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The Sheikhs of Islam and Their Role in the Establishment of the Ottoman State (1876-1909)

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Abstract

In this research, the topic of Islam and their Role in the Establishment of the Ottoman State (1876-1909) was addressed. The historical method was applied. The study found that Sheikh Islam was an obedient tool in the hands of the Caliph, and he was certifying what the Caliph needed from fatwas. Among the most important sheikhs of Islam during the study period (1876-1909) were Sheikh Mohammed Sharif, who died for the second time in 1798, and Sheikh Mustafa Sabri Tuqadi, who assumed the sheikhdom four times. During this period, Sheikh Islam played a distinctive role in reforming the state and influencing the decision-making in political, religious and social matters, as Sheikh Islam was a factor of strength for the state through his fatwas, especially in difficult times in the history of the Ottoman Empire.

Keywords: Sheikh Islam, Mufti, Ottoman Empire.

Introduction

The Ottoman Empire, since its founding by Prince Osman bin Ertugrul Ghazi (1299-1326 AD), sought to deal with Islamic affairs by virtue of it being an Islamic state. The highest religious position at that time was known as the Grand Mufti, and then the position of Sheikh al-Islam, according to the most likely statements, began during the reign of Sultan Murad II (1321-1444 AD). The Ottoman Islamic Sheikhdom (the Fatwa House in Istanbul) was established in 1555 AD, which is considered one of the greatest achievements of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566 AD). It remained in operation until 1920 AD. It was then known as the Agency for Sharia and Religious Affairs, and after the Caliphate was abolished in 1924 AD, the Ottoman Islamic Sheikhdom was replaced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The mission of the Sheikh of Islam was Fatwa is the fatwa, and it played an important role in the Ottoman Caliphate, whether in reform or in serving the various policies that the Sultan needed at the time, some of which were in line with Islamic law and others were not.

From the time of Sultan Abdul Hamid II's accession to power in 1876 until his deposition in 1909, he focused on reforms stemming from the fatwa of the Sheikh al-Islam, the sole Islamic authority in the state. This contributed to combating many of the internal and external challenges and dangers that threatened the Ottoman Empire. He relied on the Sheikh al-Islam and the clerics to initiate internal reforms that would strengthen the Ottoman Empire's position against external

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threats, providing a strong foundation for the state. Sultan Abdul Hamid II relied on the Sheikh al-Islam when he made the decision to reform education and eliminate subjects that fostered nationalist and Westernized sentiment. He also established curricula for Islamic subjects in primary and secondary schools, including jurisprudence, interpretation, and ethics. He placed schools and universities under his supervision and oversight, with the assistance of the Sheikh al-Islam and the clerics. Thus, the Sheikh al-Islam played a distinct and pivotal role in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, which prompted us to explore the topic of the Sheikhs of Islam and their role in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire.

Through the historical approach, we tried to divide this research into two sections. The first section dealt with:

The Sheikhdом of Islam, its origins and history, while the second section deals with the role of the Sheikh of Islam in decision-making in the Ottoman Empire from 1867-1909.

The first topic

Sheikhdом of Islam: its origins and history

This section deals with a historical overview of the Sheikhdом of Islam, its concept, and the reasons for its emergence through the following topics:

First requirement: A historical overview of the Sheikhdом of Islam

The Ottomans viewed themselves, since the beginning of the establishment of their state, as Muslims before anything else. Therefore, their loyalty was first to religion, then to the Sultan, and then to the state. ()The entry of the Hijaz under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire confirms this, especially when Sharif Barakat, the Emir of Mecca, sent a delegation of Mecca's notables to Sultan Selim I. This delegation carried a message to Sultan Selim I, through which the acceptance of the entry of the Hijaz under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire was announced. This matter was crowned when Sharif Barakat sent the keys of the Holy Kaaba to Sultan Selim I in the year 1517 AD.).

The Ottoman Empire's keenness to implement the principles of Islamic law gave it a distinct Islamic character that was deeply rooted in the hearts of its rulers before its subjects. This was evident in the first laws of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (Qanunnami Sultani Ki Shari'i Sharifi Muwafaqaw Muharrir Alub). This sentence meant that the laws were in accordance with Islamic law. For example, no one at that time could dare to eat or drink during the day during the month of Ramadan. The punishment for anyone who dared to do so was flogging or whipping, the latter being a well-known punishment for violators at the time. In addition to all of this, the Ottoman Empire was keen to establish religious rituals.().

The Ottoman Sultans were keen to preserve the relics of the Messenger of God - may God bless him and grant him peace - which were represented by his relics that the Emir of Mecca sent to Sultan Selim I, which are (the Prophet's cloak, the prayer rug, the Prophet's flag, hairs from his beard, a stone bearing the imprint of his blessed foot, the keys to the Kaaba, and two copies of the Holy Quran, which are said to have belonged to the Caliphs Uthman and Ali, in addition to a group of tools, weapons, and clothes that are said to have belonged to previous prophets, companions, and caliphs). The Ottoman Empire recruited a military force of forty individuals to guard these Prophetic relics.().

The Ottoman sultans also took care to build large mosques in Istanbul and throughout the

Ottoman Empire's provinces, such as the Mehmed the Conqueror Mosque and the Suleiman Mosque. The Ottoman Empire also took care to pave the roads leading to the Hejaz, and sought to establish forts to guard wells. In addition, inns were constructed to receive and rest travelers, including merchants and others. Four Hajj caravansaries were organized each year according to a specific system, followed by a military force led by the Sardar of Hajj, who was headed by a prominent figure called the "Prince of Hajj." Among these caravansaries were the Shami Hajj caravansary, which included pilgrims from the Levant, the Jazira, Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, the Caucasus, Crimea, Anatolia, and pilgrims from Istanbul itself. Another Hajj caravan came from Egypt and North Africa, and another caravanserai for pilgrims from Iraq, Persia, Yemen, India, Malaysia, and Indonesia.().

