

# POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REFLECTIONS ON OTTOMAN PAINTING IN THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY PERIOD<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

This article examines the political, social, economic, artistic and cultural developments in the Ottoman Empire during the Second Constitutional Monarchy. In general, Ottoman artists did not focus much on social and political issues in their work during this period, but artists such as Osman Hamdi Bey, Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, Fausto Zonaro, Hüseyin Avni Lifij, İbrahim Çallı, and Mehmet Ruhi Arel were not indifferent to the changes experienced. Artists were interested in the cultural, political, economic and social modernization experiences of the Ottoman rulers and society, but they did not depict these issues with a critical approach in their work. The aim of this research is to identify and interpret the reflections of political and socio-cultural developments on works of art during the last years of the reign of Abdülhamid II and the Second Constitutional Monarchy period between 1908 and 1918 when the Committee of Union and Progress was in power. The research is a qualitative study described according to the literature review model. The works of art analyzed in the research are limited to artists and their paintings related to the political, social and cultural developments during Abdülhamid II and the Second Constitutional Monarchy.

**Keywords:** Ottoman painting, politica, social reflections, Second Constitutional Monarchy

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## Introduction

On May 30, 1876, Sultan Abdülaziz was deposed in a coup d'état known as the Coup of the Softas. Under the leadership of coup leader Mithat Pasha, discussions on a constitutional system of government were brought to the fore. In this contentious atmosphere of political tension, Crown Prince Murat V was first proclaimed the monarch and shortly afterwards Murat V was deposed on the grounds of mental health problems and replaced by Abdülhamid II. On December 23, 1876, the *Kanun-i Esasi* (Constitutional Law) was adopted, introducing a Constitutional Monarchy I, albeit for a short period of time. This historical turning point marked an important step in the beginning of modern Turkish political history, as a political form of government with a constitution being adopted, consisting of the *Meclisi-i Umumi* (General Assembly), which was formed by the *Meclisi-i Mebussan* (Parliamentary Assembly) and *Ayan Meclisi* (Assembly of the Elite), a combination of elected and appointed parliamentary systems. Parliament was opened on March 19, 1877. On February 13, 1878, immediately after the Ayastefanos Armistice was signed with the Russians, it was suspended and closed upon the instruction of Abdülhamid II, thereby beginning his absolute rule which was to last for thirty years (Berkes, 2011; Çavdar, 2008). Towards the end of the rule of Abdülhamid II, the opposition movements that had begun to appear intensified. In 1856, as a reaction to the *Islahat Fermanı* (the Edict of Reform) and the Ottoman dynastic rule that had been in power since then, the movement began to take the form of Turkish Nationalism. The trace of this transformation can be understood through the name change that resulted from the evolution of the New Ottomans to the Young Turks (Arsal, 2000). The young generation of Ottomans, who had been trained in the military and civilian colleges established during the *Tanzimat* (Imperial Edict of Reorganization) and Abdülhamid II periods, began to be seen more and more as a new group in the upper echelons of the military and administrative structures. The new generation of military-bureaucratic cadres, which was needed by the state, grew rapidly, reaching 190,000 people in state organizations at the beginning of the twentieth century. A large portion of this number consisted of officers in the army. Furthermore, the majority of the new generation of Ottoman bureaucrats and officers originated from poor families. In a short period of time, these cadres, with the mindset they acquired from Western-type educational institutions, adopted an ideology that the political, social, and economic structure of the state should be restructured according to the model of a bourgeois nation-state and that the Turkish state should be saved in this manner. This ideology was instilled externally through the French and German education systems. This ideological approach was not solely the result of an internal and grassroots social structure. Although the bureaucratic and military structure that emerged in this environment was intended to facilitate relations of the Ottoman Empire within the capitalist world economy, and to serve the economic enterprises and interests of foreign capital, it was essentially a policy based on an ideology of Turkish Nationalism that emphasized independent socio-economic progress. Among the Young Turks, and later the members of the *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (the Committee of Union and Progress), the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a semi-colonial economic structure and the monopolization of foreign capital and capitalist structures by expanding their hegemony were considered to be the most important factors preventing the economic and social progress of the state. In this context, the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), who gained an important position in the state administration between 1908 and 1918, took protective economic decisions based on the idea of economic nationalism. Although an independent economic policy was attempted, the human and technological resources of the state had not yet emerged and there were still inadequacies in the commercialization of the productions resulting from these resources. Therefore, the compulsory orientation towards the German Empire, which was seen in Ottoman foreign policy since the end of the nineteenth century, provided freedom from the political and economic influence of England and France, but this time, it paved the way for Germany to increase its political, military, and economic influence (Tezel, 2015).

## Social and Political Developments towards the Declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy

The dissident writings of Namık Kemal, Şinasi, Ziya Pasha, and other intellectuals, who were the most important pioneers of the Neo-Ottomans and influential in the spread of bourgeois-liberal ideas of a constitutional form of government, revived the ideas of Constitutionalism among the young intellectuals of the Abdülhamid II period. Among the young generation of Ottomans in colleges in particular, such as the military academy, mülkiye, and tıbbiye, pro-freedom and pro-change ideas were spreading. The first organization was established in 1889 among the students of the Military Medical School. In 1895, the Armenian uprising in Istanbul heightened the discourse of Turkish Nationalism amongst the Young Turks. Following this revolt, *Osmanlı İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress) was founded. From 1902 onwards, the Young Turks,

led by Ahmet Rıza, whose positivist and materialist views were predominant, and Prince Sabahattin, who advocated decentralized liberal thought, began to be influential with their oppositional writings in newspapers such as *Meşveret* (Advisory), *Osmanlı Gazetesi* (Ottoman Newspaper) and *Şura-ı Ümmet* (Council of the Community), which they published in Paris and London. In 1905, two significant events had a major impact on the Ottoman dynasty and the Young Turks. The first was the transition to a constitutional monarchy in Tsarist Russia following the Moscow Uprising. The second was the removal of the Shah of Iran from power and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Iran in the same year. As similar popular uprisings occurred in many provinces of Anatolia, particularly in the Erzurum and Sivas provinces, the new generation of Ottoman soldiers and intellectuals led by the Young Turks began an intense mobilization. In 1906 and 1907, *Teşebbüsü Şahsi* (Attempted Individual Society) and *Âdemi Merkeziyet Cemiyeti* (Decentralization Society) were transformed into the Society of Progress and Union within the program published in the Terakki newspaper. In the same years, *Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti* (the Ottoman Freedom Society) in Rumelia, *Vatan Cemiyeti* (the Homeland Society) and *Hürriyet Cemiyeti* (the Freedom Society) in Damascus and Jerusalem, of which Mustafa Kemal was one of the founders, merged to form the Ottoman Progress and Union Society. After the merger of the Damascus and Rumelia organizations, the Progress and Union Society, which had been established in Paris, moved to Thessaloniki and merged with the Ottoman Progress and Union Society. Eventually, the Young Turks movement was founded through the merger of other organizations under the name of the CUP. In 1907, the Young Turks, members of the CUP, conducted intensive propaganda activities within the army, particularly in Thessaloniki. That same year, a congress was organized at the Paris headquarters of the Society with a commission led by Ahmet Rıza, Samipaşazade Sezai, Prince Sabahattin, Fazıl Bey, Dr. Nihat Bey, and Malumyan Efendi, and the congress declaration was published in the newspaper *Meşveret*. In this declaration, Abdülhamid II was explicitly blamed as the source of the problems the country was experiencing, and it was stated that the solution to this situation was to revolt against his rule and to oust him from power. In May and July 1908, at the end of the rebellions led by Enver, Niyazi, and Eyüp Sabri Beys in the regions of Thessaloniki and Kosovo, particularly in Manastir, Abdülhamid II and his government were forced to declare the Second Constitutional Monarchy on July 24, 1908, by establishing the Kanun-i Esasi and the Meclis-i Umumi, which had been suspended for nearly thirty years (Çavdar, 2008). In Ottoman political history, the period between 1908 and 1920 is referred to as the Second Constitutional Monarchy.

