

FREEMASONRY IN TURKEY

Introduction

The history of Freemasonry in Turkey is interwoven with its turbulent political history and the gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire, which was a world power during the 18th and 19th centuries and the spiritual and legal centre of the Muslim world. See Appendix A.

The decline of the Ottoman Empire was an integral cause of an on-going debate in the Islamic world regarding the role of Muslim law, and, as Muslim Freemasons were directly involved in the political fortunes of the Ottoman Empire, this history is important to an understanding of various Muslim attitudes towards the Craft.

Political Change in the Ottoman Empire – 1299-1923

The Ottoman Empire in the 16th and 17th centuries included Anatolia, the Middle East, parts of North Africa, and much of south-eastern Europe to the Caucasus. Constantinople (Istanbul) became the capital of the Ottoman Empire following its capture from the Byzantine Empire in 1453. For a list of the Caliphs of the Ottoman Empire see appendix B.

During this period, the Ottoman Empire was among the world's most powerful political entities, with Eastern Europe constantly wary of its steady expansion through the Balkans and the southern part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Its navy was also a powerful force in the Mediterranean. On several occasions, the Ottoman army invaded central Europe, laying siege to Vienna in 1529 and again in 1683, and was only finally repulsed by great coalitions of European powers at sea and on land. It was the only non-European power to seriously challenge the rising power of the West between the 15th and 20th centuries, to such an extent that it became an integral part of European balance-of-power politics.

The serious decline of the empire began after the Russian army, under Catherine the Great, defeated Abdul Hamit I and forced him into the treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca in Bulgaria in 1774. Political rivalry had grown between the Ottoman Empire and the growing strength and modernization of Russia under the Peter the Great, who wanted naval and trading access to the Baltic Sea.

The defeat induced the Sultan to understand the need for modernization of the military and began a period when European experts were engaged to advise the Sultan. The birth of Freemasonry in Turkey was a direct consequence.

This defeat and subsequent treaty had another far-reaching consequence as the Sultan had to grant to Russia the right to protect adherents to the Orthodox Christian Church in Moldavia and Walachia. This was later used as an excuse by Russia for military incursions into the Empire and there were additional wars between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in 1787, 1806 and 1828 with several annexations of Ottoman territories, until the Crimean War of 1854. These annexations of lands in which the major population were Muslims, had long-term consequences on the way in which Islam adapted to secular law.

While the Ottoman Empire rivaled Russia in size it suffered from poor administration and was crumbling. Britain assumed a policy of maintaining the integrity of the Turkish Empire as a weak buffer to Russian expansionism in India and the Balkans. The problem for Britain was how to do this and still support Liberal Nationalism. Britain would only support Liberal Nationalism if the new states were both constitutional and really neutral. Britain felt that she had to prevent the dismemberment of Turkey to stop others attempting it.

The Crimean War, in which Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire sought to curb Russian expansion in India and Afghanistan, saw the influx of many more Europeans into Turkey and, conversely, many Turks were beginning to be educated in Europe and were exposed to European forms of Government. In consequence, the technical modernization process, begun 80 years earlier, was now leading towards a social and political renaissance and a will for more democratic forms of Government.

Turkish progress from an autocratic Sultanate form of Government to a democratic Republic took several turns. Sultan Abdul Hamid II agreed to a change to Constitutional Monarchy with a Turkish Parliament. It was short-lived and the Sultan adjourned the Parliament indefinitely in 1878.

Subsequent dissatisfaction with the Sultan (and his suppression of Freemasonry) led to the formation of the 'Young Turks' movement, a Turkish patriotic constitutionalist society, officially known as the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). Its leaders led a revolution and deposed and exiled Abdul Hamid II in 1909¹. They ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1909 until the end of World War I in November 1918, but they made many mistakes finally deciding to side with Germany in World War I.

The Empire's final dissolution was a direct consequence of their defeat in World War I, when the Allied Powers defeated the Central Powers in Europe as well as the Ottoman forces in the Middle East. At the end of the war, the Ottoman government collapsed and the empire was conquered and divided among the victorious powers. Subsequent years saw the declaration of new states from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, and, in 1923 **Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**², a Freemason, formed the modern Republic of Turkey and became its first President.

The Law, Religion, the Caliphate and the Ulema

The traditional Muslim view is that Sharia law, which derives from the Koran, comprehensively provided for all aspects of a person's spiritual and physical well-being. The Caliph was Islam's spiritual leader and the guardian of the sacred grounds in Mecca and Medina. He was the arbiter or judge and, as such, the successor to Muhammad.

