INTRODUCTION
According to the Ottoman chronicles, the first sultan, Osman (1299-1324) while sleeping in the house of a holy man named Edebali had a dream in which a tree emerged from his navel and its shade encompassed the world. Beneath the shade there were mountains and streams flowed from the foot of each mountain. Some people drank from these running waters, others watered gardens, while yet others caused fountains to flow. When Osman awoke, he narrated his dream to the holy man; the latter prophesied that Osman and his descendants will rule over a vast empire the prediction came true. After the conquest of Constantinople, the symbolic centre of eastern Christendom, in 1453 by Sultan Muhammad II (the conqueror), the thrust of the Ottomans was limitless. The conquest of Constantinople (transformed into Ottoman capital of Istanbul) stimulated in Muhammad II a desire to place under his dominion not only the Islamic and Turkic worlds but also a recreated Byzantine Empire and perhaps the entire world of Christendom. At the death of Suleyman, the magnificent, (1566), the Ottomans had created the largest and the most militarily powerful empire in the world at that period. The Empire extended over three continents and stood at the crossroads of the European West and the Asian East, playing a vital and unique role in world history. At its height, it included most of south-eastern Europe to the gates of Vienna, including modern Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia, Romania, Greece and Ukraine; Iraq, Syria, Israel and Egypt; North Africa as far west as Algeria; and most of the Arab Peninsula.
During the sixteenth century, the central Islamic lands which had been devastated by the Mongols recovered their political entity and cultural vitality through the three great empires: the Indian Mughal Empire in the east; the Persian Safavid Empire in the centre; and the Turkish Ottoman Empire in the west (in fact, it was European, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Persian Gulf power). Each of these three empires made lasting cultural, political and social contributions to the areas under their domain. The emergence of these three states shows that Islam had not reached the limits of its expansion during the classical Abbasid caliphate. Marshall Hodgson, in his seminal study, observes that a visitor from Mars who arrived on earth during the sixteenth century would probably have concluded that the world was on the verge of becoming Muslim. He is referring to the very extensive territorial expansion of these empires in the world and to their power and prosperity. Compared to other Muslim empires and states, the Ottoman Empire was strong, long-lived and glorious. The Ottomans administered more than two million square miles of earth and many millions more in adjacent vassal territories. The Empire was a universe unto itself. Within its dominion were Arabs, Byzantines and Greeks, Serbians and Bosnians and Croats, Poles and Ukrainians and Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians and Austrians, Romanians and Persians and people from the Caucasus, Berbers and Azerbaijanis, and Armenians, Georgians and Somalis and Ethiopians. The languages and dialects are too many to count.

The Ottomans had built up a strong navy and a well-equipped army. Besides the Sipahi cavalry, which made up the bulk of the Ottoman army, the
most efficient imperial unit was the professional standing infantry corps known as the Janissaries. They equipped their infantry, the Janissaries, with gunpowder weapons to such an extent that in the sixteenth century they deployed more firearms than any other armed force in the world. Known for their discipline, morale and professionalism, the janissary corps was the most outstanding military unit in Europe. During the reign of Suleyman, the Magnificent, the corps comprised 40,000 troops and had expanded from an infantry force to include specialized artillery units. Their number had swelled to 2,00,000 by mid-seventeenth century. These technical advantages, coupled with a disciplined and well-trained army (janissary) and the broader devsirme cadre of administrative officials and the valiant ghazi spirit that inspired the rulers and their warriors, enabled the Ottomans to defeat the armies of Europe and Middle East in campaign after campaign.