Returning to the origins of the Sheikhdome of Islam in the Ottoman Empire, one of the most important indications that point to its emergence is that it was given broad powers, and large financial resources were allocated to it. The Sheikh of Islam himself was the one who took charge and headed the body, and he was assisted by a number of senior religious men, who formed technical bodies with names and powers attached to his office. The Sheikh of Islam in the Ottoman Empire received all forms of respect, reverence and honor, and enjoyed a high status such that his position was comparable to that of the Grand Vizier.().

The position of Sheikh al-Islam appeared officially in the Ottoman Empire after a major development occurred in the position of Mufti. Some historians believe that...()Prince Osman I (1300-1326 AD) entrusted the first fatwa position to his jurist son-in-law, Tursun Efendi.)Where the latter issued fatwas and ruled on matters of Islamic law.

There are different accounts of the beginning of the emergence of this position in the Ottoman Empire, and the first to hold it. It was said: "The beginning of the emergence of this position was during the reign of Murad II (1421-1451 AD), and it was said that the first to hold it was Adebali."()He is the father of the wife of Osman I, and he was the first to hold the position of Mufti in the Ottoman lands at that time. It was said that the first person to be officially granted this title was Khadir Bey.)After the conquest of Constantinople by Mehmed the Conqueror.

It was also said that the first person to be appointed Sheikh of Islam was Muhammad Shams al-Din al-Fanari.()...who was a teacher at the Minster Institute in Bursa, and was appointed by Bayezid Yildirim to the position of Mufti of mankind in order to advise all judges, scholars and representatives of Islamic law. However, with the passage of time, the position of Mufti branched out and became more important and sacred, so those appointed to the position of Sheikh al-Islam were called "Sheikh al-Islam and Wali al-Na'im" (the Guardian of the Blessings).

Researchers have differed on the era in which this position was established. Some say it was during the reign of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, while others say it was during the reign of Selim I or Suleiman the Magnificent.()However, the historical consensus was that Murad II (1421-1444) was the one who founded and established this system, and that Sheikh Shams al-Din al-Fanari was the first to bear the title of "Grand Mufti - Sheikh of Islam" in 1425 AD. The headquarters of this sheikhdome was in the city of Bursa, then moved to the city of Edirne, then to Istanbul after it was conquered by Muhammad II (the Conqueror) in 1452 AD. Another opinion was said that Sultan Muhammad II (the Conqueror) was the first to create this position. It was also said that the first to establish a technical office for the Sheikh of Islam was Sultan (Suleiman I the Magnificent) in 1566 AD, and it was given a historical term which is (the Fatwa Gate), or Fatwa Khana, meaning the Fatwa House in which a group of senior scholars worked,

who researched in a preliminary manner the legal matters that required the Sheikh of Islam to issue a fatwa on them. This house was headed by one of the senior scholars and was called (the Fatwa Secretary).

During the reign of Sultan Mahmud II in 1839 AD, when he abolished the Janissary system in 1826 AD, he made the house that was designated for the Janissaries in Istanbul for the Sheikh of Islam, and it was considered his headquarters in which he exercised all his powers, as this house was located near the Suleymaniye Mosque.().

The last person to hold the position of Sheikh al-Islam in the Ottoman Empire was Mustafa Sabri bin Ahmed bin Muhammad Basri al-Tuqadi (1869-1954 AD), who led a war against secularism, Westernization, unveiling and immodesty. He was an example of a patient fighter until he was exiled outside Türkiye, where he died in Cairo and was buried in Abbasiya.().

The second requirement: Defining the Sheikhdom of Islam in language and terminology:

To address the concept of the Sheikhdom of Islam, this section was divided into two branches as follows:

The first section: the linguistic definition:

The term Sheikh Al-Islam consists of two parts: (Sheikh) and (Islam). Sheikh comes from the root verb (Shakha), from which also comes Sheikhan, Shuyukhiyah, Shiryaikhah, and Shiyukhiyah, all of which mean he became an old man, or someone who has reached old age. It is said: A person has become old, meaning he has grown old.)The word "Sheikh" in the Arabic language means someone whose age has become apparent and whose hair has turned grey. It has been said: an old man from fifty to the end of his life. It has also been said: he is from fifty to eighty. The plural is "ashyakh", "sheikhan", "shuyukh", "shaykha", "mashayikha", "shaykha", "mashayikha", "mashayikha", "mashayikha", and "mashayukhaa".

The word "mashayikha" in the Arabic language goes back to the form "maf'ala" from the trilateral root and "mashayikha" is the plural of "shaykh", according to what Al-Zubaidi said. In morphology, it is often formed from a noun, a place name, in the form (maf'ala) with a fatha, then a sukun, then a fatha, to indicate the abundance of that thing in that place, such as "masadah", "masba'ah", "matbakhah", and "maqtha'ah".).

It is clear from the above that the formation of (the sheikhdom) is the name of the function undertaken by the holder of this position.

The second section: the technical definition:

A sheikh, technically speaking, is someone who follows the Book of God Almighty, who is well-versed in the Sunnah of His Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, and who is familiar with the rulings of the Qur'an, the ways of reading it, the reasons for its revelation, its abrogated verses, taking into account the clear verses and the ambiguous verses, and the rulings of the Arabic language that help him with what was mentioned above, and knowledge of the Sunnah, transmission and chain of transmission, and acting upon what must be acted upon, relying on and believing; what is required of him, that is his belief and deriving the principles and branches from the Book and the Sunnah, consequently, whoever is in this position is judged to be an imam and deserves to be given the title (Sheikh of Islam) ().

This meaning was mentioned in the Holy Quran. God Almighty said:They said, "We will not water [your flocks] until the shepherds disperse, and our father is an old man."()And also the

Almighty's saying: (She said, "Oh, Woe to me! Shall I give birth while I am old and my husband is an old man?") ().