Muhammad, during his lifetime, was not only the Muslim political and military leader, but the Muslim prophet and the Muslim judge. All law and spiritual practice proceeded from Muhammad. None of the early Caliphs claimed to receive divine revelations, as did Muhammad and none of them claimed to be a prophet.

Muhammad's revelations were soon codified and written down as the Koran, which was accepted as a supreme authority, limiting what a Caliph could legitimately command. However, the early Caliphs did believe that they had authority to rule in matters not specified in the Koran. They believed that complete obedience to the Caliph in all things was the hallmark of the good Muslim.

An early division in Islamic thought was caused by the succession of the Caliphate. As Muhammad left no clear instructions about who should be leader or Caliph after his death, it became the standard Arabian practice for the leaders of his tribe to gather after a leader's death and choose a leader from amongst themselves³. Candidates were usually from the same lineage as the deceased leader, but capable men who would lead well were preferred over an ineffectual direct heir. This is the position of Sunni Muslims, who believe that Muhammad's lieutenant Abu Bakr was chosen by the community and that this was the proper procedure. Sunnis accept that the caliph should be chosen from Muhammad's tribe, the Quraysh. Shi'a Muslims disagree. They believe that Muhammad had shown that he considered Ali ibn Abi Talib, his cousin and son-in-law, as his chosen successor.

¹ The deputation which informed the Sultan that he was deposed were all Freemasons.

² **Ataturk** had led the resistance to the carving up of Turkey.

³ Fred Donner, in his book "*The Early Islamic Conquests*"(1981)

This view of the Caliphate was eventually modified in Sunni Islam by the rising power of the Islamic scholars, clerics, and religious specialists, called the “Ulema” who insisted on the right to determine what was legal and orthodox⁴. However, gradually, laws relating to matters of state became codified and replaced scholarly legal opinion, although the Ulema retained the sole authority for guidance in ritual, worship and spirituality. Generally, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire was the Caliph and the Ulema became his religious advisors. This evolution caused Muslim communities to become divided into:-

- Secularists, who supported law being based on secular principles;
- Traditionalists, who believed that the law of the State should be based on the Sharia⁵; and
- Reformers, who believed that Muslim law could be updated and lead to acceptable modern practices.

A major reorganization in the relationship between religion and the law took place during 1839-1876 in the reign of Sultan Abdul Mejid and Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Known as the “Tanzimat”, it emerged from the mind of prominent reformers who were European educated bureaucrats. They were Ali Pasha⁶, Fuat Pasha, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, and Midhat Pasha.

They recognized that restoration of old religious and military institutions would no longer match the needs of the world and many of the reforms were attempts to graft successful European practices onto the empire. The reforms included universal conscription, educational reform, and the elimination of corruption. **Mustafa Reshid Pasha**⁷, a Freemason, was the principal author of the legislative remodelling of the Tanzimat.

A further reason for the development of stress within Islam was caused by the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th and 20th centuries, which meant that some of its Muslim territories were ceded to Russia and other Western powers and they then came under secular rule, while still being “allowed to practice their religion”. This created confusion and stress and further reduced the power of the Ulema and adherence to Sharia law.

When, in 1924, President **Atatürk** constitutionally abolished the Caliphate and transferred its powers to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the traditionalists and reformers lost considerable influence and this further hardened their resistance to constitutional or parliamentary rule and also to the influence of Freemasons in Turkey.

Early Freemasonry in Turkey

The Masonic history of Freemasonry in Turkey is summarized shown below and in Appendix A:-

- Lodge of unknown name operated in Istanbul about 1721;
- First known Lodge started in 1748 under Grand Lodge of Scotland;;
- Freemasonry banned throughout Ottoman Empire by Mahmud I, 1748;
- Grand Lodge of England appoints Grand Master for Asiatic Turkey and Armenia in 1764;
- In 1826 Mahmut II closed the Lodges and Freemasons were sent into exile;
- Revived in 1839 with unofficial permission of the Grand Vizier;
- Provincial Grand Lodge of Turkey consecrated under Grand Lodge of England 1862;
- Provincial Grand Lodge of Turkey extinct by 1873;
- Some persecution by Sultan Abdulhamit II;
- Fundamentalists take control of Istanbul in 1909;

⁴ Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, in their book “*God's Caliph*”

⁵ The Indonesian Government recently allowed the rebellious Province of Aceh to be ruled by Sharia Law as part of the settlement with their rebels and it has been put into effect.

