party. Germany under the leadership of Bismarck, with its concerns to prevent a European war, endeavoured to contain Russia's aggression, not by stopping it but by limiting it. "Bismarck was probably seeing war as inevitable, and was hoping to minimize its scale and consequences. As for Germany and a near Eastern war – this would not be worth 'the healthy bones of a single Pomeranian musketeer."[157]

As the new Ottoman government, under the new Sultan Abdülhamid II, rejected the reform plans, Russia waged its war on the Ottoman Empire that was to last almost a year and result in the camping of the Russians just a few kilometres away from the Old City of Istanbul, in Yeşilköy. The Ottoman army, especially the navy, put up a significant defence, but was defeated nonetheless. The war started in April 1877 and the Treaty of St. Stefano (Ayastefanos) was signed in March 1878. This devastating defeat was to have international and domestic consequences. One of its early results was the way in which Abdülhamid II used this defeat in February

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[156] Joll, 16.

[157] C. J. Bartlett, *Peace, War and the European Powers, 1814-1914* (London: MacMillan, 1996), 104.

1878 as a pretext for suspending the Parliament that was formed after the declaration of the constitution. The Parliament would only reassemble after the 1908 revolution, although it was never officially abolished as an institution.[158] Also, at the height of the crisis, Abdülhamid exiled Midhad Pasha, who had already dethroned two Sultans before him. So, while the Empire was at war, the Sultan was waging his own war in his bid for power and his three-decades-long reign is testimony to his success at this task. It was his success in diminishing his bureaucratic rivals in the power struggle that paradoxically led to the emergence of the opposition to his rule. The Russo-Ottoman war and the Berlin Congress gave Abdülhamid II the means to achieve his ends. It is rather early to discuss the emergence of the opposition. However, *this point reiterates the argument that 1875 – 1878 was the critical juncture that made the Young Turk movement possible.*

As the war gave Abdülhamid the pretext to do as he pleased, "it was Abdülhamid II's success in quashing the independence of the Sublime Porte that led to the centralisation of power in the court and inadvertently paved the way for the revolutionary rise of a new and more dangerous rival for power – the military."[159] By eliminating the bureaucracy and the newly founded parliament as political power centres, Abdülhamid II was in fact facilitating opposition to his own rule. The war

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[158] Zarinebaf attracts our attention to the impact of the First Constitutional Regime in the Ottoman Empire on the Iranian revolutionaries. "Despite its shortcomings and short life (one year), the first Ottoman constitution had a major impact on political developments in the empire by inspiring not only the Young Turks who engineered the 1908 revolution but also the Young Iranians who came into contact with Ottoman political thinkers in Istanbul and played a major role in the constitutional revolution in Iran." Fariba Zarinebaf, "From Istanbul to Tabriz: Modernity and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28, no. 1 (2008): 167.

[159] Hanioğlu, "The Second Constitutional Period 1908 – 1918," in *Cambridge History of Turkey: Turkey in the Modern World,* 45.

with Russia and the shifting system of alliances that was undermining the trust placed in the Ottoman Empire by the 1856 treaty (under the terms of which Great Britain, Austria and France had promised to protect the territorial integrity of the Empire) led to renewed investment in the army. The events of 1875-1878 triggered a chain reaction which, combined with certain choices of the actors involved, paved the way for the possibility of a military-based reaction to the regime. This was one of the consequences of the war.

Another consequence was the Treaty of St. Stefano, which was disastrous in terms of territory loss for the Ottoman Empire. It turned out to be not so advantageous for Russia either. The creation of a large Bulgarian state under Russian protection that had borders in the Aegean was unacceptable to Austria and to England. These powers found the need to correct the Treaty of St. Stefano and saw this not as a burden, but as an opportunity. This diplomatic attitude towards the Empire was to have its impact on Hamidian policies for the rest of his reign. The way the powers handled St. Stefano exacerbated Abdülhamid II's suspicions and his increasing tendency to lean on Germany.[160]

The diplomatic crisis over the Treaty of St. Stefano and the Balkans in general were discussed at the Berlin Congress convened in the summer of 1878. This treaty was to determine the course of Balkan politics for the next two decades yet it rejected the demands for participation by the representatives of the Balkan peoples themselves. "The proceedings were brusquely opened with the frank comment, 'We

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[160] "By turning to Germany, Abdul Hamid hoped to counter the Russian threat by means other than support from Paris and London. At the same time, he hoped to challenge what he saw as the Anglo-French monopoly over Ottoman affairs." Ahmad, 11.

are not here to consider the happiness of the Bulgarians but to secure the peace of Europe'."[161] In this context, it is no surprise that both the leaders of the national movements in the Balkans and the Ottoman opposition inside the Empire and in exile were trying in later years to locate their causes in a European context, more specifically in a European diplomatic context. As the Russo-Ottoman war and the overriding of its concluding Treaty by the Great Powers in Berlin shows, "the international diplomacy did not allow these two countries to solve their problems on their own."[162]

The resolutions of the Berlin Congress, chaired by Bismarck[163] himself, were to cause further grievances in the Balkans. The Congress decided to divide the greater Bulgaria created by St. Stefano into Bulgaria and East Rumelia, with the latter to be given back to the Ottoman Empire. This was to cause further rebellion in the 1880s. Austria was given the right to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina. Russia gained territory in Caucasia, most notably Kars, Ardahan and Batum. Finally, two important international issues that are still of great relevance in the contemporary Middle East emerged: the Cyprus issue and the Armenian issue. Great Britain was handed Cyprus before the closing of the Berlin treaty, in exchange for protection from Russia. This suited Britain's increasing interest in the south Mediterranean, as it formed a link to Suez and was all linked to the protection of India. The Armenians,

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[161] Bartlett, *Peace, War and the European Powers*, 105. The comments belong to Bismarck the chair of the Congress.

[162] S. F. Oreşkova, "Rusya ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Arasmdaki Savaşlar: Sebepleri ve Kimi Tarihi Sonuçları," in *Dünden Bugüne Türkiye ve Rusya: Politik, Ekonomik ve Kültürel İlişkiler*, ed. Gülten Kazgan and Natalya Ulçenko (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2003), 27.

[163] Bismarck, by various humiliating comments, made clear that he did not respect the representative of the Ottoman Empire. Georgeon, 118.

who had also sent delegates to the Congress, were appeased with the 61st clause of the Berlin Treaty which was on reforms to protect the Armenians against Kurdish and Circassian threats.[164]

In addition to rendering the fate of vast regions from the Balkans to Cyprus and Eastern Anatolia a subject of international diplomacy, the Berlin Treaty envisaged the changing of borders in the Balkans. This was to cause resistance for the decade to follow. In this way and in many others, the Berlin Treaty caused resentments for most of the parties involved, starting with the Ottoman Empire and Russia. Although it succeeded in freezing the Balkan question for the time being, it created new questions, such as the Bulgarian and Macedonian issues. As one of the last international treaties of the 'European peace', it constitutes the last part of our *critical juncture*. As the Great Powers were unwilling to allow Russia to conclude its own peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire, they intervened in a wider political issue. "The events of 1877-8 had emphasised once again, and with unparalleled clarity, that the issues involved were inextricably intertwined, of general European concern and incapable of solution simply by Russian pressures against the Porte."[165] The idea that Ottoman problems could only be solved by international intervention was to leave a deep mark on Ottoman politics. It would be no coincidence then that the Young Turk leaders would send letters explaining themselves to European diplomats or that the Armenian militants would conduct political protests in order to attract the attention of the Europeans.

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[164] "This clause which rendered the signatory states of the Berlin Treaty intervening parties was to be the basis of the future Armenian demands." Ibid., 121.

[165] Alan Bodger, "Russia and the End of the Ottoman Empire," in *The Great Powers and the End of Ottoman Empire*.

Overall, the Berlin Treaty confirmed a situation, as it emerged in the second half of the 1870s, whereby Ottoman politics, from domestic reform to financial debt, was indeed international politics. Abdülhamid II for the rest of his reign reacted to this situation in various ways (from suppression to further Westernization). The Sultan was not the only one to react. The Ottoman bureaucratic and intellectual elite transformed its *Weltanschaung* accordingly and so did the various ethnic and religious communities throughout the Empire. Each of these actors developed their own techniques for handling the situation. Although there exists the argument that the fate of the Ottoman Empire was in the hands of the foreign powers and it was their decisions that made it survive as long as it did[166], it was not clear to the Ottoman actors that the fall and partition of the Empire was inevitable, nor that the nation-state was to be the only viable option for communities within the Empire.[167] So the fact that Ottoman politics was an international affair did not stop them from pursuing their own politics within this affair and influencing it a great deal along the way. The politics of the peoples of Macedonia and of the Armenians emerged from this intersection among the global, the imperial and the local.

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[166] "If the Empire survived for almost another century and a half, that was due more to the rivalries of the Great Powers and their failure to reach an agreement on how to divide the 'sick man's' legacy than to the patient's will and determination to survive." Ahmad, 5.

[167] As Reşat Kasaba concludes, the Ottomans did partake in the many attempts at reform with the intent of staying in the Empire. This shows firstly that a retrospective reading from the several nationalist discourses that emerged after the collapse is rather misleading for the period before the collapse. Also, crucially, it shows that the Ottomans indeed showed will and determination for the continuity of the Empire, despite or perhaps because of their grievances. "The idea that people should only live with and be ruled by people of their own 'kind' would be alien to most of the subjects of the empire. Therefore, many urban notables, merchants and local intellectuals actively participated in the new experiments of the nineteenth century and helped give them substance. They emerged as the main delegates or electors in the six parliamentary elections that were held in the Ottoman Empire between 1876 and 1919." Reşat Kasaba, "Dreams of Empire, Dreams of Nations," in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, ed. Joseph W. Escherick, Hasan Kayali, and Eric Van Young, (London Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 211. For a comparative account, also see C. A. Bayly. "The fall of the Ottoman Empire, or at least its core provinces, seems more and more like a contingency of war rather than a consequence of the inevitable rise of nationalism." Christopher Bayly, "Distorted Development: The Ottoman Empire and British India, circa 1780– 1916," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27 (2007): 334.

The story so far has been the background political history which surrounded the Hamidian era and the Young Turk's political education. The various struggles of these peoples, on the other hand, will provide a view of the context in which the Young Turks actually became politically active. We now turn to the surfacing of the Young Turk opposition, which was conditioned but not pre-determined by this critical juncture fully materialized by the Berlin Treaty in 1878.

4.2.4 The Hamidian era and the establishment of the CUP

The political organization, which after years of internal divisions and mergers and a great deal of transformation, would declare the constitutional revolution in the Ottoman Empire, was founded on June 2, 1889, by four students of the Royal Medical Academy in Istanbul under the name of the Ottoman Union Society (İttihad-ı Osmanî Cemiyeti).[168] It was neither the first opposition group nor the most important at its inception. Nonetheless it was to be the most successful and would lead to the end of an *ancien régime*. However, it took almost a decade for the founders of the Ottoman Union Society to turn themselves into an organization formidable enough to attract the repressive policies of Abdülhamid II. In 1897 most of the members were arrested and exiled and the headquarters were moved to Europe. "A careful examination of the evidence shows that the CUP did not become a prominent actor until 1894 – 1895, and its prior activities were quite insignificant."[169]

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[168] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 71. The students were İbrahim Temo, Abdullah Cevdet, Mehmed Reşid and İshak Sükûti.

[169] Ibid., 33.

In line with the purposes of this chapter, this section will start with the politics of the Hamidian era, with an emphasis on the international connections, and continue by locating the actors within the larger picture of international politics. The first section will deal with Hamidian policies prior to the establishment of the Ottoman Union Society and the second section will deal with their activities until 1895.

4.2.4.1 The Hamidian Era in the aftermath of the Berlin Congress

The literature of recent years has undermined the view of Abdülhamid II as the reactionary, fanatically religious and incapable Sultan and has brought a new perspective on his policies at home and abroad. His infamous politics of Pan-Islamism is now interpreted as a pragmatic, strategic move rather than as evidence of his backwardness. The Sultan who the Young Turks would come to oppose had inherited an Empire in disarray. The Berlin Congress caused more problems than it solved and led to new conflicts. The intent was to 'freeze' the Balkan situation, but with new borders and reform packages the situation became impregnated with new rebellions and wars. Most of the Balkan peoples and governments were dissatisfied and the Ottomans had to deal with their dissatisfaction, as in the case of Albanian resistance and Greek border issues. Also, Cyprus was now handed over to Great Britain without any resistance on the part of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenians were recognized in the treaty, which did not meet their demands but acknowledged their cause to some extent, and the Armenian issue would become one of the big crises in the Hamidian era and one in which the Young Turks would be involved. Abdülhamid II also inherited an Empire that was bankrupt. The creditors, mostly from France and Great Britain, established a Public Debt Administration in 1881.

Despite this gloomy picture, it is argued that Abdülhamid actually succeeded in bringing about economic improvements and, like almost all of his policies, this facilitated the formation and strengthening of an opposition to his rule. One such explanation is given by Akarlı: "Rising economic prospects in certain parts of the Empire fanned the desire for autonomy from a government incapable of protecting local economic interests against foreign ones."[170]

As the struggle for economic and political advantage intensified in the provinces, Abdülhamid found himself in the position of a negotiator between foreign powers, between the newly independent states, and in a space cutting across all of these. It was his policy choices in international and imperial matters that fuelled the opposition , along with his style of government, which included strict censorship, the encouragement of espionage within the Empire and a secret intelligence service – which was to prove itself efficient against the Young Turks.

Despite his image as a reactionary and a despot, Abdülhamid II made many of the Tanzimat reforms his own, including the administrative, financial, military and educational reforms. He supported the existing plans to rationalize the administration of the Empire, though he himself did not want to be subject to the same rationalization. He continuously changed *sadrazams* and other high ranking bureaucrats, moved the high military officers around the Empire and, most importantly, he wanted to insure the loyalty of his subjects. While the new educational and administrative understanding was based on the idea of merit,

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[170] Engin Deniz Akarlı, "The Tangled Ends of an Empire: Ottoman Encounters with the West and Problems of Westernization—an Overview," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 26, no. 3 (2006): 357.

Abdülhamid's rule was based on the idea of 'loyalty'. As summarized by Hanioğlu, "Because he promoted western technology and education, 'modern' bureaucrats emerged throughout the Empire, and this new group, known as the Young Turks, found that they were unable to rise within the bureaucratic ranks because of the sultan's neopatrimonial regime."[171]

As he was attempting to accumulate patrimonial powers, Abdülhamid II had to cope with the disintegration of the Empire because the Balkan peoples were objecting to the Berlin Treaty. Abdülhamid II recognized the fact that Britain could not be trusted alone with the territorial and political integrity of the Empire. The shifting alliances in Europe, coupled with the new imperialist rivalry and the international financial control of the Empire, was calling for a more independent solution. Despite all his shortcomings, the Court under his leadership endeavoured to come up with such a solution, one element of which was the newly emphasised role of the Caliph as a glue for the Muslim population as well as a form of international political leverage. Another was the way he chose to deal with non-Muslim communities such as the Armenians. He chose to form a special military unit composed of Kurds, called *Hamidiye Alayları*, to tackle the emerging Armenian militants. This was a move not only towards the Armenians, but also towards the Kurds. Indeed, integration or reintegration of the elements of the Empire was one of his basic concerns. He even wondered about the solutions adopted in other multi-ethnic empires.[172] Censorship, repression of the opposition or any kind of alternative

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[171] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 25.

[172] "I wonder whether the situation is better on the Russian territories, on the other side of the border. Is there any mobilisation among the Armenians similar to our situation?" Abdülhamid, 59.

political voice went hand in hand with his need to legitimize the regime and justify it in the eyes of the international community and of public opinion in the Empire.[173] All in all the problems that the Hamidian regime faced were unique in some aspects and in others common to the other multi-ethnic empires. His solutions were to make an impact, not only on the Young Turks but directly and indirectly on the Balkans and the Middle East, for decades to come. This is well underlined by Akarlı:

> "Heterogeneity of the Ottoman population, the poor state of the economy and government finances, and vulnerability to external pressure rendered the political integration of the Ottoman Empire a gigantic task, if not an impossible one. The Ottoman leadership recognized these problems. Although the Ottoman state in the end proved unsalvageable, the solutions it sought have had important repercussions for the people living in Ottoman lands."[174]

So this was the paradox and the creativity of the Hamidian era. The international pressure coupled with the insurgencies within the Empire was such that the Sultan had to create spaces in which he could manoeuvre. Reforms in all these fields were in a sense intended to provide such spaces, and were to a great extent innovative and autonomous – autonomy not in the sense of complete independence, but in the sense of not being pre-determined. Education especially, as brilliantly analyzed by Fortna, was one of these crucial fields. And it is in the field of education that one encounters the seeds of the Young Turk movement.

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[173] Bayly, in a comparative work on British India and the Ottoman Empire, emphasises that most governments in this era invented new ways and discourses for regime legitimization:
"Yet the late-nineteenth-century autocracies did not rely solely on a brief technical superiority over their internal and external enemies. They also honed a more powerful set of propaganda tools. Benjamin Disraeli's Crystal Palace speech of 1871 announced a "new imperialism." In the hands of conservative viceroys of India, this took the form of an emphasis on feudalism, ethnic separation, and the British inheritance of India's past." Bayly, 341.

[174] Akarlı, "The Tangled Ends of an Empire," 358.

Although from a superficial reading of the Ottoman modernization it may seem as if the successive Ottoman governments throughout the nineteenth century simply 'borrowed' from the West, the works of Fortna and Somel prove that the issue was more complicated.[175] As the penetration of the West took on new forms, such as missionaries, the newly independent states neighbouring the Empire and the Western-influenced Christian subjects of the Empire, education became a field of competition.[176] It reflected both symbolic and actual power. Fortna claims that the Ottomans did not simply stand by and let the other agents operate, they did 'fight back'. "A wariness of Western encroachment of all kinds translated into a more combative approach to the West in general and a more reflective adaptation of its institutions."[177]

Fortna insists on using the term adaptation rather than adoption. And perhaps the Hamidian policies were oscillating between these two. As he had a more combative approach to educational reform, he was ready for a direct transfer from the West when Von der Goltz arrived in the Ottoman military and developed the concept of 'general staff officers' in the army, who were to have a special education and would be the 'ruling' elite of the military.[178] Old schools were reformed and new

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[175] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, autocracy, and discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

[176] Fortna also points out the fact that all the powers were indeed in a competitive state of mind in terms of education. This is in parallel with the competitive state of affairs that Deringil finds in the field of legitimation of the big powers. As Fortna sums up: "The complicated relationship with the West, both a major source of emulation for the Ottoman educational system and a threat to the very existence of the Empire, can only be appreciated in light of the competition milieu." Fortna, *Imperial Classroom*, 48.

[177] Fortna, *Imperial Classroom*, 9.

[178] Sacit Kutlu, *Milliyetçilik ve Emperyalizm Yüzyılında Balkanlılar ve Osmanlı Devleti* (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007), 138.

schools founded for these and other purposes. The ideas of positive sciences and progress were the cornerstones of this education policy.

Clearly, the scientific reasoning behind the Hamidian education policies had a deep impact on the Young Turks who, despite many internal disagreements and changes of heart throughout the period until the revolution, did not give up their commitment to the idea that science was the key to progress and progress the key to saving the Empire. But the new schools also had other adverse affects that in turn fuelled the seeds of opposition from within. Şerif Mardin, in his cardinal study of the political ideas and origins of the Young Turks, argues that the new schools also fed a kind of discrimination and division among the students. Despite their training, Abdülhamid II hesitated to assign responsibilities to the commanding officers, a fact that the students took note of – he was establishing the Yıldız Palace as the command centre, in line with his centralization policies. Additionally, there was a limit to the rationalization and meritocracy in these institutions and, as the number of students from the provinces increased, those students from notable families still enjoyed the benefits of their social status and were promoted ahead of the others. Mardin demonstrates that there was a division between those from Istanbul and those from the provinces; between the better off and the less privileged. Mardin traces the leaders of the Young Turks to the latter groups:[179]

> "One of the signs of how this dualism wounded the hearts of the Young Turks is the articles on promotion regulations that appeared in their political programmes from time to time. Another sign is that all those who were promoted this way [because of their family connections] were degraded after the proclamation of liberty [the revolution of 1908]."[180]

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[179] Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 56-58.

[180] Ibid., 58.

These students from various academies were to establish the Ottoman Union Society or, as it was later named, the CUP, and would be exiled. It was another wave of students from the military academy that would accumulate in Macedonia in the 1900s and then join the CUP in 1907. So the critical juncture of 1875-1878 led to the paradox of the Hamidian era: the policies designed to deflect enemies from both outside and inside in fact built up the opposition from within. Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman bureaucracy fought back - against the international situation as a whole and against specific problems that were either international or had international causes or outcomes – but at the same time, the opposition to their choices emerged.

The critical juncture identified in the preceding sections resulted in a disastrously difficult international situation and in a Sultan whose prime objectives became to minimize the external damage and prevent internal strife of various kinds. It is in the unique solutions to this situation that one can observe the origins of the Young Turk movement. Ideologically, they were tied to various intellectual movements in the West, most notably positivism and a particular kind of materialism. Politically they feared the disintegration, but did not act on the idea that it was inevitable. Socially they belonged to a new group within the Ottoman elite whose social background and education was a curious mix. Their emergence occurred in the context of the Hamidian era, which itself was conditioned yet not absolutely determined by the international predicament. Of course, the successes and failures in this process were also factors in the outcome. As Hanioğlu reminds us:

> "Indeed, it is often forgotten that Abdülhamid II's ambitious agenda of bureaucratic modernization at home depended on his ability to parry the external threats to the empire."[181]

4.2.4.2 The CUP and its affairs: a diplomatic crisis and the escape to Europe

The 1880s in Ottoman politics witnessed the unfolding of the critical juncture explained in the above sections of this chapter. Abdülhamid II was accumulating power, but also struggling with various internal and external threats. In 1881, the Public Debt Administration was founded, which did not leave much room for financial independence. The Greeks, the Armenians, the Albanians and Kurds, the Muslim and non-Muslim communities of the Empire and the peoples of its independent neighbours were all in a rebellious mood. Albanians objected fiercely to the new border arrangements.[182] Kurds, under the leadership of Sayyid Ubeydullah, rebelled against the 61st article of the Berlin Treaty, which envisaged the protection of the Armenians against the Kurds and Circassians.[183] Greece was trying to achieve the maximum gain in the drawing of the new border and the Armenians were establishing revolutionary organizations in Tbilisi and Geneva.

The Ottoman state was not alone in its concern for the integrity and continuity of the Empire. The students from the various academies of the Empire, the Royal Medical Academy, the Royal War Academy, and the Royal School of

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[181] Hanioğlu, *The Late Ottoman Empire*, 129.

[182] Isa Blumi, "Contesting the Edges of the Ottoman Empire: Rethinking Ethnic and Sectartian Boundaries in the Malësore, 1878 – 1912," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35, no. 2 (2003).

[183] Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004). 74.

Administration, as frustrated as they were with the grievances mentioned above, the discrimination, the patrimonial nature of the Hamidian regime, the procedures of promotion, etc., were also concerned with the future of the Empire. Erik J. Zürcher, in various articles, points out the fact that not much is known about the founders of the CUP and its increasing membership thereafter. The traits that he has gathered show us that they were not necessarily bourgeois in origin or outlook. "The generalization sometimes made that the Young Turks had a petty bourgeois background does not seem to be based in fact. The two characteristics which bound the Young Turks together were education and profession."[184] They were mostly from the Western regions of the Empire, urban and educated.[185] They belonged to a young professional group. And remarkably they were not dominantly Turkish in origin. In fact of the students who founded the CUP in 1889 in the Royal Medical Academy none were Turk. It is no coincidence that Albanians and Kurds were in this group, as they came from the internationally and inter-religiously problematic areas of the Empire. Again, it is important that the small initial group grew particularly in size during the Armenian crisis (1894 – 1896), which was at once international and imperial in character.

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[184] Erik J. Zürcher, "The Ottoman Legacy of the Turkish Republic: An Attempt at a New Periodization," *Die Welt Des Islams* 32, no. 2 (1992): 241-242.

[185] Zürcher breaks down the origins of the first wave of Young Turks until the attack of the regime in 1896 – 1897. "This is a group of 20 persons, whose origins were as follows:
Istanbul 2
Balkans 7 (this includes 2 from provinces lost in 1878)
Aegean 3 (Rhodes, Smyrna and Crete)
Arab provinces 2
Kurdistan 2
Caucasus 4 (all from the Russian Empire)
Anatolia 0"
Zürcher, "The Young Turks – Children of the Borderlands?" *Turkology Update Leiden Project Working Papers Archive*, Department of Turkish Studies, Universiteit Leiden, October 2002, 5.