This term was also given to someone who should be respected and honored, as one honors the elderly. It was commonly given to scholars and the elderly. The term "Sheikh" was also given to a professor, a great scholar, a leader of a people, a religious man, or the leader of a Sufi order from whom disciples learn, or someone who was great in the eyes of his people in knowledge, position, or virtue.().

The title of "Sheikh" is also given to the notables of the sects, not to the princes and leaders, as it was not limited to Muslim scholars only, but was given and is still given to the notables of the houses of non-Muslims, as in Lebanon and elsewhere.().

The word "Sheikh" is a compound word that refers to a group of villages and towns in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere, such as Sheikh Ubadah and Sheikh Zain Ladin in Girga, Egypt, and Sheikh Ali, Sheikh Fadl, and Sheikh Saad in the Al-Jidur district of the Hauran region in Syria, and there is Sheikh Shuaib in the Arabian Gulf.().

The field of play of "Sheikh" was wide, as it was given to some of the most prominent scholars, ministers, scribes, and accountants, and some kings and writers from non-Muslims and foreigners. The title of Sheikh entered into the formation of a large number of compound titles, all of which refer to the position of leadership or presidency that distinguishes its holders from others. In the scientific field, the compound title refers to specialization, so it is said: Sheikh of the Hadith scholars, Sheikh of the reciters, Sheikh of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, Sheikh of Sheikhs, Sheikh of Islam, Sheikh of the Gnostics, Sheikh of the Zawiya, and others.().

As for the term "Sheikh al-Islam" as a compound term, its interpretation from a technical standpoint is that it is a title that appeared in the second half of the tenth century, and was restricted to Sufis and scholars. In the eleventh century, it was given to the head of the Shafi'i jurists in Khorasan, Ismail ibn Abd al-Rahman, and after him Fakhr al-Din al-Razi.() Then the title became in Egypt and the Levant an honorary title and not an official title, and it was only given to jurists, specifically in the Mamluk era, where this title reached the height of its status after it was given to the Mufti of Istanbul, whose position in the Ottoman Empire acquired a political and religious importance that had no parallel in the Islamic state in general, and this position was manifested in the official forums of the state ().

When we say: Sheikh Al-Islam, meaning the one who is the leader in Islamic legal sciences over his peers, and with this title a group of the Companions, the Followers, and their Followers, and so on in every class and every era, were called Sheikh Al-Islam, and this is to indicate his precedence over his peers, and among the Companions who were given this title (Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq and Omar bin Al-Khattab, may God be pleased with them) and a group of the Followers and then the Followers of the Followers and among the Followers (Muhammad bin Sirin, Saeed Al-Musayyab and Al-Hasan Al-Basri) and among the Followers of the Followers: Sufyan Al-Thawri, Imam Malik and their likes.().

If we were to follow a comprehensive book of biographies such as "Siyar A'lam An-Nubala" by Al-Hafiz Al-Dhahabi (748 AH), we would find a group of no less than (160) one hundred and sixty scholars over seven centuries who were given the title of Sheikh Al-Islam. These biographies mentioned the scholarly characteristics that earned the title, such as their advancement in knowledge over their peers, their fame for acting upon their knowledge, and that they do not show favoritism to anyone no matter how great their status is, and that they are

people of prestige among the people of their time. This is without a relative form between one century and another. Whoever was given the title of Sheikh Al-Islami among the followers is not like whoever was given the title among the companions, and whoever was given the title from the followers of the followers is not like whoever was given the title from the followers, and so on. Whoever is ahead always has the advantage in precedence, and by everyone's admission().

Therefore, the general merit of every era was less than that of the one that preceded it, even if this does not negate the fact that there were individuals in previous eras who might have surpassed individuals in previous eras. Rather, the discussion here is in terms of the whole, not the individuals, as came in a hadith of Anas, may God be pleased with him, in Al-Tirmidhi: "There is no year except that the one after it is worse than it until you meet your Lord."

However, what is striking in the book of biographies, especially the biographies of the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth centuries AH, centuries that witnessed the rise of the Ottoman Empire, is that the title of Sheikh al-Islam was given to the great scholars whose descriptions and conditions were mentioned above. This title was never used in the way it was used by the Ottomans. In fact, we did not find in the books that translated the scholars of the era any biographies that mention the Ottomans. For example, in the book (Al-Durar Al-Kamina fi(Aayan al-Mi'ah al-Thamina) by al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (852 AH) or the book (Al-Daw' al-Lami' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tasi') by al-Hafiz al-Sakhawi (902 AH), or the book (Al-Nur al-Safer 'an Akhbar al-Qarn al-'Ashr) by Muhyiddin al-Aydarus (1938 AH). We find that the title of Sheikh al-Islam was given to non-scholars from Egypt, the Levant, the Hijaz, Yemen, and Morocco. Accordingly, the famous biographical books of those eras, which were written in Egypt, the Levant, and Yemen, did not have a great share of the Ottoman princes and scholars, even though al-Hafiz al-Sakhawi stated in the introduction to his book that he was writing biographies of (scholars, judges, righteous people, governors, men of letters, poets, caliphs, kings, princes, and others). However, biographies of the Byzantine princes and Ottoman scholars were rare and few in his view.