⁶ The Turkish Orders of Merit were Pasha (Knight), Bey (three levels) and Effendi (Gentleman).

⁷ **Mustafa Reshid Pasha** was six times Grand Vizier (Prime Minister).

- Reservist army, many of whom were Freemasons, regain Istanbul;
- Freemasonry hibernates in 1935 under Nazi German propaganda;
- Restoration of Freemasonry in 1948;
- Military coup in 1960 delays international Masonic recognition;
- International recognition in 1963; and
- Schism with Scottish Rite in 1965.

It is reported that the first lodge known to be founded on the Ottoman soil is the İskenderun Lodge in Aleppo chartered by the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1748. There were twenty-eight Turks amongst these first Masons. They included **Çelebizade Sait Çelebi**, **İbrahim Müteferrika**⁸ and **Humbaracı Ahmet**⁹ **Paşha**. The archives also tell us that important politicians, such as **Koca Mustafa Reşhid Paşha**, were affiliated with these lodges.

The Papal Ban of 1738 and the ban on Freemasonry in 1748

A Masonic historian reports that “10 years after the excommunication of freemasonry by Clement XII, in 1748 Mahmud I, under the pressure of his Christian subjects and also the Muslim clergy, which thought that the Pope would not charge a fraternity with atheism in vein, outlawed freemasonry in the Ottoman Empire. An English lodge was sacked by the police, but as the British ambassador gave notice in due time, the list of members had been rescued.”¹⁰

Grand Lodge of England appoints Grand Master for Asiatic Turkey and Armenia in 1764;

According to **Gould**, the British Consul in Aleppo, **Alexander Drumond** had been appointed as District Grand Master for the Orient by the Grand Lodge of England. Later in 1764, **Dr. Dionysios Menasse** had been appointed District Grand Master for Asiatic Turkey and Armenia.

Mahmut II closed the Lodges in 1826

Sultan Mahmut II reigned from 1808 and attempted to westernize the declining Ottoman Empire, carrying out a series of far-reaching reforms in the civil service and army.

His reforms were opposed by the powerful but rebellious Janissaries, who were an elite corps in the service of the Ottoman Empire and were composed of war captives and Christian youths pressed into service. As a result of their opposition, Sultan II destroyed the Janissaries in 1826.

Moreover, the issue of Greek independence created conflict with Britain, France, and Russia and the Sultan was forced to recognize Greek independence in 1830. These events partially led to the ban on Freemasonry in 1826 because of its British and French connections.

Revived in 1839 with unofficial permission of the Grand Vizier;

In 1839 on the day of Mahmud's death, news came of the ignominious surrender of the Turkish fleet to the Egyptians.

His son Abd-ul-Mejid succeeded him and granted Egypt independence from the Ottoman Empire. Freemasonry began to revive again partly because the Empire now needed the support of Britain and France.

⁸ **Ibrahim Muteferrika** and **Yirmisekiz Celebizade Sait Effendi** established the first Turkish printing house in 1727.

⁹ **Humbaracı Ahmet Pasha**, (Alexander Comte de Bonneval), of French origin who converted to Islam and was appointed to command the first Regiment founded on a European model.

¹⁰ “The History of Freemasonry in Turkey” Website of the Grand Lodge of Turkey



Sultan Mahmud I

Banned the Craft



Sultan Mahmud II

Banned the Craft



Sultan Murat V

Member of the Craft

Provincial Grand Lodge of Turkey consecrated under Grand Lodge of England 1862;

The Lodges re-established in Istanbul included Proodos, whose members included Sultan **Murat V**, Prince **Nurettin Effendi**, Prince **Selahattin Effendi**¹¹, Sheikh-ul-Islam **Musa Kazım Effendi** and Sheikh-ul-Islam **Mahmut Esad Effendi**. It included the Grand Viziers **Keçecizade Fuat Paşa**, **Mithat Paşa**, **Ahmet Vefik Paşa**, **Tunuslu Hayrettin Paşa**, **İbrahim Hakkı Paşa** and **Sadullah Paşa**.

The ambassador to Berlin, **Şinasi**, **Ziya Paşa** and **Namık Kemal** were members of the Proodos Lodge. This lodge, established in Istanbul, was a shelter to the enlightened men of the era. Members of these lodges greatly influenced the establishment of the “Constitutional Monarchy” both speculatively and practically.