### **Reflection of the Socio-Cultural Environment of the Second Constitutional Monarchy Period on Paintings**

The 1908 Declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy laid the foundations for the relations between the military, politics, society, and capital that would later determine modern Turkish political life. The 1908 Revolution was considered a bourgeois revolution, as it represented a social stratum that was not fully classed in Ottoman society. The ideological approach at the root of the revolution was based on the discourses of liberty, equality, and fraternity, which strengthened the motivation for justice and patriotism, similar to the slogans of freedom, fraternity, and equality of the French Revolution and the French commune movements. In this respect, these discourses were frequently emphasized in many newspapers and publications during the revolution. Therefore, the people thought that justice and freedom had come to the whole country. An example of this widespread idea is the work of Fausto Zonaro, court painter of Abdülhamid II, entitled *Yeni Türkiye* (New Türkiye) (Figure 1.) on the cover of *Figaro Illustré*. Zonaro painted a portrait of an Ottoman woman raising her hand with her veil on her head and looking hopefully towards an uncertain horizon as a symbol of the excitement of hope and freedom that existed all over the country with the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy.



**Figure 1.** Fausto Zonaro, *Yeni Türkiye* (New Türkiye), dry pastel on paper, 1908, Figaro Illustré magazine cover.

Adolphe Thalasso (Eyice, 1988), whose books *Les Premiers Salons de Peinture de Constantinople* (First Painting Galleries in Istanbul) and *L'Art Ottoman* (Ottoman Art) made a significant contribution to the recognition of Turkish painting in the West and to the art market and criticism, became close friends with Osman Hamdi Bey, Prince Abdülmecid Efendi and Fausto Zonaro. Thanks to his friendship and connections with Ottoman and French cultural circles, Thalasso wrote reviews and introductory articles about the artists and their works. Thalasso wanted to write about the artist and his works in the October 1908 issue of the Figaro Illustré on Constantinople, despite reservations of Zonaro about the Ottoman administration and the will of Sultan Abdülhamid II, and used the work entitled 'Yeni Türkiye' on the cover of the magazine to introduce the political environment in the post-revolutionary empire (Şerifoğlu, 2012). In 1908, after painting the small work entitled 'Yeni Türkiye', Zonaro also created an oil painting entitled *Hürriyet, La Liberta* (Freedom) (Figure 2), which was unfortunately destroyed in a fire. *Hürriyet, La Liberta* is clearly an allegorical painting. In this painting, a woman holding a bunch of flowers in her right hand leads a group of Ottoman people on the slopes of Istanbul, heading towards the Bosphorus, symbolizing the collective spirit created by the 1908 Revolution across the country. In this work, Zonaro was influenced by the discourse of 'Liberté-Egalité-Fraternité', *Hürriyet* (Freedom), *Eşitlik* (Equality) and *Kardeşlik* (Fraternity), which was frequently used in the French Revolution of 1789 and which was associated with the Revolution. The artist chose the woman (Liberté, known as Marianne) in *Liberty Guiding the People* by Eugène Delacroix as the subject of an allegorical narrative in order to express the environment of freedom created by the 1908 Revolution in parallel with its symbolic meaning.



**Figure 2.** Fausto Zonaro, *Hürriyet, La Liberta* ('Freedom'), oil on canvas, 1908.



**Figure 3.** Hüseyin Avni Lifij, *Özgürlük Alegorisi* ('Allegory of Freedom'), charcoal on paper, 63.5 x 48 cm, B. Aksoy Collection.

Furthermore, the sketch of Hüseyin Avni Lifij entitled *Özgürlük Alegorisi* (Allegory of Freedom) (Figure 3) is also important in terms of expressing this period. There is no information about the exact date of the 'Allegory

of Freedom', but as can be understood from its content and title, there are clues that the artist witnessed the political and social events of that period. In this context, several ideas can be put forward based on indications that the sketch is historical and related to events. The first of these is that it was probably made before 1909 and before Lifij went to France to study art under the patronage of Prince Abdülmecid Efendi. As with Celal Esat Arseven and Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, Hüseyin Avni Lifij may have seen this work in the studio of Fausto Zonaro. Therefore, the sketch of Lifij seems to express a symbolic narrative similar to 'Hürriyet La Liberta' of Zonaro in terms of both composition and content. As is known, Hüseyin Avni Lifij, who adopted the language of fictional and symbolic expression in Turkish painting, made the preliminary drafts of many of his canvases as sketches and drawings (Gören, 2001). In this context, the sketch entitled 'Allegory of Freedom' was likely the preliminary preparation for the work the artist planned to make. The fact that this sketch has not survived as a canvas can be attributed to two possibilities; it may have been lost over time, or the artist may have abandoned the idea of creating 'Allegory of Freedom' as a canvas. These possibilities could be due to the artist taking a break from his art education in France between 1909 and 1912, or the political environment becoming chaotic as a result of the events of the 31 March Incident in 1909, leading to the ideals of freedom and justice being lost. Additionally, it is also possible that the artist did not make this sketch immediately after the events of 1908 in relation to the revolution. In 1912, upon his return from France, Lifij began to work as a French painting teacher in various schools until 1923 and 1927, when he joined the Sanay-i Nefise School. In addition to teaching, he began to create a series of fictional paintings to earn a living by taking orders with the patronage of Celal Esat Arseven and Prince Abdülmecid Efendi (Gören, 2001). During this period, the figure and space analyses in the compositions of his paintings entitled *Development and Municipality Activity*, commissioned for the Kadıköy Municipality Directorate in 1916, and *War-Allegory*, painted in 1917, are similar to the figure and space relationship in 'Allegory of Freedom'. The painting 'Allegory of Freedom' is organized in a vertical composition. It is understood that the artist worked on the drawing from a hill in the Süleymaniye neighborhood in the Fatih district of the historical peninsula, looking towards Eminönü, the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. On the right side of the painting, from the crown gate in the outer courtyard of the Süleymaniye complex, there are angels holding a Turkish flag in the upper left corner, towards the sky where lightning strikes the crescent moon. These angels and the flag symbolize spiritual spirit and freedom, which are supreme values. The group of people in the lower background of the sketch, consisting of young and old men and women, depicts Turkish society and moves towards the flag. Towards the lower part of the background of the drawing, the silhouette of the Valide Sultan Mosque is depicted against the Bosphorus in a grove of cypress and plane trees. The important religious places and symbols used by Hüseyin Avni Lifij in the sketch clearly aim to uplift the mental collapse of the country in a war environment with spiritual feelings. On the contrary, the work entitled 'War-Allegory' represents the collapse and despair that war, with all its evils, creates in people and society. 'Allegory of Freedom' can be seen as a continuation of 'Allegory of War'. It is also likely that Lifij painted both the painting entitled 'War-Allegory' and the sketch entitled 'Allegory of Freedom' together between 1916 and 1918 in a reactionary mood due to his melancholic personality in response to the events that had taken place during and after World War I. After the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, there was a great revival in social and cultural life. On 24 July, 1908, the articles and content of the press and broadcasting organizations were not sent to the censorship board, resulting in a great increase in the number of newspapers, magazines, and books that were published. The first feminist organizations and publications representing the rights of women, as well as organizations and strikes representing workers' labor rights and laws, emerged (Akşin 2007). The establishment of girls' Iptidai and Rüştüye schools, as well as girls' teacher and art schools, and their spread throughout the country since the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz, symbolically contributed to the status and cultural development of Ottoman women in society (Somel, 2000). As the daughters of Ottoman upper bureaucrat families began to receive education in foreign colleges and schools, a period of awareness began to be raised in defense of the rights of women. The social status of Ottoman women played an important role in the reform processes of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. This issue was being discussed among male intellectuals of the time. In a way, the position of women in the modernization process was considered as a measure of civilization (Somersan, 2009). Pioneers of woman movements such as Nezihe Muhittin, Ulviye Mevlan, and Mükerrerem Belkıs, who organized events in organizations such as *Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti* (Society for the Advancement of the Status of Women), *İttihat ve Terakki Kadınlar Şubesi* (Society of Union and Progress Woman Branch), *Teali-i Vatan-ı Osmani Hanımlar Cemiyeti* (Society for the Exaltation of Ottoman Ladies), *Osmanlı Kadınları Şefkat Cemiyeti* (Ottoman Women's Compassion Society), transformed Ottoman women into political actors. This strong role of women in particular, would manifest itself in the First World War and the National Struggle (Somersan, 2009; Gülcü and Tunç, 2012).