Since the Berlin Congress, Britain had been playing the role of protector towards the Christian community in the eastern provinces. With the shifting European alliances and the new British attitude towards the Ottoman Empire, Abdülhamid II had distrust towards the British. The invasion of Egypt in 1882 did not help, nor did the new Gladstone government in Britain, with the prime minister infamous for his anti-Ottoman attitudes. So, when respective British ambassadors were pressing for reform in favour of the Armenians, Abdülhamid II was stalling and keeping the plans on hold.[186] However, the Armenians, who had longstanding grievances not only against the Ottoman state but also against the Kurdish tribes and whose elite experienced a cultural renaissance in parallel to the increase in foreign missionary activities in the East[187], also showed political will and determination and opted for armed action. At the beginning of the 1890s "Armenian revolutionaries were mobilising and stockpiling arms in numerous areas."[188] Of course, the Eastern provinces were impregnated with violent conflict, and one should also remember the Kurdish revolt of 1881. The developments up until the 1894-1896 crisis are well summarized by Bloxham, who puts these events into their larger context:

> "It is no exaggeration to say that the Armenian question was born as the international politics of the eastern question intersected with the agrarian question, the question of demographic change in Anatolia and the development of Armenian national consciousness, all at the inauspicious moment at which Abdülhamid was seeking to re-establish the state's control of its own destiny by a different and more religiously exclusive modernisation agenda."[189]

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[186] On the British-Ottoman interaction in this diplomatic crisis see Jeremy Salt, "Britain, the Armenian Question and the Cause of Ottoman Reform: 1894-96," *Middle Eastern Studies* 26, no. 3 (1990).

[187] Bloxham, "Terrorism and Imperial Decline: The Ottoman-Armenian Case," *European Review of History* 14, no. 3 (2007): 303.

[188] Ibid., 312.

[189] Ibid., 305-306.

This mobilisation[190] and the circle of violence and counter-violence, coupled with further international intervention, culminated in the Sasun massacre of 1894[191] where Armenians were killed in masses by the Ottoman troops. And with the events of 1894-1896, which included urban[192] and rural activities, the internationalization of the Armenian issue was complete. Both Abdülhamid II and the Young Turks were to react to the situation in their own ways. Abdülhamid II's reaction was violent and harsh, whereas the Young Turks, as concerned as they were, saw at this moment as an opportunity for political expression and organizational enhancement. In fact their membership not only increased but also diversified and now included senior statesmen and *ulema.*

As the organization was expanding both among the Academies and among some bureaucrats, Abdülhamid II's intelligence service obtained information about its existence and waves of arrests started. The arrests had two main results: the fleeing of students to Europe and hence the start of political activities in exile; and a new composition of the Istanbul group, which now was joined by bureaucrats who were conspiring to dethrone Abdülhamid II. Although arrests occurred, some of the

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[190] The two Armenian revolutionary organizations that were founded in the late 1880s were Hnchak and Dashnaktsutiun. Hnchak Committee was founded in Geneva in 1887 and Dashnaktsutiun in Tbilisi in 1890.

[191] "The relationship between protection, agitation and gesturing to the outside world played itself out in a chain of calamitous events in the mid-1890s. The chain began with the first instance of large-scale, nationalist-influenced Armenian resistance in 1893–1894 in the Sasun region of Bitlis province, and ended in slaughter on a huge scale." Bloxham, 307.

[192] The Armenian militants became even active in Istanbul, most probably because demonstrations and protests at the Capital had a bigger chance of attracting international attention. The following two events are the highlights of these activities: "On August 26, 1896, a group of Armenians took over the main Ottoman Bank in Beyoğlu. (...) Soon after a second group forced its way into the Sublime Porte, wounding several officials and threatening the grand vezir with a pistol. (...) Another bomb was thrown at the sultan as he was going to the Aya Sofya mosque for the Friday prayer, with more than 20 policemen guarding him being killed." Shaw and Shaw, 204-205.

students were pardoned by the Sultan, as the organization was not yet deemed to be important. It was when the students' continuous activities merged with the international crisis in 1895 that the CUP was perceived as more than a simple student organization. "The sultan feared that high-ranking bureaucrats might capitalize and employ them as their tool."[193]

Ahmed Rıza's joining of the CUP occurred around the same time. He was residing in Paris, having given up the hope of making a difference within the bureaucratic structure of the Empire. He was an adamant adherent of positivism, especially of the works of Auguste Comte. Ahmed Rıza would prove to be an unyielding advocate of the constitutional cause and would establish his own faction in the aftermath of the 1902 Congress. In the mid-1890s he was approached by a Young Turk student[194] and asked to publish the official organ of the Committee. In 1895, he started to publish *Meşveret*[195] and also its French supplement. He negotiated with the founders of the Ottoman Union Society to change its name. True to his positivist tendencies, he opted for the name of Order and Progress. However, the founders insisted on Union (referring to the Union of Ottomans) and the name Committee of Union and Progress was decided upon. While the Young Turk community in Paris was expanding, the Istanbul headquarters was involved in an

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[193] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 75.

[194] Dr. Nazım. Hanioğlu points out the fact that Dr. Nazım in particular was not at all interested in the constitution nor in developing a programme for reform or revolution and cites Şevket Süreyya Aydemir's dialogue with him. Ibid., 32. After admitting that he did not know the contents of the constitution for which he was fighting, he also admits the lack of interest in a programme for the post-revolutionary period. "So, in that case, there was not any programme of action for the future of the committee? – Don't say that. I know there was a programme. I wouldn't be able to explain it if you ask me, but it should have been a sizable one. But nobody was really interested in that." Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Suyu Arayan Adam* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2006), 277.

[195] The title referred to the institution of consultation to evoke the demands for constitutional regime.

attempted coup d'état. Nonetheless, publishing and distributing manifestos, rather than conducting a coup, would be the first public political action. As the British and other powers were drawn into the Armenian crisis so were the Young Turks. They commented on the Armenian activities and the Sultan's policies in four 'appeals'.

> "A third one, written by the CUP organization in the capital focused on government corruption, and contrary to the first two, asked the Muslims and Christians to unite against the common enemy and accused the sultan of preferring foreign intervention to forming a consultative body of capable statesmen."[196]

This appeal sums up the tendencies and paradoxes of the early years of the CUP. Despite the obvious lack of support for the Armenian cause, they shared with the Armenians a method of stepping up political activities: that locating politics in an international context. The appeal also demonstrated the unionism of the CUP and their confidence in the belief that 'capable statesmen' would be able to 'save the state', unlike a despotic Sultan. The issue of 'foreign intervention' would cause internal strife and later division in the CUP, which will be examined in detail in the next chapter. However, division and internal opposition had already started in 1895, with Ahmed Rıza taking one stance and the 'new central committee in Istanbul – composed of high-ranking bureaucrats, military generals and ulema"[197] another stance on the issue of coup d'état.

As the diplomatic crisis deepened new members joined, one of whom was Murad Bey, also known as Mizancı Murad after the name of the journal he published, *Mizan*. He was a former bureaucrat and a teacher at the Royal School of

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[196] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 76.

[197] Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, 79.

Administration. He was to become an influential figure in the movement, both through his escape to Europe and later through the way he returned to the Empire, which will again be dealt with in the next chapter. On the issue of the coup d'état and all the other issues that seemed to divide Ahmed Rıza and the Istanbul committee he "became a balancing power between the Istanbul centre and Ahmed Rıza", who had started to publish Meşveret in Paris in late 1895 as the official organ of the CUP. Murad Bey also initiated several meetings with European diplomats and Ahmed Rıza started issuing statements to the European press. As Hanioğlu states, the Young Turk movement started to become a diplomatic affair.[198]

The diplomatic crisis over the Armenian issue died out, as none of the interested powers – except Britain – was committed to the cause. The Russian government in particular was worried that any international intervention on this issue would cause Russia harm, given the fact that Russia had its own Armenian community. Abdülhamid II in the end appeared victorious in the sense that he managed to deflect what he considered another blow to Ottoman sovereignty. With this and the later Greco-Ottoman war – which the Ottoman armies won on the battleground - in the background, the arrests and exile of Young Turks intensified, leading to an almost complete elimination of the organization within the Empire. Details of the war and of the situation of the Young Turks in exile will be provided in the next chapter.

The years between 1889 and 1896 were the founding years of the Young Turk movement. These young students and their collaborators from different sections of

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[198] Ibid., Introduction.

the state mechanism were aware of the imperial and international issues that transcended them. They were eager and ambitious in that they were trying to manipulate this wider world for their own political purposes. The Armenian crisis, recounted at length in the preceding pages, is a case in point. So would be their numerous attempts to manipulate European diplomacy while they were in exile, and this is also the essence of their activities in Cairo. Through their education and their interest in Ottoman and world politics, these students, the statesmen who joined them and later the increasing number of members from the army became actors in a game that was at once Ottoman and European. As alliances and political mentalities shifted in Europe, the Ottoman political actors were influenced by these, but were also presented with choices for how to deal with this changing world. The argument here has so far been developed in order to reveal the international as a constitutive element in the Hamidian regime and in the opposition against it. The next chapter will explain how both the Hamidian regime and the Ottoman opposition became actors on the international scene.

4.3 Conclusion

> *"In HS [Historical Sociology], the causal argument is central, and causal propositions are tested and carefully selected rather than just arbitrarily introduced into the argument. This is where HS differentiates most clearly from many interpretivist or post-modernist approaches that ultimately reject causal explanation."*[199]

A thorough study of the causes of the Young Turk Revolution, especially a long-term analysis, is not yet present in the literature. Studies of the ideational development of the Young Ottomans and Young Turks are available. So are studies of the two years before the revolution. The literature on the Young Turks focuses most extensively on the actual Unionist governments and the First World War years. Perhaps one reason for the lack of available studies of the causes is that this is a multi-layered story, with the layers stretching into multiple disciplines. This chapter has been part of an attempt to show that international relations as a discipline has much to offer in studying single cases of political change, such as the Young Turk Revolution, when it is properly informed by history and sociology. What is also called the historical sociological approach to International Relations has provided us with the means to look at the story of the beginnings of the Hamidian regime and the beginnings of the opposition from a fresh angle. These means were, first and foremost, the special attention paid to the peaks of the international political change itself. As such, the rise of Germany, the changing attitudes of Russia and England and the evolving tools of international politics were put on the spot. Secondly, the general spirit of the age, which can only be discerned if one looks through an international lens, was helpful in understanding what was constant in all this change. For the time period under examination, this was the 'new imperialism' and a world

[199] Dannreuther and Kennedy, "Historical Sociology in Sociology," 375.

more than ever interconnected and in competition. Thirdly, historical sociological approach to IR directs us to the historical trajectory of certain issues, such as the Armenian issue, and, as we will encounter in the next chapter, the Macedonian issue. The roots and causes of these issues were traced to the 1870s and were linked. Fourthly, a historical emphasis asks us to find the causal links in explaining political change. Here, that task has been fulfilled by showing the impact of various international elements on a number of important domestic conflicts and transformations. The changing attitude of the Great Powers towards the Ottoman Empire built up the circumstances within which the Hamidian regime formed itself. The peculiarity of the Hamidian reforms and the tactics of foreign and domestic policy that the Sultan developed cannot be fully explained without showing their international causes. The same holds true for the rise of the opposition, in this case the Young Turks. This is indeed no surprise, as not only were potential opposition members affected by the Sultan's policies which were part of and consequential upon the international situation, but opposition members also had an autonomous grasp of the international situation. These linkages will be particularly important when we move on to the questions of the why and how of the revolution.

A subsidiary theme of this thesis and a special concern of Historical Sociology is the question of agency. As it is a particularly multi-layered issue, and as the historical narrative of this time period requires it, a certain theoretical abbreviation with regards to the issue of agency has been made in this chapter. Especially on the issue of the Hamidian regime and on the years of Ottoman disintegration, the Ottomanists in the last decades have been drawing attention to the factually wrong and historically farfetched argument that it was external pressures

that determined everything. It is the contention of this work that this is indeed an indispensable revision of the historiography of the late Ottoman Empire. However, there is a not so fine a line between determination and co-constitution. Ottoman agency, as it evolved in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, was not rendered futile by international pressures. It was, however, changing and rising (with reference to the combative approach of the Hamidian regime in certain respects and to the intensification of the Ottoman opposition) as an integral part of the wider world. The very conditions of its nature were symbiotically tied to international conditions. Several aspects of this symbiotic relationship have been explained above. A remarkable example of this is the competition among the emperors and monarchs in several aspects of their rules, such as education, symbols of legitimacy and even 'public image'. This chapter has mostly dealt with the high politics aspect.[200] The contention of this work so far is that Ottoman agency was indeed as active and innovative as the Ottomanists claim. It was the international, at many levels, that gave rise to and facilitated that process of innovation. Two clear examples are worthy of further mention. The clear connection between the Berlin Congress and the various responses to it from the Ottoman actors - from active resistance, as in the case of the Albanians, to stalling and ignoring, as in the case of Abdülhamid II, and finally feelings of humiliation followed by the need to seek reforms in the Ottoman Empire itself, as in the case of the Young Turks. Another example is the Armenian crisis in the 1890s and the numerous ways in which this international crisis was

[200] Another face of the issue is that of ideas, their international dissemination and their value in explaining agency in moments of change. This is largely omitted from this chapter and thesis, firstly because the ideational development of the actors in the case study is well studied in the literature. Secondly, that kind of investigation would steal the focus away from the main theme of the thesis, namely the international/domestic dichotomy. That should not mean, however, that the author contends that the ideational realm is not a legitimate topic of study for the theory of agency or that of the international. It is the limits of this particular study that holds the investigation back from delving into the other infamous dichotomy of the social sciences, that of the material/ideational.

exploited by Young Turks and non-Young Turk Ottoman statesmen for their own causes. It was during this crisis that the students of the Royal Academies decided to issue their public appeals. The Ottoman Empire may have been cornered by several external threats, the Ottoman Sultan tried to abuse the inter-relations between those threats in order to create a space for himself and the Ottoman opposition was indeed given that space and rose within it.

CHAPTER 5 1896 – 1906: A DECADE OF GLOBAL, IMPERIAL AND LOCAL POLITICS

5.1 Introduction

> *"This race among the major powers to establish economic and political spheres of influence and new dominions created a world loaded with confusion, tension, violent competition and nationalistic emotionalism."*[201]

The late 1890s witnessed the total exclusion of the CUP as an organization in the Ottoman Empire and the flight of many members and sympathizers to Europe. In almost a decade and despite the odds against them, divided, reorganized and regrouped, they were to defeat one of the most powerful Sultans in Ottoman history. The years between 1896 and 1906 are hard to pin down in several aspects. There is no straightforward line of development, globally or imperially. The fluidity of the era and the specifics of the case are revealed in the following elements: the amount of change in the revolutionaries' thinking and activities, the internal divisions, the shifting alliances in Europe and the Sultan's various responses to the Great Powers and towards the opposition. With regards to the CUP, after the first shock of the defeat, came the moments of internal strife and the refining of the differences within this opposition group. The 1902 Congress of the Ottoman Opposition formalized these differences and led to the emergence of two camps: the majority (under the leadership of Prince Sabahaddin) and the minority (under the leadership of Ahmed Rıza). Meanwhile, the incessant Ottoman-European interaction continued, while a major issue of international concern, the Macedonian issue, accelerated. The rebellions in Macedonia and the activities of the Armenian militants in the Empire

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[201] Akarlı, "The Problems of External Pressures, Power Struggles, and Budgetary Deficits in Ottoman Politics under Abdulhamid II (1876-1909): Origins and Solutions," (PhD Diss., Princeton University, 1976), 42.

and in Europe took much away from the prestige of the Sultan who had won the Greco-Ottoman war in 1897. The Sultan also pursued the Young Turks in their exile in Europe through the Ottoman embassies as well as the foreign ministries of the hosting European countries and the Young Turks (Jeunes Turcs) became an item in the European public opinion. Other events followed: the Russo-Japanese war and the Japanese victory, the 1905 Revolution in Russia and the later the Iranian Revolution of 1906. The period ended with the reorganization of Ahmed Rıza's group under the name of CPU (Committee of Progress and Union) and their new tendency towards activism. Prince Sabahaddin also chose to increase the level of activism by collaborating with the Armenians and infiltrating in Eastern Anatolia and in the Black Sea Region. These developments culminated in the 1907 Congress, which constitutes the limits of this chapter, as the Congress, the Anatolian uprisings and the events that unfolded thereafter – including the merger between Ahmed Rıza's group and the Ottoman Freedom Society, a primarily military committee – can be considered within the contents of the revolutionary process which will be the focus of the next chapter.

When rereading the Ottoman history of the 1870s and 1880s in detail through the theoretical lens of the HS in IR, it appears clear that the international-domestic interaction is indeed multi-layered and operates in various directions. International treaties had far reaching consequences both in Ottoman politics and in the international political scene. From the late 1890s and up to 1905-6, the Eastern question was 'put on ice' and the Far East became the scene of international rivalry. While the European alliances shifted yet again, resulting finally in the *Triple Entente* between France, Great Britain and Russia, subtle but important changes occurred in

the interplay between world politics and Ottoman politics. Added to this is the crucial transformation of the Ottoman bureaucracy and intelligentsia under the materialized influence of the Hamidian reforms, most notably in the field of education and in the military. As Abdülhamid was trying to find a place for the Empire within the shifting European politics and leaning towards Germany as an informal ally, the Young Turks in Europe were approaching the diplomats and the publics of Great Britain, France and Switzerland. And a latent wave of opposition was growing within the students and young officers of the army in the Empire itself, especially over the increasing violence in Macedonia. So, despite the 'freezing' of the Eastern question, the dynamics set forth in the 'critical juncture' of the late 1870s were in operation and transcended to a certain extent by the new choices of the emerging agents. One theoretical insight to be demonstrated in the decade before the revolution is *the changing nature of international-domestic interaction*. That this nature is itself history specific and that there are no constant elements to be reified is of course an insight from Historical Sociology. The rather decreased levels of interaction and the increased amount of the variety of Ottoman politics vis-à-vis international politics, when compared with the two decades before is evidence for that insight. The decade before the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 is witness to the importance of studying this changing nature of interaction and the further vitality of studying politics of change on a grand scale that transcends the later established national boundaries. As explained below, the changing nature of European imperialism coupled with its overseas interventions was constitutive in the further development of the Ottoman opposition, including its internal strife and the refining of their activist ideologies and revolutionary programme. Also influential were the other layers of international politics, such as the revolutionary experiences

elsewhere, although at times it was just their success that was important rather than the content of their ideologies or their ultimate aims. As rebellions and wars within or near the Empire continued to feed the opposition in interesting ways, even the Russo-Japanese war had far reaching influences on the opposition movement, which will be dealt with in the pages below.

Exploring a single case study over a rather extended period of time has also the advantage of studying the changing nature of the agency within a given period of social change. What is significant for the purposes of this thesis is the fact that not only the formative years (as explained in Chapter 4) but also the refining years of the agency both in the sovereign body and in the opposition were in fact shaped a great deal by their stance in international politics. The years between the arrests in 1896-1897 and 1906 demonstrate the peculiar combination of domestic and international attitudes of the Ottoman opposition and how this combination defined and refined their revolutionary propaganda, revolutionary activities, and finally their political identity. The difference between this decade and the decade before gives us the chance to draw a valuable comparison. Indeed, ideologies were adapted to the period, peaceful evolution turned into revolution, the admiring attitudes toward Europe turned into a very rough anti-imperialist stance, high politics and conspiracies gradually gave their place to on the ground revolutionary organization and new yet influential members and groups emerged. Within the framework of this thesis, providing an explanation for this change and linking it to the wider change in international and domestic politics is crucial. The revolutionary turn is as important as the revolutionary success itself. Both points still remain largely unexplained in the literature and I believe that the reason for that lack is because these matters related to

agency and process cannot be wholly grasped by an in-depth analysis of the ideational world of the agents but also and necessarily so, requires a reference to the material world in which these changes took place.

This brings us to another theoretical insight to be driven from and developed by an analysis of the decade before the revolution. As it was emphasised in the last chapter, the juxtaposition of *international influences versus domestic agency* was creating more perplexities than the amount of paradoxes it solved. By this I mean, viewing the relation between international factors and the emergence and development of agency in any given country as an *either or* relationship. The turn of the events in this period is a powerful reminder of the futility of juxtaposition: *ideational versus material* when explaining social change that was brought by intentional agents. I believe that the origin of this perplexity lies in the continuing connection built between every matter related on agency and the infamous structure versus agency debate. As structures do not always have to be material, so the agency is not necessarily composed of the ideational.

As is elaborated in the theoretical sections of this thesis, this problematic confusion around the issue of agency and pinning down the appropriate method and level of analysis to study stems from the confusion about what is actually understood by the agency. If one dares to turn back to the debate of structure versus agency, it would be helpful to remind ourselves of the infamous phrasing of Marx on this matter: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please in circumstances they chose for themselves; rather they make it in present

circumstances given and inherited."[202] Here agency is pointed out not only to the contemplating actors but perhaps more so to those who actually *make history*. That process is inevitably in the realm of actions and only to be referred to by their causes, processes and consequences. As the following analysis of the maturing and changing nature of the Ottoman agency composed of varying actors will make clear, ideational characteristics of the agency are only one aspect and only in relation to the actual deeds of the actors. Hence, although this study had to avoid a thorough analysis of the ideologies and mindsets involved in the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, I would argue that showing the connectedness of the actors to their local, imperial and global world and disentangling the complex set of links in that world is a sine qua non of any explanation in this regard. It is only through their relations to the world around them that agents create themselves and intervene in their surroundings. Hence, it is only through these relations, which we, as observers, can account for their behaviour and its consequences. Indeed, their behaviour consists of nothing but these relations.

So, the following narrative of the decade before the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 will try to first disentangle who the actors are, what their actions were, coupled with their causes and consequences. As the central argument goes, this narrative will require the identification of crucial international inputs into that process. The chapter will follow a chronological order and encapsulate international issues, such as the Macedonian issue, imperial issues such as the course of the Hamidian regime and the opposition against it, and local issues when relevant.

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[202] Karl Marx, "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in *Marx: Later Political Writings*, ed. Terrel Carver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 32.

5.2 A Period of Political Transformation

> *"They [the Young Turks] were surprisingly ignorant of political economy, and of all third world revolutionary movements theirs was the least anti-imperialist. The Young Turks saw themselves as players in the European arena rather than as nationalists voicing resentment against the West."*[203]

In the years between the *en masse* arrests of the Young Turks and their sympathizers and the Congress of 1907 in Paris, the transformation of the Young Turks went in the opposite direction of the tendencies that Keyder observed in the quote above. The Sultan, buttressed by his triumph in the Greco-Ottoman war, but also damaged by the way the Great Powers handled his victory and deprived the Ottoman state of making any real advances following the victory, attacked the CUP organization in the Empire. Many of the students and young bureaucrats and professionals were arrested and/or exiled. Regardless of the places of exile, the Young Turks began to accumulate in a few cities: Paris, London, Geneva, and Cairo. Also some took refuge in the Balkans. As can be seen from the location of these cities, the political network within the borders of the Ottoman Empire proper was crushed. Only after a decade would the Young Turk factions be able to return to political activity in the Empire itself. That decade was going to be spent abroad[204] and the issue of anti-imperialism, at least anti-interventionism was going to be a vital dividing line among the Young Turks in exile. Proto-nationalist sentiments and awe towards the "European civilization" would clash. Although plots and conspiracies continued in the background, it is around these matters and matters of more local and

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[203] Keyder, "The Ottoman Empire," 37.

[204] "The 1896-1897 arrests and trials destroyed the organizational structure within the Ottoman Empire and for the next ten years resistance was pursued from abroad." Zürcher, *The Unionist factor: the role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish national movement, 1905-1926* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 35.

imperial concerns that the Ottoman actors abroad would reorganize themselves and re-engage with their 'comrades' in the Empire.

If the exile and arrests were a defeat for the Ottoman opposition, including the Armenian revolutionaries whose armed activities and raids into the capital proved fruitless in the face of non-involvement by European powers, it can be considered as a success for Abdülhamid II and his regime. The secret intelligence services, so valued by the Sultan, would be successful vis-à-vis various opposition groups until the Revolution of 1908. The Sultan, by the sheer number of the arrests, also demonstrated that he did not see the CUP as a student organization, but as an actual threat.

The Sultan was reassessing other threats as well, most notably the continuation of the dramatic changes in world politics. Just as the 1870s witnessed the rise of Germany under Bismarck, the 1890s witnessed Germany's new Weltpolitik under Wilhem II. Just when the Balkans and the Eastern Question in general seemed to be relatively eventless, under the mutual understanding of Austria-Hungary and Russia, world politics was evolving gradually and the repercussions were to hit the Ottoman Empire in the 1900s. "What was to make this evolution fatal to Europe was the breakdown of the balance of power in Europe which followed the reshaping of German policy into a struggle for hegemony by all means, including, if necessary, force of arms."[205] The German overtures towards the Ottoman Empire, exemplified in the visit of the Kaiser and later in the Baghdad Railway concessions, were to be a part of the realignment of the European powers. As the Germans pushed

[205] J. M. Roberts, *Europe 1880-1945* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 89.

the existing alliances, Great Britain, Russia and France aligned themselves accordingly.

Many elements of these drastic changes in European diplomacy and its several offshoots were to have a great impact on the political choices of the Sultan as well as the opposition against him. In the pages below, the evolution and diversification of the Young Turk politics and the Sultan's measures will be analyzed in light of these grand scale changes in world politics.

5.2.1 New Alliances and New Hostilities

The Greek-Ottoman war (1897) marks one period's end and the beginning of another. With the victory won on behalf of the Ottoman state, the Sultan felt he could and should eliminate the internal opposition against him, from his own bureaucratic, military and educational cadres. He also tried to win over the opposition leaders already abroad, most notably Murad Bey (Mizancı). As Abdülhamid II commissioned Ahmed Celaleddin Pasha, the head of secret services, to conduct negotiations with the Young Turks in Turkey and conclude deals that would guarantee the end of their political activities and promise them various rewards in return, which differed from important positions in the bureaucracy to the release of Young Turk political prisoners in the Empire. Before going into the detail of what followed from these negotiations, it must be noted that the Sultan remained an important element in the process that shaped the Young Turk agency and as one of the elements in the critical juncture that was set out in the late 1870s he continued to influence the Young Turks, together with the other elements of the juncture. His role and the impact of his various choices should not be disregarded in the history of the

revolution and one should not fall into the easy trap of portraying him as a mere hate figure that motivated the opposition.