The third requirement: The reasons for the emergence of the Sheikhdom of Islam and its tasks:

To discuss the reasons for the emergence of the Sheikhdom of Islam And its tasks in the Ottoman Empire. This requirement will be divided into the following two branches:

Section One: Reasons for the emergence of the Sheikhdom of Islam in the Ottoman Empire:

Some historical studies have indicated that the establishment of the position of Sheikh al-Islam in the Ottoman Empire came as an imitation of the church institution in Europe. However, this claim is not based on evidence, especially since the hierarchical system in the Muslim state was known since the first Abbasid Caliphate, and at the top of this pyramid was the Chief Justice. However, Turkish historians believe that Sultan Murad II was the first to establish the institution of Sheikh al-Islam, as we mentioned previously. The reason for his establishment of this position was the political turmoil he caused during his rule at the hands of movements that rebelled against the state under the guise of deviant religion, such as the movement of Sheikh Badr al-Din in 1420 AD, where he rebelled against the public order, demanding the confiscation of individual property and its distribution to the people as a common property. He also declared to his followers that all religious prohibitions had been lifted and that everything was permissible and lawful. The esoteric groups were also working in the dark to undermine the Ottoman Empire, under religious names and slogans. Then Sultan Murad II realized that he was in dire need of a scholar who listened to everyone and had religious and moral prestige throughout the country,

so that he could save people from the esoteric nonsense and delusions and solve the religious issues of the state and the people. .

Accordingly, it was necessary to unify the word of the muftis who were spread throughout the Ottoman Empire to form a correct scientific trend that would stand in the face of destructive intellectual trends. He made the fatwa center in the capital the first center, and gave this center the right to appoint muftis. This was the beginning of the codification of the institution, and made the Hanafi school the jurisprudential reference of the state to further control matters. Accordingly, Sultan Ramad II benefited from this system, when Ibrahim II, the governor of Karaman, took advantage of his preoccupation with the war in the Balkans in 1444 AD, and sought to pounce on him from behind. He asked Islamic scholars in all countries who held the title of "Sheikh of Islam," such as (Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani Al-Shafi'i in Cairo, who was the Chief Justice of the Mamluk state, and the Grand Judge Badr Al-Din Al-Baghdadi Al-Hanbali), and they issued a fatwa that Ibrahim II must be killed.

And when Sultan Muhammad, son of Sultan Murad Khan, turned towards the deviant Harunite sect, Sheikh al-Islam Mawla Fakhr al-Din al-Ajami confronted them, expelled them from Edirne, and ruled them to be infidels. They, and the Sultan is silent and does not move a finger, and he even incited people to kill them in Al-Shaqaiq Al-Na'maniyah.

Section Two: The Duties of the Sheikh of Islam in the Ottoman Empire:

The Sheikh al-Islam was initially on an equal footing with the Grand Vizier (Prime Minister), the second man in the state after the Caliph, so the position of Sheikh al-Islam in the Ottoman Empire became a prestigious one, as he was responsible for the religious affairs of the country. He was at the top of a hierarchical pyramid that began with the religious agents and ended with the Sheikh al-Islam. The selection of the position of Sheikh al-Islam was made by order of the Sultan, who chose them from among the judges of the important cities of the Ottoman Empire. The Sheikh al-Islam enjoyed the authority to ratify the new Sultan, and once he was ratified by the Sheikh al-Islam, the Sultan's authority became higher than that of the Sheikh al-Islam.

Issuing fatwas based on the Quran and Sunnah was one of the most important duties of the Sheikh al-Islam. Thus, the Sheikh al-Islam represented Islamic law. His fatwas dealt with public and private matters, such as declaring war, making treaties and peace, executions, incidents related to the people, rebellion, and dismissing the government. Private matters, however, represented religious aspects. The Sheikh al-Islam was a professor who taught at the Bayezid II Mosque in Istanbul. He was also a judge who adjudicated grievances, particularly those filed against military judges. The Sheikh al-Islam was also the imam of the Sultan's country during occasions of condolence for princesses or engagements, and he led the funeral prayer for the Sultan. () The laws were also presented to the Sheikh of Islam to ensure their conformity with Islamic law. He was also responsible for issuing fatwas that permitted the transfer of Ottoman provinces to another state and fatwas to remove the Sultan.

An example that confirms the authority of the Sheikh of Islam to issue political fatwas in the Ottoman Empire is the fatwa issued regarding the Ottoman Empire's ceding of Ottoman provinces in 1829 when Russia defeated the Ottoman Empire in 1828. The Treaty of Adrianople was concluded in September 1829, and in this treaty, the internal independence of Greece was recognized under the protection of Russia. Sultan Mahmud II decided to turn to the fatwa of the Sheikh of Islam, as he obtained a fatwa permitting this action. Based on that, the treaty was ratified by the Sultan after the First Levantine War broke out in 1831 AD between Sultan

Mahmud II and Muhammad Ali, the governor of Egypt. Consequently, the Sultan issued a fatwa permitting him to fight Muhammad Ali. When the war stopped and the Treaty of Kutahya was concluded in 1833 AD, the Sultan obtained a fatwa from the Sheikh of Islam stating that he had abandoned the war against Muhammad Ali.

The most powerful manifestation of the Sheikh al-Islam's power and influence was that he alone had the right to issue a fatwa deposing the ruling sultan if the sultan deviated from the application of Islamic law, or was afflicted with an incurable mental illness, or for any other reason. The fatwa of the Sheikh al-Islam did not only lead to the deposition of the sultan, but also had other consequences, namely the killing of the deposed sultan or his imprisonment in a palace with his harem, and the severing of all ties between him and the outside world until the deposed sultan died. There are several fatwas that exemplify this, such as the fatwa deposing Sultan Selim III (1798-1217 CE) because he had organized the army according to European methods. The fatwa was issued: "The "Any sultan who introduces Frankish systems and forces his subjects to follow them is not fit for kingship.")... where he was deposed and killed by the Janissaries who, for personal reasons, stood in the way of any attempt to reform and develop the army and its weapons and change its system. The second fatwa was the fatwa to depose Sultan Abdul Aziz (1861-1871 AD) due to his extravagance and borrowing from financial houses in Paris and London and his inability to manage the affairs of the country, which prompted the military to support this fatwa. He was deposed the next day after it was issued, and Sultan Murad V was appointed in his place. The last fatwa by the Sheikh of Islam was the deposition of Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1909 AD, in response to the desire of the military. The fatwa stated that Sultan Abdul Hamid II was plotting against the constitutional system in the state. Many of the sheikhs of Islam at that time were a docile tool in the hands of the ruling sultan or influential people to issue a fatwa justifying or explaining a certain procedure, and the Sheikh of Islam would declare what he was ordered to do.