As with other freedom and rights-seeking organizations before the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the workers' movement and organizations continued to exist in secret during the reign of Abdülhamid II. In addition to the many factories and workshops, which were mainly established as public enterprises to meet the needs of the Ottoman army, the wages and working conditions of workers working in private sectors, such as agriculture, public works and transportation, were troubling. In order to remedy this situation, strikes had been organized since the 1870s, albeit in limited numbers and scope (Yıldırım, 2013). In this context, *Amele-i Osmani Cemiyeti* (the Ottoman Worker Society), a secret organization based on a class level, was established for the first time in 1894 by workers working in the state-owned Tophane Factories. Despite the closure of this organization, workers' movements maintained their vitality (Aymalı, 2014). With the partial freedom that emerged as a result of the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, thirty different waves of strikes took place between August and September 1908, ranging from the workers of the Alatini Flour Factory in Thessaloniki to the workers of the Izmir-Aydın Railway and the Anatolian Railway and Tramway Company (Çavdar, 2008). The newspaper *Amele* (laborer) of the Laborer Club founded by workers in Istanbul and the newspaper *Irgat* (Agricultural Laborer) in Izmir began to publish articles defending workers' rights. Starting from the cities of Skopje and Thessaloniki, May Day celebrations became widespread in the Ottoman Empire. After the 31 March Incident, the movements of workers, as well as the counter-revolutionaries, were suppressed by the *Tatil-i Eşgâl* (Strike Law) and strikes in public enterprises were banned. In the face of these events, the working class sought a political organization that would better represent them in political life. In 1910, Hüseyin Hilmi, who was known for his socialist thoughts and writings around philosophical views of Marx, and who owned the *İştirak* (Affiliate) journal, founded the Ottoman Socialist Society, a socialist political party, for the first time in Türkiye (Aymalı, 2014). In addition to these movements in the social and political spheres, with the political elections that were planned to be held after the July Revolution, oppositional divisions emerged within the CUP under the leadership of Prince Sabahattin. The Ahrar Party was founded under the leadership of Prince Sabahattin. In December 1908, a multi-party election was held for the first time in Turkish political history with parliamentary elections (Akşin, 2007). The elections resulted in the CUP winning a large parliamentary majority and the Parliament was opened on 17 December, 1908, with the participation of Sultan Abdülhamid II (Akşin, 2007; Çavdar, 2008). At the start of the elections, with the opposition protests against the CUP, the political opposition both inside and outside the Parliament, which had turned into a pro-Abdülhamid II stance, was on the rise. The discomfort of not taking part in the government in particular, despite having an overwhelming majority in the Parliament caused discontent among the leaders of the CUP. The assassination of Hasan Fehmi Bey, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Serbesti* and one of the leading journalists of the opposition circles, on March 31, 1325 according to the *Hijri calendar* and April 13, 1909 according to the *Gregorian calendar*, led to a major uprising against the Committee of Union and Progress, which was seen as responsible for the incident. The uprising, which lasted for about two weeks in Istanbul, was suppressed by the *Hareket Ordusu* (Movement Army). The 31 March Incident, a failed coup attempt by reactionaries against the CUP, caused Abdulhamid II to lose his throne. The Parliamentary Assembly convened to discuss the issue of the succession of sultan, and Abdulhamid II was deposed on the basis of a fatwa issued by the Şeyhülislam. After a debate among those who wanted the fatwa to be issued before the decision of the Parliamentary Assembly, it was decided unanimously and with a standing ovation that Abdulhamid II would be deposed and Reşat Efendi would ascend the throne with the title *Mehmet the Fifth*. In the delegation that went to Abdülhamid II to inform him of his settlement were Navy Vice Admiral Arif Hikmet Pasha, Member of Parliament of Thessaloniki Emanuel Karasu, Member of Parliament of Durrës Esad Toptani Pasha, Senator Aram Efendi and Colonel Galip Efendi. In fact, this delegation was cosmopolitan, and of different religious, ethnic and class backgrounds, which would later become the subject of rumors. On the contrary, the delegation that informed Reşat Efendi of his ascension to the throne included Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha, the second president of the Assembly of the Elite and Talat Bey, the second president of the Parliament. In 1909, Prince Abdülmeccid Efendi, the son of Sultan Abdülaziz, who was also deposed in a coup d'état, depicted the dethronement of Abdülhamid II with a documentary approach using photographs of the places and people where the event took place (Öztaş, 2004; Gören, 2004). Prince Abdülmeccid Efendi re-enacted and reorganized the fiction of the event and the people who participated in the action in order to make the *II. Abdülhamid'in Hal'i* (the Dethronement of Abdülhamid II) (Figure 4), which he was able to complete approximately nine years after the Sultan was deposed, with documentary accuracy.



**Figure 4.** Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, *II. Abdülhamid'in Hal'i* ('The Dethronement of Abdülhamid II'), oil on canvas, 234 x 172 cm, 1918, Istanbul Dolmabahçe Palace Museum.

After the the 31 March Incident, the absolute power of the Ottoman dynasty, which was the sole political power of the state, diminished, and the political power of the state between 1908 and 1918 passed to the CUP as a militarist party. Therefore, Enver Pasha, Talat Pasha and Cemal Pasha, the leaders of the CUP, became the powerful political actors. Enver Pasha, who had played an important role in the declaration of the Constitutional Monarchy, took the lead among the new power holders. The new political power and power relations began to affect the field of art along with the political and social structure. It is observed that Fausto Zonaro endeavored to maintain warm relations with the CUP and Enver Pasha. Before his dismissal from his position as a palace painter, Zonaro, as a gateway to prosperity, met with the executives of the CUP, Enver Pasha in particular, and endeavored to protect the rights he had acquired at the state level as a palace painter. In order to achieve this, he even hid Enver Pasha in his house during the 31 March Incident and painted his portrait as a gesture (Figure 5) (Öndeş and Makzume, 2003).



**Figure 5.** Fausto Zonaro, *Enver Paşa'nın Portresi* ('Portrait of Enver Pasha'), oil on canvas, 1909, Private Collection.