Some persecution by Sultan Abdulhamit II

Abd-ul-Mejid had five sons and was succeeded by Abdulaziz. After the suicide of Sultan Abdulaziz, his brother **Murat V** acceded to the throne, but due to a mental illness, he was deposed three months later and another brother Abdul-Hamit II succeeded to the Sultanate. **Midhat Pasha**, Grand Vizier, assisted him to the throne insisting that he should start a constitutional process. The new Sultan agreed but soon went back on his promise and adjourned the new parliament indefinitely in 1878. **Midhat Pasha** was sent into exile and eventually poisoned.

Abdulhamit traveled to England and he knew very well what Freemasonry was about as three of his brothers were Freemasons and the princes **Kemalettin** and **Nurettin** were in line for the throne. Abdulhamit did not want to alienate the Freemasons and he gave large donations to the charity efforts of English Lodges in Istanbul, while, at the same time, persecuting the Lodge members of the Italian, French and Spanish lodges in Thessalonica.

The most important of these lodges were Macedonia Risorta and Veritas, respectively under Italian and French jurisdictions. Among the members of these two lodges were eminent political and military figures such as: **Kâzım Özalp Paşa**, **Mehmet Talat Paşa**, **Mithat Şükrü Bleda**, **Mehmet Cavit Bey**, **Manyasizade Rafik Bey**, **Kâzım Nami Duru**, Naval officer **Cemal Paşa**, **Faik Süleyman Paşa**, **İsmail Canbulat**, **Hoca Fehmi Effendi**, **Osman Adil Bey**, **Mehmet Servet Bey**, **Fazlı Necip Bey** and **Emanuel Karasu Effendi**.

¹¹ Three sons of Sultan AbdulMejid

Fundamentalists take control of Istanbul in 1909 but the Reservist army regains Istanbul;

A great number of high ranking military officers were Freemasons and also members of the Union and Progress Party (“Young Turks”). The action of the Union and Progress Party, and its threat to invade Istanbul with the armies stationed in the Thrace, obliged Abdulhamit to promulgate once more the Constitutional Monarchy in 1908.

The reaction was not long to come. In 1909 the fundamentalists took control of Istanbul.

The freemasons in the Thrace, mainly from Thessalonica, organized an army of reservists of which almost all officers were Freemasons. This army took back Istanbul from the fundamentalists, and Abdulhamit II was dethroned by a committee of five deputies, all of them Freemasons.

These events further hardened the opposition between the fundamentalists and the Freemasons.

Freemasonry and the Constitutional Monarchy

After the dethronement of Abdulhamit and in the first years of the Republic, **Kâzım Özalp Paşa** was the speaker of the Republican Parliament and **Mehmet Talat Paşa**, who was the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Turkey established in 1909, was the Grand Vizier during the war years. **Cavit Bey**¹² was the Minister of Finance in the same period.

The foundation of the political regimes of the First and Second Constitutional Monarchies and societies such as “The Young Ottomans”, “The Young Turks” and “Committee of Union and Progress” came into being through the efforts of Freemasons.

The Ottoman Grand Orient was established in 1909 with **Mehmet Talat Sait Paşa** as the first Grand Master and with **Dr Rıza Tevfik Bölükbaşı**¹³ and **Osman Talat Bey** as members of the Board of Grand Officers. Other members of prominence included **Prince Aziz Hasan Paşa**, commander of the Selimiye cavalry regiment, **Cavit Bey**, Minister of Finance, **Mithat Şükrü Bleda**, **Fuat Hulusi Demirelli**, **Faik Süleyman Paşa**, Grand Master in 1915, **Galip Bey**, The Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie Forces and **Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın** famous journalist and deputy in the Parliament were all members of the Craft. At that time there were 23 lodges in Turkey.

In 1914 the outbreak of World War I created a dilemma for the new political leaders, **Talat Pasha** and **Cavit Bey** in particular, and they sided with Germany and the Central Powers, believing that they were the stronger.

This decision caused the eventual downfall of the “Young Turks” Government.

The post-war period in Turkey saw hardship beyond belief and set up the conditions for the eventual formation of a modern Turkish Republic.

¹² **Mehmet Talat Pasha** resigned as Grand Vizier just prior to the armistice and he, together with **Cavit Bey**, Finance Minister, fled to Germany where Talat was murdered for his alleged part in the Armenian “Massacre”.

¹³ **Dr Rıza Tewfik** was one of the three Turkish plenipotentiaries negotiating the Treaty of Sevres, which spelled out the terms of the armistice and sealed the end of World War I with Turkey.