This point is clear in the difference between his two moves. While he was arresting the organization members within the Empire, he was much more accommodating towards the ones in Europe. Indeed the final arrests in the spring of 1897 of the students who regrouped after the suppression of the organization in 1896 resulted in their exile to Tripoli. This fact alone gave the Sultan's representative certain leverage in the negotiations in Europe. He also increased his leverage by pressing the European bureaucrats and politicians in the countries hosting the Young Turks and hence leaving less room for manoeuvre for them. Murad Bey, who was already estranged from Ahmed Rıza over the tactic to be employed towards the Great Powers, a discussion in which he was advocating a milder approach[206] and frustrated due to the Powers' attitude in the aftermath of the Greco-Ottoman war,[207] accepted a return to the Empire and ended his political activities. "As a consequence of this weakness on the part of Murad Bey, the "Young Turk" community was seriously shaken; some among them felt that they had to take refuge in the Sultan Abdülhamid now. This deal [between Murad Bey and Ahmed Celâleddin Pasha] is an important point in the "Young Turk" history."[208]

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[206] "This compromising attitude of Murat Bey, trying to gain the trust of the European cabinets, could have been tactically right. But it also tells how he did not even have a clue about the conditions that made the Committee form in military academies and moved it forward. He could not grasp the real reason behind the Committee's existence, namely to stop the foreign intervention in the first place." Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 79.

[207] Ibid., 84-85.

[208] Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, *İnkilap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler* (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları 2000 [First edition, 1945]), 76

One of the tactical consequences of this deal was the regained leadership of Ahmed Rıza within the movement and his strengthened image as a political thinker who was persistent in his belief and did not give up on the cause. Although some Young Turks, including some of the founders, İshak Sükûti and Abdullah Cevdet, had started publishing the journal *Osmanlı* in Geneva, after the closure of *Mizan*, the publication of Murad Bey, the Sultan continued his advances towards the Young Turks. In 1899, the editors closed down *Osmanlı* in exchange for the release of the political prisoners in Tripoli and a year later they accepted offices in various Ottoman embassies in Europe.[209] It is important to note that during its short publication period, *Osmanlı* editors advocated a pro-British approach. As Hanioğlu notes, the editors also published "an English supplement to *Osmanlı* that promoted British support for the constitutional movement and denounced the sultan's anti-British policy."[210] This clearly reveals the persistence of the issue of foreign involvement and support in various Young Turk branches and factions. This matter was only going to be exacerbated in the near future.

The attempt to publish *Osmanlı* in Geneva also points to the diversity of the Young Turk movement abroad and to the fact that it would be factually wrong to assume the absolute leadership of Ahmed Rıza within the movement. The diversity intensified with the escape of another famous Ottoman statesman and his two sons.

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[209] Ernest E. Ramsaur, *Jön Türkler ve 1908 İhtilâli* (Istanbul: Pozitif Yayınları, 2007), 72-73. Georgeon explains this non-resistance on the part of the Young Turks by Hamid's intuitive knowledge about them and their real desires: "Abdülhamid knows the weak side of the Young Turks; the reason that they are in opposition is because thay were not offered job opportunities through which the regime would make full use of their qualifications. They could be convinced if one starts giving away positions and scholarships and acknowledging their status. Indeed, this way of seeing the matter would prove to be right." Georgeon, 390.

[210] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 117.

Damad Mahmud Pasha left Istanbul for Europe and took his two sons with him, Princes Sabahaddin and Lütfullah. Although Mahmud Pasha's coming to Europe and his will to immediately contact Ahmed Rıza had created a certain excitement within the Young Turks, also partly due to the status and financial resources of Mahmud Pasha, he could not pursue active politics due to his diminishing health and Prince Sabahaddin would be the ultimate new member of the Young Turk circles as a result of this escape. If Ahmed Rıza was the positivist, Prince Sabahaddin during the course of the events would become a liberal of the British variety. Moreover, he would initiate and keep contact with the Armenian revolutionary group Dashnaktsutiun and become involved in the tax revolts in the Eastern Anatolia and Black Sea regions in 1906-1907. So, despite Damad Mahmud Pasha's inactivity, his estrangement from the Sultan and his escape contributed to the development and diversity of the Young Turk movement deeply.

Once again, we observe the importance of including the different dimensions of the Hamidian regime in the causes of the Young Turk revolution. In the last chapter, we focused on his policy inclinations, in the military, education and administrative fields. For the purposes of this chapter, his approach towards the opposition, including his methods of repression and rapprochement and his choices regarding the Ottoman-European dealings, will be of paramount importance. As his choices and limitations were realized within the parameters of a competitive European politics, we turn now to the European affairs in relation with the Ottoman state and the Young Turks.

5.2.1.1 The oscillating peace in Europe and the Ottoman Empire

As the new imperialism was spreading to and intensifying in other parts of the world, most notably the Far East and Africa, conflicts and diplomacy over the European periphery slowed down. Russia, involved in Far Eastern politics, wanted to protect the status quo in the Eastern Question. An early partition of the Ottoman Empire would create more problems than it solved and most probably to the detriment of Russia.

> "When the Austrians eventually recognized this, in 1897, the way was open for an entente between Vienna and St. Petersburg that put Balkan affairs 'on ice' and did more to stabilize the European state system itself than any other bilateral agreement of the era."[211]

Britain's occupation of Egypt and the subsequent intensification of what is also called her isolation in European politics only accelerated by the shift of the European clashes to other parts of the world. The Boer War, the Fachoda crisis and other conflicts that Britain found herself in, got only worse with the new *Weltpolitik* of Germany.

Hence, the stabilization of the European state system could not be achieved solely by a relative peace period over the Balkans. As mentioned earlier, Germany, under the new Kaiser and without Bismarck was claiming its right to be not only a European power but a world power. In its claim, Germany was neither alone nor marginal. The armament that started to increase around the 1870s continued to increase even further. Empires became bigger and public opinions more eager about

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[211] F.R. Bridge and Roger Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System 1814-1914* (London: Longman, 2005), 253.

expansion.[212] "Imperialism was a popular cause in England in the 1890s."[213] Germany, with the new Weltpolitik, was pursuing every international affair, including conflicts such as the Boer War, to mark its print on the global scene. Even familiar names supported this new agenda. "Max Weber's inaugural lecture at the University of Freiburg in 1895 was typical. He claimed that German unification would prove but a youthful folly unless it was followed by *Weltmachtpolitik.*"[214]

Weber's choice of direction for German expansionism was indeed realized and soon. Three years after his speech, the Kaiser visited the Ottoman Empire for the second time and made his famous speech in Damascus, announcing his friendship towards the Muslims publicly. From many aspects, this visit was a success both for the Kaiser and the Sultan.[215] Firstly, the Kaiser's speech and declared intentions towards Muslims boosted the Sultan's position as a caliph addressing the whole Muslim world. Two points made by Kayalı and Georgeon are important in understanding the heightened voice of Pan-Islamism in the Hamidian regime.

> "What makes Islamism politically important was that it gained ascendancy in opposition to the political interests of the European powers that traditionally had abetted Ottoman territorial integrity. Islamism was the child of changing international and economic relations in Europe and the position

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[212] "Piecemeal and for a variety of reasons the British increased their empire vastly between 1880 and 1905, so that at the end of the process the population of the British colonies was estimated to be over 345.000.000, at a time when the United Kingdom itself had some 40.500.000 inhabitants." Joll, 83.

[213] Ibid., 83.

[214] Bartlett, *The Global Conflict*, 21.

[215] For the success and the glory of having hosted the monarch of a Great European Power, the Sultan spent ten percent of the empire's budget, which was mostly spent on the gifts for the Kaiser and his circles and for the construction of a special wing in the Yıldız Palace for Kaiser's accommodation. Georgeon, 395.

that the Ottoman Empire acquired in the neoimperialist status quo." [216]

As Britain, Russia and France were drifting away from their traditional attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire, Abdülhamid was trying to create an Ottoman way of navigating in international politics. Among his several moves to create more manoeuvring space for the Ottoman state in the new imperialist era was precisely this Pan-Islamism,[217] which was only fed further by the Kaiser's attitude and Germany's new ambitions towards the Near East. "With the support of Wilhelm II's Germany who was advocating a made in Germany kind of Pan-Islamism, the politics of the position of the caliphate took a more aggressive turn and it became clear that it could be a formidable weapon in the hands of Abdülhamid."[218] Although the actual use of the weapon did not produce such formidable results, it also entered the list of Young Turk frustrations. Despite the existence of Islamist individuals among their own circles, the Young Turks remained starkly secular under the leadership of Ahmed Rıza before the turn of the century.

Another aspect of the Kaiser's visit in 1898 was the Baghdad Railway Project. This project had repercussions in politics, economics and international diplomacy alongside the Young Turk opposition to it. As negotiations bore fruit after

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[216] Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908 – 1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 32.

[217] That Hamidian Panislamism was instrumental in nature rather than stemming from a genuine faith in the umma politics was mentioned in the last chapter. It is now widely agreed upon in the literature. Here, a quote from Akarlı should suffice: ""If he pretended to the leadership of all Muslims, this was only to foil foreign pressures on the Ottoman government by gaining leverage over the European powers who had Muslim dominions. In other words, Abdülhamid was an Ottoman Sultan before he was the Great Muslim Caliph." Akarlı, "The Problems of External Pressures," 60-61.

[218] Georgeon, 396.

the visit and Hamid, against the will of the pro-British bureaucracy, approved the grant of the concession to the Germans, the Young Turks saw this as another move towards the selling out of the fatherland. Georgeon's quote from the *Osmanlı* journal, mentioned earlier, demonstrates the growing anti-imperialist tendency among most of the Young Turks – hence it supports the claim in the beginning of this section. Contrary to Keyder's depiction, the Young Turks became more resentful towards the West as the century was ending: "The only thing left to be sold as a privilege by the Sultan is air; sooner or later he will sell that too and the people will suffocate."[219] The sultan seems to have been direct target but criticizing the long standing and escalating system of capitulations and concessions point to another target: European powers and specifically Germany. However, it was Germany that Abdülhamid was holding on to in the competitive international environment, which produced adverse results for the Ottoman Empire in the short and long terms. It certainly became a factor in the rapprochement of Great Britain and Russia.[220]

The Baghdad Railway took on a national importance for both Germany, who saw the partial realization of the Weltpolitik and for the Ottoman Empire, where Abdülhamid saw it as a diplomatic victory, in an international environment increasingly hostile to his regime. Also, as with his other modernization projects, such as the telegraph, he saw the railway as an expansion of his central authority to inner Anatolia and into the Arab territories. In an empire full of upheavals in distant

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[219] Ibid., 399.

[220] "With the rapprochement between Germany and Austria-Hungary and under pressures from the German industry which had entered an expansionist phase, Germany made advances towards Ottoman territories and economy. This, inevitably, was going to push Russia towards the line of Britain and France. As a result of the Franco-Russian détente in 1893 and the Franco-British rapprochement after 1902, Russia parted from Germany." İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Alman nüfuzu* (Istanbul: Alkım, 2005), 26.

territories, the sheer ability to reach these territories and communicate with them as fast and efficiently as possible was an almost personal concern to him. "Railways were an opportunity for bolstering the sultan's political authority in the regions that it stretched to, in other words a tool for centralization."[221]

A recapitulation of the politics of Empire and the world around it is necessary before we delve into the details of the Young Turks politics in exile and the 1902 Congress of the Ottoman Opposition in Paris. The story so far reveals two important points regarding the case and the theoretical insights of this chapter. The first point is on the constitution and composition of the agency. It was mentioned in the introduction that various elements went into the constitution of the Ottoman agency and using *the ideational versus material* dichotomy in this context would be misleading. The change in the group of individuals that are identified as Young Turks was, as we have seen, first and foremost triggered by the Sultan's triumph in defeating the movement in the Empire and specifically in the capital. Indeed, the Young Turks would try to establish quarters in Istanbul but failed to do so until their victory in the revolution, which is an evidence of the Sultan's success in this struggle. Not satisfied with having exiled many to far provinces and caused many to escape to Europe, the Sultan pursued the politically active members of the opposition abroad as well. By pressuring the host countries and by offering the members positions and deals, he succeeded in having Murad Bey, the temporary leader of the organization, returned to the Empire. If the elimination of the organization within the Empire took away the possibility of political action, the pacification of Murad Bey caused Ahmed Rıza to become the leader of the group and hence his positivism and

[221] Georgeon, 396.

disgust for bloody revolutionary activity prevailed for some time. Although he would receive internal opposition, he would encounter another competitor only during the 1902 Congress. All this failure on the part of the Young Turks caused these immediate results and more. It forced various members to rethink the whole cause and its method and consequently the various divisions among them. The Sultan, with his foreign policy choices, also contributed to a European diplomacy that would not be favourable towards the Young Turks.

This brings us to the second point on the changing nature of the international-domestic interaction. When we remember the quote from Akarlı from the beginning of the chapter, it is fair to say that the late 1880s and 1890s were harsher in competition compared to the 1870s and early 1880s. This had its toll on the Ottoman state. Abdülhamid's foreign policy strategy of stalling and neutrality which had worked fairly well in the implementation of the Berlin Treaty and in the fading away of the Armenian crisis was now harder to hold on to. As Britain's strategic interests shifted from the Straits to the Suez Canal and even to Central Asia, the British card against Russian expansionism did not function anymore. This happened in parallel to the Hamidian insistence on the maximum independence from foreign interference. However, the late 1890s witnessed the emergence of the nucleus of the Triple Entente and neutrality was replaced with rapprochement with Germany.

Another development occurred at the same time, what contemporaries called the *pénétration pacifique*. The European investments of various kinds and the concession grants acquired through *pénétration pacifique* were defended rigorously by the European governments. In this, they seemed to cooperate rather than compete.

A handful of organizations, most notably the Public Debt Administration (founded in 1881) regulated the competition and ensured the safe functioning of European operations. They also "played crucial roles in brokering the economic and political differences among industrial powers."[222] Indeed, it was not a rare phenomenon for the Great Powers to agree on some common issues. An interesting example is the Boxer Rising in China, where the rival Great Powers collaborated on the containment of the situation in 1900 when a common threat bounded them all.[223] The commercial interests and any fear of harm towards them provided the same results. Another example is their defence against Hamidian advances to lessen the foreign influences in smaller issues such as the foreign post offices in the Empire. "Abdülhamid thought that they would disagree (...) He was mistaken: On the contrary, they supported each other."[224] Besides, each power of considerable importance had some sort of backing acquired by various means in the Ottoman bureaucracy. Indeed, the Sultan was not the only Ottoman actor who had to act and be creative within the limits of these multiple dimensions of international influence. Ahmed Rıza's faction of the Young Turks picked up on the subject as well and gradually adopted a different rhetoric towards the foreign influences. "According to this discourse the Western *pénétration,* though seemingly *pacifique*, was a dangerous one. Its consequences were apparent in what had happened to the native Americans, Sudanese, Boers and Chinese."[225]

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[222] Ibid., 216

[223] "In the event, the interests of the powers in the Far East proved perfectly capable of accommodation and fears of an actual partition subsided. On the occasion of the Boxer Rising of 1900, as many as ten powers, displaying (except for Japan) that same sense of Christian solidarity that they had formerly displayed towards the Armenian massacres in Constantinople and the Greco-Ottoman war, joined forces in an international expedition under the Kaiser's friend, General Waldersee, to inflict condign punishment on the violators of the legations in Peking." Bridge and Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System 1814-1914*, 257.

[224] Georgeon, 412.

[225] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 35.

So, the change of the Hamidian foreign policy and the shifting alliances in Europe were mutually dependent on each other. Of course, the latter had more influential powers on the former but, as Hamid's informal alliance with the Germans demonstrates, the Ottoman actions had a certain degree of influence as well. Several other interests, most notably the economic ones also have to be included in the equation. Hence, the international-domestic interaction was constant only in its mere existence. Its dimensions, density and nature fluctuated according to the circumstances. The revolutionary process between the years 1906-1908, with the culmination of the international conditions of the ten decades under the investigation in this chapter, will testify even more to this theoretical insight: it is not enough to account for the existence of the international-domestic interaction. The crucial issue for the discipline of IR and HS in IR is to show the various levels at which it was functioning and to be able to produce comparisons among eras and within a single case.[226] These two points will be further expanded and re-evaluated once the political conditions of the early years of 1900s have been examined.

5.2.1.2 The 1902 Congress of Ottoman opposition

The Young Turks could not find much political space to be active in after their defeat. However, they did find time to rethink the cause and also to have their first congress, which crystallized the growing tensions within the group and caused the emergence of two separate camps, conventionally called the majority group (under the leadership of Prince Sabahaddin) and the minority group (under the leadership of Ahmed Rıza). Both groups were actually coalitions, though the inner

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[226] Of course, although it is not within the scope of this thesis, comparisons among different cases from this angle would be very productive for the same purposes.

clashes of the minority group are more of historical importance. Some of the Young Turks who had taken the Sultan's deal and were appointed to certain positions in the Ottoman embassies in Europe returned back to political activity. Among them there was a group of members, described by Hanioğlu as activists. They would join Ahmed Rıza's minority group in the aftermath of the 1902 Congress. The lines of diversion would cut across the issue of foreign intervention and support on behalf of the Ottoman reformers. A second point of diversion would be the method of toppling down the Hamidian regime, an aim shared by all Young Turks from all groups.

The Young Turk activities immediately prior to the 1902 Congress could not be of real importance. There were several reasons: the decreased membership, the lack of financial sources, the loss of important figures to the Hamidian regime and the Sultan's incessant pressure on the European governments to expel the Young Turks and ban their activities. As Hanioğlu calls it, these pressures on the European governments and the Young Turks responses and appeals to their diplomats rendered the issue a European affair: "Due to increasingly cordial relations between the Ottoman and German empires, the sultan requested the help of German diplomats and thus elevated the Young Turk movement from a mere domestic problem into a matter of European diplomacy."[227] An important example of the Young Turks' countermeasures against Hamidian pressures on Europe was Ahmed Rıza's participation in the Hague Peace Conference of 1899, despite the fact that he was not invited. He also convinced an Armenian activist to join him in this venture.[228] The conference had been summoned to discuss the alarming armament issue and to

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[227] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 126-127.

[228] Ibid., 127.

contribute to the general peace upon the suggestion of the Russian tsar who found the burden of the armament too much to bear.

Ahmed Rıza's transformation from an admiration of Europeans to a more cautious attitude towards them occurred around the same time. In his dealings with the European diplomats and intellectuals and in his observations of world politics, he came to believe that the enlightened European men were hypocritical. His criticism towards the *pénétration pacifique* was mentioned earlier. He questioned the claim of superiority of the Europeans and "as such, the already existing opposition towards the capitulations was coupled with the suspicious European behaviours towards the Turks and the hidden chauvinism of the European intellectuals and the disappointment that the Young Turks felt resulted in a harsher and intolerant rhetoric to prevail in Mechveret after 1900."[229] Ramsaur also mentions that Ahmed Rıza became frustrated with the fact that Turks were the only group in the Empire to lack a foreign protector.[230] It was with this mindset that Ahmed Rıza accepted the invitation of Prince Sabahaddin to convene the 1902 Congress.

Also joining the Congress were the activist group, who wanted more radical action but were powerless to actually pursue it; and the Armenian, Greek and Albanian representatives; Prince Sabahaddin; and some members from the old nucleus of the CUP. The number of the participants was 47 in total and due to Ottoman pressure on the French government the congress had to convene in a private residence in Paris on February 4-9, 1902. Despite Prince Sabahaddin's efforts to be

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[229] Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 154

[230] Ramsaur, 84.

all encompassing and compromising, the subjects of disagreement could not be avoided. "The disagreement occurred on specifically two topics: the European intervention and the resort to violence."[231]

The parties in the debate were roughly Prince Sabahaddin and the Armenian, Greek and Albanian representatives; and Ahmed Rıza and the activists. It is important to note that the former parliament member from Syria and the only Arab representative, Khalil Ghanem supported the minority group led by Ahmed Rıza. Another crucial note is the mild presentation of each position. Prince Sabahaddin did not want to look like he was betraying his own Empire; however, he found the Armenian support necessary to attract European attention. He insisted that they did not want an actual intervention but moral support on the matter. Ahmed Rıza, on the other hand, did not want to give the image of being anti-European. In his minority appeal, he stressed that:

> "We are not against Europe as we are unjustly accused. On the contrary, to imitate their progress throughout our country is our prime and sacred aim. Thus, what causes the disagreement between us is not that [we are against Europe] – it is pro or con stand toward foreign intervention."[232]

The Congress crystallized the existing tensions and made them publicly visible. The majority group, despite its name, was less experienced, less active and less coherent. In fact, one can hardly speak of a solid Turkish, Armenian, Albanian and Greek collaboration in the years that followed. The minority in turn were experienced in publication, propaganda and included the activists. The activities of

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[231] Georgeon, 437.

[232] The quotation is taken from Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition*, 196. He quotes the text from two separate journals. "Yeni Osmanlılar Kongresi," *İntikam,* no. 50, 3, and "Ahrar-ı Osmaniye Kongresi," *Kürdistan*, no. 31, 4.

these groups in the following years will be examined throughout the sections below, with special importance placed on the radicalization and reorganization of the minority group, also called by Hanioğlu as the 'coalition'. The minority group were also going to have inner clashes, especially on the issues of violence and method of revolution.

Having the Sultan as the common target and a constitutional regime as the ultimate objective were not enough to force them even to a tactical alliance and this was in the face of a terrible defeat and a confusing international political scene. In this fact, we can observe the deep and powerful division over the issue of foreign intervention. Only if we study some of the actual examples of intervention we can grasp why both sides felt the need to defend their positions. In parallel with the points of emphasis on the issue of agency, the study of the world to which they reacted and in which they emerged, these ideas would lead to a true understanding of the agency under investigation. A symbolic, politically significant and historically crucial example, especially in the context of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, is the Macedonian issue. After all, it is where the Balkan peoples, the Great Powers, the Hamidian regime, the Ottoman army and the Young Turks intersected and it is where the revolution was realized in 1908.

5.2.2 The Macedonian question

The Balkans[233] was the hotspot of the Eastern Question for many decades and a matter of international struggle as explained in the preceding chapter. It was

[233] "From a geographical point of view, the defining feature of the region is its mountainous character. *Balkan* derives from the Turkish word for mountain and nearly 70% of the land area is comprised of

mentioned that the Berlin Treaty had created the seeds of future conflicts and the Macedonian Question was the centre of the conflict at the turn of the century. Many of the obvious and subtle themes of the Young Turk opposition and revolution could be seen in this issue. "For the Ottoman Empire the Macedonian Question was a question of existence in Europe."[234] It was the only meaningful piece of territory left in Europe after the defeats of the 19th century. It was commercially, historically, politically significant and also a matter of prestige and integrity for the Empire. For the Young Turks, with their close but also complicated relations with the Albanians, it always had importance but that importance was going to reach a very high level with the developments at the beginning of the century. The fate of Macedonia and the Young Turk movement was going to be symbiotically tied, especially after the reorganization of Ahmed Rıza's faction into the CPU and after its merger with the Ottoman Freedom Society – an opposition society founded by young officers in the III. Army in Macedonia. "The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 is inextricably linked to the further development of the Macedonian question."[235] In the greater scheme of politics, the Macedonian Question reflected the complicated nature of Great Powers politics and was affected by the changes in world politics, such as the Russo-Japanese war and 1905 Revolution in Russia. Indeed, as one scholar argues, the Great Powers showed their influence in an unprecedented level in Macedonia, where even the *gendarmerie* became a European institution. Their continuous intervention

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mountains." Tom Gallagher, *Outside Europe: The Balkans, 1789-1989 From the Ottomans to Milošević* (London: Routledge, 2001), 6.

[234] Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, "The Young Turk Revolution and the Negotiations for the Solution of the Macedonian Question," *Turcica* 36 (2004): 165.

[235] Fikret Adanır, "The Macedonians in the Ottoman Empire, 1878-1912," in *The Formation of National Elites: Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940,* ed. Andreas Kappeler (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 174.

and the responses from the locals and the neighbouring Balkan countries left its mark in the region: "Just as Macedonia as a geographical region was invented by European geographers and ethnographers in the 19th century; the "Macedonian Question" was a creation of European diplomacy after the Treaty of San Stefano of 1878."[236]

The chain of events that led to a very insecure and violent Macedonia started with the Bulgarian issue. In the preceding chapter, the story was told of the Bulgarian ambitions and how the Berlin Treaty, overriding the Treaty of San Stefano, led to a divided Bulgaria, with Eastern Rumelia under Ottoman control. In 1895, the Bulgarian revolt succeeded in the union and began to look over to Macedonia, which they considered as an essentially Bulgarian region. The Bulgarian claims provoked the other Balkan countries, caused frustration in the Albanian and Turkish communities and finally led to the deeper involvement of the European Powers. The literature considers the Crete revolt – which had caused the Greco-Ottoman war of 1897; and by the intervention of European powers, the island won its autonomy – also as an inspiration for the Bulgarians. The method was as follows:

> "First, guaranteeing the support of one of the Great Powers and then initiating an upheaval in Macedonia; because it was known that the factor that made the political autonomy possible was not really the revolt itself. The real element was the intervention of a Great Power on behalf of the rebels."[237]

With the Austro-Russian agreement on the protection of the status quo in 1897, and hence, with active Russian support for the Slavs out of the picture, the Bulgarian militants felt that violent attacks were the only solution to attract other Powers' attention and achieve their aims of establishing Bulgarian dominion over

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[236] Ipek K. Yosmaoğlu, "Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia," *International. Journal of Middle East Studies* 38, no. 1 (2006): 59.