**Figure 6.** Osman Hamdi Bey, *Enver Paşa'nın Portresi* ('Portrait of Enver Pasha'), oil on canvas, 120 x 70 cm, Arzu Sadıkoğlu Collection.

In 1908 and 1909, Osman Hamdi Bey, as with all Ottoman bureaucrats, was affected by the volatile and risky political environment. While Osman Hamdi Bey often used himself, his wife and children in his paintings, it is seen that he rarely painted portraits of ordinary old peasants and children, except for a few people in his close circle. In 1908, when Osman Hamdi Bey was sixty-six years old, he painted a portrait of Enver Pasha (Figure 6). Enver Pasha, who had assumed an important role as a low-ranking officer in Manastır before the declaration of the Constitutional Monarchy by leading the July revolts against the rule of Abdul Hamid II, was known as the hero of freedom among the people as a result of his heroic deeds in Rumelia (Çavdar, 2008). Enver Pasha, who became an important figure in Ottoman politics with the Second Constitutional Monarchy, was probably watched with

interest by Osman Hamdi Bey. As with Zonaro's endeavor, Osman Hamdi Bey may have painted a portrait of Enver Pasha. The purpose of Osman Hamdi Bey and Zonaro in painting the portrait of Enver Pasha was to reassure themselves in the uncertain political and social environment that was developing at the time. Striving to become the sole dominant power in state administration, the CUP adopted an oppressive political stance until 1918 (Arsal, 2000). With the armed attack against the government cabinet in particular, known in history as the Bab-ı Ali raid, the CUP strengthened its power. From 1908 onwards, the leaders of the CUP believed that a complete transformation of the entire fabric of Ottoman society was necessary to save and renew the collapsing social and political structure. They were completely opposed to the idea of preserving the existing social fabric, expanding the areas of rights and freedoms and establishing an economic structure according to free market conditions, as proposed by the liberals led by Prince Sabahattin and the *Ottoman Ahrar (Liberal) Party*. For them, a social revolution that would adapt Türkiye to the modern world was crucial for survival. However, the attempts of the Union and Progress leaders to establish a more rational and sovereign system in accordance with the economic and political program based on the idea of Turkish nationalism that they were going to implement, alienated all those whose privileges depended on the continuation of the old order. Therefore, the policies of the CUP were fiercely opposed by Muslim Turks, Arabs and Albanians, as well as Christian Greeks, Slavs and Armenians within the Ottoman Empire (Ahmad, 2014). The members of the CUP, who considered the rising wave of opposition in society as an obstacle for the continuation of their policies and the state, started to increase their oppressive policies in a way that was incompatible with the democratic political style. After 1908, many unsolved political assassinations were carried out by the Society, which had an impact on society and political life. The assassinations of Ismail Mahir Pasha in 1908, journalist Hasan Fehmi from the newspaper *Serbesti* in 1909, journalist Ahmet Samim from the newspaper *Saday-ı Milliyet* (Voice of the Nation) in 1910, journalist Zeki Bey from the newspaper *Şehrah* (Antery) in 1911 and Nazım Pasha, the Minister of War in the Bab-ı Ali raid in 1913, led to an increase in political conflict and an oppressive atmosphere. The murder of journalist Ahmet Samim was the subject of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's novel entitled *Hüküm Gecesi* (The Night of Judgment) (Akşin, 2007). Due to the events that took place during the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, the perception of freedom felt in social and political life turned into disappointment in a short period of time; in fact, society was even looking for the period of Abdülhamid II. On 29 September, 1911, Italy sent notice to the Ottoman Empire and occupied Tripolitania, marking the beginning of a new political era. With the Tripoli War, Ottoman society entered into a cycle of war that lasted for about twelve years, with the Balkan Wars I and II between 1912-1913, World War I between 1914-1918, and the War of Independence between 1919-1922. This cycle brought about a humanitarian, economic and political collapse. Despite the repressive and authoritarian policies of the CUP administration, reforms in the economic, political and legal spheres continued, and there was an intensive movement in the fields of art, culture and thought in Istanbul and other major port cities. During this period, there was an increase in the activities of many political and non-governmental organizations, associations, sports clubs, newspapers and magazines, with many different tendencies and intellectual approaches. Many Western literary works were translated and published, and the writings of Recaizade Ekrem, Halit Ziya and Tevfik Fikret were published in the journal *Servet-i Fünun* (The Wealth Of Knowledge). The journal *Genç Kalemler* (Young Writers), published in Thessaloniki, emphasized the new Turkish language and Turkism. Modern Turkish literature was founded on the ideas represented by these journals (Karpaz, 2011). Under the influence of the modernization efforts that began with the Tanzimat, Ottoman society underwent structural changes and many traditional institutions and habits of life were dissolved. In addition to the upper bureaucratic class, a new profile of people began to emerge in Ottoman society. This profile was mostly composed of well-educated, middle and fixed income civil servants, officers, teachers and intellectuals. While a significant part of this group became civil servants, they also started to establish their own economic autonomy over time. While the status of intellectuals in the Tanzimat period was respectable and important, the intellectuals of the Abdülhamid II period were introverted and romantic due to the psychological environment created by the political conditions (Berkes, 2011). Before the 1908 Revolution, the intellectuals of the *Servet-i Fünun* circle of the Abdülhamid II period, especially in the field of poetry, dealt with subjects that were more subjective and far from critical reality regarding social problems, under the influence of the Parnassian School and Symbolism. In the environment of political freedom after 1908, intellectuals addressed social and political issues, especially in the field of novel writing (Tuncer, 1992). Leading literary figures such as Ahmet Mithat Efendi, Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, Ömer Seyfeddin, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu expressed in their works their reactions to the new social order for which Ottoman-Turkish society was caught unprepared. From the publication of Şemseddin Sami Bey's first novel, *Taaşuk-ı Talat-ı Fitnat* (The Romance of Talat and Fitnat) in 1872, until the beginning of the twentieth century, Turkish novel writing had not reached the level of Western art in terms of language and fiction, similar to the developmental stages of Turkish painting. During the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, Ottoman social culture was still largely closed off to individualization due to the