Sultan Abdulhamit II



Kemal Attaturk



Mehmet Talat Pasha

The Turkish Republic

The Turkish Republican Government was formed from the Ankara-based revolutionary group, led by **Attaturk**. A new constitution was approved in 1924 and, for the next 10 years, there was a steady process of secular westernization, guided by **Attaturk**. The majority of Atatürk's staff who assisted him in the foundation of the Turkish Republic were Freemasons.

Among the freemasons who served the country under the guidance of Atatürk were: **Fethi Okyar, Rauf Orbay, Rafet Bele Paşa, Ali İhsan Sabis Paşa, Kâzım Özalp Paşa**, -Speaker of the Turkish Parliament-, **Abdülhalik Renda**, - Speaker of the Turkish Parliament-, **Hasan Saka**, - Prime Minister-, **Şükrü Kaya and Mehmet Cemil**, - both Ministers of Internal Affairs-, **Bekir Sami Kunduh and Tevfik Rüştü Aras**, - both Secretaries of State -, **Rıza Nur, Adnan Adıvar, Refik Saydam and Behçet Uz**, - all four Ministers of Health - , **Reşit Galip and Hasan Ali Yücel** , both Ministers of Education, **Sırrı Bellioğlu**, - Minister of Economy-, **Cevat Abbas, Atıf Bey, Edip Servet Tör, Yunus Nadi, Reşit Saffet Atabinen, Memduh Şefket Esendal, Hilmi Uran, Tevfik Fikret Silay, Ahmet Ağaoğlu**, - all deputies -, **Nevzat Tandoğan and Süleyman Asaf İlbay** successive governors of Ankara -, **Muhittin Üstündağ and Lütfü Kırdar**, - Governors of Istanbul-, **Mustafa Reşat Mimaroglu**, - Head of the Council of State -, **Galip Paşa**, - The Chief of staff of the Gendarmerie-, **Necip Ali Küçükca**, - Supreme Justice-, **Mehmet Ali Paşa**, - Admiral-.

In 1923 by the foundation of the Turkish Republic Freemasonry began to become more self-conscious and nationalized itself in parallel with the principles of **Attaturk**. The name of the Grand Lodge was then officially changed to "Grand Lodge of Turkey".

Zionism

The post-war period saw the rise of Jewish migration into what is now Israel and Palestine and the rise of Zionism. Although, no doubt, many Freemasons were Jews, there were others with sympathy to the Zionist movement¹⁴. Turkey was admitted to the League of Nations in July 1932. During World War II, Turkey signed a peace treaty with Germany and officially remained neutral until near the end of war. In 1945 Turkey joined the UN, and in February 1945 it declared war on Germany and Japan. Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952.

¹⁴ The Detroit News Tribune reported a speech of **Dr Riza Tewfik** in which he stated that he was a Zionist, although not a Jew.

Freemasonry hibernates in 1935 under Nazi German propaganda;

The mid-30s saw Turkey being a target for Nazi German propaganda and organizations such as Women's Support Association, Turkish Teachers Association, and Boys Scouts were dissolved by law. In such a political and social climate where social organizations were being terminated or placed under the control of the ruling Party **Atatürk** asked **Şükrü Kaya**, the Minister of Internal Affairs and also a Freemason, to convince the Grand Lodge management to cease their activities by themselves in order not to be placed under any pressure by legislation.

As a result, in 1935 the Anadolu Press Agency broadcast the news as: "Reported by relevant authorities, The Masonic organization of Turkey, after taking into consideration the daily progress of the republic and having realized the democratic and secular principles of the same has decided to cease its activities, on its own free will."

Restoration of Freemasonry in 1948;

In 1946 new laws and regulations concerning organizations such as Freemasonry went into effect. In 1955 lodges in Ankara founded their own Grand Lodge and invited the lodges in Istanbul and Izmir to join this Grand Lodge. At the end of the same year the Grand Lodge of Turkey was established in Ankara and thus Turkish Freemasons showed their intention to become a member of the global mainstream Masonry. As of that date the Grand Lodge of Turkey became the sole Masonic authority on the Turkish soil.

However, with respect to the mainstream Masonry the problem was not yet solved. The lodges that constituted the Grand Lodge of Turkey were not duly established since they were irregularly founded by the Supreme Council of Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Therefore, Freemasons who were initiated in such "irregular Lodges" were not recognized as "regular Freemasons". Even though the Grand Lodge of Turkey had been recognized by some jurisdictions, Grand Lodges known as regular and led by the United Grand Lodge of England and Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland did not recognize it due to its irregular establishment.