In the administration of the empire, so large and varied, Ottomans were concerned with efficiency rather than uniformity. The principle that they followed was that in governing diverse territories, flexible administrative practices should be adopted that could cater to the needs of different regions and cultures. The ruling class respected the customs and mores of the diverse groups so as to win over their appreciation of the benefits of the Ottoman rule. Under Ottoman rule, partly out of the Islamic principle of toleration and partly out of pragmatic reasons, the major religious groups were allowed to establish their own self-governing communities, called millets, each retaining its own religious laws, traditions and language under the general protection of the
sultan. The millet system was a very significant administrative institution to
deal with a community comprising diverse religious groups (In Istanbul alone
during 16th century, the population of 7 lakhs comprised 58% Muslims, 32%
Christians and 10% Jews). By permitting non-Muslims to retain their
religious laws and allowing their own leaders to deal with matters relating to
education, justice and religious affairs, Ottomans administered such diverse
religious groups quite peacefully. Many Jews who were being persecuted in
Spain migrated and sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire. How warmly the
Ottomans received them is dealt with by several observers who acknowledge
that the Turks will not only be remembered for their ability to create an empire
that lasted for more than 600 years right up to the 20th century, they will also be
remembered “for their diversity and inclusion, merit over privilege, and
fairness.”

The Ottoman Slave Elite (the Devshirme system) was a unique feature
of their administration. In addition to providing soldiers for the Janissaries, it
furnished top-ranking military commanders and civilian administrators to the
state. After rigorous screening, the cream of these young Christian converts
was given intensive training and then given responsible positions in
administration. From mid-fifteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries, most of the
grand viziers and other top officials came through devshirme levy. These elite
were constantly renewed by newly committed warrior-statesmen as the levy
was periodic. They were slaves in name only – slaves of the sultan. Ottomans,
thus, managed to have a very efficient and dynamic bureaucracy and capable
civil service which drew on the administrative traditions of the Byzantines, the Iranians and the Arabs. Along with the military and civil service, the third pillar of the government was the religious establishment. The Ottomans established Sharia’h norms of justice through a hierarchy of qadis with Sheikh al-Islam as the chief religious dignitary of the empire, holding office at the pleasure of the sultan. The Ottomans had, thus, established a vast empire, with a strong military force, an efficient bureaucracy and a fair administration of justice. Sixteenth century was the period of expansion, the seventeenth century a period of preservation, but the eighteenth century and onwards was a period of decline and defeats what went wrong?

It may not be irrelevant to point out here that some western writers have characterized the Ottoman Empire as “oriental despotism” or “The Sick Man of Europe”. These prejudicial remarks were made in the heat of confrontation between western states and the Ottomans at a particular moment in time to suit particular purposes. But these ‘soundbites’ have been so repeatedly made and recycled as if they encompass the whole of Ottoman history. Similarly, we find in European sources observations against Ottomans suggesting as if it is a class of “salacious sultans, evil pashas, hapless harem women, obscurantist clerics … a tale of an alien and exotic universe” Of course, not all sultans were alike; Some of them may not be upto the mark, but sweeping generalizations would be wrong and untrue. How come that despite heavy odds --- serious internal problems, revolts and uprising from non-Muslim Ottomans, whose cause championed by foreign powers, external aggression
and continuous wars with European powers, industrial decline and financial
debacle --- it took two-and-a-half centuries for “the sick man of Europe” to
die. (Actually not died but reincarnated into a successor smaller Republic,
occupying a unique geographic position, lying partly in Asia and partly in
Europe). How then the Empire survived until the First World War, outlasting
the Safavid and Mughul empires by more than 150 years? It shows that the
Ottoman Empire had a strong base, a strong military and bureaucracy.

A researcher meets some practical hurdles while working on Ottoman
history. A good deal of basic source material is in ottoman language. The
change of alphabet by Ataturk in 1928 from the Arabic script to the Roman
alphabet and the expunging of Arabic and Persian words have made the
original material inaccessible to the present day Turkish student. Further, in the
earlier years of Republic, the Ottoman centuries were considered as a closed
book and were looked down with contempt. However, there is a revival and
researchers are digging into the rich material which shows that barring a few
'sot' or 'crazy' rulers, the Ottoman dynasty was invincible and its sultan’s all-
powerful. Fuad Pasha, a grand vizier and foreign minister in Ottoman Empire,
once remarked to a European diplomat: “Our state is the strongest state. For
you are trying to cause its collapse from the outside, and we from the inside,
but still it does not collapse.”