Among the Islamic sheikhs who challenged the Sultan was Sheikh al-Islam Zambali Ali Jamali (1503-1526 AD), who issued a fatwa to fight the Shiites in the Sufi state. During that time, some Christian subjects behaved in a way that made Sultan Selim look at them with some caution and fear, as the Ottoman state might be preoccupied with wars and then these people would threaten it. This made the Sultan ask the Sheikh al-Islam for a fatwa to kill them. Sheikh al-Islam (Zambali Ali Jamal) refused and opposed that, and told him that there is no compulsion in religion, and that non-Muslims have the right to remain in their religion as long as they pay the jizya as a monetary substitute that exempts them from conscription and the state undertakes to protect them. Sultan Selim I submitted to the opinion of the Sheikh al-Islam.().

Until May 3, 1920, the Sheikhdom of Islam continued, and it had a ministry under the name of the Agency of Sharia and Endowments, until the establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs on March 3, 1924. The Sheikhdom and the Caliphate were abolished, the Turkish language was written in Latin letters, and the dress code was adopted, and the Sharia courts were abolished. The secularism of the state was declared by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.().

The last of the sheikhs of Islam in the Ottoman Caliphate was Sheikh Mustafa Sabri bin Ahmed bin Muhammad Sabri al-Tuqadi (1286/1869 AH - 1373-1954 AD). He faced the policy of Westernization, secularism, unveiling and immodesty against the Kemalists. He set an example of the patience of the mujahid in this war until he was exiled outside Turkey. He died in Cairo and was buried in Abbasiya.)As for Sheikh Mustafa Sabri's thought, it was based on reviving the nation and striving to remove all manifestations of Westernization of Islamic civilization,

and to adhere to the path of the Sunnis and the community and to restore the Islamic Caliphate.

It can be said that the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic state whose ruler was called Sultan, Caliph, and Protector of the Two Holy Mosques. Its political structure was based on the Islamic religion, and its capital, Istanbul, was called the "House of Islam." The Two Holy Mosques were under its protection, and the ground was paved for the arrival of pilgrims to the Hijaz to perform the Hajj rituals. Islamic law was implemented, and the Sunni doctrine was preserved for more than six centuries.

The second topic

The role of the Sheikh al-Islam in decision-making in the Ottoman Empire from 1867 to 1909

Before talking about the role of the Sheikh of Islam in decision-making in the Ottoman Empire Especially in the period 1867-1909, this topic was divided into the following two requirements:

The first requirement: Internal reforms in the period 1876-1909 AD:

The period 1876-1909 AD was the period in which Sultan Abdul Hamid II ruled the Ottoman Empire. During his reign, Sultan Abdul Hamid paid attention to the position of Sheikh al-Islam, due to his conviction and belief in the role of Sheikh al-Islam in reform and building the state and the nation. He emphasized in his constitution the equality between Sheikh al-Islam and the Grand Vizier in terms of rank, in Article 27 of the constitution issued by Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1876 AD. The fatwas issued by Sheikh al-Islam during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II were The great impact on reform and facing the external and internal challenges of the Ottoman Empire, which prompted the Sultan to bring together religious scholars and muftis such as Sheikh al-Islam Mustafa Sabri, Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi (1849-1909 AD) and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, which affected the reforms achieved by the Sultan, as it came in a saying of Sultan Abdul Hamid II that: "The calamity of our nation is laziness and lack of work" () The Sultan asked the Sheikh of Islam to issue a fatwa urging people to work, and for the Sheikh of Islam to recite this fatwa in schools, because nations do not rise except through hard work. Sultan Abdul Hamid II was known for his piety and love for Islamic civilization.

One of the most prominent reforms in which the fatwa of Sheikh al-Islam played a major role was the fight against Westernization and minority movements. When Sultan Abdul Hamid II assumed power in 1876, there were attempts at Westernization and imitation of Western civilization, which was incompatible with Islamic law. This led to the reform process taking a new direction, which emerged from his belief that Islam is the only force that makes the nation strong, and that Europe does not bring any good to his state. Sultan Abdul Hamid was also certain that the circumstances of countries differ, and what is good for one country may harm another. Therefore, he constantly rejected Westernization and imitation of the West, despite his view that Islam does not prevent the adoption of science, technology, and causes of strength, provided that this is done according to the internal needs of the country, and not in implementation of Western orders. These countries do not proceed except in accordance with their own interests. Therefore, the West sought to fragment the Ottoman Empire and eliminate it. Experience has proven that following the advice of the West and implementing its orders will only lead to destruction and defeat.

Sultan Abdul Hamid II was aware that the West had infiltrated education through those influenced by Western ideas who controlled the administration of education and state affairs,

which prompted Sultan Abdul Hamid II to reform education. He directed it in an Islamic direction by seeking the help of the Sheikh of Islam to include lessons on jurisprudence, interpretation, and ethics in the curricula and limiting teaching to the teaching of Islamic history and Ottoman history. He placed the schools under the control of the Sultan and the supervision of the Sheikh of Islam.

The Sheikh of Islam also contributed to achieving an Islamic scientific renaissance during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, through comprehensive progress in all the affairs of the Sultanate and its modernization without westernizing the state, and combating Western intellectual influences, which stemmed from European civilization. Therefore, Sultan Abdul Hamid II, with the help of the Sheikh of Islam, sought to provide a scientific and intellectual renaissance in the state within an Islamic context, by supporting the dissemination of thought and the Islamic bond. Sultan Abdul Hamid II would refer to the Sheikh of Islam, especially when he wanted to obtain a fatwa from him regarding any issue related to state affairs, as the Sheikh of Islam supervised the establishment of Islamic schools and colleges of engineering, medicine, literature, law, political science, arts, commerce, agriculture, and other colleges, as well as primary and intermediate education. Consequently, the number of schools increased during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, so that the number of those who read and write doubled during his reign. Sultan Abdul Hamid II, with the help and supervision of the Sheikh of Islam, was keen to keep the content of education Islamic, far from westernization and adherence to Western thought. Islamic curricula were printed under the supervision and control of the Sheikh of Islam.