prevalence of the community phenomenon, except for certain social classes in large cities, particularly in the provinces. As Yahya Kemal Beyatlı pointed out, a lack of painting and prose in social culture also meant a lack of nature and reality (Kahraman, 2013). During the period of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, literary figures with different world views and political tendencies created their works. As in the view of *l'art est pour l'art* advocated by important poets and literary figures such as Gautier, Baudelaire, Whistler and Wilde (Shiner, 2004), the literary figures of *Servet-i Fünun* and *Fecr-i Ati* (Dawn of the Future) emphasized that the purpose of art, especially in prose writing, should be subjective and personal (Tuncer, 1992), while the literary figures and writers around the journal *Genç Kalemler* emphasized the social purpose of art with an epic and didactic orientation through the renewal of language (Demir, 2014). In this context, there is a dichotomy and rivalry between writers who emphasized individualization and secularization by advocating modernization based on Western institutions and philosophical foundations, and writers who expressed nationalization and a return to the essence by embracing the glorious history of tradition and the past. Two writers or poets who sometimes seem diametrically opposed to each other actually express two different sides of a certain social event. While one defends the values of the past, the other wants to see the future; they both live in the same society and express ideas that dominate that society as a part of it. The thoughts of Mehmet Akif and Tevfik Fikret are interesting and illustrate the point. Mehmet Akif accepts the social ideas of Islam, defends a Turkish-Islamic state founded on these principles and looks at the individual as a means to achieve this goal. According to him, man was created to be a martyr and his value is measured by his success in the field of war. History, on the other hand, is an epic of heroism, and by writing this epic, man fulfills his responsibility to the world. Contrary to this view, Tevfik Fikret defends human equality and free thought based on secularism. He wants to free people from preconceived judgments. Fikret does not see a hero in history, but a human being who lives, suffers and is spent for the sake of goals that are separate from his desires and human beings. These two valuable poets collectively expressed the conflicting currents of thought during the period of the Union and Progress. In doing so, they also brought the causes of the past and the future to society. Although Tevfik Fikret and Mehmet Akif had opposing views, they were poets who were more interested in social and political thoughts than the art of poetry (Karpat, 2011). The field of literature and thought during the Second Constitutional Monarchy could not remain indifferent to political and social developments, and even a number of literary figures, such as Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil, and Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, were seen as political actors in parliamentary and high bureaucratic positions. On the other hand, with the exception of Osman Hamdi Bey and Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, İbrahim Çallı, Ruhi Arel, Hüseyin Avni Lifij, Namık İsmail, İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu and Celal Esat Arseven, the vast majority of Turkish artists did not have relationships with political actors and did not emphasize political critical issues as a theme in their works. "The short period that began at the *Mühendishane-i Berrî-i Hümayun* (Military Academy Artillery School), the first Turkish higher education institution to include painting courses in its curriculum and ended with the opening of the Sanay-i Nefise Mektebi (Fine Arts School) in 1883, was the preparatory stage of Turkish painting in the Western style (Başkan, 2009, p. 177)." In this context, the debates between the academic-aestheticist and functionalist-socialist views in the Western art scene were too early for the Turkish artists who received their education abroad and the Sanay-i Nefise students who took painting lessons from foreign artists-teachers who adopted the orientalist and classicist style to perceive and interpret, as they were still learning and trying to solve plastic problems. According to Mustafa Cezar (1995), for a long time, Ottoman-Turkish painters either showed little interest in political and social issues or avoided them out of aesthetic preference. Regarding the neutral stance of Turkish painters towards social and political events, with the exception of a few exceptional artists such as Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, Hüseyin Avni Lifij and Mehmet Ruhi Arel, notes the inadequacy of the teaching approaches of school administrators and teachers such as Osman Hamdi Bey, Salvatori Valeri, Joseph Varnia-Zarzecki and Yervant Oskan Efendi, as well as the course content in the curriculum.

"It should be considered natural that Şeker Ahmet Pasha and Süleyman Seyyid Bey did not interfere in the political events of their time, but it would be a misjudgment to remind us that Şeker Ahmet Pasha and his contemporaries, as painters who were raised under military discipline and were taken into the palace circle at a young age, did not paint 'revolutionary' paintings. They did not adopt a revolutionary or libertarian attitude towards the sultanate, nor do they seem to have been interested in 'historical' or 'patriotic' subjects. It was not possible for them to embrace the tradition of the multi-figure arrangement of Western painting to such an extent, nor for them to be successful in this field" (Erol, 1981, p.122).

Due to their educational and professional backgrounds, it was common for the first generation of military painters to have difficulties in understanding the anti-Academic and anti-Classicist artistic tendencies that had begun in Europe in the mid-1800s.

In 1937, a response of Halil Pasha to a question about modern painting at the exhibition he opened at the Ankara Community Center is interesting in this respect: "I have no idea and no hope. When I was in Paris, a painter named Manet used to paint impressionist paintings. Since he had a weak line, he tried to show everything with color. Later on, this style of painting took a completely exaggerated form. It almost became fashionable all over Paris. At an exhibition in Paris, I saw a painting showing herds of blue pigs and even the peasants were laughing at it. There used to be very strong painters in France. But when I went to Paris fifteen years ago, I saw that painting had become terrible, I saw weak paints, colors without lines and weak patterns. All of this was due to the influence of Manet. I was very saddened by this. However, now new classical masters have started to grow again in France." (Erol, 1981, pp. 155-156).

Beginning in 1835, many of the painters sent abroad for specialized training by the state as part of the Ottoman modernization efforts developed similar behavior, lacking a philosophical or cultural background.

"Just as Şeker Ahmet Pasha was unaware of Courbet's efforts, the painters of the 1914 Çallı Generation were unfamiliar with the Ravel and Debussy influences of the Impressionist movement. Therefore, this understanding that came through transmission was limited to visuality and even its technique. Visuality, which we can characterize as a new ideology, was thus integrated with an impressionist aesthetic. It should be noted that this was the aesthetic preference that became generalized and established in Türkiye over time. Despite all the different movements that followed, impressionism was the main approach, and if one remembers that Hikmet Onat, the longest living painter of the generation, died as late as 1977, it can be argued that this perception dates back to that period." (Kahraman, 2013, p.86).

From the 1870s onwards, we can talk about the Turkish painting scene, albeit under state patronage and supervision. In addition to the developments in the fields of archaeology and museology with the *Müze-i Hümayun* (Sultanate Museum) and the expansion of art education in military and civilian schools, Istanbul asserts its influence in the field of art. In 1883, the process of institutionalizing Turkish art was strengthened with the opening of the Sanay-i Nefise Mektebi to provide academic art education, and in 1914 with the opening of the *İnas Sanay-i Nefise Mektebi* (Fine Arts School for Women) for the education of women, which is one of the indicators of modernization (Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Ömer Adil Bey's, *Kızlar Atölyesi* ('Girls' Workshop'), oil on canvas, 81 x 118cm, Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum.



**Figure 8.** Osman Hamdi Bey's, *Mihrab-Yaratılış* ('Mihrab-Creation of Woman'), oil on canvas, 210 x 108 cm, 1901.

Osman Hamdi Bey, who served as the Director of the Sanay-i Nefise Mektebi for many years, is an important figure, not only for the large number of works he created in the field of art, but also for enriching the inventory of the Müze-i Hümayun as a result of his great efforts in archaeological excavations. Osman Hamdi Bey