However, the Ottoman Empire, once the terror of Europe, started losing
its superiority, after its Golden Age (1453-1566). A very significant factor was
the fact that the Europe which the Ottomans now faced was far more powerful than that which the great Sultans of the past had defeated.

The confrontation was now with European modernity which had undergone four epoch-making thrusts towards modernization: The scientific and philosophical revolution; the cultural and theological revolution; the political and democratic revolution; and the technological and industrial revolution. Such modernization did not take place in the Muslim world, including the Ottoman Empire. In fact, Ottoman society and government suffered from a number of factors (spelled out in chapter I infra) that led to internal decay and decline. Now, Europe was in a position of strength to challenge the world of Islam, including the Ottomans. With technological advancement, Europe developed more sophisticated weapons. In 1571, when the Ottomans were besieging Cyprus, the Ottoman naval fleet was badly beaten by the combined Christian fleet at Lepanto. But the Ottomans took Cyprus and rebuilt their fleet within one year. The Russian victory in 1681 took back most of the Ukraine which Ottomans had conquered in 1676. In 1683, the Ottoman forces advanced to the gates of Vienna (this was the second assault) but were defeated by the Christians. In a ruinous 16 year war, beginning in 1682, the Holy League (comprising Austria, Poland and Venice and organized under the aegis of the pope) and Russia defeated the Ottomans and by the Treaty of Karlowitz, 1699, the Ottomans lost Podolia to Poland, Hungary and Transylvania to Austria, Morea to Venice. Three Russian wars in the eighteenth century resulted in the victory of Catherine the Great and
culminated in the Treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarja, 1774. Incorporating terms quite humiliating to the Ottomans, Catherine championed the cause of Christian Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire and tried to rouse the Greeks to revolt.

The superiority in arms gave the Western powers an edge over Ottomans and the latter were convinced that if the empire was to survive reforms, mainly military reforms, must be undertaken immediately. Like the Western countries, they have to modernize their weapons, their government and society. So the process of Westernization started with a modest beginning in the early eighteenth century and continued till the end of the empire in the early twentieth century and further accelerated by Ataturk in a bold and sometimes rash manner in the Republic of Turkey. It may also be noted that each reform effort in the history of the Ottoman Empire has provoked opposition and produced reaction from vested interests. The first sultan (Selim III), whose reign is often taken to mark the start of westernization, was accused of failing to respect the religion of Islam and the tradition of the Ottomans and was deposed and eventually murdered. At the other end, Mustafa Kemal, who is honoured as Father-Turk, was opposed, but being a War Hero and savior of Turkey, he overpowered his opponents. But Turkey today stands divided on some of Ataturk’s reforms, e.g., the “headscarves” case decided a few months ago by the Constitutional Court sets the stage for a showdown between the Turkish secular elites (the military, the Constitutional Court, the Republican Peoples’ Party), the self-appointed guardians of ‘Kemalism’, and the pro-Islamic governing Party of Prime Minster Recap Tayyip Erdogan (AKP –
Justice and Development Party). The Court held that the law enacted by
Turkish Parliament in February, 2008, allowing women to attend Universities
wearing headscarves was unconstitutional (New York Times, June 6, 2008).

Chapter 1 deals with the beginning of Ottoman Reformation by first
providing the background - the rise of the Ottoman Empire as a world power,
its Decline and the causes of Decline. The efforts of certain Grand Viziers, the
reforms were introduced by Sultan Salim III (1789-1806) and Sultan Mahmud
II (1808-1839) to remove the internal decay and improve the military capability
is discussed. Salim introduced a series of reforms to reorganize the armed
forces on European model, involving employment of foreign advisers,
imparting training in new methods and tactics and purchasing and deploying
new weapons. A new infantry corps, Nizam-e-Jadid was created which was
trained and equipped according to European standards. Exposure to the West
was attempted through the newly established diplomatic channels. Opposition
to these reforms came from the dereby-ulama-janissary coalition who accused
the sultan of failure to respect the religion of Islam and the tradition of
Ottomans. The sultan was deposed and later murdered.