[237] Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, 150.

Macedonia. The Sultan was contributing to the complexity of the situation by favoring this or the other Christian group and thereby causing competition among them, though he seems to have favoured Greeks more than the Bulgarians and the Serbs. "Therefore, the Bulgarians were forced to a position where they had to fight against the Greeks and Serbs more than the Ottoman forces."[238] Another interesting Ottoman response to the situation was refraining from intense fights against the Christian bands, so as to prevent a whole-scale European attention on the topic.[239]

Even this brief outline on the causes of violence in Macedonia confirms the general understanding of this thesis. The Macedonian revolutionary committees[240], with separate backing from several Balkan countries, were moving within a space built by themselves, by the respective Balkan governments, by the various attitudes of the Great Powers, by other similar examples from different regions, including Crete and Armenia and of course by the Sultan and the Ottoman state in the longer term. Their leap from committees publishing journals and engaging in cultural activities to becoming armed bands, kidnapping foreigners, murdering civilians and even terrorizing their own respective communities can only be understood by the continuous shift in the international, imperial and local contexts and in their particular interaction at the turn of the century. This point is supportive of this

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[238] Georgeon, 37.

[239] Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, 161.

[240] One has to qualify the term Macedonian. For the period under investigation, Macedonian did not refer to a separate ethnicity or even language. It referred to the people living in this territory. "In the nineteenth century the term Macedonian was used almost exclusively to refer to the geographic region; the Macedonians were usually not considered a nationality separate from the Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs or Albanians. The diplomatic records of the period make no clear mention of a separate Macedonian nation." Barbara Jelawich, *History of the Balkans, Twentieth Century Vol. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 91.

chapter's insights on agency and its composition and on the importance of studying the various links between the international and the domestic. Now we turn to the upheavals and their consequences in Macedonia in 1900s to see these links more closely.

As explained, the Bulgarian activists were the most influential in the region and had several organizations. Over the course of history, they too were divided internally. Two organizations are worth mentioning here: the External Organization (also called the Supreme Macedonian Committee) – which was connected to Bulgaria and was working for the union with Bulgaria and the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) – which was more locally based and was working more towards the autonomy of Macedonia.[241] After the suppression of the upheavals and after being pursued heavily by the Ottoman forces, it was going to split further into left and rightwing camps, with the leftwing establishing relations with the CPU and even contemplating advocating a constitutional Turkey, rather than autonomy.[242] There were also Greek, Serbian and Albanian organizations. Also residing in Macedonia were Jews, Vlachs and Gypsies.

It is interesting to notice the pattern of revolts and international interventions in the region. When the Supreme Committee initiated the Friday Revolt on September 23, 1902, it was suppressed, but a convention of Great Powers over the issue of reform in Macedonia followed just months later and in February 1903, the

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[241] "Another turning point in the development of the Macedonian conflict was the establishment of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) in 1893 in Salonica and that of a similar organization called the Supreme Committee or the External Organization (*Vŭrkhovists*) in Sofia in 1895." Yosmaoğlu, 60.

[242] "The idea of a constitutional Turkey as a solution for the Macedonian Question was winning wider support in the left circles." Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, "The Young Turk Revolution", 172-173.

Vienna Program was suggested to the Sultan. The core idea of the program was as follows: "The Gendarmerie has to include Christians and Muslims based on the population percentages. The Government will appoint foreign officers for the reorganization of the gendarmerie. (...) The three provinces[243] will have their own budgets."[244] The program did not bring autonomy and the Sultan thought that it was not really different from the reforms that he intended to implement. The Ottoman government accepted the program immediately. However, its implementation faced difficulties and the Albanian resistance to what they understood to be the preparations for the future partition of Macedonia among Balkan countries was formidable. [245]

The issue, however, was far from being resolved. A bigger revolt followed these discussions of reform. This time it was the IMRO that led the upheaval. It is generally referred to as the Ilinden Revolt (as the starting day was St. Elijah's day). It occurred only a few months after the acceptance of the reform program designed by European powers, in August 1903. The Muslim population of Macedonia, Albanians and Turks alike, supported the Ottoman troops, alongside the Greeks. The revolt was suppressed and no major intervention favouring autonomy arrived, contrary to the insurgents' expectations. What followed was yet another reform program: The Mürzsteg Reform Program in October 1903. This program was designed by Austria-

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[243] It refers to the three provinces (Vilayet-i Selase) that the Ottoman Empire had marked as Macedonia, though it did not use this term. These were Kosovo, Salonica and Monastir.

[244] Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, 171.

[245] The Albanians even resorted to violence when they saw that Christians were allowed into the gendarmerie. Unwillingly, the Sultan approved of the suppression of the Albanian resistance and "the grand vizier informed the Austria-Hungary's ambassador that the Albanian resistance was completely crushed on May 23." Ibid., 182.

Hungary and Russia. A notable contribution came from a British memorandum and the program was finally supported by France and Italy as well. The program, among many other reform suggestions was providing "for foreign advisers and for a gendarmerie under great power control. It also had a clause stipulating that Macedonia should be divided into districts based on ethnic divisions. This provision simply gave rise to further battles between armed groups, each attempting to secure control of a distinct area."[246]

The revolts led to reform programmes by the foreign powers which caused further and deeper conflicts between the Macedonian peoples and the Ottoman Empire, as well as between the Powers and the Ottoman state. A good example of the second case is the Great Powers' insistence on further financial control over Macedonian budget, which the Sultan resisted fiercely. With neither side compromising, Great Britain, Russia, France, Austria-Hungary and Italy decided to show off their naval powers to force Abdülhamid to back down. "When Germany refused to participate, the other 5 states gathered their ships at Pire and advanced towards the Straits, on 26 November [1905], the international fleet discarded to Midilli, took over the customs office, and invaded the post office and the telegraph office."[247] The Sultan finally accepted their demands.

Although this brief overview of the Macedonian Question does not do justice to the complex history of the region, it sets the ground for the further Young Turk related developments that will be presented in the next chapter. Such was the state of Macedonia when the Young Turks both intentionally and somewhat out of choice

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[246] Jelawich, 95.

[247] Georgeon, 426.

decided to make the region the centre of the revolutionary activities. Also this state of affairs, where all the relevant actors for the purposes of analyzing the revolution have intersected and interacted, will be crucial in understanding why the opposition took root among the young officers' circles in Macedonia. Ryan Gingeras sums up the situation as follows:

> "As in the cases of intercommunal conflict in Mount Lebanon and Eastern Anatolia, local tensions in Macedonia were manifestations of a broader discontent with the centralization efforts of the Ottoman government and the imperial designs of the European Powers."[248]

The region would prove to be fertile ground for revolutionary groups who were opposing both the Ottoman state and the designs of the European Powers. Furthermore, trying to accommodate the multitude of religious and political orientations of the Macedonian peoples, the Young Turks would manipulate their propaganda accordingly. But just before their revolutionary activities accelerated in the region, three important international events had manipulated the Young Turks themselves. These were the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, the Russian Revolution of 1905 and the Iranian Revolution of 1906.

5.2.3 1905-1906: Preparation for action

These two years present a true turning point for the Young Turks. The international developments that led to the 1905 Russian Revolution and the 1906 Iranian Revolution itself undeniably effected the Young Turks a great deal and mostly in an encouraging fashion. Another development internal to the Young Turks, however, was even more effective in bolstering the movement and accelerating the

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[248] Ryan Gingeras, "A Break in the Storm Reconsidering Sectarian Violence in Ottoman Macedonia during the Young Turk Revolution," *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (2003): 33.

transformation from political ideas and conspiracies to political activities and in leading the way for a genuine preparation for the revolution. That was the joining of two medical doctors, Dr. Nazım and most importantly Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir to the Young Turks' ranks in Paris. What had come to be known as the CPU, became a truly revolutionary organization rather than a media source for intellectuals. It is impossible to grasp the reasons for the success of the Young Turk Revolution without a clear understanding of these developments.

5.2.3.1 One war and two Revolutions

We shall single out two repercussions of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 for our purposes. Firstly, the Japanese victory resulted in a change in European political rivalry. With Japan eliminating Russia from the struggle over the Far East, and particularly over China, the road to the British-Russian entente was opened further. And with Russia having lost its stakes in the Far East, the Balkan issue would see a return of Russian interest. Both of these spill-over effects would have their consequences for the delicate Ottoman status in the Near Eastern Question. A British-Russian agreement over the Balkans upset the already damaged Ottoman protection against Russia and the hopes for keeping the European territories in the Empire. The Balkans seemed to be ready for partition and this created various disturbances. This frustration on the part of the Ottoman peoples would provide fertile ground for the Young Turk activities in Macedonia and the infamous Reval Meeting between the British King and the Russian Tsar in the summer of 1908 would accelerate the Young Turks' revolutionary activities and contribute to the timing of the Revolution. The details of the impact of these newly developing

alliances will figure a great deal in explaining the course of the Young Turk Revolution in the next chapter.

The second repercussion of the Russo-Japanese war had again two important aspects to it: The interpretation and reception of the Japanese victory and the 1905 Revolution in Russia by the Ottoman opposition. The victory of an Asian power with a reformed and modernized administration over the eternal European enemy had created political excitement over the whole Ottoman Empire and vitalized the disillusion in absolutist monarchy. The Young Turks' interpretation was as follows: "It was due to the constitution, the Chamber of Deputies, and principles of consultation that Japan had entered the ranks of Great Powers and conclusively defeated the enormous Russia on land and water."[249] The fact that the Japanese political transformation was bloodless and designed by an elite group also fascinated the alike-minded Young Turk members. There was a twist to this admiration though. As Worringer reveals, the Japanese example could be used both by the opposition and its target, namely the Sultan and his circles. "Thus, the Japan metaphor functioned as a defense mechanism for the authority against the critical subordinate voice."[250] The Japanese example had a deep impact on politically minded Ottomans of various camps; however, the 1905 Revolution, to which the emergence of the Japanese victory contributed, was going to scare the Sultan and further please and encourage the Ottoman opposition. Followed by the 1906 Iranian Constitutional

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[249] Nader Sohrabi, "Global Waves, Local Actors: What the Young Turks Knew about Other Revolutions and Why It Mattered," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 1 (2002): 55.

[250] Renée Worringer, ""Sick Man of Europe" or Japan of the Near East?: Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36, no. 2 (2004): 213.

Revolution, the opening up of parliaments and consultative regimes in the neighbouring countries would even have an impact on the masses to a certain extent during the Eastern Anatolian revolts in 1906-1907.[251]

Sohrabi's central claim on the interaction between these two revolutions and the Young Turks organizations at the time is that, in addition to adding to their self-confidence with regards to the constitutionalist cause, they added to the repertoire of action of the Young Turks. The existence of a disciplined organization in Russia and their approach to the masses, argues Sohrabi, had caused an admiration and re-evaluation of the available means of action. By analyzing the articles of the *Şura-yı Ümmet*, the journal published by Ahmed Rıza's group, he finds that the 1905 Revolution "highlighted the central role of social movement organizations and a dedicated cadre of revolutionaries, and the importance of the intelligentsia for inciting the masses and for setting the movement's broad goals beyond a mere revolt."[252] As with the Japanese example, the notion of *vanguard elite* was already an element of the Young Turks' political mindset, so the feeling was sharing this common element rather than learning. With regards to the appeal to the masses, Ahmed Rıza's faction was already under such a transformation and would complete the transformation under a new leadership in 1906-1907, while Prince Sabahaddin group would find a whole new way of stirring up the masses in Eastern Anatolia. It is beyond doubt certain that 1905 Revolution gave a boost to the Young Turk movement and most certainly they were amazed with its execution rather than its ideology. They viewed the revolution in high regard, but "these views do not

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[251] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 121.

[252] Sohrabi, "Global Waves, Local Actors", 52.

necessarily mean that either the Young Turks or the people who took part in the revolutionary activities shared the ideas of the Russian revolutionaries, or were even aware of those ideas."[253]

The 1906 Iranian Constitutional Revolution was even closer to home, as the Iranian and Ottoman constitutionalists had a history of collaboration, at least on intellectual matters, and they had physical contact in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe, and they supported each other. The 1907 Congress of the Ottoman Opposition ended with an appeal for support for the Iranian constitutionalists. They had various common elements to discuss and share ideas upon, such as the role of religion, the method of response to foreign intervention, and how to fight an absolutist monarchy. To put it simply: "Turkish and Iranian constitutionalists supported each other and made a united front whenever the opportunity presented itself."[254]

The Russo-Japanese war and the two revolutions contributed to the preparation and success of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. The circulation of the ideas of constitutionalism gave further legitimation to the Young Turk insistence on a constitutional monarchy. However, it seems fair to say that prominent Young Turk leaders were more interested in the discussion on the method and organization of the revolution, rather than the revolutionary ideas behind these developments themselves. Also, as explained above, the international political repercussion behind these developments would be among the essential elements that went into the

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[253] Ibid., 122.

[254] Zarinebaf, "From Istanbul to Tabriz," 169.

constitution of the 1908 Revolution. The two-fold influence of these internationally and historically significant events testifies to the multi-dimensional interaction between the international and the domestic. The conventional features of the international system such as wars and treaties undeniably showed their presence in this interaction in the preceding chapter. The international financial organizations, the local organizations from various parts of the Empire, the far away conflicts on other continents were all mixed up in this interaction that we are trying to disentangle. The two revolutions also showed us that it is not only the ideological aspect that is transferred between the critical groups in several empires, but also the repertoire of action, sometimes a sheer encouragement and boost to self-confidence and the spill-over international political effects, especially in a region like the Near East where the actors are most likely to be located within the same international tensions and opportunities.

The concrete repercussion of these tensions and opportunities will be evident in two spheres of activities of two separate Young Turks, the Sabahaddin group and his Armenian partners in Eastern Anatolia (1906-1907) and the Ahmed Rıza group and the Ottoman Freedom Society in Macedonia (1906-1908). Leaving both of these activities that paved the way for revolution to the next chapter, we now turn to the transformation of the Ahmed Rıza group (also called the coalition, the minority group, and later the CPU) into an active revolutionary organization with the coming of Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir and Dr. Nazım.

5.2.3.2 The emergence of the CPU as a revolutionary organization

There are a few controversies in the rather small literature on the Young Turk Revolution. One of them is the relationship between the CPU headquarters in Europe and the military cadres within the Empire, most importantly in Macedonia. The debate revolves around the following questions: which of these sides initiated the revolution, which group had the upper hand in decision making and more interestingly for our purposes now, would the leaders in Europe turn into revolutionaries at all, if it was not for their merger with the Ottoman Freedom Society (the military based organization in Macedonia) in 1907? For many decades, the debate seems to have settled on the superiority of the Ottoman Freedom Society over Ahmed Rıza's group and on the inactivity of the latter. With the most valuable contribution to the debate by Hanioğlu, in his path-breaking study *Preparation for a Revolution* and also supported by Nader Sohrabi to a great extent, there is now a good deal of evidence supporting the argument that the coalition led by Ahmed Rıza and composed of highly activist members had undergone a transformation with the joining of Bahaeddin Şakir and Dr. Nazım. What they essentially changed was not the main objectives of the movement but the method of organization, as agreed by Zürcher as well: "The situation changed from 1905. Newly arrived activists reorganised the émigré movement into a far more effective force, with a cell structure and secure communications."[255]

Before this transformation that Hanioğlu calls reorganization, Ahmed Rıza's group, though more experienced and larger in numbers was not in the best of shape. The activist members of the group were intensely unsatisfied with Ahmed Rıza's lack of initiative for action. Ahmed Rıza, opposing violence, was also against

[255] Zürcher, "The Young Turks – Children of the Borderlands?" 2.

criticizing the Ottoman royal house, another division between him and the activists. "Ahmed Rıza compared the republican criticism of the dynasty with the "barking of a dog at a horse"."[256] Nonetheless, neither Ahmed Rıza and his colleague Samipaşazade Sezai, nor the activists could transcend the journal editing phase. If this was partially due to the ideological tendencies of Ahmed Rıza, and indeed of many Young Turks who distrusted the masses and were appalled by the idea of resorting to them[257], another partial reason was their lack of a solid organization to pursue any activity whatsoever. "The "activist" policies defended by many Young Turks from almost the outset of the movement always underestimated the importance of "organization"; to them this word did not mean anything more than a group of people purchasing dynamite together."[258]

So, it was going to take the meticulous efforts of Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir to turn this coalition into a revolutionary committee. His role and influence on the coalition is frequently likened to that of Stalin in the communist movement in Russia. It was also among the changes that he brought to actually name the committee the Committee of Progress and Union in 1906. He concentrated on establishing a solid organizational network and a true propaganda with mobilizing effects.[259] The network included a centre in Paris and branches outside and inside the Empire. The concentration on Macedonia was a natural choice given the circumstances outlined

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[256] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 38.

[257] "The general tendency of the Young Turks to look down upon the masses was now joined with another attitude: a dislike of the physical conditions of their own society, of the messiness and dirtiness of the East." Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 196.

[258] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 137.

[259] Ibid., 137.

above. Istanbul was particularly important for obvious reasons, yet despite their best efforts they could not really build a solid network there, due to the Sultan's immense security system. So the strategy that was employed was to use the branches outside the Empire, such as Bulgaria, Romania or Crete to distribute propaganda inside. The branches inside the Empire were seen as branches of "action". The propaganda also changed, in content and in style, modified according to the nature of the targeted audience. Before the reorganization, "a peculiarity of the self-styled coalition was its lack of a strong revolutionary praxis. The coalition confined itself to publications and awaited the moment when a few readers of these publications would carry out a miraculous revolution."[260] With the new turn of the movement after the coming of Bahaeddin Şakir, the publications varied in style, took on shorter or longer versions, took the form of appeals with the intention of mobilization. Hanioğlu documents in rich detail the different styles that the Young Turks used when addressing Christians or Muslims, Turks or Albanians, the military circles or the civilians.[261]

So, the CPU, parallel to the act of naming itself, transformed itself into an organization with revolutionary intentions, rather than mere wishes. Its ideology was not changed deeply by this reorganization, mostly because the new activist members were not really political ideologues but men of action. As explained above, Ahmed Rıza's group became increasingly anti-interventionist, had a growing tone of Turkism and remained conservative while it was radicalizing itself.[262] The Turkist tone or at least the emphasis on the betrayal of the non-Muslim peoples would have

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[260] Ibid., 173.

[261] Ibid., 175-177.

[262] Ibid., 190.

to be backed down in the face of the efforts of working in Macedonia, a mix of ethnicities and religions. It made a more flexible use of the rhetoric of Islamism as well.

How could Bahaeddin Şakir implement the organizational changes so easily without internal resistance? There isn't a substantial explanation in the available literature. Nonetheless, one can attempt to arrive at a possible explanation when one considers both the international conditions leading up to 1905-6, that were explained throughout this chapter, and the state of Ottoman politics. The Young Turks were trapped from two fronts. The Sultan had managed to confine them to Europe, up until 1906; he did also manage to prevent any new organizational activities within the Empire. The Great Power rivalry was creating an atmosphere of confusion and frustration, alongside a certain disillusionment with the European practices as against the European ideals again as explained above. The known and trusted prejudices against this or that interest of this or the other Power were crumbling down. New alliances were built over the Near Eastern issue and a new power, Germany, started investing its stakes in it. The year 1905 saw the victory of one reformed Asian Power and a revolution in Russia. 1906 continued with the Iranian constitutional revolution. From every angle possible the world was narrowing down on the Young Turks. The quick acceptance of Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir's organizational designs, especially by Ahmed Rıza, who was so reluctant to delegate any power before, can only be explained by the intersection of these developments and the metamorphosis that they had caused on the agency in question.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter opened up the two theoretical insights from the last chapter regarding the *international* and the *agency* and the interconnectedness between them. While doing so, attention was drawn to the fluid but persistent nature of international-domestic interaction and to the constitution of agency. The inherent difficulty of telling a story of the causes of a revolution in this multi-layered way is the inclusion of various features of politics in general that are rarely used in actual combination, though frequently mentioned *in passim* while focusing on one or the other feature. The story of the international politics and domestic politics is interwoven in each others' fabrics as well as with the stuff that agency is composed of. A further difficulty is to do justice to this intertwined nature of politics and to reveal the dialectical nature between the agents and the world around them, all the while trying to define the characteristics of both of them. The potential merit of this chapter for the purposes of this thesis would be realized if we can be convinced that this immanent relation between the domestic and the international that constantly builds and rebuilds the totality of politics, also exists between the world-historical moments and the agents that rose within and/or from them. From the critical juncture of 1878 emerged the Young Turk organization in Istanbul. The story of the decade between their defeat and exile and, their transformation in 1905-6 is their response to a different juncture, the details of which were provided above.

It is the story of their change to an organized group of actors that *made history* and the given circumstances that created a world in which they *could* act. The next chapter will show how their perceptions of the world and of their own Empire resulted in a revolution that bent and refracted the world to a certain extent.

CHAPTER 6 THE YOUNG TURK REVOLUTION OF 1908

6.1 Introduction

In the summer of 1908, the revolt that started in Macedonia led to a regime change in the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan of three decades accepted the demands for a constitutional regime. A year later, he was to be dethroned and what is called the Unionist era in the Ottoman Empire would begin. The following chain of events and the place of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War are well known. The toppling down of the Hamidian regime by the opposition group, the Young Turks and their organization the CPU (Committee of Progress and Union) through an upheaval that started in Macedonia - the reasons of which will elaborated upon below – forced the Sultan to announce the return of the constitutional regime that had actually been established three decades ago but was suspended by the Sultan after a short period of time. The newly introduced liberties produced an enthusiastic era when Ottoman politics in general entered a whole new phase of modernization. However, the Unionist era that started in 1908 – the full take-over of the state institutions by the Unionists was only completed in 1913 – was not going to proceed as the liberal revolution it promised to be. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and the First World War (1914-1918) would leave their marks and Unionism would witness the dissolution of the Empire it tried to save.

In this chapter we will look at the two years before the revolution: what will be called here the revolutionary process. From the reorganization of the CPU onwards, the Young Turks of various fractions entered a period of intense revolutionary activity. Although somewhat separate, this period includes the

collaboration between Prince Sabahaddin and Dashnaktsutiun and the revolts in Anatolia. The merger between the CPU and the Ottoman Freedom Society was a critical turn along the way. This revolutionary process was intertwined with an international event, the detente between Russia and Great Britain, which in 1907 resulted in the Anglo-Russian Convention and later in the Anglo-Russian collaboration on the Macedonian issue, the peak event being the Reval Meeting (1908) between the two monarchs. As the emergence of Unionism was one of the milestones on the road to the First World War, from an Ottoman perspective, this detente was one of the milestones for the international alignments that created the conditions and determined the course of the First World War. So these two years are critical to understanding the *longue durée* that connects the world of the mid-19th century to the 20th century in the Ottoman and international politics.

These two years (1906-1908) are also critical to the general intent of this thesis, namely to disentangle and explain the international connections of the 1908 revolution and to enter into a discussion of the international/domestic distinction. It will be clear in the following narrative of the revolutionary process that, from the motivations of the actors to the opportunities of the world-historical moment presented to them and including the Sultan's own capabilities for action – a rather neglected part of the equation – the coming of the 1908 revolution was tied to the world around it. The fast-moving international political scene, most visible in the Macedonian situation, was an obvious constitutive factor in the revolutionary process.

The two other, interrelated sub-themes, namely the structure/agency and ideational/material dichotomies, presented themselves in the preceding history of late Ottoman politics and in the interaction between that history and the historical sociological approach to IR. An opportunity to further clarify these themes arises in the analysis of the revolutionary process in this period, 1906-1908. The transformation and further multiplication of actors and their complex set of responses to the Sultan, to the international conjuncture and to the material world with which they were linked are elements demanding a proper explanation that can only be provided with an appropriate understanding of the international and of agency. At the same time, these elements of the narrative offer insights into the way in which we should perceive international-domestic interaction and into the analysis of the nature of the agency arising from that interaction, especially in periods of change.

Although the precise influence of the Anatolian revolts on the revolutionary process is a matter of controversy in the field, the first section of this chapter will start with an analysis of the political program of Prince Sabahaddin and his activities in collaboration with Dashnaktsutiun, which then will lead us to the upheavals in several East Anatolian and Black Sea towns, the most important being the Erzurum revolt, where Ottoman central authority was to be absent for several months. The Ottoman Freedom Society and the circumstances, in which it was founded, along with its links to the Macedonian Question, will then be investigated. Following their merger with the CPU, reorganized by Bahaeddin Şakir, the Ottoman Freedom Society was to turn Macedonia into a hotbed for Young Turk activities. Although somewhat inconsequential for the revolution, the 1907 Congress that followed will be important for our purposes of reassessing the propositions of the last chapter

concerning the links between the international and agency, as this documents the positions of the different sides.