As During the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, Sheikh al-Islam played a role in reforming the judiciary. This stemmed from Sultan Abdul Hamid's belief that justice was the foundation upon which the Ottoman Empire was built. Therefore, he attempted to reform the judiciary with the aim of achieving equality among all members of society, so that everyone would be equal before the judiciary, and applying justice through legislative and administrative organization. Therefore, the Sultan sought to establish a College of Law to train specialized personnel and organize the Ministry of Justice, which would interact with all types of courts. He developed a reform program that began with laws issued in 1879. All litigants in civil courts of all levels, as well as all defendants before criminal courts, were equal before the law, regardless of their religion, sect, or social status. However, the West was not satisfied with these reforms, as they placed Ottomans and foreigners or those enjoying foreign protection in the Ottoman Empire on an equal footing. This prompted these countries not to apply the new laws to their own citizens, relying on foreign capitulation treaties, which led to the failure of any potential fruits of this reform.

In light of the internal challenges faced by the Ottoman Empire, especially the emergence of the Committee of Union and Progress, which was influenced by Western thought, Sultan Abdul Hamid II realized the dangers and European and Zionist ambitions facing the state, not to mention the state of weakness that the state had reached. Therefore, the idea of the Islamic University emerged, in which the Sheikh of Islam played a fundamental role in establishing this university during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Sultan Abdul Hamid did not differentiate between the sects of the sheikhs of Islam, in order to bring about rapprochement between all sects and to deprive Russia and Britain, which were coveting the lands of the Ottoman Empire and Iran together. Therefore, when a group of Druze sheikhs from Hauran were present in Istanbul, the Sultan ordered that they pray Friday prayers behind him in the Yildiz Mosque.)This demonstrates the extent of Sultan Abdul Hamid II's interest in Islamic sheikhs and their role in the internal and external challenges facing the Ottoman Empire. He therefore granted them the

privilege of making political, religious, and social decisions within the state.

Sultan Abdul Hamid II also sought to gain the loyalty of the sheikhs of the Sufi orders, and to include them in the state and in the Islamic University that he established. Among them were Sheikh Ahmed Said, the agent of the Sharifian Order in the Hijaz, and Sheikh Awb al-Huda al-Sayyadi, the sheikh of the Rifai Order. This had a significant impact on the spread of the idea of the Islamic University, to the point that French intelligence described their influence by saying: "Sultan Abdul Hamid, in his capacity as president of the Islamic University, can assemble an army through his association with the Islamic universities in North Africa and resist any foreign force."

The second requirement: The role of the Sheikh of Islam in decision-making in the Ottoman Empire

The roles of the Sheikh of Islam in the Ottoman Empire are of great historical importance, as the institution of the Ottoman Empire relied in its various policies on the Sheikhs of Islam, as they were a basic reference for the decisions of the Ottoman Empire. According to this role, three axes emerge that give a historical picture of the role of the Sheikhs of Islam at the levelsThe political, social and religious, where the sheikhs of Islam played a major role in formulating many political decisions that had a connection between the institution of the Sultanate on the one hand and the subjects with their various ethnic and religious groups on the other hand, where Muhammad Tahir Efendi Qadi Zadeh took over the position of Sheikh of Islam and had a major role in the events of the state, where he issued his famous fatwa on the establishment of the new army during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II, where the latter saw at that time the necessity of relying on the new army and abolishing the Janissary army ()Sheikh Muhammad Tahir Effendi played a distinguished role when he issued a fatwa to abolish the Janissary formations when what was known in Ottoman history as the Khairiyya Incident occurred in 1862 AD.

As a result of the developments that took place in the Ottoman Empire, especially those related to the internal and external events that the state faced after the defeat of the Ottoman army at the hands of Timurlane's army in the Battle of Ankara in 1402 AD, in addition to the emergence of some religious paths and the multiplicity of unofficial sources of fatwas in the state, all of this led to the Grand Mufti having a special place for fatwas. This Mufti also had assistants and employees who managed this institution. Since that time, the Grand Mufti was called (Sheikh al-Islam), meaning the first authority in fatwas. This institution continued from 1425 AD until 1922 AD, that is, until the days of the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922 AD).

The Sheikh of Islam had a role in making decisions related to political, religious and social aspects, as sources mention that the Sheikh of Islam, Sheikh (Zanbili Ali Efendi Al-Qaramani) had a role in making political decisions. This Sheikh took over the Sheikhdome of Islam for the period (1503-1525 AD), and he is the ninth in the sequence of Sheikhs of Islam in the Ottoman Empire, during the reign of Sultan Selim I (1512-1520 AD). One of his most important decisions was when the Sultan wanted to fight the Mamluks, he wanted to obtain a legal fatwa for that, so he explained to Sheikh Zanbili Efendi that he wanted to save the people of Egypt and the Levant to get rid of the Safavid trend against them.

This was during the reign of Sultan Selim I. However, during the study period (1876-1909 AD), after the dismissal of Sheikh Hasan Khairullah Efendi, who had assumed the position of sheikhdome in 1874 AD and remained in this position for only one month, after Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha persuaded Sultan Abdul Aziz (1861-1876 AD) to dismiss him, his second

sheikhdom came after the deposition of Sultan Abdul Aziz and then his killing and the accession of Sultan Murad V at the end of 1876 AD, then the latter was deposed and Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909 AD) accession.