Although the Ottoman Empire suffered territorial losses during Mahmud
II’s reign his reforms strengthened the military and administrative arms of the
state. As the sultan became committed to European reforms and as European
economic and military pressures increased, the so-called ‘French-knowers’ and
those well-versed in European languages and way of life received favoured
treatment and got higher government jobs. This new elite continued Mahmud’s
reforms even after his death and this heralded a new phase (the Tanzimat reforms) in the modernization of the Ottoman system. Mahmud was one of the most effective rulers who acted decisively. The Janissaries, who were an obstacle to reform, were eliminated, the autonomy of the derebeys was curbed, the bureaucracy reorganized and brought under direct authority of the sultan, and the office of sheikh al-Islam made part of the state bureaucracy.

Chapter 2: The period from 1839 to 1856 is known in Ottoman history as the Tanzimat (Reordering/Re-organisation), programme of reform and marks the most intensive phase of the nineteenth century Ottoman reformist activity. These reforms were inspired by the bureaucrats who were career diplomats, the so-called ‘French-knowers’. Sultan Mahmud II’s younger son, Abdul Majid (1839-61) promulgated what came to be known as the Gulhane Edict of 1839. Rather than a legislative programme, this document was an statement of royal intent promising continued institutional reform, an end to corruption in government, abolition of tax farming, the standardization of military conscription, equal treatment of Muslim and non-Muslim subjects, and a years later in 1856 another royal decree was issued in which the principles of 1839 edict were repeated and the guarantees of equality of all subjects were made more explicit. All subjects of the state regardless of religion will now have equal obligations in terms of military service and equal opportunities for state employment and admission to state schools. The main purpose of these edicts was to win over the loyalty of the Ottoman Christians at a time when nationalist movement was growing amongst them. Another purpose was to
placate European powers whose influence had increased in the empire after the Crimean War. Tanzimat period is also significant for promulgation of new penal and commercial codes on the lines of French civil code and the establishment of secular courts called Nizame. The work on Mejelle was going on for quite sometime and it was completed in 1876. The form was European, but the contents were consistent with Sharia'h. This was the first attempt to codify Muslim civil law in the Islamic world.

The implementation of the Edicts foundered due to traditionalist resistance. It led to the crisis of identity. The rifts between Muslims and Non-Muslims aggravated. The implementation of the reforms entailed huge expenditure, but the state revenues did not proportionately increase, compelling the Empire to make heavy borrowings on the European money markets, burdening the empire with such heavy servicing of these debts that the government was virtually bankrupt. This meant surrendering of Ottoman financial independence to European interests. One consequence of Tanzimat reforms was that Ottoman reforms were no more an internal affair. They now came on international stage and provided an opportunity to European powers to monitor these reforms. These failures necessitated another movement and it came in the form of Young Turk Movement.

Chapters 3 and 4, deal with the Young Ottoman Movement and their Ideological Orientation. In the wake of opposition which erupted as a consequence of Tanzimat reforms, a group of Ottoman nationalist intellectuals emerged in 1865 which was influenced by such Western thinkers as
Montesquieu and Rousseau and the French Revolution. They developed the concept of Ottomanism, aligned with these thinkers. They advocated a constitutional, parliamentary government. The Young Ottomans were bureaucrats resulting from the Tanzimat reforms that were dissatisfied with its bureaucratic absolutism and sought a more democratic solution. They sought to reform the government while maintaining the empire’s Islamic traditions. Also known as the new men from elite families who were journalists, poets, playwrights, and government functionaries. In the early and mid-1860s they began publishing newspapers, poems, and plays that called for an end to the absolute rule of the sultan and the adoption of a constitution. Among their published journals were Tasvir-i Efkar (published first by the poet and journalist Ibrahim Sinasi Efendi, and later by the poet and prose writer Namık Kemal) and Muhbir (published by the journalist Ali Suavi).