was influenced by the Orientalist painters and teachers Jean-Léon Gérôme and Gustave Clarence Rodolphe Boulanger, and throughout his artistic life, except for a few landscapes and portraits, he painted within the framework of the Orientalism movement. Osman Hamdi Bey's period of Orientalist works began during his student years in Paris, and the effects of this movement can be seen in his paintings titled *Çingenelerin Molası* (Break of the Gypsies), *Zeybeğin Ölümü* (Death of Zeybek) and *Pusuda Zeybek* (Zeybek in Ambush), in which he participated in the International Paris Exhibition in 1867, which was attended by Sultan Abdülaziz (Eldem, 2015; Artun, 2007; Cezar, 1995). Although he preferred an Orientalist and overly academic style, unlike his contemporaries, Osman Hamdi Bey was the first painter to raise the problematic of the monumental figure in terms of the development of Turkish painting. In fact, with his preferences that could shake the established values in terms of the subjects he dealt with in his paintings, this attitude shows that he was a fundamentalist artist for the art of painting, which was in its infancy. As Thalasso emphasizes, Osman Hamdi Bey, like his Western contemporaries, had the character of an artist who was able to preserve his originality and identity while practicing his art, and even surpassed his Western contemporaries with his command of knowledge and literature (Cezar, 1995). Osman Hamdi Bey brought a more precise and progressive realism to figure painting than the attempts at realism that entered Turkish literature with Namık Kemal's novel *İntibah* (Awakening). The 1880 'Girl in Front of a Priest' was a radical breakthrough in every sense. Until then, no Turkish painter had exhibited the human figure as such a clear and dominant image. *Rahle Önünde Kız* ('Girl in Front of Faldstool') was a work that challenged traditional beliefs, customs and traditions (Duben, 2007). Osman Hamdi Bey's other work that created controversy with its radical discourse and fiction in figurative Turkish painting is *Mihrab-Yaratılış* (Mihrab-Creation of Woman) (Figure 8). Unlike the painting titled 'Girl in Front of the Priest', there is a contrasting fiction and narrative to it. Similar to Osman Hamdi Bey's positioning of himself as the subject of the composition, as in his paintings 'In Front of the Rüstem Pasha Mosque', 'At the Green Mosque in Bursa' and 'The Tortoise Trainer', there is a religious-mythological and symbolic narrative in his 1901 painting 'The Creation of Woman', most commonly known as Mihrab or by another name, in which he uses his second wife Naile Hanim as a model (Eldem, 2015). The painting depicts a woman seated on a mother-of-pearl inlaid priest in front of a mihrab. Close to the foot of the priestess, just in front of her, there is a censer on the right and left sides, and scattered old manuscripts and Koran volumes. In contrast to the discourse of woman in a holy act and religion and holy books in Osman Hamdi Bey's 'Girl in Front of a Priest', the Mihrab-Creation depicts the creation and allure of woman in a way that is intertwined with pagan culture and mythology. In contrast to the Eastern spaces, décor, attire and personalities which are emphasized in Osman Hamdi Bey's paintings, the opposing religious discourse and provocative approach in the Mihrab-Creation is also important in terms of showing the secularization tendencies in the Muslim Ottoman upper bureaucracy and the capitalist social strata living in big cities like Istanbul, although not widespread, as one of the results of the modernization process starting from the late nineteenth century. In the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, the visibility of the female image increased rapidly with figurative paintings representing daily life, the working class, and the working-living class outside the tradition of landscape and still life painting. In addition to Levantine and non-Muslim Ottoman painters, Osman Hamdi Bey, Halil Pasha, and Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, nude painting and women's subjects become a general trend among the younger generation of artists, later called the Generation of 1914. In this context, the depiction of the female body in daily life as an object of art is an indication of the emancipation of women, albeit partially, in terms of gender role in Ottoman modernization.



**Figure 9.** Prince Abdülmecid Efendi's, *Sis* ('The Fog'), oil on canvas, 141,5 x 98,5 cm, 1901-1902, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Aşiyân Museum.



**Figure 10.** Prince Abdülmecid Efendi's, *Haremde Beethoven* ('Beethoven in the Harem'), oil on canvas, 155,5 cm × 211 cm, Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum.

In the cultural environment of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, the literati of the period and painters interacted. Tevfik Fikret, who was interested in painting in addition to his literary character, was involved in discussions on art and culture. Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, one of the important patrons of the Ottoman art scene and honorary president of the Ottoman Society of Painters, was a competent artist with his monumental and multi-figure paintings. Prince Abdülmecid Efendi's portraits of the poets Abdülhak Hamit and Recaizade Ekrem in an atmosphere of friendship and dialog with literary figures are important in terms of showing the interaction between literature and painting. Prince Abdülmecid Efendi painted with the inspiration of Tevfik Fikret's poem *Sis* ('Fog') in order to express the political and psychological uncertainty of Ottoman society at that time. Like the poem *Sis* with its strong symbolic expression, this painting depicts the process of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the inevitability of moving into the unknown (Figure 9). As a concrete example and first-hand witness of Ottoman modernization, Prince Abdülmecid Efendi's paintings *Haremde Beethoven* ('Beethoven in the Harem') (Figure 10) and *Haremde Goethe* ('Goethe in the Harem') are important works in terms of showing the cultural changes the Ottoman dynasty underwent. The Ottoman dynasty has now internalized Western cultural values, similar to the life of Western aristocracies, while preserving its traditional values (Kahraman, 2013). However, it is an interesting coincidence that in terms of the main symbols used in the paintings entitled 'Beethoven in the Harem' and 'Goethe in the Harem' by Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, Beethoven and Goethe, two important characters of German culture, emerged as the cultural reflection of the economic and military cooperation of the Ottoman Empire that started with the period of Sultan Abdülhamid II and German Emperor Wilhelm II. *Beethoven in the Harem* and *Goethe in the Harem* are also important in terms of showing Abdülmecid Efendi's interest in Western music and literature and in reflecting a subject he knew extremely well. Prince Abdülmecid Efendi's 'Beethoven in the Harem' is widely known as 'Beethoven in the Palace'. According to Aykut Gürçağlar (2000), it shows that the place previously referred to in the painting is not Dolmabahçe Palace, but the harem apartment, which is the selamlık section in the current structure of the Abdülmecid Efendi Mansion in Bağlarbaşı. With the correct identification of the place where the subject of the painting takes place, the title of the work is referred to as 'Beethoven in the Harem' (Gören, 2004).

There are seven figures in the painting. In the foreground on the right, seated on an armchair in Ottoman military uniform, and possibly is Prince Abdülmecid Effendi, with his kalpak, overcoat and weapons set haphazardly placed on the armchair. The woman playing the violin in front of the prince is reminiscent of Şehsuvar Kadın Efendi, the wife of the prince, since she looks similar to the female model in the painting entitled 'Goethe in the Harem'. It is understood from the inscription on the booklet on the floor next to Abdülmecid Efendi that the piece being performed by the piano, violin and violoncello players in the painting is by Beethoven. At the same time, the bust statue standing close to the wall in the middle of the Prince and Şehsuvar Kadınefendi is Beethoven himself. In the background of the painting, in black silhouette, is a statue by Charles Fuller of Sultan Abdülaziz, the father of Şehzade, who was deposed from the throne as a result of a coup at a young age (Gören, 2004; Ersin, 2009). The sculptures, paintings, music, decorative objects and clothing of the people in 'Beethoven in the Harem' are an emulation of Western culture. As the attitudes towards the female image in figurative painting loosened

with the increase in secular tendencies in the upper social strata in Ottoman modernization, it is seen that artists from the late nineteenth century onwards began to attach importance to symbolic expression in their paintings and to prefer the female image as one of the main subjects. In this direction, Osman Hamdi Bey's *Girl in Front of Faldstool* and *Mihrab-Creation of Woman*, Prince Abdülmecid Efendi's *Beethoven in the Harem* and *Goethe in the Harem*, and Halil Pasha's *Woman Lying Down* are among the important works of Turkish painting.