The second section will focus on the revolution itself. It will endeavour to make sense of this revolutionary process which, it would be fair to say, is rather strange when compared to other revolutions. The way events unfolded and led to the triumph of the revolutionaries, as well as a deeper discussion of the revolutionary process, will be investigated in terms of the *revolutionary situation/revolutionary outcome* distinction made by Charles Tilly in his work on theories of revolution. The intuition here is that, even if we leave the consequences of the revolution aside, the situation as it emerged in the first half of 1908 was revolutionary and as such deserves separate treatment. Several repercussions of this definition for the main theme and sub-themes of this thesis will accordingly be discussed in this section. Again, in line with the spirit of this work, these events will be located within their broader international context and without neglecting another actor and institution, the Sultan and the Ottoman state. The second section will conclude with an effort to tie together the different causes and process of the 1908 Revolution in this last chapter dealing with the case study. We have followed the trajectory of the emergence and maturing of the global, imperial and a few local conditions, starting from the political economic developments of the 19th century, to the political developments of the late 19th century that constituted this revolutionary period. We now turn to the immediate reality of the revolution itself.

6.2 1906-1907: Accelerated Politics

1906 turned out to be a critical year for the Young Turk movement. One reason for this special importance was presented in the last chapter, namely the reorganization of the CPU into a disciplined revolutionary organization with the intention of propaganda and expansion outside and within the Empire. In this section, two other reasons will be provided. Firstly, Prince Sabahaddin initiated a whole new political agenda around his newly founded League of Private Initiative and Decentralisation. Related to this new League are the revolts in Eastern Anatolia, known in the literature as the tax revolts, as these were ignited after the imposition of two new taxes by the government. The role of the CPU and the League of Prince Sabahaddin in these revolts are intriguing pieces of Young Turk history. Secondly, a new society was founded in Macedonia, mostly by young officers belonging to the III Army in the region. The Ottoman Freedom Society, as it was called, would prove only a few months after its establishment, to be the needed agent of revolutionary activity. Merging with the CPU and expanding in Macedonia, it was to initiate and defend the revolution. These two developments in different regions and by somewhat separate actors constitute the core of the revolutionary activity that led to the yielding of the Sultan. Both are products of the global conjuncture, though in the case of the latter links are more visible and more vital to a solid account of the revolution. Both developments are also moments of emergence and variations in agency. With the objective of clarifying these themes, we now turn to Prince Sabahaddin's League, his collaboration with Dashnaktsutiun, and to the tax revolts.

6.2.1 Prince Sabahaddin and the League of Private Initiative and Decentralization

Prince Sabahaddin had taken refuge in the study of social sciences, politics having become after the 1902 Congress a realm where his efforts seemed futile. In his reading, especially of French scholars like Demolins, he thought that he had found a new way to prevent the Ottoman Empire from disintegrating, to find a place for it in the international arena and to solve its ethnic, religious and social problems. In the problems he was trying to solve, he was no different than any other member of the Ottoman elite, a group who had been devoting themselves for many decades by now to saving the Empire. "A large part of the dilemma of the Ottoman elite who forged the new concept of imperial sovereignty was the thin line that separated citizenship and subjecthood, nationness and Ottomanness."[263] Prince Sabahaddin's answer to that dilemma was decentralization and individualism in the Anglo-Saxon style.[264] Individualism and private initiative would be catalysts in an Empire that needed further modernization and industrialization. Decentralization, on the other hand, would be a solution to the ethnicity problem, but also a democratic merit in itself. Hence, the mere name of his organization, the League of Private Initiative and Decentralization, "was a program in itself."[265]

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[263] Dina Rizk Khoury and Dane Kennedy, "Comparing Empires: The Ottoman Domains and the British Raj in the Long Nineteenth Century," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2, (2007): 240.

[264] Mardin points out an interesting clash between Prince Sabahaddin's interpretation of Ottoman society from an individualist angle and the social world of the rest of the Young Turks. Inspired by Demolins' praise of British society and its training of the individual, Sabahaddin came to believe that the state was too protective towards the individual and that the large segment of state officials of various sorts was an adverse effect of this society. "Attacking this 'public servant' itself and considering the public service as a harming activity, was a very deep social criticism in a country where all sorts of 'elite' were public servants themselves." Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 213-214.

[265] Georgeon, 451.

Prince Sabahaddin was reacting not only to what he had been studying, but to a political world which included the complicated nature of Ottoman and European politics and also to the political attitudes of his adversaries, Ahmed Rıza's CPU, now more bolstered than ever after Bahaeddin Şakir's interventions. After the foundation of the League and the publication of a new journal, *Terakki*, Prince Sabahaddin faced the ultimate problem: how to act/what to do? Hanioğlu notes that, in this problem and in their lack of revolutionary activity, Ahmed Rıza and Prince Sabahaddin resembled one another. Bahaeddin Şakir's revolutionary and practical perspective became the solution for Ahmed Rıza, although at the expense of some of his own powers. "Sabahaddin Bey, however, was left with no alternative but to present 'decentralization' as a privilege to be accorded to non-Turkish groups of the empire seeking autonomy."[266]

This policy had a dual function. On the one hand, collaboration with various non-Turkish/non-Muslim groups, mostly with the Armenians, would serve the ultimate objective of Prince Sabahaddin, that of obtaining the support of the European Powers for a future change of regime. The history of non-Muslim politics in the Ottoman Empire, some aspects of which have been presented in this thesis, is a testament to the influences of non-Muslim political activity in attracting the attention of the outside world. Also, Prince Sabahaddin, placed in a difficult situation by the concrete developments in the CPU, had felt the need to respond and recognized the need to establish an organizational presence in the Empire. For this purpose he chose Eastern Anatolia and the Black Sea towns. "The existence of a significant Armenian movement in the very same region makes it difficult to believe that this was a mere

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[266] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 88.

coincidence."[267] He tried to move the League's agents to this region and engaged in political activity in solidarity with the Dashnaktsutiun organization. This collaboration would prove to be effective in the tax revolts of late 1906 and 1907.

The emergence of the League as a political organization with concrete aims and means is thus a result of its interaction with the European and Young Turk politics and its reflection on Ottoman politics in general. Once again, we observe the combined process of the emergence of revolutionary agents. Combined, as in being the result of *a specific moment in global conjuncture* and also as in being consequential to *a dialectical relationship between the ideology and the material world within which it was contemplated.*

Prince Sabahaddin's emphasis on decentralization gave him a more tolerant and confident attitude towards the involvement of the people in imperial politics. He was thus prepared to trust the choices of the locals on political matters. "Therefore, Prince Sabahaddin was ready to give credit to the rural areas, much more than most of the Young Turks who actually did come from these rural areas."[268] Hence, he gave preference to urban notables in the towns where his League was trying to channel their mostly economic frustrations towards a revolutionary agenda.

The point to be reiterated here is that the Prince's choices of these towns, like his choice of presenting decentralization as a solution to the Ottoman Question in the

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[267] Ibid, 93.

[268] Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, 216.

international arena, were choices emerging out of a specific intersection: the moment when his ideological preferences met the necessities of revolutionary action in a specific Ottoman and international conjuncture. The need to attract the attention of Europeans and to secure European intervention in support of regime change, an axis around which many of his political choices and ideological orientations were evolving, was itself a product of a particular world, where international and domestic political changes were intertwined and where the Ottoman Empire was on the losing end of the emerging European alignments. Although Prince Sabahaddin himself would be on the losing end of the revolutionary process and outcomes, it is important to note his presence in the revolutionary process and the international, global and local conditions that made this possible. This is essential not only because his politics provide further feedback for our theoretical insights, but also because his League played a significant role in the tax revolts of 1906-1907.

6.2.2 Tax Revolts in Anatolia, 1906-1907

> *"The hero of the revolution, Niyazi Bey, after igniting the revolt that resulted in the proclamation of liberty in 1908, has sent a telegraph to the Yıldız Palace and stated that "The wish of the whole nation is the enactment of the Constitution. The persecutions in Erzurum did not scare the people off. On the contrary, it pushed us to further resistance in this cause". "*[269]

Although the tax revolts in Anatolia did not directly influence the revolutionary outcome, they were part and parcel of the revolutionary process. The quote above shows that the link between the Anatolian revolts and the upheaval in

[269] H. Zafer Kars, *1908 Devriminin Halk Dinamiği* (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1997), 13.

Macedonia which finally led to the proclamation of liberty was also established by the Young Turks in the latter region.[270]

Two distinct developments provoked and shaped these tax revolts in Anatolia. One was the enforcement of the two new taxes by the Ottoman government (the personal tax and the tax on animals) that caused great frustration on the part of rural residents. The already poor economic conditions became unbearable with these new taxes, and in addition to this there were "crop failures and price rises."[271] A second development was the infiltration of the League's agents, most notably of Hüseyin Tosun, and the constant endeavours of Armenian militants to organize and channel these disturbances. Rural revolts were not in fact rare in Ottoman history. "What seems new in July 1908 is that an economic crisis unfolded in the presence of an organized, widespread revolutionary cadre. For the first time in decades, there was a favourable juncture, of economic and political conditions."[272]

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[270] However, the historiography on the causes of the Young Turk revolution – so scanty for an event of such scale – does not really discuss or point out this link. In an article written in 1979, "The Young Turk Revolution: Old and New Approaches", Donald Quataert was attempting to open these matters for discussion and asked the following question: Why did the Anatolian unrest not translate into revolutionary activity or transform the movement in Macedonia? Hitherto, no satisfactory account has been written. Aykut Kansu, in his famous study of the Young Turk revolution, analyzes the tax revolts in a separate chapter (*The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey*, 29-73), yet fails to establish a clear and distinct link between the revolts in Anatolia and in Macedonia. Instead he attempts to find the demonstration effect of the Anatolian revolts on the upheaval in Macedonia. Apart from the encouragement and enthusiasm that these disturbances in Anatolia might have caused for the Young Turks in Macedonia, he also argues that these tax revolts affected the state's capacity in an adverse way. "The continual disturbances in the provincial towns all over Anatolia and Macedonia, however, crippled the representative power of the state by the end of the year." (Ibid., 75) Unfortunately, a solid answer to this debate has to be given after a detailed historical research on the subject. However, the content and method of these tax revolts remain important for the purposes of this study.

[271] Quataert, "The Economic Climate of 1908," 61.

[272] Ibid., 61

Discontent with economic conditions, combined with the existence of the League's propaganda, led to the politicization of some of these revolts. Georgeon describes the general pattern of these tax revolts as follows (note that the people were also showing discontent towards local representatives of the state, towards corruption and unnecessary use of force): "the insurgents first controlled the telegraph office and then bombarded the Yıldız Palace and the Sublime Porte with telegraphs. Among their conditions they listed the abolition of the taxes and the removal of incompetent government officials. The telegraph, which was a tool of the regime's centralization, was rendered like a boomerang and became a tool for the expression of the local people's demands."[273]

Abdülhamid seems to have adopted a two-sided strategy in the face of these upheavals. He used compromise and suppression at the same time. While Istanbul sent telegraphs accepting some of the demands, it also pursued those individuals that it saw as the most radical and politicized.[274] Upon receiving the news of the acceptance of their demands, the crowd in most cases started to pray for the well-being of this generous sultan and shouted "Long live the Sultan!"[275] However, in the famous case of Erzurum, the discontent was organized by the League's agents and

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[273] Georgeon, 451.

[274] "The extent of these tax revolts forced the absolutist regime to take some measures to satisfy public outrage. In May [1907], the Government had sent a circular to the Governors of Van, Bitlis, and Trabzon, instructing them to make a tour of their provinces to investigate popular grievances. They were also instructed to remove from office all functionaries who had been guilty of injustice and malpractice." Kansu, 43.

[275] "When Abdülhamid responded to the demands of the insurgents – generally by the removing the governor – the crowd gathered in front of the telegraph office and shouted "Long Live the Sultan!" also they ran to the mosques and prayed for the Sultan." Georgeon, 452.

Armenian partners and led to a politicized revolt with the objective of constitutional regime.

In the case of the Erzurum revolt, which extended from 1906 to 1907, we can observe the fruits of the League's collaboration with Dashnaktsutiun. The fact that Erzurum was where Hüseyin Tosun chose to start propaganda makes sense, as Erzurum was an important city of the region with a great number of Armenian residents. The voicing of demands started in the spring of 1906 and the course of action adopted was that of sending petitions to Istanbul for the abolition of the new taxes, especially the one on animals which was harming the local economy engaged in raising livestock. The month of March witnessed the closing down of shops and civil disobedience on the part of the people of Erzurum, mostly under the guidance of the urban notables. They triumphed and the governor of Erzurum was removed from office – one of their initial demands. The new governor encountered the difficult task of finding and arresting the leaders of the March revolt, an endeavour which caused further disturbances.[276] "A crowd occupied the governor's office and captured the governor who had hidden in a nearby house. He was wounded and held hostage at the İbrahim Pasha Mosque."[277] The weeks that followed were an experience of oscillation between the Sultan's compromises and aggressive plans and between joy over the successful demands and the ambition to voice all the remaining grievances, which included the soldiers' demand for receipt of all the unpaid salaries. The inability and/or unwillingness of the central government to pay the salaries of the soldiers fuelled the insurgents' anger further and, under the guidance of the

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[276] Kars, *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği*, 31-32.

[277] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 112.

organized revolutionaries, the insurgents managed to cripple the authority of the central government. "An Azeri journal likened the situation in the town to that in some Iranian cities under the administration of local *anjumans*."[278] This situation lasted for months and there was a locally formed authority managing the affairs of the city. In November of 1907 military forces suppressed the rebellion.

There were other revolts at this time in cities like Kastamonu, Van, Bitlis and Trabzon. The Erzurum revolt was the most successful in challenging the state and the longest in duration, mostly due to the activities of the League-Dashnaktsutiun alliance.[279] They achieved the desired politicization but could not obtain their ultimate objective of securing foreign intervention on behalf of a regime change in the Ottoman Empire, despite Prince Sabahaddin's efforts in communicating with European diplomats.

The tax revolts did do some damage to the state's capabilities of coercion. It also gave courage to the emerging revolutionary agency in the Macedonia region. However, the failure to transform these revolts into organized and coordinated revolutionary activity rendered them detached from the hotbed of Young Turk propaganda, the European provinces. Part of the reason for this detachment seems to

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[278] Ibid., 113.

[279] As the collaboration between the two parties was a sensitive matter, and in accordance with the requirements of optimum propaganda methods, some bogus organizations were set up during their activities, which Hanioğlu reveals in detail in *Preparation for a Revolution*, 97-103. For a brief summary of how this was done, the following quote may be useful: "Accordingly, Sabahaddin Bey's League and the Dashnaktsutiun solicited help from intermediary organizations and set up bogus organizations to facilitate cooperation. This continued until the Second Congress of Ottoman Opposition Parties, after which the agreement between the Dashnaktsutiun, Sabahaddin Bey's League, the CPU and numerous trivial and bogus opposition organizations were drawn up and made public." Ibid., 97.

be the division among the Young Turks and the difference between the CPU and the League,[280] which was the result of the 1902 Congress. The CPU was absent in the Erzurum revolt, despite its escalating efforts to penetrate the Empire itself. It was, however, to have a strong hold in Macedonia.

To recapitulate, Prince Sabahaddin, Dashnaktsutiun and the locals of these towns had succeeded in creating a temporary revolutionary moment that remained local and could not transcend the geographical origins of the discontent. We have followed this trajectory from the Prince's social scientific studies to the livestock breeders in Erzurum. It was indeed a combination of the global conjuncture, imperial politics and local concerns, bound together by the political will of the people, the League and the Armenian revolutionaries. However, it remained specific to the region and the state managed to suppress the insurgents. This was not to be the case in Macedonia, where the links between these three different levels are stronger, more intertwined, and where the revolutionary momentum will be able to transcend its immediate surrounding and concerns.

6.2.3 The global, the imperial and the local: a combined analysis of revolutionary agency

In 1906, the balances in Europe, in the Ottoman Empire and accordingly in Macedonia were changing. The traditional ally, Britain, was transforming its status in

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[280] It should be noted that, while giving a detailed account of the revolts, Kansu does not distinguish between the CPU and the League and seems to be referring to both as the Committee of Union and Progress, which, if not historically inaccurate, creates confusion in an already perplexing chronology of events. Also reviews of the book have criticized its referring to Turkey rather than to the Ottoman Empire and its seemingly arbitrary use of the phrases Turkish/Turk. For an example, see Keith Watenpaugh, review of *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey,* by Aykut Kansu, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 32, no. 1 (2000): 168-171.

world politics along with its attitude towards the traditional enemy, Russia. What was to be known as the Triple Entente was in preparation, especially after the Anglo-French agreement of 1904. The Austro-Russian understanding on maintaining the status quo in the Balkans was also shaken and, as Russia drifted away from Austria, the Anglo-Russian friendship evolved into a collaboration over the Macedonian Question. The Ottoman Sultan was seeing confirmation of his fears of the return of Russia to Balkan politics after its defeat by Japan. The already difficult task of carving out a manoeuvring space for the Empire was becoming impossible. Approaching Germany and allowing it to enter the Ottoman political and economic space did not produce tangible results, as was seen in the naval demonstration of the European powers against the Sultan's attitude over the customs issue in 1905, which took place despite German abstention. The Baghdad railway, on the other hand, was drawing Russia and Great Britain closer in their common fear of Germany's expansion. "The result was that the Anglo-Russian convention of August 1907, which attempted to settle outstanding Anglo-Russian rivalries in Persia and to regulate the position of the two powers in Afghanistan and Tibet, was, at least so far as Britain was concerned, more clearly anti-German in inspiration than the Anglo-French agreement of 1904."[281] From an Ottoman perspective this was a preparation for an Anglo-Russian partnership on the Macedonian Question and that was indeed what followed. This was seen as a 'diplomatic revolution' in European affairs, as it ended the 'splendid isolation' of Great Britain.[282] Together with the Anglo-French

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[281] Anderson, *Ascendancy of Europe,* 49.

[282] "The basis for friendship already existed in the Anglo-Russian Convention of I907, a settlement of outstanding differences in Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet; to achieve a wider co-operation would complete the diplomatic revolution and favourably alter the Balance of Power in Europe." M. B. Cooper, "British Policy in the Balkans, 1908-1909," *The Historical Journal* 7, no 2 (1964): 261.

entente, it deeply influenced European political affairs.[283] In accordance with the central theme of this thesis, it would also be seen to influence the Ottoman Empire and Macedonia in particular, with rather unpredictable results.

Specifically, it would push the revolutionaries to act sooner and more swiftly, fearing the loss of Macedonia. In this demonstration effect, we can once again observe the *'either or'* thinking discussed in Chapter 4. The juxtaposition of international influences and the rise and development of domestic agency, as we have seen, was not sufficient to give a full understanding of the intrinsic relation between the international and the domestic. As encroaching and as restrictive as the international's impact can be, that encroachment is not necessarily an invasion of the realm from which agency arises. Rather, that encroachment of the 'foreign' is part of that realm and of the process whereby the political world of the agency in question is constructed. In this part of the case, the Anglo-Russian entente after the turn of the century and the breaking down of the status quo at the global, imperial and local levels, most discernible in the Macedonian Question, transformed the Young Turks, the revolutionary agents, just as they were transforming themselves. In comparison to the decade preceding 1906-1907, it would be fair to state that the CPU was already on its way of developing a more radical politics. This was caused by its interpretation of Ottoman and European politics. As we have seen, they were already developing anti-Western ideas drifting away from the publication of scientific analyses and

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[283] "The Anglo-Russian convention of 1907, along with the Anglo-Japanese treaty of 1902 and the Anglo-French entente of 1904, marked a sea-change in the history of international politics in Europe. While the ad hoc manner in which the agreements were negotiated suggests that they were not designed as a deliberate attempt to promote a new British diplomatic strategy, together they marked the end of the country's tradition of 'splendid isolation' from the intricacies of European affairs." Michael Hughes, "Bernard Pares, Russian Studies and the Promotion of Anglo-Russian Friendship, 1907-14," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 78, no. 3 (2000): 510.

moving on to organizational networks and actual propaganda. The change in world diplomacy interacted with this transformation in the making and pushed it further. So, it is reasonable to assume that the international did not necessarily restrict or constrain domestic agency, but was part of the material from which the Young Turks composed their politics. If this is not obvious from the mere chronology of events, it is clearly so because of the complicated nature of the subject matter. Here lies the difficulty of capturing this dialectical relation between several actors and developments at various levels. One has to disentangle these links, but not to the point where one loses the theoretical intuition into and empirical observation of their mutual constitution.

A vital component in the process of Young Turk revolution was indeed Macedonia, where all these links are more easily observable. Macedonia, throughout the revolutionary period, remained the central focus of the international and revolutionary actors, and for clear reasons. Several reform programs, outlined in the preceding chapter, were unable to halt the circle of violence in Macedonia. What they did start was an international military regime in Macedonia, side by side with the Ottoman army. The various armed bands were creating an unsafe environment for every resident. The violence had its impact not only on the peoples of Macedonia, but also on the officers of the III Army. As the government had to send more reinforcements to the region, the young officers immediately out of the military academies "had directly witnessed the failure of the government to calm the situation and (...) resented the presence of the foreign inspectors who had arrived after 1903."[284] They also saw the better conditions of the foreign officers. They

[284] Jelawich, 83.

themselves were unpaid, were not trained well enough for active combat and had to pursue irregular armed bands in difficult terrain. Perhaps, in their poverty, they were like any other army division. But their specific location, constant exposure to foreign officers and the difficulty of the conflict itself led to severe grievances among these young officers. Most of these can be observed in the memoirs of Kâzım Karabekir.[285] The target of these grievances was the Sultan, whom they held responsible not only for the poor handling of foreign affairs, but also for the poverty of the army. In the end, for the purposes of revolutionary success these grievances weight more heavily than the rural unrest. In the words of Kansu: "More critical than civil disobedience, however, was military unrest."[286]

Why did the military upheaval turn out to be among the most critical factors for revolution in the Ottoman Empire? The answer has several aspects, most of which will be hinted at below, when the military revolutionary organization, their links to the CPU and their role in the actual execution of the revolution are analysed. One aspect which can be dealt with here is the long-term causes of this military unrest, the kind of a political world by which it was shaped and to which it was reacting. The Hamidian educational reforms of the late 19th century have been

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[285] Once a general in the army and later an MP and Chair of the Parliament in the Republican era, Kâzım Karabekir (1882-1948) is one of the important figures of the period stretching from Unionism to Republicanism. Below are a two of his observations from his years in the III Army in Macedonia. When he arrives at his post in Monastir, he sees the poverty of the army and blames the Sultan:

"I have cursed once again the destructive delusions and mentality of Sultan Hamid - so ambitious to reign – that was to be observed everywhere and in every matter." Kâzım Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terraki Cemiyeti* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2009), 54.

"We had neither medical detachments nor bandages. This and the fact that we only had Martin rifles against the Manliher of the bands, showed that our management was corrupt and broken. We were fighting for the patriotic cause with our lives, whereas the Istanbul government and the palace were reckless in their pleasures." Ibid., 66.

[286] Kansu, 81.

explained in preceding chapters, along with the backgrounds of the students who benefited from the new military academies and their curriculums. These young people, eager to rise in the army, hostile to all those who had won their privileges outside the merit system and also equipped with a scientific outlook towards the world in general, were the origins of this military unrest. Also, having been told of or having observed the short rise and long fall of the Young Turk movement in Istanbul in the 1890s, they did have an idea of a possible opposition to the Hamidian regime. Some older officers were former CUP members. When a concentration of these young officers accumulated in a region like Macedonia, the outcome was the transformation of action around these grievances into an actual political organization. Unlike the locally distinct tax revolts of a vast region, Macedonia, with its intense conflicts and sense of being a distinct European province of the Ottoman Empire, segregated as it was, provided the catalyst necessary for the politicization and political organization of grievances. As Russia and Great Britain were putting pressure on the Macedonian issue, and as Macedonia's inner struggles were putting pressures on the young officers in the Ottoman army, they felt that they had to respond. Added to this were a sense of vanguardism and of a historical mission to 'save the Empire'. Thus the formation of revolutionary agency in Macedonia was, as much as it was a choice on their parts, also a crystallization of several conflicts at one historical moment, a moment also encouraged and informed by Russian (1905) and Iranian (1906) constitutional revolutions. The result was the foundation of the Ottoman Freedom Society in September 1906.

6.2.3.1 The Ottoman Freedom Society and the Merger with the CPU

As Macedonia continued to be an area of intense struggle and a space of intersection for international, imperial and local affairs, the military unrest paved the way for the foundation of the Ottoman Freedom Society, which was founded in September 1906 and in September of the following year officially merged with the CPU.[287] The nature of the Ottoman Freedom Society was linked from its inception to the Macedonian question. The organization was founded in Salonica and included some famous pashas of the Unionist period that followed the 1908 revolution, such as Enver and Talât[288]. Although it included some civilians, it essentially expanded among the officers in the III Army and established a branch in Monastir. "From the fall of 1907 onwards the II Army also established relations with the Society, through the recruitment of officers such as Seyfi (Düzgören), the chief of army intelligence and division commander, and İsmet (İnönü)."[289]

There is no doubt that the establishment of the Ottoman Freedom Society is a response to Macedonian Question and its intersection with international and Ottoman politics. Specifically, the failure of the reform programs and their adverse effects on

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[287] Zürcher, *Milli Mücadelede İttihatçılık*, 67 -71.

[288] Talât (1874-1921) was a former member of the CUP in the 1890s and a founder of the Ottoman Freedom Society in 1906. He was working as a high-ranking public servant in the Postal Services and hence was a civilian at the time of the revolution. He served as 'sadrâzam' for a short period during the First World War and had to flee the country after the defeat. He was assassinated in 1921 in Germany. Ibid., 66.

Enver (1881-1922) was a military officer and would become the future Minister of War in the Unionist era. He is generally held responsible for the way in which the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War. At the beginning of the war he had suffered a huge defeat on the eastern Russian front at Sarıkamış.