In 1865 a small number of Young Ottomans in İstanbul formed an underground society led by Mehmed Bey, the nephew of Mahmud Nedim Paşa, an Ottoman grand vizier. This organization came to spearhead the Young Ottoman movement and within two years included Şinasi, Kemal, Suavi, and Mustafa Fazıl, the brother of Ismail Paşa, the khedive (Turkish viceroy) of Egypt. Many of its members had trained or served in the government’s Translation Bureau and had some firsthand experience of Western Europe. They were opposed to the successive grand viziers, Ali Paşa and Fuad Paşa, who were seeking to reform and strengthen the central government along Western lines. The Young Ottomans accused these men of constructing an
absolutist regime under Sultan Abd al-Aziz, who was also one of their targets, and attempting to destroy Ottoman Turkish culture. They wanted the empire to reform democratically without becoming subservient to any European power or to European culture. These reformists took Japan as their model society, which they considered as having modernized without discarding Japanese culture.

The Young Ottomans were targeted by the government; some were jailed, and many were exiled and continued their agitation from abroad. Popular demands for a constitution grew in the empire. Abd al-Aziz was overthrown in 1876 and the Ottoman constitution was drafted later that year.

The ideological orientation of the Young Ottomans (ch.4) was the result of reaction and deep protest against the traditional as well as the western extremes, as they were the first among the Ottomans to graft the western influence in the Islamic traditional streamline. They induced the western approach, and tried to balance it with the Islamic orthodoxy, as they viewed to liberalise it to Ottoman society. These intellectuals felt that the success of Europe was not merely in its technological advancement, but also in their political organisation. They favoured a constitutional parliamentary system, rule of law. They were all out for reform, but without undermining Islamic traditions and Ottoman patriotism.

The prominent reformer or flag bearer of the modernization were Mehmed Bey, Halil Şerif, Mustafa Fazıl Paşa, Namık Kemal, Ziya Paşa, Ali Suavi, and many others, whose ideologies have been discussed in detail in chapter 4.
Chapter 5 of the thesis discusses (a) the religious assertiveness and authoritarian reforms of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, (b) the emergence of the ‘Young Turks’ and their Revolt of 1908, (c) the First World War and the Emergence of Mustafa Kemal.

In contrast to secularism and Ottomanism, developed during the period of Tanzimat and Young Ottomans, Abdul Hamid, during his 33-years’ long and repressive sultanate/caliphate, adopted Pan-Islamism. The first ten years of his reign saw very significant development in higher education, including the setting up of the University of Istanbul, and transportation and communication. The surrounding hostile atmosphere in which he ruled led him to adopt authoritarian and repressive measures, but he was a reformer and an Ottoman patriot. Soon after ascending the throne, the constitution drafted under the direction of Midhat Pasha was promulgated. This was the first written constitution in Ottoman history. It embodied the substance of the Young Ottoman’s programme. Details are spelled out in chapter 5. However, the acceptance of constitutionalism appeared only a temporary expedient to gain the throne. Parliament was dissolved within a year. The Tanzimat and achievements of Young Ottomans came to an end. The repressive measures of the sultan created opposition and small groups of students and young officers who conspired against the sultan’s regime sprang up. Mustafa Kemal, then a young officer, organised a secret society of his fellow officers during his posting in Damascus and later in Salonoka (his birth-place now in Greece). Kemal’s group later merged with the national group in 1907 to form the
Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), also known as the Young Turks. They wanted the restoration of 1876 constitutions and unification of the various diverse elements into a homogeneous nation through a greater centralization under a parliamentary system. In 1908, the Army units in Macedonia revolted demanding the restoration of the constitution. The Sultan conceded the demand; elections were held and the CUP won almost all the seats. However, the traditionalist forces, at the instance of Sultan, staged a counter-revolt in Istanbul and overthrew the CUP government. The CUP leaders managed to despatch forces from Salonika, which restored the CUP government and deposed Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

The CUP government made some positive contribution initially but soon became a sort of military dictatorship with power concentrated into the hands of Mehmed Talat Pasha, Ahmet Cemal Pasha and Enver, the War minister. Mustafa Kemal could not get along well with Enver and he had dissociated himself from the CUP. In domestic matters the CUP government introduced reforms in the field of education, law, trade and commerce (spelled out in chapter 5) and undertook programmes which may not have produced immediate results, but had long-term effects on the future development of the Turkish Republic.