### **The Social, Political and Cultural Situation in the World War I Environment**

During the First World War, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and its leaders created an environment in which they could implement their political goals in a positivist and secularist manner without any problems by intimidating social and political opponents. This freedom was achieved not only because they were not afraid of opposition, but also by suppressing religious fanaticism. After the uprising led by Sharif Hussein in the Arabian peninsula, the CUP, due to the negative attitudes of Arabs towards the Ottoman Empire, began to increase their struggle against liberal, Islamist and ethnic class political ideas by voicing the discourse of Turkish nationalism more loudly. A great effort was made to ensure that secular and national values permeated all areas of the country, from education to economy, and from law to cultural life, and policies were implemented in this direction. Even during the war period, when the Ottoman Empire was at its most economically, politically and socially strained, a series of reforms were carried out in the direction of modernization efforts that would be the legacy of Modern Republican Türkiye. In 1916, with the decisions taken at the Congress of the CUP, all Sharia Courts were separated from the office of the Sheikhu-İslâm and connected to the Ministry of Justice in 1917, which was an extremely important step towards the secularization of the legal field. The regulation in the field of law was a result of the modern bourgeois mentality of the CUP. As a result of the increase in the population of Ottoman cities, the Ottoman middle class civil servants and intellectual bourgeoisie, who had become educated and economically prosperous thanks to a revival of trade with the support of Germany, and the intense pressure of feminist movements, the *Hukuk-u Aile Kararnamesi* (Decree on Family Law), which can be considered as the first foundation of the Turkish Civil Code, was an important step in the secular modernization of the legal field. This decree introduced a system that regulated the family law of the entire Ottoman society, both Muslim and non-Muslim. The 1917 *Law on Medaris-i İlmiye* aimed to transform madrasahs into modern religious education institutions, and it was planned to include physical and natural sciences and Western languages in their curricula. These were the efforts made to make the Ottoman letters more suitable for the Turkish sound structure, which is the precursor of the alphabet revolution to be implemented in the Republican period and which can be considered an important step for nationalization in the cultural sense. In fact, Hüseyin Cahit was one of the members of the *Islahî Huruf Cemiyeti* (Society of Alphabet Reform), which was founded in 1911 around the Turkish Quarry, who suggested the adoption of the Latin alphabet. Before the First World War, Enver Pasha, the Minister of War, had attempted an experiment in which Arabic letters were written separately, like Latin letters, rather than contiguously, in order to ensure better reading of training orders in sub-unit army units within the army, but it failed to make significant progress in this regard. Since most of the men had to fight on the fronts in terms of human resources during wartime, the problem of employment in economic labor life arose. For this reason, in order to solve the employment problem, Ottoman women were brought more into the workforce. In addition to the teaching, nursing and midwifery professions, the number of women working in military factories, government offices, municipalities and in the fields began to increase. For example, approximately 6,000 to 8,000 women workers, members of the Women's Labor Society, established under the auspices of the Ministry of War, prepared military equipment such as uniforms, laundry and sandbags for the army. A battalion of women was even established during the war, which was a radical move for the Ottoman structure at the time. Women were more actively involved in culture and education. Women began to study at colleges such as the İnas Sanay-i Nefise Mektebi and *Darülfünun* (Istanbul University). The visibility of women increased in the public spaces of urban life, and there was a partial freedom in the way they dressed. With the establishment of *Darülbeydi* (Istanbul City Theaters), the effort to nationalize the performing arts was increased and the obstacles preventing Muslim women from working as actresses in stage casts were removed, thereby breaking the taboo of the position assigned to women by Ottoman society from a feudal and traditionalist perspective (Figure 11) (Akşin, 2007).

From the beginning of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, it can be seen that cultural and social life revitalized with the short-term economic revival. In this context, in addition to theater and opera, Ottoman society showed interest in cinema productions as a new art form and cinema shows became widespread in the Pera region. Cinema was accepted by Ottoman society following developments throughout the world. Therefore,

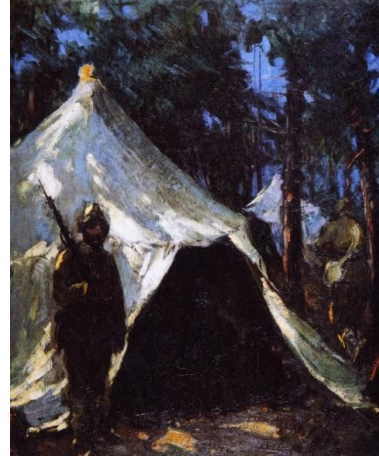
cinema became a mass form of entertainment in the Ottoman Empire (Temel, 2015). The Union and Progress government soon realized the propaganda power of cinema.

In 1915, the Central Army Cinema Department was established. Enver Pasha, who witnessed the use of cinema as a weapon by other countries participating in the First World War, ordered the establishment of a cinema institution affiliated with the army, as he had seen in Germany. Sigmund Weinberg, the Turkish representative of Pathe Film Machines, who had organized the first film screening in Istanbul in 1896, was appointed as the head of this institution. Although the Central Army Cinema Department, Türkiye's first cinema production company, was established for military purposes, due to a lack of sufficient equipment and experts, only a few short documentaries could be shot, and the desired goal could not be achieved. However, in the meantime, Weinberg obtained permission from the Ministry of War and began shooting the first themed films. *Leblebici Horhor Aga* (1916), the first thematic film attempt of Turkish cinema, was made with equipment provided free of charge by the army. However, the outbreak of war between the Ottoman Empire and Romania in 1916 led to the dismissal of Weinberg, a Romanian national, and he was replaced by Fuat Uzkınay, one of the first Turkish filmmakers (Evren, 1995 as cited in Maktav, 2013, p. 5).

After the Tanzimat, apart from non-Muslim, Levantine and foreign artists, painters such as Osman Hamdi Bey, Şehzade Abdülmecid Efendi, Osman Nuri Pasha, Hüseyin Zekai Pasha, Ahmet Ziya Akbulut, Halil Pasha, Hoca Ali Rıza, Şeker Ahmet Pasha and Süleyman Seyyid dominated the field of art (Başkan, 2009). In 1883, after the establishment of the Sanay-i Nefise School, the opening of the field of painting to Ottoman civilians led to the training of a new generation of artists. Among this new generation of artists, the so-called Çallı Generation or the 1914 Generation (İbrahim Çallı, Sami Yetik, Hikmet Onat, Mehmet Ruhi Arel, Ali Sami Boyar, Nazmi Ziya Güran, Hüseyin Avni Lifij, Namık İsmail, and Feyhaman Duran), who were called the Çallı Generation or the 1914 Generation, actively assumed an important role in the field of art in the last periods of the Second Constitutional Monarchy and the first periods of Republican Türkiye. The artists of the Çallı generation were sent abroad for specialized training, just like the painters of the first period of military origin. Between 1908 and 1914, these artists studied at the workshops of Jean Paul Laurens and Fernand Cormon in Paris. With the outbreak of the First World War, they had to return home. The artists of the Çallı generation who returned to the country started to work in the teaching positions left vacant by the retirement of the first teachers of the Sanay-i Nefise School. Therefore, foreign artists and non-Muslim Ottoman citizens began to be replaced by Turkish people around the ideal of nationalization in every field in the Second Constitutional Monarchy period as the human source of the modernization process. In the midst of the First World War, a spirit of nationalist mobilization had begun to rise in Turkish society under the influence of the battles. The nationalist discourse that had begun in political and cultural life had also begun to take its place in the field of painting. In 1917, Enver Pasha, the Minister of War, requested the establishment of a painting studio in the Şişli district of Istanbul to reflect the heroism and war conditions of World War I, just as the Central Army Cinema Department had been established. The paintings (Figure 12, Figure 13 and Figure 14) made in this painting workshop attended by the painters of the Çallı Generation were also planned to be exhibited in countries allied with the Ottoman Empire through an exhibition organization (Tansuğ, 1993). The Şişli workshop is of great importance for Turkish painting. The paintings made at the Şişli workshop enabled the creation of a significant number of inventory works covering the periods of World War I and the War of Independence.



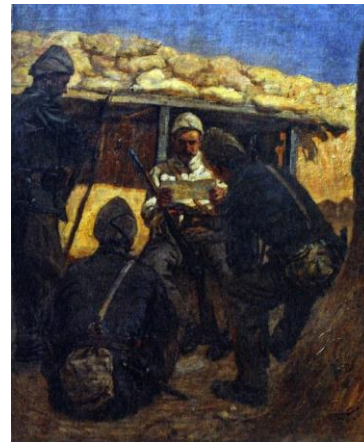
**Figure 11.** İbrahim Çallı's, *Adada Çamlar Arasında* ('Among the Pines on the Island'), oil on canvas, 110x75cm, 1917, Private Collection.