[289] Ibid., 70. İsmet İnönü (1884-1973) after the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk would become the second president of the Turkish Republic in 1938.

the various peoples of Macedonia inspired these young officers to respond. In this regard they were acting in the immediacy of the situation rather than from a planned and ideologically distinct point of view. They also had immense potential for revolutionary action due to their positions in the army and the resources they could muster. They opted to contact the CPU abroad, requested cooperation and later a complete merger with the CPU. Zürcher explains this decision to choose the CPU rather than the League of Prince Sabahaddin by referring to the familiarity between the officers' backgrounds and the nationalist and pro-centralization views of the CPU, as against the liberal ideals of the League.[290] One could also argue that the increasing tone of anti-Europeanism in CPU publications must have attracted these officers. Thanks to the organizational efforts of Bahaeddin Şakir and Dr. Nâzım, more propaganda material than ever was being smuggled into the Empire. Especially if one considers the timing of the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907, which was concluded in August and exacerbated the attitude of many Macedonians and Ottoman military officers against foreign intervention, the officers' choice of the CPU seems like the joining of two organizations that were extremely similar in world outlook.

Indeed, the nature of this merger is another controversial issue in the literature on the Young Turk revolution. The discussion revolves around the question of which of these two organizations gave the movement its revolutionary impetus. The CPU's more refined ideological line and its exile status is juxtaposed to a picture of young officers eager to act as radically and as fast as possible. This juxtaposition leads to the conclusion that it was the cadre of officers that actually carried the responsibility

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[290] Ibid., 71.

for decisions in the revolutionary process and should be given sole credit for the revolutionary success.[291] However, recent studies point to the similarities between the two groups in terms of revolutionary objectives, to the transformation of the CPU prior to the merger, to the presence of former CUP members in the Ottoman Freedom Society and finally to the importance of the CPU's propaganda[292] and guidance for the execution of the revolution, besides the obvious contributions of the young officers.[293] Indeed, Hanioğlu also underlines the fact that the Ottoman Freedom Society was unorganized and inefficient before the merger with the CPU.[294] Sohrabi agrees with him: "In one sense, the CUP abroad, by providing an organizational umbrella for officers, did what the latter was to do for the disparate bands of Turkish villagers in Macedonia."[295]

After the initial contact with the CPU abroad, the official merger occurred in September 1907 and the Ottoman Freedom Society became the Internal Headquarters of the CPU, whereas the Paris group became the External Headquarters. A division of labour followed the merger, whereby the External Headquarters took charge of communications with the European community, organization and management of external branches, preparation and dissemination of propaganda material and so

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[291] "Regardless of the contributions of the opposition centres abroad in the preparation of the 1908 revolution, their direct influence on the events prior to the revolution is insignificant. The 1908 Revolution is a result of the efforts of the groups residing within the Empire." Ibid., 44.

[292] Ahmet Bedevi Kuran (1886-1966), who was a student at the Military Academy around early 1900s, testifies to the receipt of CPU propaganda among the students: "All of the academies had a society for themselves. We would meet the heads of these societies every Friday, enter into discussion and share the "Young Turk" publications that had arrived from Europe." Kuran, 277.

[293] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey*, Sohrabi, "Global Waves, Local Actors".

[294] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 212.

[295] Sohrabi, "Global Waves, Local Actors," 66.

forth. The Internal Headquarters, on the other hand, was organized after the merger upon the suggestions of Bahaeddin Şakir, who had advised them to study the organizational methods of non-Muslim organizations. Hanioğlu notes that they had asked for a copy of Dashnaktsutiun's program, whereas Ramsaur mentions IMRO as an inspirational model.[296] The attention paid to the possible uses of the Muslim bands of Macedonia, and the study of the Macedonian organizations for organizational efficiency suggest that, after the merger, the CPU in Macedonia was engaged in various forms of revolutionary activity. Here, Sohrabi's picture of the preparation of the revolution seems accurate: "Agency in revolution, contrary to caricatures of it by critics, did not magically create organizations and resources out of will power. But by giving direction to what was at hand and by making crucial linkages among disparate elements, it realized potentials that would otherwise have remained dormant."[297]

Leaving the actual course of events that followed the merger and that constituted the final revolutionary blow to the Hamidian regime to the next section, and before going into details of the 1907 Congress when all the above mentioned actors convened, a few words on agency formation would be timely and of relevance to the themes of this thesis. Charles Tilly, in his work on mobilization and social movements[298], postulates that the formation of revolutionary agency depends upon the resources and opportunities for the actors, and that these resources in turn range from material resources to the formation of alliances among several actors and

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[296] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution,* 217; Ramsaur, *Jön Türkler ve 1908 İhtilali*, 125.

[297] Sohrabi, "Global Waves, Local Actors," 66.

[298] Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978).

include the repertoire of action available. The merger of the CPU and the Ottoman Freedom Society can be seen from this perspective as an alliance that contributed to the process of agency formation, rather than as the coming together of two fully-fledged and separate groups. Through these alliances other resources presented themselves to the extended CPU. Networks were enhanced, new methods of propaganda emerged (such as that of appealing to the Muslims of Macedonia through the politicization of the Young Turk officers), and emerging opportunities were also used in a more efficient way (such as the issue of foreign intervention to Macedonia). While the past divisions and internal strife among the Young Turks in Europe had taken their toll on their political capacities, this merger expanded their capacities for political action. If we remember the global conjuncture that led to the politicization of the young officers in the first place, namely the changing European alliances and the meaning of this for the Ottoman context, it becomes additionally plausible to consider the international context among the opportunities that contributed to the composition and evolution of revolutionary agency. Hence we can conclude that the international determinants of a revolution may occur not only in the long-term inputs that were identified in the critical juncture of the late 1870s, and not only in the transformation of the actors that arose out of this critical juncture (in the decade prior to the revolution), but also in the emergence and development of a 'revolutionary situation' in a manner that would affect the timing and resource capabilities of revolutionaries.

An appreciation of the profound and constitutive role of the international community at all these periods can only be reached through a nuanced approach to the issue of agency, especially in the analysis of the political change carried out by

specific actors. This kind of investigation into the first two years of the revolutionary process (1906-1907) bolsters the theoretical insights that presented themselves in the preceding chapters: the intrinsic link between the international and the domestic, a renewed understanding of the impact of international factors on domestic agency, and the need to associate these two points. In the next subsection, an opportunity emerges to look more closer at the actors involved, namely the 1907 Congress, the result of which Hanioğlu calls as a 'tactical alliance'.[299]

6.2.3.2 1907 Congress: A tactical alliance

So, just months after the merger between the CPU and the Ottoman Freedom Society and also only a short time after the suppression of the tax revolts, in part led by the League-Dashnaktsutiun collaboration, the parties came together in December 1907. Kuran notes that the call for a Congress came from the Armenian Dashnaktsutiun organization and that they had first approached Prince Sabahaddin and then Ahmed Rıza to arrange such a meeting with delegates from Dashnaktsutiun.[300] Georgeon points out the ideological differences among the participants, especially between the "socialist-revolutionary" Dashnaktsutiun and the "conservative-nationalist" CPU.[301] However, the negotiations went more smoothly than expected and, after the League's cooperation with Dashnaktsutiun and the CPU's merger with the Ottoman Freedom Society, a third alliance would emerge between these parties. Due to its insignificance for the outcome of the revolution (as the revolutionary process proceeded in Macedonia and under the leadership of the

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[299] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution.*

[300] Kuran, 287.

[301] Georgeon, 453.

CPU as opposed to the other participant parties of the Congress), this Congress does not occupy a significant place in the literature on the Young Turks. The parties to this Congress understood their limitations and also that there was power in numbers and they wanted to include as many organizations as possible in support of their cause. In that context, they approached Macedonian organizations, but with little success. This failure did not intimidate them and they managed to find a way to make the Congress appear larger in scale:

> "The organizers thus made use of the editorial boards of various insignificant journals and virtually non-existent, one-man organizations to inflate the number of signatures. This ploy enabled them to make the bombastic claim of having accomplished a general union of "Ottoman opposition parties" and served as a shield against the attacks of opponents who rejected any rapprochement between the CPU and the Dashnaktsutiun. These signatures were, however, of no help to the organizers in carrying out revolutionary activities."[302]

It is important to notice the concerns of the CPU and of Dashnaktsutiun about their image in the eyes of both friends and foes. As the revolutionary propaganda was intensifying, appeal to potential sympathizers gained the utmost importance, a fact that will come to the fore in the CPU's growing pragmatism during the revolutionary process. It is also important to note Dashnaktsutiun's need for alliances. Kuran attributes this to the failure of their previous actions[303], the most famous being the 1905 attempt to assassinate the Sultan, which failed due to a delay in Abdülhamid's exit from the mosque on one of his Friday visits. Both the League of Prince of Sabahaddin and Dashnaktsutiun had failed to attract foreign involvement or to establish a coordinated organizational presence within the Empire. The CPU, on the

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[302] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 202-203.

[303] Kuran, 288.

other hand, was seeking ways to expand. The urgency of toppling the common enemy led to a Congress that was extremely critical of the Sultan and appealed to similar sentiments in the Empire. They called for civil disobedience, strikes and all the other means appropriate to removing the Sultan and reinstalling the Constitution. This tactical alliance would not really translate into revolutionary action. Nonetheless, it is important to observe the heightened will and determination of the CPU, which led them even to enter into an alliance with the Armenian revolutionaries, whose actions they had been describing in recent years as harmful to the Empire, and with Prince Sabahaddin, whose preference for and insistence on foreign intervention they had come to despise. This reflects their newly evolved political flexibility. In the end, the coming of the revolution would proceed from the European provinces of the Empire and against foreign intervention. We now move on to the year 1908, when the diplomatic revolution coincided with the revolution of 1908.

6.3 From the Diplomatic Revolution to the Young Turk Revolution: the Summer of 1908

The diplomatic revolution, as explained above, was a combination of several treaties. One of the most important, the Anglo-Russian Convention, was signed in August 1907. Below is a chronological account of what followed: the CPU's merger with the Ottoman Freedom Society occurred in September 1907. The 1907 Congress was convened in December 1907. Austria-Hungary and Russia broke their entente in the first two months of 1908, after Austria obtained from the Ottoman Sultan the concession to build a railway to reach the Aegean. From February 1908 onwards it became common knowledge that Russia and Great Britain were working on a new reform programme that had a high likelihood of leading to an autonomous

Macedonia. In May 1908, the CPU sent a letter to the consulates of the Great Powers, explaining the futility of European attempts to solve the Macedonian question, and that they were going to do this themselves. In 9-10 June, The British King and the Russian Tsar met in Reval to discuss world politics, including the Macedonian Question. Only weeks after this, on 3 July 1908, Ahmed Niyazi Bey (a CPU officer and an Albanian) took 200 men, including public servants, to the mountains in Resne and sent telegraphs to the Sultan demanding the enforcement of the Constitutional Regime. So, the revolution started. An Albanian crowd (20,000-30,000) gathered in Firzovik and swore "an oath to work for the restoration of the constitution."[304] On 23 July 1908, the constitutional regime was declared in Monastir by the revolutionaries. On 24 July 1908, the Sultan issued a decree for the re-establishment of the constitutional regime. *Meşrutiyet*[305] was proclaimed. It took the CPU only 20 days to submit the Sultan to their demands after open revolt broke out with Niyazi Bey's move to the mountains.

This is indeed a brief summary of the year that started with the merger and ended with a revolution. As can be seen in this simple chronology of events, it was a rapid revolutionary process, a dense historical period, and the lines between the international, imperial and local were highly blurred. Below we will try to unravel these links. However, one should be extremely careful, as too rigid a disentanglement would lead to the disillusion that these were separate events in time and space. The several intuitions that this case study has provided us so far reach their peak and

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[304] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 272.

[305] Constitutional Regime. The Unionist era is also called the era of the *II. Meşrutiyet*.

crystallization in this period and the need to reveal the dialectics of these events, rather than compartmentalizing them, becomes the most significant task. Also important is the weight of the last 30 years of Ottoman and international politics on these events. Here, this case study has the advantage of comparison within a single case.

The Anglo-Russian *rapprochement*, as we have seen above, was indeed a diplomatic revolution. The politicized and to some extent radicalized Young Turks of Macedonia and Europe witnessed the toppling of the international system as they knew it. This entente further pushed them towards anti-imperialism[306], not only because it led to the emergence of new fears, but also because it helped in the reshaping of Ottoman politics, when anti-imperialism became an asset to the revolutionary actors. It gave their propaganda an additional impetus, especially because in Macedonia the impact of this entente and the centralization of revolutionary activities coincided. Moreover, the failure of the reform programs since the Berlin treaty created a space of discontent within which the Young Turks found the skills to contact other Macedonian organizations in order to seek alliances or at least to secure their neutrality. The result of these contacts is summarized by Hanioğlu, who documents these negotiations in detail: "The CPU's success in striking deals with various Christian organizations and in neutralizing others, either by implicit threats or by explicit demonstrations of power, persuaded the Christian masses to join the movement at the hour of its triumph, or at least not to oppose

[306] Hasan Ünal explains the Young Turks' attitude in international politics, in comparison to that of the Sultan at this period, as follows: "He [Abdülhamid] accepted the prevailing international order as given, and sought only to ensure the Empire's survival within it. In contrast, the anti-Europeanism of the CUP was rooted in an aggrieved and assertive nationalism, some of whose implications in international affairs were potentially revolutionary." Hasan Ünal, "Young Turk Assessments of International Politics, 1906-9," *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, no. 2 (1996): 36.

it."[307] This success is additionally intriguing given the CPU's nationalist tendencies and reactions towards the non-Muslim political activity. It certainly is a reflection of their newly developed political flexibility and pragmatism and a testament to their revolutionary will.

Another factor in the rapidity of the revolutionary process is the local political environment. Despite the failure of the reform programs in the past, these foreign interventions in Macedonia had rendered the region a relatively free environment, free to discuss politics, engage in propaganda activity and free to recruit new members. Together with the violence, this freedom led to a rapid politicization process among the people of Macedonia. Accordingly, the Sultan's authority and powers were weakened in the region, parallel to the rise of the number of new recruits to the CPU.

Another accelerator along the way was the concession that the Sultan granted to Austria-Hungary. "In February 1908, the Sultan gave a concession to Austrians to build a railway that would pass through the Sanjak of Novibazaar; this railway would open them the road to Salonica and the Aegean Sea. This decision altered the balances in the Balkans."[308] The Sultan was making an effort towards managing this complex situation. However, his response further damaged the little manoeuvring space he had. This concession caused the breakdown of the Austro-Russian coalition on Macedonian affairs, alarmed the British and further provoked the Young Turks.

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[307] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 238.

[308] Georgeon, 455.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to observe that the Sultan remained part of the revolutionary equation until the end.

Russia and Britain started working on a new reform program. These developments caused a further acceleration in Young Turk activity in the region and also led to their statement on the Macedonian issue, which they sent in May 1908 to the consulates of the Great Powers. The statement was essentially a warning to the Powers, explaining the damage their intervention has inflicted upon the region, and informed them that the CPU claimed the Macedonian Question as an Ottoman affair. "This document demonstrates that the Committee of Progress and Union had decided to solve the Macedonian Question on its own and informed the Great Powers two months before the revolution."[309] It also testifies to the revolutionary will of the Committee. They were prepared for a revolutionary struggle and also ready to give the news to the relevant parties.

The timing of the revolution in July 1908 is generally explained in the literature by reference to two additional triggers: the Reval Meeting of June 1908 and the increasing intelligence activity of the Sultan's representatives in the region. The Reval meeting, between the monarchs of Great Britain and Russia, only confirmed the fears of both the Ottoman state and the Ottoman opposition. The traditional enemy and the traditional ally had finished working on their plans for the Ottoman Empire and Macedonia in particular.[310] This hastened the whole process of

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[309] Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, *Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu*, 170.

[310] "The sovereigns, accompanied by Hardinge and Isvolsky, met at Reval on 9 June. The ministers' discussions ranged over Macedonia, the Middle East and the Balance of Power. They put the finishing touches to the Macedonian programme and Hardinge promised British support for a Danube-Adriatic

preparation for the revolution[311] and also put the Sultan in a difficult position. "If the Sultan accepted the Reval plan, the revolutionaries would gain a powerful weapon against him; if he rejected it, the European Powers would no doubt intervene."[312] The Sultan's sovereignty over the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire was seriously diminishing, in reality as well as in perception. This surely became a motivation for the opposition, whose sole aim was to topple his 'repressive regime' and replace it with a constitutional one. The second trigger was the Sultan's increasing surveillance of the Young Turks in the region. The CPU tried to take counter-measures against this move by the Sultan and attempted to assassinate, but only wounded, one of the Sultan's agents.[313] They were thus entering the point of no return.

Here it would be helpful to remember the emphasis of Tilly on the revolutionary situation, as distinct from revolutionary outcome, and his insistence on giving analytical priority to the resources, capabilities and contingent opportunities that present themselves to revolutionary agents.[314] When looked at from this angle,

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railway as soon as the reforms were presented to the Porte." M. B. Cooper, "British Policy in the Balkans", 262.

[311] "Had the Reval meeting of June 1908 between the Russian tzar and the British king not taken place, the CPU would have commenced its campaign to foment unrest at a relatively late date. This meeting however, not only provided the CPU with the convincing propaganda thesis that a European intervention led by Great Britain and Russia was imminent, but also impelled the leaders and members of the CPU to risk all and to start the revolution." Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 237.

[312] Kansu, 87.

[313] Georgeon, 455.

[314] In a special issue of *Doğu Batı* on the Second Constitutional Regime, Cenk Reyhan also refers to this distinction of Tilly, between revolutionary situation and revolutionary outcome. His emphasis, distinct from mine, is more on the events that unfolded after the triumph of the revolution in 1908 and he identifies 1909 as the crucial point when the revolutionary outcome emerged. Cenk Reyhan, "Jön Türk Hareketi: Türk Devrim Süreci Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı bir Çözümleme," *Doğu Batı* 1, no 45 (2008): 105 -132.

the role of the Reval meeting and of the bigger global conjuncture behind it and the effect of the Sultan's policies and tactical moves can be appreciated as constitutive of the revolutionary situation, rather than as mere triggers for some event waiting to happen. In this regard, we do not have to choose either a voluntaristic view of agency that is full-fledged and ideologically equipped or a structural causation that proceeds on a set course. It is within the situation that the agents form themselves. That situation in turn is formed by the previous actions of the agents, as well as by political transformations at the international, imperial and local levels.

Indeed, it was at all these levels that the revolution occurred. Following the Reval meeting, the CPU mobilized its accumulated resources in the region. They had been for some time now focused on Muslim bands which they envisaged to be led by Young Turk officers. The Macedonian peoples were already moved by this course of events and by the immediate threat of a wholesale foreign intervention. Here the local level assumes a special importance and perhaps explains why the tax revolts in Anatolia did not produce such a coordinated action. Having lived with foreign gendarmerie, foreign advisors and foreign reform plans for so long, the high politics of diplomatic revolution was a concrete reality for the peoples of Macedonia.[315] So, most notably the Muslims, but also the Albanians (Christian and Muslim) and later the Christian community of various sects stepped up for the revolution.

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[315] "Foreign intervention, which was no more than an abstract idea in the capital, and not even an issue in the Asiatic provinces (expect the so-called six provinces in Eastern Anatolia), was embodied in the actual presence of foreign officers and officials in Macedonia." Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 238

Adjutant-Major Ahmed Niyazi headed for the mountains on 3 July 1908, with not only military officers but also a significant number of civilians. The original group consisted of 200 people, including the mayor, the chief of police, the director of a Serbian school and so forth.[316] The number increased as the battalion advanced. The Sultan reacted by sending Şemsi Pasha to the region to suppress the revolt. Şemsi Pasha's assassination by the CPU caused further chaos and more officers headed for the mountains. Along the way, these battalions made full use of the telegraph and passed their demands to the Sultan. The Sultan however was not receiving accurate information on the size and power of the rebels, which caused frustration and inability to assess the situation on his part.

The final blows of the Sultan and the Young Turks coincided in the following event: the shift of the enforcement troops from Anatolia to Salonica. The Sultan was counting on the suppressive power of these troops. What he did not know at the time was the success of CPU propaganda among these troops, the credit for which is usually given to Dr. Nâzım. When they reached the region, around mid-July 1908, they did not fight, but joined the rebels. Thus, the Sultan was losing his coercive powers, which were at this point his only means of preventing the rebellion. "Hence the CUP deprived the government of its last military resort in Macedonia."[317]

It is also important that, during all these actions, the CPU did not neglect to calm the Great Powers by sending a memoir explaining itself, assuring them that the

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[316] Hacısalihoğlu, *Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu,* 174.

[317] Ibid, 201.

revolution was not anti-Christian in motivation and it was based on European ideals. On the day of the proclamation of liberty, 23 July, Enver Bey spread the news to the European press. Also, "on the morning of July 23, The British Consulate at Monastir was informed that in a few hours, the Committee of Union and Progress would proclaim the Constitution, and that the Unionists were firmly determined to maintain order and avoid senseless bloodshed."[318] This was a reflection of one of the most instinctive fears of the Young Turks for the last three decades, namely that of causing further loss and damage to the Ottoman Empire at the hands of foreign powers while attempting to change the regime. Therefore they made sure that they gave no excuse for this. Their success in neutralizing or even obtaining the support of the Christian population was an important help in this regard.

The day after the proclamation of liberty, the Inspector General in Salonica received the telegraph from Istanbul which stated that the Sultan was reinstituting the Constitution and recalling the Parliament. The whole region engaged in celebrations afterwards. Hanioğlu gives the most reasonable and well documented account of the Sultan's reasons for yielding to the demands of the revolutionaries:

> "The number of troops of the Third Army alone, 70,000, exceeded the total number of troops of the First and Second Armies between Macedonia and the capital. No Ottoman sultan could risk a civil war between Ottoman armies and Abdülhamid II's final decision reflected a realistic appraisal of the situation."[319]

So Abdülhamid was defeated and a year later was to be dethroned. He was to be the last Ottoman Sultan to rule and reign. Thus began a whole new era in Ottoman

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[318] Kansu, 96.
[319] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 278.

politics. The revolution of 1908, when seen from the day of 24 July 1908, was not yet looking like the revolution it would come to be: a catalyst for fundamental change in the Ottoman Empire, a constitutive factor in the emergence of the modern Middle East and Balkans, and finally an integral part of the First World War.

6.4 The Aftermath

> *"The Turkish Revolution was not the instrument of a discontented bourgeoisie, it did not ride on a wave of peasant dissatisfaction with the social order, and it did not have as target the sweeping away of feudal privileges, but it did take as a target the values of the Ottoman ancient régime. In this sense it was a revolutionary movement."*[320]

The exact nature of the change that was brought about by this revolutionary process explained above is still a matter of academic and political controversy. Whether it was a bourgeoisie revolution with characteristics of a movement from below or a mere coup d'état from above that did not really transform any part of the social structure are questions still discussed. A thorough elaboration on the issue of how to classify the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 requires another kind of study, one that would cover the outcomes of the Revolution as well as the broader period of modern Turkish history. As such these questions in no way form an integral part of this thesis, which was primarily concerned in grasping the international-domestic co-constitution in the causes of Young Turk Revolution. However, a few words on the changes brought about by the revolution are indeed necessary.

As we have seen in this and preceding chapters, the revolutionary situation that led to the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 was the result of a combined process. In this combination global, imperial and local conflicts played their roles in an

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[320] Şerif A. Mardin, "Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2, no.3 (1971): 202.

interactive way. Starting with the critical juncture identified around 1875-1878, the case study at hand focused on these conflicts whenever necessary and underlined the combined effect of these conflicts on the actors that in turn transformed themselves within that world of combined development and arose as revolutionary agents. These agents were primarily the Young Turks in exile who had symbiotic ties to the Ottoman civil and military bureaucracy and especially in the period examined in this chapter the young officers in the Third Army in Macedonia.

The world outlook of these exiles and later the officers were explained throughout the chapters. It is now evident that there was no revolutionary master plan, no ready-made and specifically set social engineering project and that these actors were shaped and shaping the world around them as historical junctures rendered possible and their room of manoeuvre was limited yet present. Their world was not yet the world they shaped through their interventions, the victory was not pre-determined and most importantly it was not known to them.

Moreover, as their hastened radicalization process has demonstrated, although they were part of the bigger process of change, they had to act quickly in a rapidly moving set of events and they showed tactical ideological manoeuvres and variations. Finally, they were the ones who at the end showed a revolutionary will to topple down the Hamidian regime and the enthusiasms and contributions of local actors in Macedonia and later the celebrations throughout the Empire do not change this fact in a fundamental way. Aykut Kansu's claim that the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 was a deliberately made bourgeoisie revolution by a new class for the

purpose of creating a whole new social structure remains yet unsupported.[321] It seems that this claim stems rather from a retrospective thinking, hence, from a gaze at the consequences of the revolution.