When World War I broke out, it was at Enver’s advice that the Ottoman Empire entered the war on Germany’s side which had disastrous consequences. Kemal was opposed to this and he proved to be a better strategist. Enver’s winter offensive against the Russians in 1914-15 was ill-planned causing heavy
losses to Ottoman forces. While retreating, the Ottoman army massacred many Armenians, who had given assistance to Russians. Armenians have not forgotten this tragedy and want the world opinion to declare it as a genocide committed by Turks. About 3,25,000 Turks lost their lives in this war and about 2 million civilians died in war-related causes. Enver, Talat and Cemal fled the country when Allies entered the defeated Turkey. Enver was killed while fighting in Turkistan and the other two were assassinated by Armenians. Mustafa Kemal emerges as the most successful commander and hero during and in the aftermath of World War I.

The Ottomans fought well during the first two years of the war although they suffered defeats at the hands of Russia in eastern Asia Minor. Once the Russian counter-attack on the eastern front gained success, the Allies opened two new fronts against the Ottomans: at Istanbul and Mesopotamia. The Ottomans repulsed both. The Gallipoli campaign started in February 1915 with 2,00,000 British and French troops. The Ottoman army under the command of Mustafa Kemal did an excellent job and after causing heavy casualties forced the Allied troops to evacuate. This established the reputation of Kemal as the most successful military commander. But in 1917-1918 when new British offensives began in Iraq and Syria, the Ottoman forces began to decline and by the time of the Armistice of Mudros (October 1918) the Ottomans had lost everything but Anatolia. Consequently the Ottoman Empire disintegrated and it was close to being wiped off from the map of the world when Mustafa Kemal started the resistance movement. The Ottomans were forced to sign the Treaty
of Sèvres (1920), by which they lost not only the Arab provinces but suffered a partition of Anatolia. In opposition to Allied plans, and in particular to the invasion of Smyrna by Greece in May 1919, a nationalist movement had grown up under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and this movement carried on armed resistance until in 1922 the Greeks were defeated and driven out of Anatolia and eastern Thrace. The sultan had been compromised by his acquiescence in Allied policies, and on November 1, 1922 the Ottoman dynasty was abolished and the empire came to an end. A year later there stood in its place the Republic of Turkey.

At the end of the war, the Allies occupied İstanbul and the Ottoman government collapsed. The Treaty of Sèvres, a plan designed by the Allies to dismember the remaining Ottoman territories, was signed on August 10, 1920 though never ratified by the Sultan.

On the western front, when Greece, with the backing of Britain, invaded deep into Anatolia in an attempt to deal a blow to the revolutionaries, the latter foiled the attempt. After Turkish resistance gained control over Anatolia and İstanbul, the Sèvres treaty was superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne which formally ended all hostilities and led to the creation of the modern Turkish republic. As a result, Turkey became the only power of World War I to overturn the terms of its defeat, and negotiate with the Allies as an equal. Atatürk demonstrated his qualities as a charismatic leader. A brief discussion of his early life and military career as given in chapter 5
shows that he was a born soldier and destined to be an outstanding commander.