Hassan Khairallah Effendi, who held the position of Sheikh al-Islam twice, played a major role in the events that took place in the state. He held the position the first time on 6/11/1874 AD, and continued in it until 7/9/1874 AD, when he was dismissed after convincing the Grand Vizier Mahmoud Nadim Pasha of Sultan Abdul Aziz (1861-1876 AD) to dismiss Sheikh Hassan.()While his second sheikhdom began in 1876 and lasted until 1877 AD, where his sheikhdom witnessed a number of events, including the deposition of Sultan Abdul Aziz and his murder, the accession of Sultan Murad V in 1876 AD, then his deposition and the accession of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909 AD), and because of his deposition of the sultans, Sheikh Hassan Khairullah Effendi was called "the dethroner of the sultans".

According to sources, Medhat Pasha()He visited the home of Sheikh al-Islam Hasan Khairullah Effendi to congratulate him on his assumption of the position of sheikhdom. The visit lasted for half an hour, and when he left, he told him that he would come after three days to visit him in order to consult him on a legal matter. When he came to visit him after this period had passed, he was accompanied by a number of scholars. He remained silent at first, and left the conversation to the scholars so that they could talk to the Sheikh and explain to him the decline and deterioration that had befallen Islam and the country as a result of the Sultan's policy. They asked him whether it was better to keep the throne of the Ottoman Empire or to keep the owner of the throne who was supposed to be in the grave today and tomorrow. Then they asked the Sheikh to issue his final ruling.)Then the Sheikh began to think about the matter, and then he thought for a long time, and then one of the scholars stood up to tell him, "We expelled the previous Sheikh al-Islam and we can treat you in the same way we treated him, and you must take urgent measures to protect Islam." When the Sheikh heard this threat, he replied that he was completely prepared to change the administration of the Ottoman government and that he could also assign the throne to a sultan if necessary in order to elevate the honor of the Islamic religion. Then Midhat Pasha spoke and told the Sheikh al-Islam that his support alone was not enough, "but you must depose him because of your important religious position." Then, a day later, the Sheikh al-Islam met with Grand Vizier Muhammad Rushdi Pasha and they agreed to depose him. A few days later, the Sheikh al-Islam issued a fatwa deposing the Sultan, based on the fact that the Sultan was unstable in his feelings, had little experience in political affairs, was extravagant and wasteful of state funds, and was negligent in religious and worldly matters.).

After Sultan Abdul Aziz was deposed, the throne was handed over to Sultan Murad V, and he was pledged allegiance to in front of Sheikh al-Islam and Sharif of Mecca Abdul Muttalib, and a number of the country's dignitaries, in addition to military and civilian personnel. Five days after the deposition of Sultan Abdul Aziz, he was killed on June 4, 1876 AD. Some sources stated that Hussein Awni Pasha)He is the one who killed Sultan Abdul Aziz by cutting his wrist arteries, but the state announced in an official statement that he had committed suicide.

Sheikh Hassan Khair Allah also issued a fatwa to depose Sultan Murad V three months after he assumed his position. He was deposed as a result of what Hassan Bey Jarkas had done.()One of the events that affected the Sultan's psychological state and led to his mental disorder.)Therefore, Sheikh al-Islam Hassan Khair Allah issued a fatwa deposing him on August 31, 1876 AD. After those events, the new Sultan, Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909 AD), was pledged allegiance to.

Sheikh Hassan Khairallah remained in the sheikhdom until 1877 AD, then he was deposed by order of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, as he was one of those who participated in the deposition and killing of Sultan Abdul Aziz. The deposed Sultan Abdul Aziz was the uncle of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. () On 2/14/1909 AD, Muhammad Zia al-Din Effendi assumed the position of Sheikh of Islam. Sheikh Muhammad Zia al-Din Effendi had a good relationship with Sultan Abdul Hamid II, but he was forced to depose him.) The deposition took place after Said Pasha, the head of the council, and the members of the Committee of Union and Progress asked the Mufti, Nuri Efendi, to write the text of the fatwa deposing him. In March 1914, Mustafa Khairi Efendi assumed the position of Sheikh of Islam. Nine months after he assumed his position, the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War on the side of the Germans. Mustafa Efendi declared the fatwas of the greater jihad against the Allies (Britain, France, and Russia).) The fatwas of jihad were announced in a grand celebration held in the Fatih Mosque in Istanbul, and thus Mustafa Efendi, Sheikh al-Islam, was considered the Grand Mufti of the Jihad of World War I. .

The same applies to Sultan Abdul Hamid II, whose removal was effected by a fatwa from the then Sheikh of Islam. A Turkish historian has stated that the decision to remove him was presented to Sheikh of Islam at the time, Ziyauddin Efendi, for approval so that it would take on legal status. He approved it while surrounded by bayonets. The following is a fatwa to remove Sultan Abdul Hamid II, issued by Sheikh of Islam Muhammad Ziyauddin Efendi, which begins with "From Him is success" and ends with "Written by the poor Sayyid Muhammad Ziyauddin, may He pardon him." This fatwa was published in Issue No. 194 of the Constitution (second edition), among others.