The most visible accomplishment of the revolution is the establishment of a Unionist regime replacing the Hamidian regime. The Unionist era is generally divided into two periods: the years between 1908-1913 and 1913-1918. The two Balkan Wars were crucial in the consolidation of the Unionist power as before 1913 the CUP was a power behind the curtain whereas after 1913 they occupied all the key posts in state institutions. In the spring of 1909 they managed to prevent a counter-revolution attempted mostly by conservative forces. Throughout the Unionist period they had to invent ways to deal with an opposition for whose existence the revolution was claimed to be made. The opposition included not only conservative elements of the ulema and rebellious parts of the military but also the liberal forces and the various non-Muslim groups, as well as non-Turkish groups such as the Albanians. The Unionists faced an inevitable dilemma: their proclaimed revolutionary goals contradicted with what they perceived to be the necessities of the Ottoman politics, the liberal orientation of the revolution faced the centralizing, nationalist and authoritarian tendencies among the Young Turk cadres, whose rhetoric of the 'people' never transcended their disbelief in the actual rule of the 'people'. The result was a new way of politics for the Ottoman Empire, the nucleus of one-party politics with para-militaristic and nationalist veins. Indeed, in introducing a new elite to rule the country and a new way of organization of politics, the revolution succeeded in

[321] "In short, 1908 represents a revolution in which political power is taken from the hands of the monarch and the bureaucracy and given to representatives of the citizens with a view to establish the political as well as the economic supremacy of a new class. In this sense, 1908 is one of the last examples of bourgeois revolutions to have taken place before the First World War." Kansu, 27.

toppling down not only Abdülhamid II but also in toppling a political mentality. This meant both the elimination of old bureaucracy and the weakening of traditional political nods, such as the urban notables, tribal chiefs, etc.

> "For the first time in the history of the empire, politics was the business of political parties sponsoring competing policies and visions of the future. Although this political pluralism was not long-lasting, it caused a far more enduring change in the nature and composition of the Ottoman ruling elite."[322]

And this is in agreement with the statement by Mardin from the beginning of this section: that the Young Turks did not create a social revolution but more of a political revolution, that is they succeeded in creating a new political regime, with new institutions, new values, new ways of organizing political will and of mobilizing the masses, and new ways of controlling the opposition. Indeed, they proved to be able to be as oppressive as the Sultan they deposed, but they conducted these measures through temporary laws. They did not disregard the parliament and hence rendered the path of parliamentary regime as the point of no return.

As such, it is not too daring to call the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 a political revolution, as opposed to a coup d'état or a social revolution. Here, we can refer to Skocpol's study on revolutions: "Political revolutions transform state structures but not social structures, and they are not necessarily accomplished through class conflict."[323] After 1908, not only the state structure but the whole structure of politics was set in a motion of change. And this sea-change was not the characteristics of the territory that was to become modern Turkish politics but

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[322] Hanioğlu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 200.

[323] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 4.

belonged to the Balkans and the Middle East. "The Young Turk Revolution played a significant role in the reshaping of the Middle East and the Balkans. Because of it an area from Scutari in Albania to Basra became acquainted with political parties, nationalist clubs, elections, and the idea of constitutional rights."[324]

Also, the CUP's coming to power became a vital part of the international history. That is so for two reasons: Firstly, as mentioned above, it had a huge political impact on the Middle East and Balkans. CUP's nationalism as well as its performance of a certain kind of modern politics had produced reactionary attitudes as well as imitation on the former parts of the Ottoman Empire. These all figured in the political configuration of these areas after the First World War. Secondly, the Unionist reign had left its mark on the First World War as well, the simplest evidence of which is the entrance of the Ottoman Empire to the War and thus the change of the course of events, the opening up of new fronts, the influence of these on the proceedings of the Bolshevik Revolution, etc. Hence, not only the causes but also the outcomes of the Revolution have important international dimensions yet to be studied thoroughly and with an appropriate theoretical framework. However, these are the topics of another study yet in themselves are the proof of the world-historical importance of the Young Turk Revolution.

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[324] Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 317.

6.5 Conclusion

> *"HS examines processes as evolving over time, identifying those deeper structural factors that both limit, and also potentially empower, the actions of agents."*[325]

In this thesis a possible trajectory of the revolution has been followed from the economic and political background of the 19th century, focusing on the political developments of the late 19th century, up until the day of the proclamation of liberty. The case study has focused in general on the international dimensions of the coming and the making of the revolution, and also paid attention to the formation of agency, which turned out to be intrinsically linked to one other.

At this moment of revolutionary agency formation, as told above, we can observe the merit of an historical sociological approach to international relations when explaining political change, domestic or otherwise. As the quote above suggests, only through this rather complicated lens can we appreciate the totality of politics, which in world-historical moments like 1908 and in *longue durée* transformations such as the period leading up to the First World War reveals itself completely to its seeker.

An appreciation of the case from an historical sociological perspective to International Relations led to the emergence of several suggestions as to how to study political change located in the global conjuncture. Vice versa, the course of the 1908 revolution when analysed in its long and short-term causes and in its process

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[325] Dannreuther and Kennedy, "Historical Sociology in Sociology," 376.

led to theoretical suggestions as to how to develop a more nuanced way of looking at the long-standing dichotomies of political analysis, such as international/domestic, structure/agency, and to a certain extent, ideational/material. A unique combination of both of these efforts also presented another excursion into the relation between international influences and domestic agency. In this double challenge between the theoretical approach and the specific case study, an opportunity arises to develop our social scientific understanding regarding both these challenge. The double challenge, when applied properly, becomes a double contribution. And the bulk of this contribution in the context of this thesis is directed towards the discipline of International Relations and could only be convincing if sound suggestions for this discipline can be provided. This double challenge will be the topic of the next chapter, where the findings of the case study will meet and clash with the approach in International Relations. This is all the case because:

> "The analysis of revolutions in their international context, both ideological and historical, provides an occasion to assess not only international history itself, but also the ways in which this topic can have implications for theorising international relations."[326]

[326] Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 293.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION: DOUBLE CHALLENGE

7.1 Introduction

> *"Rather than compare reified, static social facts, this mode of research involves the study of the relations, linkages and processes that make up the social world"*[327]

Throughout the course of the late nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was in an intense interaction with the world around it. This empirically evident interaction should be reflected in our theoretical excursions. As Lawson emphasises, the historical sociological lens, coupled with the reflexes of such minded IR studies, forces us to see the linkages and the relations that go into the composition of the world. The world was not and still is not a parochial place, neither should our theories be.[328] By parochialism, I refer to the analytical and historical distinctions and dichotomies that social science had produced between what are essentially elements in a constitutive relation, the international and domestic. This thesis as such not only attempts to contribute to the rescue of the history of the 1908 Revolution from the parochialism of 'national history' but argues that this attempt when combined with a sound theoretical direction would also contribute to the rescue of

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[327] Lawson "Historical Sociology in International Relations," 358.

[328] The usage of the term 'parochialism' in this context was inspired by Bayly's warnings about the history of human interaction and communication in the previous centuries. He uses it to underline the actual communication among people whereas I also refer to the second meaning of the term, namely the 'limited' thinking. Bayly's much needed observation is as follows: "We need to rescue the early modern, even pre-twentieth-century world from the imputation of parochialism. The old social history of the village community and the "world we have lost" often seemed to argue that because travel and communication were difficult in the past, people did not travel and communicate. On the contrary, they tried harder and connected more resolutely. The Indian world and the Middle Eastern world were connected by trade, faith, legends, and imaginings well before the start of the period under consideration. Interregional connections may actually have reached their peak in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before they were fragmented as the political control of the nation-state asserted itself so strongly in the twentieth century." Bayly, "Distorted Development," 344.

International Relations from the parochialism it sometimes falls into, both in terms of reifying the domestic, but also in terms of the repercussions of not engaging with history in a substantial and methodological manner.

The narrative and theoretical excursions provided so far have maintained a focus on the primary theoretical and empirical problematic of this thesis: how the 'international' and 'domestic' realms interact, what the outcomes of this interaction may be in specific times and places, how this interaction in turn becomes the stuff that the world of agents is composed of and how this interaction changes over time and what these changes mean in terms of the events that social science seeks to explain. The narrower focus was to ask these questions in the context of a revolution. Revolutionary situations are moments when this interaction can be most clearly seen as it is crystallized in the emergence and development of revolutionary agents, in the policies of the *ancien regime*, in the grander scheme of politics that surrounds the state and the opposition alike and finally in the way this politics is reorganized. This thesis pursued these questions addressed to the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. The historical sociological approach to International Relations gave this thesis a clearer direction, as it offered ontological, epistemological and methodological insights, though they were never formulated in a rigid and dogmatic fashion neither in the theoretical literature nor in this thesis. As Chapter 2 has explored, historical sociology as a tradition and historical sociology in International Relations have long been producing certain scientific approaches with which one can begin the investigation of these questions. The thesis among many characteristics of these traditions underlined the following as they intersected with its central curiosity and

question: that 'history matters'[329]; that analysis should be multi-causal with special attention paid to all the layers of social interaction whenever possible; that 'the international matters'; and that dichotomous thinking in the explanation of social phenomena should best be avoided, such as in the debates on structure/agency and ideational/material.

In the pages below, I will attempt to juxtapose these theoretical insights with the narrative on the emergence and development of the revolutionary agents and on the situation that led to the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Indeed, the chapters on the case study have also undertaken this task, starting with the time span that was chosen for the investigation of the case, stretching back to the early nineteenth century. This in itself was the result of historical sociological reflexes, namely that 'history matters' not as a mere background or a collection of evidence to be abused but as an integral part of the social phenomenon to be explained and therefore as an integral part of the *explanans*. This is only one example of the results of the theoretical treatment of this case study and this chapter will attempt to present these findings in a systematic fashion. As such, it will not endeavour to do more than what was already presented in the chapters on the case study, as these chapters had already included this double challenge between the theory and the case.

In terms of organization, the chapter will first sum up the challenges, suggestions and warnings brought forward by the study of the case that are posed to

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[329] "Taking the simple motif - ''history matters'' - as its first-order maxim, historical sociology aims to trace and examine the slow-moving processes, sequences, and developmental paths that can, and should, constitute the principal points of inquiry in the discipline." Lawson, "The Promise of Historical Sociology," 415.

the theoretical insights that gave their direction to this thesis. Lastly, it will recapitulate on how these theoretical insights have contributed to the account of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908.

7.2 Rethinking the 'International' in the Face of the 1908 Revolution

That the 'international matters' and that it should be incorporated into the analysis of social change is a point frequently made *in passim* in social scientific studies with a historical sociological mentality. In the initial theoretical notes of this thesis, it was argued that one should go beyond this mere observation and actually show the mechanisms of how the 'international matters'. From the Weberian historical sociology tradition, we had inferred some guiding principles. Below the empirical implications of these principles will be summarized. However, the 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire as a case study had some particularistic features that are better laid out before this summary. These features do not detract from the possible contribution of this case study to the theoretical field, provided that they are explicitly stated and hence any possible illusion on the impact of this case study for the wider field is prevented.

To start with, the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 was not a social revolution as, for example, the great revolutions that Theda Skocpol analysed within a historical sociological framework and with a comparative methodology. It was, as argued at the end of Chapter 6, a political revolution that catalyzed the change of the political structure and the organization of politics at various levels. Apart from the ongoing class tensions in the Ottoman Empire, it did not revolve around nor reshape any major class conflicts but it did intervene and transformed the political tools of these

conflicts and of course was, from its emergence until its later defeat in the First World War, part of these tensions. Indeed, as it was shown, it did not simply emerge from the imperial tensions and conflicts but from the way these collided with the tensions in the international field, tensions in other relevant empires (as in the case of the impact of other revolutions on the 1908 Revolution), and in localities (such as the Macedonian region). Also in terms of consequences – though they were not investigated in full in this study – it had its international dimensions that reach to the course of the First World War and the political organization of the Middle East and the Balkans in the twentieth century. Hence, the 1908 Revolution and the Empire within which it occurred provided us with enough historical detail amidst which to look into the international's role in revolution. This is due not only to the specifics of the course of the revolution but also due to the world-historical moment within which it occurred. The critical moments in international politics, thus, were indeed present and gave this study plenty of food for thought.

Secondly, the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 as a case study provided us with a single empirical narrative formed in a nineteenth century and a non-European context and as such the case study does not have the characteristics of a comparative study with cases chosen from different geographical spaces and historical periods. Moreover, as it was mentioned in Chapter 2, the comparative method – with variations among different studies – is an important aspect of historical sociological thinking and also of the way that thinking was reflected in International Relations. However, the fact that this juxtaposition between theory and empirical narrative occurred only in a single case study has also its merits and these merits indeed add their own contribution to this historical sociological understanding in IR. Examining

the emergence and development of a revolutionary situation in a time span that stretched from the 1820s to 1908 and with sections devoted to a single decade (Chapter 5 on the decade between 1896-1906) and even to the two years prior to the revolution (Chapter 6 on the revolutionary process of 1906-1908) created many opportunities that are relevant to the central question of this thesis: namely how to locate revolutions in their international context.

The long time span and the richness in detail allowed us to look into the events and actors that could have been overlooked in a bigger study based on comparison between multiple cases. For example, the local context of Macedonia was given its due weight as it stems from its historical importance. As such the Macedonian issue showed us the more delicate balances between global, imperial and local politics and how these interact. The long time span made the comparison between different decades and junctures possible at the local, imperial and global levels. The same holds true for the investigation of the emergence of the revolutionary actors. We could trace back the institutions wherein they were educated to their beginnings and contextualise the mentality of why they were established in the first place. Examples can be given as the Royal Military Schools and the Translation Bureau. These were part of the bigger change of political structure, which gave a specific shape to the Palace, the Bureaucracy, and the Military as well as to the way they learned from and reacted to the similar international developments (an example can be how the education policy of the Hamidian regime was competitive in nature, competing with the influence as well as the nature of other educational institutions of the Europeans and how this resulted in a specific educational mindset that shaped the founders of the Young Turk

movement a great deal). Hence, the fact that this thesis pursued a single case study did not betray, but indeed bolstered, the initial theoretical insights of the thesis: it may even be argued that the level of detail and the opportunity of comparison within a case, as they are indeed indispensable assets that the single case studies offer, suggest the more frequent usage of single cases for future research. Especially, in a topic where one is expected to demonstrate the primary theoretical assumption through an account of the exact mechanism of the co-constitution between the international and domestic in a revolutionary context, the single case certainly was justified by providing the detail needed for the assessment of this primary theoretical assumption.

These were a few words on the status of the case study via its particular features. Now we turn to the issue of how this case study has challenged the theoretical underpinnings set out in the beginning and how it may contribute to further research.

7.2.1 Domestic-international co-constitution beyond geopolitics

Through the study of the coming of the 1908 Revolution and through the specific focus of locating this revolution in the co-constitution process between the international and domestic realms, the thesis has demonstrated the need for the study of the international-domestic interaction as an integral part of studies of social change. As such, the case study revealed many challenges in actually showing that interaction and the possible nodes of social change at which one can start this investigation at an empirical level. International diplomacy and wars were the obvious beginnings especially due to the historical sociological lens of the thesis.

The critical juncture identified in Chapter 4, was a result of this lens, which is adjusted to see the international realm as inter-connected with (if not necessarily co-constitutive of) the domestic realm and which sees wars and their territorial, political, economic and ideological consequences as an integral part of state formation and changes in state power. Hence, with the help of this theoretical mindset, the importance of the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-1878 and of the Berlin Treaty of 1878 emerged not only as important moments of Ottoman-European relations but as integral components of the Ottoman politics which made the rise of the Young Turk movement possible.

Here the challenge was to transcend mere geopolitics and move to a more multi-layered, multi-actor political scene, where economics, politics, ideologies and military developments crystallize not only as Michael Mann's IEMP model points to in the state, but also demonstrates how these developments related to the local level (such as the impact of this critical juncture on the Balkans) and how these developments via the global, imperial and local levels cut into the political formation of the future opposition movement. This challenge demonstrated, as it was already intuited in Chapter 2, that the 'international' would only be simplified and lose its explanatory power (which arises from the empirical study) if it is simply reduced to the geopolitical realm. And that held true even for these geopolitical events.

The case study gave us a richness illuminating this geopolitical level and going beyond it: Alongside the geopolitics, there were a variety of state policies that spilled over to the international realm, most of which cannot simply be explained by the necessity and the competitive rigidness of geopolitics. I am here referring to the

unique combinations that all this interaction produced: the way the Ottoman ruling elite chose to modernize and the tensions within that were as determinant as the results of the wars and peace treaties, not because of the primacy of the domestic level in explaining domestic change but because these choices of the Ottoman actors displayed their true implications and ramifications in conjunction with the international determinants. This co-constitution process can be most visibly seen in the way the Berlin Congress paved the way for another set of tensions, and merged with the existing ones, such as the Armenian issue. As the Sultan felt the pressures of dissolution via a specific combination of the perceived external and internal threats, the measures he undertook led to reactions from different groups. As explained in Chapter 4, the European, specifically British attitude towards the Armenians and the suggested reforms for the Armenian problem, combined with Hamid's harsh oppression strategies resulted in the 1894-1896 crisis, which was both an Ottoman conflict and an international crisis at once. That this international crisis facilitated the expansion of the CUP as a newly founded student opposition organization in Istanbul around the same time is an example of this co-constitution process. The international here is not merely a trigger, nor a realm of necessity as the Hamidian reaction demonstrates. Ottoman actors did have room to manoeuvre and as such the international does not emerge only as a constraining element on domestic politics. Rather it enters into the very formation of Ottoman politics. An examination of the international-domestic interaction becomes an issue of providing context to political developments, an essential task indeed. Hence when one remains solely on the geopolitical terrain, one would miss how the Berlin Treaty, at various levels and with varying degrees of influence, entered into the constitution of the world in which the Young Turks were politicized.

Another example from the case study that challenges the reduction of the international-domestic interaction solely to geopolitics and state behaviour within that realm is the central place of Macedonia in the narrative of the 1908 Revolution. The Macedonian issue in the late nineteenth century reveals clearly what I mean by the combined effect of global, imperial and local politics on the coming of the revolution. The revolts in the Balkans from the early nineteenth century onwards created a pattern of turmoil, whereby the upheavals against the Ottoman state were linked to European public opinion and political culture and then linked to Great Power politics and rivalries and thereby via the mediation of these latter nodes had a second influence on the Ottoman state. These revolts sometimes led to wars, sometimes to international conferences and sometimes to treaties in conformity with the spirit of the international diplomacy of that age. But beyond these, this pattern shows that these seemingly straightforward diplomatic issues were more than their appearances: an inner-Ottoman conflict contained all the expected tensions of an imperial issue and then transcended these by the addition of European political and cultural tensions and then reshaped the Ottoman attitude towards that issue in the light of the European attitudes. Also, when these local tensions reached the status of an international affair, they remain present in the political scene while constantly being transformed by the global and imperial developments. A good example is the transformation of the Macedonian question after it was internationalized. The Anglo-Russian entente at the turn of the century had then shaped this question even further and thereby reshaped the attitudes of the Ottoman state and Ottoman opposition. For example, while Abdülhamid II was forced to create new strategies to cope with situation that was at once local and global by dealing with different actors at different levels and with different methods of compromising and intimidation, the Young Turk

movement responded with a heightened anti-interventionism towards the European role in Macedonia. Another dimension of these relationships is the fact that the Young Turk movement was also responding to Hamidian policies at the same time. Hence, inter-state relations/geopolitics as the level of analysis remains too simplistic, indeed too parochial for us to uncover and social scientifically treat all these complex layers of interaction among different actors from different levels, especially when the directionality of this chain of causation goes back and forth among these different levels.

The critical juncture of the late 1870s and the Macedonian issue are only two examples among many that were provided throughout the chapters on the 1908 Revolution that challenge the view that sees revolutions as primarily domestic events and demonstrates that when looking at their long-term and short-term causes, revolutions are tied intrinsically to the international realm. Hence, from a historical sociological point of view, we need to find ways to study revolutions in their international context, without simplifying the latter. That these ways have to transcend the mere geopolitics, an attitude attributed to the Weberian historical sociology tradition in IR, is a point bolstered by this case study and indeed one of the themes of this thesis: namely, domestic-international interaction is a multi-layered phenomenon and requires the same effort as shown by HS scholars to the layers of domestic social change.

To conclude this subsection, the case study revealed the need to refine our exploration methods into the co-constitution processes between the international and domestic in the accounts of revolutions and social and political change of seemingly

domestic variety. By methodological refinement I mean a meticulous effort to soundly combine the chosen units of analysis, actors identified with agential powers, the chosen terrains of relations among these actors and levels of analysis deemed as interacting. If our methodological lens is adjusted as such, then the messiness of all these interactions would make social scientific sense, while escaping the trap of reification of any of these units or levels. This single case study can be judged as successful if it contributes to these efforts of methodological refinement. And this should be done not in a dogmatic way that would betray the tradition of historical sociology in International Relations, as our investigation should be sensitive to the specificities of time and space in accordance with the social phenomenon to be explained. Also, developing ways to include the multi-layered nature of this co-constitution, in parallel with the multi-causal analysis – another hallmark of the HS in IR tradition - would allow us to integrate the specific world-historical moments that go into the emergence of a specific revolutionary situation. The direction provided by this multi-causal analytical framework was crucial indeed as the thesis tackled the long and short term causes of the 1908 Revolution.

7.2.2 The causes of Revolution: The international dimension

> *"The international system is not only a consequence of domestic politics and structures but a cause of them."*[330]

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 takes its place in Turkish historiography, as well as in the accounts of Middle Eastern history and politics, via its consequences, namely the Unionist era that started after the Revolution and

[330] Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics," *International Organization* 32, no. 4 (1978): 911.

intensified around 1913. The policies of the Unionists after they assumed power, how these affected the modern Turkey that emerged after the First World War and what continuities and ruptures there are between the Unionist era and the Kemalist era, these are questions that have set the limits of the discussion on the 1908 Revolution for many decades. Recently,[331] the literature on the Revolution was expanded and enriched and two major works by Hanioğlu[332] not only document but also establish the narrative on the Young Turk movement from its foundation up until the year of Revolution. Yet, there is still room for further exploration and one of the themes to be explored further is the international context of this revolution and specifically the international context of the causes of this revolution. Any account of the 1908 Revolution should do "justice to the integrative nature of the *fin-de-siecle* world, one in which the Ottoman Empire, at least its self-identified intellectual elite, are so clearly engaged."[333] Though neither the causes nor the consequences were fully explored within the world-historical context of the revolution, such an exploration of the causes of the revolution sets a double challenge to the theory and the literature on the case. Here the former will be elaborated upon.

Going back to the parochialism analogy, the study of the international dimensions of the causes of a revolution has an obvious potential for escaping this

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[331] Sohrabi, "Constitutionalism, Revolution and State"; Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey*; Hacısalihoğlu, *Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu.*

[332] Hanioğlu, *Young Turks in Opposition* and *Preparation for a Revolution* . Also for an excellent book review on Preparation for a Revolution, see Isa Blumi, "M. Sükrü Hanioglu's *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908*" *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 2 (2002) http://web.mit.edu/cis/www/mitejmes/ Blumi underlines the interactive relation between the Ottoman and European political worlds as he reviews Hanioğlu's work: "How the various political movements are shown to evolve over time through the constant incorporation and perhaps, essential modification of outside influences has potentially much to say about the nature of turn-of-the-century European political and intellectual life. This is all very clear from the very start." Ibid.

[333] Ibid.

parochialism that exists in the field of theory and empirical narrative. If we can show that domestic change is caused by a combination of factors and that these factors may include inputs from what are perceived as both international and domestic realms with varying degrees – varying according to time and place – domestic change would cease to be domestic per se and would be rescued from the parochialism of strictly national histories. This is only one side of the challenge. The other side directs this parochialism criticism towards the field of the study of the international and demonstrates that studying the international level by purely remaining at that level would prevent us from seeing how the international can condition, shape and indeed even create the very presence of domestic change. This would be the challenge to the parochialism at the international level.

While trying to understand what it was in the international political world that conditioned the emergence of the revolutionary situation and the rise of revolutionary agents in the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth century, certain issues surfaced that were hinted by our theoretical direction yet not fully ripened. One obvious issue was how to make sense of the delicate balance between the international's impact on the Ottoman Empire, both on the state and on the opposition and the respective autonomy of these institutions and actors. Were the policies of the Hamidian regime, both international and domestic policies, dictated by the necessities of the international realm? Is that what we should understand by the international's constitution of the domestic? The same holds true for the revolutionary agents. Did the Young Turks have a choice in giving direction to their movement? Were their intellectual roots, organizational methods and discourses a direct result of the political life in Europe? In all the chapters on the case study, this issue arose. The

issue when abstracted from a certain angle refers to the relative impact of the international and the domestic realms. The case study as presented in this thesis consistently revealed the fallacy behind this angle. As shown repeatedly in the way the Young Turk movement was formed and developed as well as in the formation of the reflexes of the Hamidian regime, the international did not counteract against the autonomy of the domestic actors. This either/or thinking, as hinted at in Chapter 2 in the theoretical discussion as well, is erroneous. When looking at the actual unfolding of the historical events, the international does not emerge as setting the boundaries of the autonomy of the actors, nor of the Ottoman state as an institution and an international actor. But that should not and does not mean that we cannot infer the conditions of the capabilities, resources and repertoire of action of the actors and specific choices that arose from the capabilities of the actors arising from the international's interaction with the domestic realm. Indeed, these means of the actors emerged from the conditions of the world around them.