Chapter 6, the last chapter of the thesis is devoted to a discussion of Atatürk’s Reforms, as President of the Turkish Republic during 1923 to 1938. Mustafa Kemal united the whole army and nation of the Ottoman Empire through his ideas of secularism and nationalism. He stated that all are Turks who are residing inside the boundaries of the Turkey and further that state and religion or state and church are separate. Mustafa Kemal was very much influenced by the thoughts of the young ottomans in the form of nationalism and populism. He also stated that the aim of the reforms which we have already carried out and are continuing to carry out was to transform the Turkish society into a modern society in every aspect. This was the basis of the Kemalist reforms. In April 1931, Mustafa Kemal set forth six principles which he proclaimed as fundamental. They were shortly adopted by the People’s Party and in 1937 were written into the constitution of the Republic. The “six arrows”, as People’s Party symbolism depicts them are Republicanism (the form of government), Nationalism (the nation state), Populism (the sovereignty of the people and also that people were one without class distinction), Statism or Etatism (a controlling role of the state in economy, state capitalism and modern legislation on work and social welfare), Secularism (laicism) and Reformism (or Revolutionism – rapid, continuing but non-violent change). These six principles are discussed in chapter 6.
The principle of ‘secularism’ has remained a controversial and debatable issue. Atatürk wanted “a modern, bourgeois, secular Turkish republic on the model of laicist France and its separation of church and state.” Although such a state had already been introduced by the de facto secularisation of the reforming Ottoman sultans, Atatürk’s was “a bold, indeed rash project”, keeping in view that the majority of the Turks consist of Anatolian rural population with predominantly traditional leaning. It was the urban elite which had been most affected by Atatürk’s revolution. As we look at the current political scenario of Turkey, there exists what Samuel Huntington in his Clash of Civilizations calls “tier.” We have already referred to this above, arising out of the two recent decisions of the Constitutional Court, the highest court of Turkey. The pro-Islamic ruling party having a majority in parliament represented the grass-roots of the Turkish society take a different stand from the elites – the military and the top judiciary. However, we should also keep in mind the circumstances and environment in which Atatürk was operating. His actions “were informed by the perils of the years during which he was in power.” If Atatürk would have been living today, he probably might have thought that as times have changed, the solutions prompted by the ideals and the fears of 1920s are not best suited to the problems and challenges of the twenty-first century.²⁰ Despite all said and done, Mustafa Kemal – the father-Turk- remains a “unique man” not only in Turkey but on the global level.
Notes and References:

1. The beginning of the reign of Osman I is obscure. In one study, Turkey, A Country Study, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Ed. Paul L Pitman III), 1988, p.376, his reign is shown (1299-1326) with a footnote that the year 1299 is approximate. But the year of death 1326 does not appear correct as several researchers put it as 1324. We have followed 1324 in the text.


3. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Marcopaedia (Knowledge in Depth), Chicago, 15th ed. 2007, vol. 28, p. 948


7. Davison, Roderic H., Turkey, Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey, USA (1968), p.54

8. Cleveland, William L., op. cit., supra n. 6 at 43

9. Ibid, p.47

10. Ibid., p. 49

11. Michael Hamilton Morgan, Lost History : The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Scientists, Thinkers, and Artists, National Geographic, Washington D.C (2007), p. 279 Morgan narrates an event which shows their humane concern for Non-Muslims:
It is 1492; from the docks of Istanbul – only 40 years after the fall of Contantinople to the Turks – a small foreign ship is seen coming to the harbour. A delegation of Sultan Bayezid II stands on the docks to welcome the arrival. The delegation is headed by the grand vizier and assorted other representatives of the Sultan’s court. It would seem that the ship is carrying a foreign delegation, representatives of an allied or friendly or important government. Who should the visitors be?

But as the ship comes into view and the passengers on deck come into clearer definition, it is apparent that they are probably not ambassadors. These men on the ship wear skullcaps and dark beards and are dressed in a Biblical way that suggests refugees from time, ancient wise men. Their faces are sunburnt but betraying, a terrible melancholy, a melancholy at the thought of a loss that can never be regained. These arrivals are refugees and they have lost much. They have lost an entire homeland. They have accepted the invitation of the Turkish refuge. These are the Sephardic Jews of al-Andulus, the last Jews of Grenada, Cordoba, Seville, Toledo, and Madris, once part of the heart and mind of the great tri-religious state, the last citizens of dying Sefarad, expelled by the treachery of Isabella; Rather than accept Catholic sultan’s invitation to make a new home. ... Ottoman Turkey is one of the last incarnations of the sweet coexistence of many faiths that had flourished at times throughout the Muslim world.

12. Ibid. p. 279
13. Cleveland, William L., op cit., supra n.6, p. 47
14. Finkel, Caroline, op. cit., supra n. 2, p. xi
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., pp xii-xiii
book by the same author on Christianity, ch. V: The Paradigm of Modernity.

19. Finkel, Caroline, op cit., supra n.2 p. 554

20. Ibid