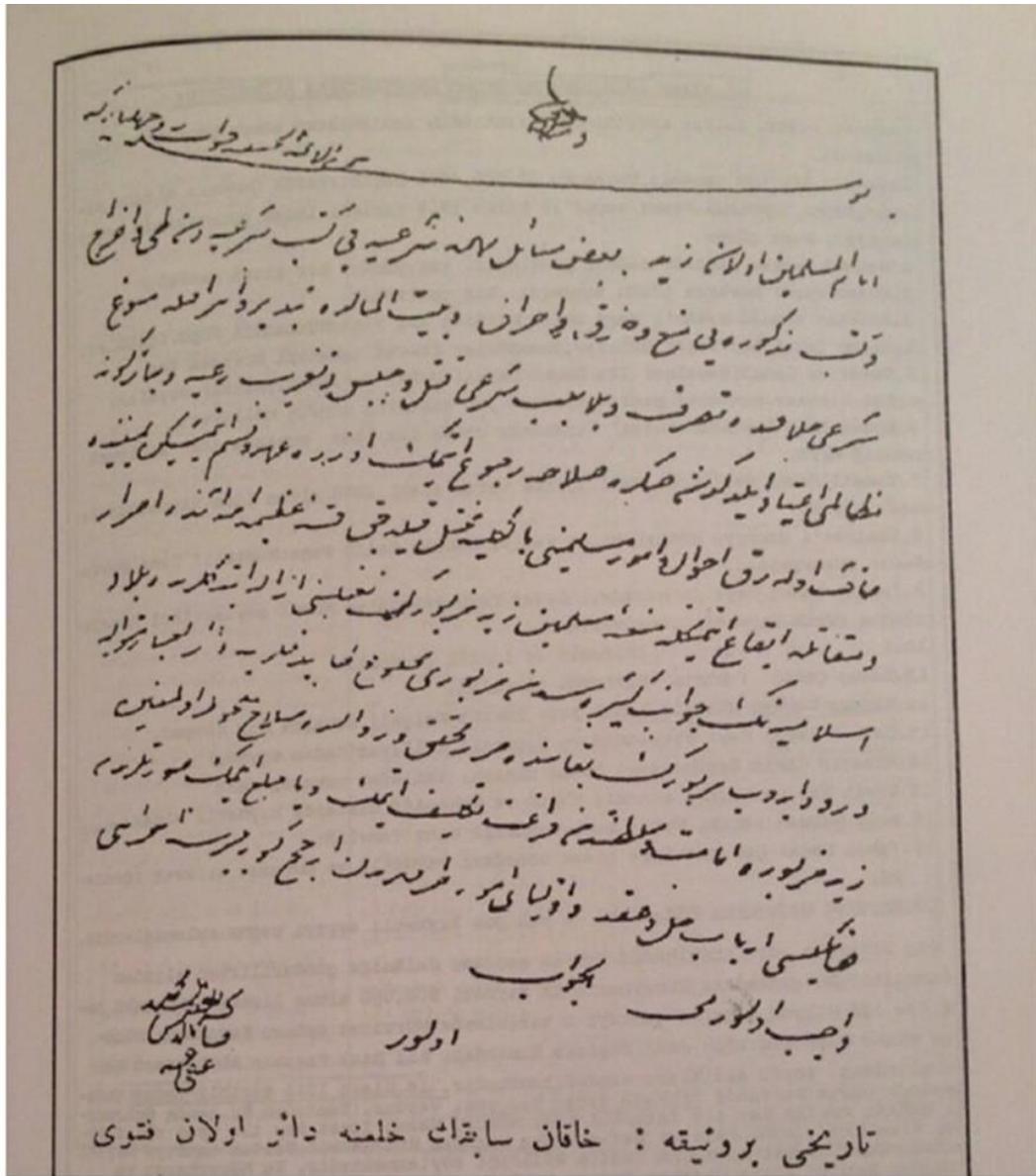


Figure (1) Fatwa to depose Sultan Abdul Hamid II

Sultan Abdul Hamid II was deposed in 1909 AD by the Unionists, and then the state fell apart after him due to the successive wars that the state fought. It is clear from the above that the Sheikh of Islam in the Ottoman Empire had a role. The distinguished reform of the state and the influence in many aspects of the state, especially religious and social, as the Sheikh of Islam represented a force for the state through the fatwas he issued during difficult times in the history of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the Sheikh of Islam had an important impact on the course of events, but the issue is linked to the person of the Sheikh of Islam, for better or for worse, and to the mood of the Sultan, whether he was pleased or angry.

Conclusion

This research addresses the topic of the Sheikhs of Islam and their role in establishing the Ottoman Empire, through an introduction and two chapters. The study concluded that the Sheikhdom of Islam was established in the Ottoman Empire and was initially headed by the Mufti, then by the Sheikh of Islam from the era of Murad II (1421-1444 AD). The Sheikh of Islam had a prestigious position in the Ottoman Empire, as he was on an equal footing with the Grand Vizier (Prime Minister). He was also the second man in the state after the Sultan in the rank of Grand Vizier.

The Sheikh al-Islam was appointed by the Sultan, who selected them from among the muftis, scholars, and judges. His role was to issue fatwas on religious and political matters, such as ensuring that laws conformed to Sharia law, declaring jihad or peace, or issuing death sentences for opponents of the Sultan. Occasionally, he was the one who issued a ruling to depose the Sultan at the behest of the Grand Vizier or senior military commanders.

The Sheikh of Islam was also a docile tool in the hands of the Caliph, and he approved the fatwas the Caliph needed. If he disobeyed, the Caliph would dismiss him, and if he refused, he would be removed from his position or submit his resignation. Among the most important sheikhs of Islam during the study period (1876-1909 AD) were Sheikh Muhammad Sharif, who was deposed for the second time in 1798 AD, and Sheikh Mustafa Sabri Tokadi, who assumed the sheikhdom four times and was the last sheikh of the Islamic Caliphate. During this period, the Sheikh of Islam played a distinctive role in reforming the state and influencing decision-making on political, religious, and social matters. The Sheikh of Islam represented a factor of strength for the state through the fatwas he issued, especially during difficult times in the history of the Ottoman Empire, as he contributed to mobilizing fighters and strengthening their resolve to fight the enemy. The Sheikh of Islam's fatwas also touched on political and diplomatic matters through his intervention in expressing opinions and making decisions in Ottoman state agreements. In addition, his distinguished position in religious affairs as the highest religious authority in the state. His adoption of important decisions, such as declaring some groups that emerged in the Ottoman Empire as infidels and advocating matters unrelated to Islam, played an important role in confronting these groups.

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