Hence, a sound and empirically meaningful conceptualization of the causal link between the international and the domestic is not a one-way determination (the international determining domestic politics) nor is it one of constraining (the international constraining the autonomy of domestic politics). Rather it is one of co-constitution (the international contributing to the emergence of the very conditions of the autonomy of domestic actors). In Chapter 2, Hobden's use of 'both/and' logic where he had argued that the structures (both domestic and global) enabled and constrained the states was mentioned.[334] Here, the case study suggests modifying this approach: the international (whether via the international structures or actors in the

[334] Hobson, "The Two Waves of Weberian Historical Sociology," 75.

international field) is an integral part of the causal explanation of the specific nature and behaviour of the states and of the opposition movements against them. Perhaps the phrases of 'enabling and constraining' as tools of explanation of the causation already assume two very distinct realms, a relationship between two external objects. But neither the empirical findings of this case study nor our primary historical sociological reflexes confirm this. Michael Mann was already quoted in the beginning of Chapter 2: "Social life does not consist of a number of realms – each composed of a bundle of organizations and functions, ends and means – whose relations with one another are those of external objects."[335] The analysis of the international's relation to the causes of the 1908 Revolution revealed the internality of the international and the domestic to each other in these world-historical moments from which revolutions emerged and displayed the theoretical difficulty of conceptualizing this internality of showing the integrative nature of these set of relations without which one cannot truly grasp why the 1908 revolution occurred at the time and place it did.

Another issue that we had to deal with was the position of the state within this chain of causality. Is the international's impact only mediated via the state as the political institution that is Janus-faced and has functions and interests in both realms? If not, how can one tackle the empirical data on the interaction between the Young Turks and their wider world? One crucial moment was when the Young Turks were forced into exile by the pressures of the Hamidian regime, when the regime pursued these opposition members in Europe and even put pressure on European governments to ban their presence and/or their political activities and when the

[335] Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Vol.1*, 18.

Young Turks became an item in the European public opinion at the time. Furthermore, the issue of asking for or preventing foreign intervention in the Ottoman politics came to the fore among the Young Turk circles and created internal divisions mostly visible in the first Congress of the Ottoman opposition convened in 1902. Some of their perceptions about the European actors, especially of the European states changed in the decade before the revolution, as demonstrated in Ahmed Rıza's critique of *pénétration pacifique*. So the relations between the Young Turks and the European actors not only entered into the ideological composition of the Young Turks (from the start with their fascination with positivism and materialism and later with their reaction to the European imperialism) but also into the day to day struggle that they had waged against the Hamidian regime, and finally into their revolutionary tactics as their anti-imperialist propaganda in the Balkans and among the soldiers of the III Army display. That the Young Turks had their own direct relations with and perceptions of European politics and European political actors, in addition to those international influences mediated by the state, poses a challenge to the understanding of international-domestic interaction based solely on the mediation of the state. In an account of revolutions that locates a specific revolution in its international context, the state, despite its central and mediating role, cannot be the sole node over which one would read the international-domestic interaction. The case study forces us to rethink the chain of causality and which actors it entails. Hence, a reconceptualisation of the state's interaction with the international field also necessitates conceptualising the international's impact on state-society relations and finally theoretically approaching the issue of locating the non-state actors namely the revolutionary agents (in our case study) in their own international context.

These two themes, namely the necessity of rethinking the logics of 'either/or' and 'both/and' with regards the co-constitution between global, imperial and local levels and the necessity of rethinking who specifically among the actors of domestic change enters this co-constitution process between the international and the domestic and how, are some of the highlights of the contributions of this case study. These contributions relate fundamentally to the period chosen to examine the 1908 revolution namely the long-term and short-term causes of the revolution and the unfolding of the revolutionary situation. Analyzing the causes rather than the consequences has underlined the issue of causation and opened up the mechanisms of co-constitution. It also allowed us to see the multi-causality mentality in its empirical implications. Only by avoiding the monolithic approach to causation gives us the possibility to even assume that the international's impact does not have to be in an 'either/or' relation with the domestic politics. Now we turn to another theme of the thesis which lies at the intersection of the case and the theory: the issue of staying 'in' history, the means and the merits of doing so and the difficulties of historicising the international-domestic interaction in the coming of a revolution.

7.2.3 Historicising international relations: Staying 'in' history

The crucial trait of historical sociology in IR to stay 'in' history instead of simply picking and choosing 'from' history as one seems fit was reflected in this thesis as a major direction. The very effort to study the 1908 Revolution, a political revolution from the turn of the century in a non-European Empire itself, namely the choice of the case study itself was part of that reflection. That there is a merit in looking at the ways political change was brought about in the past and how it was linked to history antecedent and the implicit assumption that these changes are

interlinked to the world as we see it now, are basic reflexes of historical sociology. To contextualize this political revolution in international history with all the relevant layers that this thesis could uncover, rather than in the narrower field of international diplomacy or even in the purely national history is a reflex of historical sociological approach in IR. Both these reflexes gave the broadest directionality to the choice of the case study as well to the choice of the time period (namely that it was chosen to be extended back to the early nineteenth century) and finally to the challenging but rewarding choice of contextualizing the revolution within the political tensions of various sorts in regions relevant to the Ottoman political scene.

The challenge involved in this attempt to historicise both the revolution and the international-domestic co-constitution of this revolution was first and foremost how to escape the fallacy of picking and choosing from history: i.e. which world-historical events to include in the narrative. Here the meta-issue is the how to establish historical causation in an explanatory fashion, what justifies the choices of events as causes and effects, and more generally what counts generally as explanation in history. These were topics of the philosophy of the social science that are impossible to touch upon in any length in this thesis. But even the intuition that these topics are relevant and indeed important to explore, regarding the causal explanation of a revolution located in international history is valuable in itself. In practice, the causation in the empirical narrative was presented as 'causes' conditioning the 'effects' rather than a rigid cause-effect relationship. Historical sociology as a tradition does not give up the idea of causation and the possibility of causal explanations. But the insistence on multi-causality softens the strict causality which is difficult to derive from the empirical world anyway. The event in question

may be over-determined and indeed complex revolutions mostly are over-determined.[336]

As Bryant explains, HS works with a contextual logic, "in which phenomena are explicated and understood by tracing both their genesis and their intrinsic relations to other mediating structures and processes. This contextual logic is at once sociological, in that it attends to roles, institutions, and structures, and historical, in that it comprehends human agency in all its various forms as temporally ordered and conditioned."[337] Within this logic, how to choose the historical events that will be interpreted in a causal relation with the event to be explained goes beyond being an issue of historiography and requires a sound application of the theoretical insights at hand, no matter how broad they might be. As both Bryant and Mann argue in their replies to Golthorpe's infamous criticism against the historical sociology tradition and its use of history, these theoretical underpinnings already give a direction to the messiness of the data, whether collected from primary or secondary sources.[338]

Therefore, the choice of the Auspicious Event (1826), the identification of 1878 as the critical juncture, the inclusion of the Armenian revolts and Hamidian

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[336] Michael Soriven defines overdetermination as "any cases of multiple causation where the causes are not mutually exclusive. If a revolution is overdetermined, as such events frequently are, there are several factors present which will ensure its occurrence one of which we may assume gets in first." Michael Scriven, "Causes, Connection and Conditions in History," in *Historical Methods in the Social Sciences, Vol. II: Foundations of Historical-Sociological Inquiry,* ed. John A. Hall and Joseph M. Bryant (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 371.

[337] Bryant, "Evidence and Explanation in History and Sociology: Critical Reflections on Goldthorpe's Critique of HS," in *Historical Methods in the Social Sciences, Vol. III: The Logic of Historical-Sociological Inquiry,* ed. John A. Hall and Joseph M. Bryant (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 39.

[338] John H. Goldthorpe, "The Uses of History in Sociology: Reflections on Some Recent Tendencies"; Bryant, "Evidence and Explanation in History and Sociology: Critical Reflections on Goldthorpe's Critique of HS," and Mann, "In Praise of Macro-Sociology: A Reply to Goldthorpe," in *Historical Methods in the Social Sciences, Vol. III.*

massacres, but also the inclusion of the spirit of the age, the new imperialism, the importance given to the shifting alliances in Europe, the attention paid to Great Power rivalry, whether in the rise of Germany or over the Far East, and the analysis of the demonstration effect between other revolutions of the time and the 1908 Revolution were not selected randomly but because the use of history as an integral part of the explanation required us to be selective. The criterion was to distinguish what went into the constitution of the emergence of the revolutionary situation and the objective was to transcend the presentation of a sheer empirical narrative. The use of international history displayed a theoretical and methodological difficulty and demonstrated that historicisation of the international context of a revolution also involves the theoretical treatment of a narrative. It exposed the difficulty of the main task, elaboration upon the co-constitution of the international and the domestic realms over a long time span in the context of international history.

The second challenge was not to turn this co-constitution of the international and the domestic in the coming of the revolution in a static flow of history but to reveal its changing and fluctuating nature as well: so the difficulty lay in trying not to impose this assumed theoretical co-constitution onto the events but to see through the events how this co-constitution actually worked over time. It is not too difficult to argue for the ideological impact of world-historical time on the revolutionaries as the positivist and materialist outlook, the constitutionalist political spirit, the stress on liberty and even the emphasis on anti-interventionism into the internal affairs of the Empire can be traced back to European intellectual life. It was, however, a real challenge to show why these emerged in the specific periods and instances that they did and why they were transformed as the movement gained momentum or

experienced a setback. For example the Reval Meeting of June 1908 is often declared in the literature as one of the primary triggers of the Revolution and as an important influence on the timing of the revolution. However in order to establish the explanatory status of the Reval Meeting one is required to work with inferences from several decades prior to the event, with the history of the Anglo-Russian relations over the Balkans and over the Eastern Question, with the Young Turks' perceptions of the British and Russians and their expectations and anticipations from these actors as well as from the Ottoman Sultan and finally with the past experiences of the soldiers present in the region and the inhabitants of the region. In the background of the pages on this issue, there is a somewhat concealed comparison among the different periods that made up the world that the Young Turks knew at the time of the Reval Meeting and the assumption that international-domestic interaction, though ever present, actually works with varying degrees of influence and varying degrees of responses to it. As such the case study exposed another possible fallacy one should expect in the analysis of this interaction, namely reifying either of its two components and fixating it to a certain degree of influence upon the other. The only meaningful escape from this fallacy was to be sensitive towards the changing political balances and mentalities over time not only inside the Empire but also outside the Empire. Hence once again we observe the benefits of being time and place specific, of staying 'in' history. Now we will move on to a sub-theme of this thesis that repeatedly surfaced in the unfolding of the narrative on the 1908 Revolution: namely the issue of structure and agency as it is interlinked to the study of the domestic-international interaction.

7.2.4 Structure and agency

The frequent surfacing of the structure/agency issue in the chapters on the case study is fundamentally due to the fact that the case was a revolution where actors through their agential powers engender a certain kind of change and as such emerge as agents and the degree and impact of these agents is a long-lasting social scientific debate, one that we also revisited in our theoretical discussion in Chapter 2. That historical sociology as an approach and historical sociological take on IR also is concerned with how agents and structures are related to each other is also another reason for the presence of this issue in this thesis. But there is another reason as well. In order for the study of the domestic-international interaction to have explanatory value, it must account for the agents who are shaped by and shape back the world. So, as the empirical narrative on the events that led to the 1908 Revolution advanced it forced us to rethink the issue.

The actors of social change, the meanings they attach to their actions, their capabilities and their social power to engender change was and remains a topic of social scientific discussion. It is often argued, similar to the arguments that 'international matters' or 'history matters' that 'agency matters'. However, again similar to the discussions above exactly how it matters poses a difficulty. The thesis did not have its central focus on this theme but rather took on this discussion as it related to its primary question. The initial insight did not change after the investigation of the case, which was arguing for the futility of dichotomous thinking with regards to the structures and agents.

The difficulty arose when the case study demonstrated that the international goes into the constitution of not only the political world within which the actors act but also to the constitution of these very actors themselves. The difficulty here lies between this theoretical insight and empirical observation and the following; that these actors have room to manoeuvre in this political world and the very possibility of their autonomy is again partly constituted by the international field. Various examples of this issue were provided throughout the chapters on the case.

The establishment of the first constitutional regime in the Ottoman Empire which only survived for two years (1876-1878) is one of these examples. The rebellions in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire, combined with the attention they received from European governments, most notably the British, paved the way for an international conference convened to discuss the faith of the Balkans. In many ways as explained in Chapter 4, this international affair was a combination of the alliance system in Europe and the tensions within the Empire. It showed the characteristics of the structure of the international system in that period. It was further combined with the ongoing political debates among the Ottoman bureaucracy (the details were given in Chapter 3). The result was the success of the Ottoman reformists in declaring the constitution. Hence, the emergence of the constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*) for the re-enactment of which the Young Turks would strive for three decades, was a result of the agential powers of the Ottoman bureaucracy. That this declaration coincided with the Istanbul Conference on the Balkan problems should not mean that the actors were helpless and the constitution was a direct result of the international system's pressures at the time. Rather, the international scene, by putting pressure on but also facilitating the Ottoman actors, was in a constitutive,

integrative relation with the declaration of the constitution. This specific combination of various factors, structural and agential, created the very possibility of an Ottoman opposition against the Sultan who suspended the constitution.

This example forces us to rethink about what is really involved in the relation between structures and agents while the multi-layered nature of this relation suggests an escape from the dichotomous thinking. If the international does not simply condition the world of the agents but also the mentalities, opportunities and means of actions of the agents themselves, indeed even the very emergence of these actors as revolutionary agents then the structure versus agency dichotomy loses part of its analytical power. Here the international includes both structural elements but also elements of contingency and of other actors from the international field. Another example should clarify this challenge of the case towards the thinking on structure/agency issue even further. The years of 1905 and 1906 were crucial for the transformation of the situation in Macedonia but also for the transformation of the Young Turks into revolutionary agents as well and the forces at play were international, of both structural and agential variety, at the ideational and material levels.

As detailed in Chapter 5, the Japanese victory over Russia and the following 1905 Revolution in Russia influenced Ottoman politics from several angles. Russia's loss in the Far East meant a renewal of the Russian interest in the Balkans, which caused a chain of events that led to the exacerbation of the Macedonian issue, added a new dimension to the Great Power rivalry over Macedonia and hence was an example of the inter-state relations displayed through geopolitical tools of politics

very much taken into account by structural accounts of revolutions. (Skocpol's structuralist account was an example investigated in Chapter 2). Here the international emerges as inter-state relations, as geopolitics and hence the relation between the international and the agency becomes distant, blurred and fails to be included in that dimension of the causes of the revolution. There is however another aspect of the events of 1905 that influenced Ottoman politics in general and the Young Turks in particular. The victory of an Asian power which underwent the reform process confirmed the benefits of a constitutional regime. The revolution of 1905 in Russia confirmed the same phenomenon with the addition of the method of achieving that object, namely through a revolution. Japan and Russia, and in 1906 the Iranian constitutional revolution all had influences on the opinions, methods, and repertoire of action of the Young Turks. They might not have directly borrowed the ideology behind the Russian revolution nor did they undertake a more mass involved from below strategy of the 1906 Iranian Revolution. However, the international in this juncture went into the transformation of the Young Turks and partly constituted their emergence as revolutionary agents.

Also to be added is another emphasis that has surfaced from the empirical narrative and was discussed partially above, namely the position of the state and the ruling elite in the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan and the bureaucracy in the Ottoman Empire were also engaged in a relationship with the Young Turks, sometimes harsh and oppressive, at times forgiving and incorporating. The set of relations among actors themselves is also among the factors that go into this unique combination which engenders them and in which they intervene. The elements of this set of relations include structural factors but also contingencies, involve ideational and

material issues. The historical path of the formation and development of the Young Turks cannot be fully grasped unless we take the Ottoman state, its foreign and domestic policies and its attitude towards the opposition as an integral part of the narrative. Several examples of how the Hamidian policies had an effect on the movement, apart from being the target of the opposition, were given in the thesis. Suffice it to note that even the triumph of the revolution in the summer of 1908 depended both on the capabilities of the revolutionary actors and on Abdülhamid II's perception of these capabilities in conjunction with his interpretation of the wider international context.

The formation, development and the final victory of the Young Turk movement gave us a rich narrative whereby we could examine the various nodes of the international-domestic interaction in the light of the initial theoretical insights. The narrative forced a rethinking on these insights. The consequent evaluation of the initial assumptions can be listed as follows. Firstly, the assumption that the international-domestic interaction is a vital component of this political revolution was reinforced. Thus we can safely argue that, wars, treaties, European public opinion, Great Power rivalry, the political economic developments of an international magnitude, and also the prevalent ideologies in international currency, the revolutionary developments elsewhere in the world and even the educational policies of other countries all composed the world in which the revolution occurred and as such they composed the very revolution. Hence, the international, transcending mere geopolitics, surfaces as an indispensable and integral part of the narrative of the revolution and so it should be in our theoretical excursions. Its study should go beyond the investigation of the inter-state relations but should not neglect

that either. The case study proved that this kind of balancing requires meticulous attention to empirical detail but also a sound methodology that shies away from reification. It suggested a thorough use of international history and an escape from dichotomous thinking as guiding principles of research of this kind. It also suggested that attention should be paid to the dynamics of the relations between global, imperial and local levels at the same time, as it is within these dynamics we can grasp what appears to be a theoretically abstracted relation between the international and domestic at an empirical level. The case study also bolstered the assumption that the international is not only an issue in the consequences of revolution but should be taken into account in our causal explanations of the revolutions. Finally, it gave support to the argument that structure and agency, ideational and material factors and international's influence and domestic autonomy should not be conceptualized in a dichotomous way. It is the very relations between them that constitute the social world and give rise to the social phenomena that we are trying to explain.

This treatment of the 1908 Revolution also proved to be challenging in some ways to a certain kind of thinking on the Revolution. The mere attempt to locate 1908 in the international context was difficult as no detailed study of this kind was present. So now we turn to the case study itself and will try to assess the broader implications of such a treatment on our understanding of this very Revolution.

7.3 Locating the 1908 Revolution in its 'International' context

The preceding section discussed the suggestions of this thesis in respect to the possible ways of escaping parochialism in IR. This section will briefly outline the main conclusions and suggestion with regards to the case and how to escape the

parochialism of purely 'national' histories.[339] Going back to Mann's definition of society and his emphasis on the unbounded character of society, also the reflexes of HS in IR that the realm of nation-state is an integral part of the broader international conflicts and tensions, norms and orders a challenge arises. It is not enough to demonstrate the complexity, multi-layered nature and subtleties of the international realm, because so is the very realm with which the international engages in a constitutive relation, namely the domestic. As such, the endeavour to locate what is assumed to be domestic social phenomena in their international context is not simply about our conceptualizations of the international but also about our way of thinking about the society.

These insights have moved the narrative on the 1908 Revolution to a broader context and thereby have shown the complexity behind this political revolution, which can be easily dismissed as a coup d'état in disguise. When taken with all the various factors that go into its constitution and with a little thought on the broad consequences of the Revolution, it would become possible to do justice to the historical importance of this Revolution. This thesis tackled the coming of the revolutionary situation as it emerged in the summer of 1908 by linking it to the inner-Ottoman tensions as well as to the global and local conflicts. For example, Chapter 6 demonstrated that the last manoeuvres, the tactical changes and indeed the reasons behind the final triumph of the revolutionaries cannot be fully grasped without a

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[339] "Establishing both the historical and international context for social analysis would denaturalise in one further respect, namely by removing the myth of bounded society, or what Herminio Martins has aptly termed 'methodological nationalism'. This is, at its simplest, the narration of history, or the explanation of social behaviour, in purely national terms. Thus the development of the electoral system, or of education, or of language is described in purely national or endogenous terms. This serves not only a methodological function, in the narrowest sense, of limiting and simplifying the range of explanation, but also an ideological one, of keeping foreign influence at bay." Halliday, "For an International Sociology," 247.

sound understanding of the Eastern question (as the international affair it was) and a sound understanding of the local dynamics in the Balkans and particularly in Macedonia. These are not unnecessary detours from the main narrative but indeed as integral to the narrative as the perceptions of the actors on these global and local issues.

This endeavour to understand the revolution not within the boundaries of the 'nation-state(s)' that emerged after but within the intersections of global, imperial and local issues is also bolstered by another trait present in the HS tradition of understanding social change and revolutions in particular, namely focusing on the capabilities, resources, repertoire of action, most importantly on the organizational means of the actors as they are presented to them by the world around them. As mentioned in Chapter 2 among the features of Mann's IEMP model and also in Chapter 6 by the use of the framework of Charles Tilly, this focus on what were available to the actors in terms of organizational means through which they would realize their goals, which were conditioned again by the world around them, keeps us from falling into a strict voluntarism but also helps us to integrate the structural and contingent factors in a meaningful narrative. When looked at from this perspective, we had to squeeze the existing secondary literature on the Young Turk movement and expand it to include the global and local tensions that indeed created and facilitated the use of these organizational means. There is no doubt that the Young Turks took full advantage of the international and local situation in Macedonia. A purely national history of the Young Turk movement would be too simple and too narrow to include all these other levels the linkages among which was the main theoretical guidance of this thesis.

A second difficulty related to the case study arose with regards to the chosen time-period and the intention of studying the causes rather than the consequences of the Revolution. As also mentioned before, it is the Unionist era that was brought about by the 1908 Revolution that is generally studied in Turkish historiography. The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent foundation of the Republic of Turkey compose the main context within which the 1908 Revolution was perceived. Recently a few studies also approached the Unionist era in the context of the other provinces of the Ottoman Empire.[340] Nevertheless, the Revolution receives the attraction of the social scientists by the virtue of its consequences. This tendency is prone to produce fallacies. These fallacies are the false assumption that the Young Turk movement was a homogenous movement with one common plan of action and one ideology and the more general fallacy of retrospective explanations in history. What emerged as a nationalist, militarist, one-party regime upheld by a group of Young Turks in the aftermath of the revolution, namely the Unionist government should not be retrospectively reflected back onto the mentalities, capabilities and the wider contexts of the Young Turks before the revolution. In this sense the theoretical insights of this thesis presented a valuable opportunity to the empirical narrative: to historicise the coming of the revolution in its wider context.

This historicisation of the causes of the revolution is an important contribution to the rescue of the narrative from retrospective thinking. As it was spelled out in Chapter 4, only by looking at the wider context in a longer time-span can we truly understand that it was neither evident nor inevitable for the Young Turks and the Sultan they desired to overthrow that the Ottoman Empire would

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□ For an excellent example see Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*.

disintegrate into several nation-states. The critical juncture identified through a historical sociological lens also pointed out to the contingencies along the way and most importantly the contingency of war. The later transformation of the revolutionary agents traced throughout the chapters also underlined the absence of a homogenous and strict plan of the Empire after the revolution among the Young Turks. Through the two Congress of Ottoman opposition and the internal division and strivings among the Young Turks, we observed both the heterogeneity of the movement and the change in the political perceptions of the various groups within the movement. Also exposed to change were their envisaged methods to bring about the toppling of the Hamidian regime.

Another challenge of the theory to the case due to this historicisation was the status of the state within the narrative. The Hamidian regime could easily be simplified in the narrative as an oppressive regime and a common target for all the Ottoman opposition movements. However, the historicisation of the coming of the revolution is also the historicisation of the Hamidian regime to a certain degree. As the HS approach in IR emphasizes a rethinking of the state, and since not all but most power crystallizations occur in the state and also simply because the opportunities and capabilities of the regime figured a great deal in channelling the opposition movement one way or another, Hamidian international and domestic policies and the unique combinations of these two entered our account of the 1908 Revolution.

This historicisation and doing so in global, imperial and local contexts also resulted in transforming the 1908 Revolution from the narrow box of the Republic of Turkey to become a world-historical moment, to being a part of the more global

tensions and conflicts and hence to a place where comparisons between similar and different cases is now more foreseeable. Indeed this task is recently taken by historians working in different fields. They do not use a methodological comparison between strictly identified cases but by taking the late Ottoman history in its international context, they can produce judgements as to the shared traits of the late Ottoman political, social, economic and ideological development with other parts of the world. Indeed, that is one of the valuable intuitions of this thesis as well. Although it was not developed to its full potential as the central question of this thesis was and still remains the investigation of the role of the international, the case study as produced here underlines the need for such studies on the late Ottoman period and beyond.

Finally, by locating the revolution in its international context, the thesis contributed to a healthier grasp as to the world-historical importance of the 1908 Revolution. It is not the simplified work of a few soldiers who in a miraculous way convinced the Sultan, who ruled and reigned in the Empire for three decades, to give up most of his powers in a matter of weeks. The answer to the question as to how they succeeded lies in international history, before and after the revolution, to which both the Empire they were trying to save and later the revolutionaries themselves contributed a great deal. This account of 1908 Revolution, by treating it with the historical sociological reflexes discussed at least for two decades within the discipline of IR, by keeping it 'in' history and within a wider world and a wider network of linkages, contributed to the efforts to understand how the revolution happened, how it succeeded and also suggested that unless these questions are

answered with the direction that the theoretical insights have provided, it would be extremely difficult to locate its aftermath within world history.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

For concluding remarks, it would be appropriate to state the main theme of this thesis and the contributions that the author hopes to have achieved. The main contribution was intended to bolster the efforts in the discipline of IR towards establishing an integrative political analysis of the international and the domestic realms, a theoretical framework that would work on the disorderly world of ours and that would be able to historicise and analytically account for world-historical changes that have brought about the political map of today. The author hopes to have revealed the challenges and rewards of theorizing and analytically understanding the historical narratives about these world historical changes; the difficulty of grasping these inter-relations not with ever more schematized and narrow theoretical categories but with historical and sociological reflexes adjusted to make sense of these inter-relations, connections and demonstrations' effects. The aim was to give support to the endeavours to come up with a historically and sociologically minded IR that would not dichotomize, fixate and reify the phenomena under investigation but would see it as the messy totality that it was and still is and would allow along the way for the role of contingencies, dreams and hopes of the actors who made this world we study in the first place.

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