**Figure 12.** İbrahim Çallı's, *Nöbette bir Nefer* ('A Soldier on Guard'), oil on canvas, 60x49cm, 1916, Yapı Kredi Bank Collection.



**Figure 13.** Mehmet Ruhi Arel's, *Çanakkale Zaferi* ('Victory of Çanakkale Battles'), oil on canvas, 1917.



**Figure 14.** Hikmet Onat's, *Siperde Mektup Okuyan Askerler* ('Soldiers Reading Letters in the Trenches'), oil on canvas, 124x150 cm, 1914, Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture.

In 1918, towards the end of World War I, the rulers of the Ottoman Dynasty and the CUP realized that the collapse of the empire could not be prevented; the inevitable end had come for the country. After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and its Allies, the Armistice of Mondros was signed on October 30, 1918. After this armistice, the Entente states began to dismember and occupy the Ottoman Empire with the decisions in secret agreements they had made at the Reval Talks in 1908. With the British occupation of Istanbul and the dissolution of Parliament in 1920, the Constitutional Monarchy regime between 1908 and 1920 and the CUP administration came to an end (Çavdar, 2008; Akşin, 2007).

### Conclusion

During the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, which lasted from 1908 to 1918, including the end of the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman society faced difficult political, social and economic conditions. Artists were affected by the environment created by these challenging conditions and their works of art were also shaped. The art of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, which was under the influence of Western culture with the Ottoman modernization moves of the past, developed under the influence of classicism, orientalism and impressionism movements. Thanks to the short-term environment of freedom in the first years of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, there was a revival in the field of art, social and cultural environments, literature, newspaper and magazine publishing increased, and civil society organizations and political parties were established in the political field. Societies defending women's and workers' rights organized events and strikes,

and political parties participated in elections and sent representatives to parliament. This environment of relative freedom was curtailed in only a short time, strengthening the power of the Committee of Union and Progress. Ottoman modernization, which had begun with the Tanzimat, continued in the economic, social and cultural spheres during the Second Constitutional Monarchy and was implemented according to a nationalist ideology and secular worldview. From this point of view, in the environment created by modernization, artists' choice of subject matter diversified, and paintings were made on the theme of women and actors related to political events. In the Ottoman Empire, social and political issues were dealt with more boldly by writers and journalists in the field of literature and publishing with a critical approach. The realism and naturalism movements inherited from the Tanzimat period were influential in the literature of the Second Constitutional Era. However, the number and variety of works of art produced in this period were more limited compared to previous periods. During the Second Constitutional Monarchy period, there was a significant stagnation and decline in the artistic environment due to the impact of political and social events. Artists approached political and social problems with sensitivity and dealt with these issues in their work. In conclusion, the art of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period was shaped by the political and social conditions of the Ottoman Empire. In this period, work that combined element of Ottoman culture and history with Western influences emerged.

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## Visual References

- Figure 1.** Fausto Zonaro, *Yeni Türkiye: Öndeş*, O. ve Makzume, E. (2003). *Osmanlı Saray Ressamı Fausto Zonaro*. (Ed: Ö. F. Şerifoğlu). İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
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- Figure 3.** Hüseyin Avni Lifij, *Özgürlük Alegorisi: Gören*, A. K. (2001). *Türk Ressamları Dizisi- Avni Lifij*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
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- Figure 5.** Fausto Zonaro, *Enver Paşa'nın Portresi: Öndeş*, O. ve Makzume, E. (2003). *Osmanlı Saray Ressamı Fausto Zonaro*. (Ed: Ö. F. Şerifoğlu). İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Figure 6.** Osman Hamdi Bey, *Enver Paşa'nın Portresi: Cezar*, M. (1995). *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*. Cilt: 2. İstanbul: Erol Kerim Aksoy Kültür Eğitim Spor ve Sağlık Vakfı Yayını.
- Figure 7.** Ömer Adil Bey, *Kızlar Atölyesi: İskender*, K. (1996). *Türk Resminde İnsana Bakış, Büyük Figür Sergisi*. İstanbul: Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi İstanbul Resim ve Heykel Müzesi Sergi Kataloğu.
- Figure 8.** Osman Hamdi Bey, *Mihrab-Yaratılış: Cezar*, M. (1995). *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*. Cilt: 2. İstanbul: Erol Kerim Aksoy Kültür Eğitim Spor ve Sağlık Vakfı Yayını.
- Figure9.** Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, *Sis*:<http://asiyanmuzesi.com/index.php/tr/koleksiyon/tevfik-fikret> (Erişim Tarihi: 25.03.2015).
- Figure 10.** Prince Abdülmecid Efendi, *Haremde Beethoven: İskender*, K. (1996). *Türk Resminde İnsana Bakış, Büyük Figür Sergisi*. İstanbul: Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi İstanbul Resim ve Heykel Müzesi Sergi Kataloğu.
- Figure 11.** İbrahim Çallı, *Adada Çamlar Arasında: Pelvanoğlu*, B. (2014). 1914 Kuşağı Sanatçıların Pozitivizm, Fotoğraf ve İzlenimcilik ile İmtihanı. *Sanat Dünyamız Kültür ve Sanat Dergisi*. Sayı:143. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Figure 12.** İbrahim Çallı, *Nöbette bir Nefer: Pelvanoğlu*, B. (2014). 1914 Kuşağı Sanatçıların Pozitivizm, Fotoğraf ve İzlenimcilik ile İmtihanı. *Sanat Dünyamız Kültür ve Sanat Dergisi*. Sayı:143. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
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- Figure 14.** Hikmet Onat, *Siperde Mektup Okuyan Askerler: Haydaroğlu*, M. (2014). Dünya Savaşının Sanata Yansımaları. *Sanat Dünyamız Kültür ve Sanat Dergisi*. Sayı:143. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

# İKİNCİ MEŞRUTİYET DÖNEMİ OSMANLI RESMİNDE SİYASAL VE TOPLUMSAL YANSIMALAR

Murat ATEŞLİ

## ÖZ

Bu makalede, İkinci Meşrutiyet dönemi Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda yaşanan siyasal, toplumsal, ekonomik olgular ile sanat ve kültürel gelişmeler incelenmiştir. Bu dönemde genel olarak, Osmanlı sanatçıları yapıtlarında toplumsal ve siyasal konulara fazla eğilmemişler fakat, Osman Hamdi Bey, Şehzade Abdülmecid Efendi, Fausto Zonaro, Hüseyin Avni Lifij, İbrahim Çallı, Mehmet Ruhi Arel gibi sanatçılar yaşanan değişimlere kayıtsız kalmamışlardır. Osmanlı yöneticilerinin ve toplumunun sahip olduğu kültürel, siyasi, ekonomik ve toplumsal çağdaşlaşma deneyimleriyle sanatçılar ilgilenmişler, yapıtlarında eleştirel bir yaklaşımla bu konuları resmetmemişlerdir. Bu araştırmanın amacı II. Abdülhamid'in iktidarının son yıllarıyla 1908-1918 yılları arasında İttihat ve Terrakki Cemiyeti'nin iktidarda olduğu İkinci Meşrutiyet döneminde gelişen siyasal ve sosyo-kültürel gelişmelerin sanat yapıtları üzerinde yansımalarını belirlemek ve yorumlamaktır. Araştırma literatür tarama modeline göre betimlenmiş nitel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmada incelenen sanat yapıtları II. Abdülhamid ve İkinci Meşrutiyet döneminde siyasal, toplumsal ve kültürel gelişmelerle bağlantılı sanatçılar ve resimleriyle sınırlandırılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İkinci Meşrutiyet, Osmanlı Resim Sanatı, Siyaset, Toplumsal Yansımalar