All necessary preparations were made to re-establish relationship with these Grand Lodges. The Grand Lodge of Turkey first began her efforts by looking for avenues to get the recognitions by Holland, U.S.A., Germany, and Switzerland.

International recognition in 1963

A Turkish historian reports "The Grand Lodge of Scotland, in order to enable all the remaining regular Grand Lodges to recognize the Grand lodge of Turkey, organized a Re-consecration Ceremony in 1965. In 1970, first the United Grand Lodge of England and a month later the Grand Lodge of Ireland recognized the Grand Lodge of Turkey and thus she became a fully fledged member of the mainstream Masonry.

Since that date freemasonry in Turkey has developed rapidly. In 1987 Lodge Nur No 72 in Israel, in 1990 Lodge Turkey No 995 in Frankfurt, in 2000, Lodge Nur 2000 in Washington D.C. and in 2000 Lodge Işık in Bucharest were consecrated as Turkish speaking Lodges.

Today the sole representative of the Regular Turkish Freemasonry is the Grand Lodge of Turkey. With three Masonic halls in Istanbul, two in Izmir, one in Ankara, Bursa, Adana, Antalya, Bodrum, Marmaris, Fethiye, Çeşme and Eskişehir, a total of 198 lodges and 14,000 brothers, the Grand Lodge of Turkey proudly continues to serve humanity."

Freemasonry and Islam

In general, Freemasonry is today outlawed in Arab countries except Lebanon and Morocco¹⁵. It flourishes in Turkey and Malaysia (although Muslims have withdrawn), and there are a few Lodges in Arabia and a Lodge in Jordan¹⁶, all predominately Muslim countries, but it has been banned in Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, South Yemen (Aden), Palestine and Saudi Arabia – all countries in which it once existed.

Nevertheless, we should clearly understand that a Muslim Freemason could live his life fully by the Sharia without offending Freemasonry in any way and vice versa. We have Muslim members in my Lodge. The Sharia exists side-by-side with sectoral law in countries like Malaysia, where Freemasonry is active.

The differences that have arisen between Islam and Freemasonry have their origins in the historical decline of the power of the office of Sultan and Caliph (and the Ulema) and their right to rule absolutely all aspects of men's lives through the Sharia. These differences arose primarily in the Ottoman Empire, which once was the leader of Islam and custodian of the Holy cities. This paper shows that many who took a leading role in this decline were Freemasons. Freemasons were amongst the revolutionaries and amongst their leaders. However, they did not and could not do this in the name of Freemasonry. Their actions were political and, as such, could not be condoned as Masonic.

Conclusions

Freemasonry has often been branded with the revolutionary movements in which many of its members took part. But "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" are not Masonic slogans. Freemasonry has no teachings about liberty and does not allow persons who are not "free" to be members – in other words it tacitly accepts that some may not be free. Freemasonry teaches equality but expects obedience from its members to the law and the ruler(s) of the land in which we live. Freemasonry seeks fraternity among its members as an expression of brotherly love and charity but not as a political slogan.

In the eyes of conservative or radical Muslims, Freemasonry is coupled with Zionism. Freemasonry exists and is active in Israel but is not financially or politically supported by other Grand Lodges, even though they may have Jewish members.

Today some traditional Muslim leaders consider that the rituals of Freemasonry, particularly the third degree, are a mockery of their faith. Since the early Papal Bull of Clement III and the consequent banning of Freemasonry in the Ottoman Empire, "Freemasonry" has been synonymous with the term "devil" amongst Muslim traditionalists.

In today's world there is an urgent need for understanding of the problems facing the Muslim world in trying to be true to the faith but simultaneously trying to live in a world with rapidly changing technology and morality. A devout Muslim does not really believe in separation between religion and government, though he must accept this separation in many countries, even those where Islam is the dominant religion. The Western tradition is to "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and to God that which is God's" but the Muslim tradition finds this distinction difficult. Many parliamentary laws, particularly those of a social nature, are seen as a direct interference with religion.

The politics of radical religious leaders, both Muslim and Christian, create real stress for faithful people. In today's world it is important that we understand that this has nothing to do with fundamentalism or even terrorism in its own right, although the frustration it generates may lead people in this direction. We must also understand that a devout Muslim has been educated with a long memory of history, which includes the crusades. We, as Freemasons, can be healers and I believe we should strive to be better understood by formal Islam so that we can help in this way.

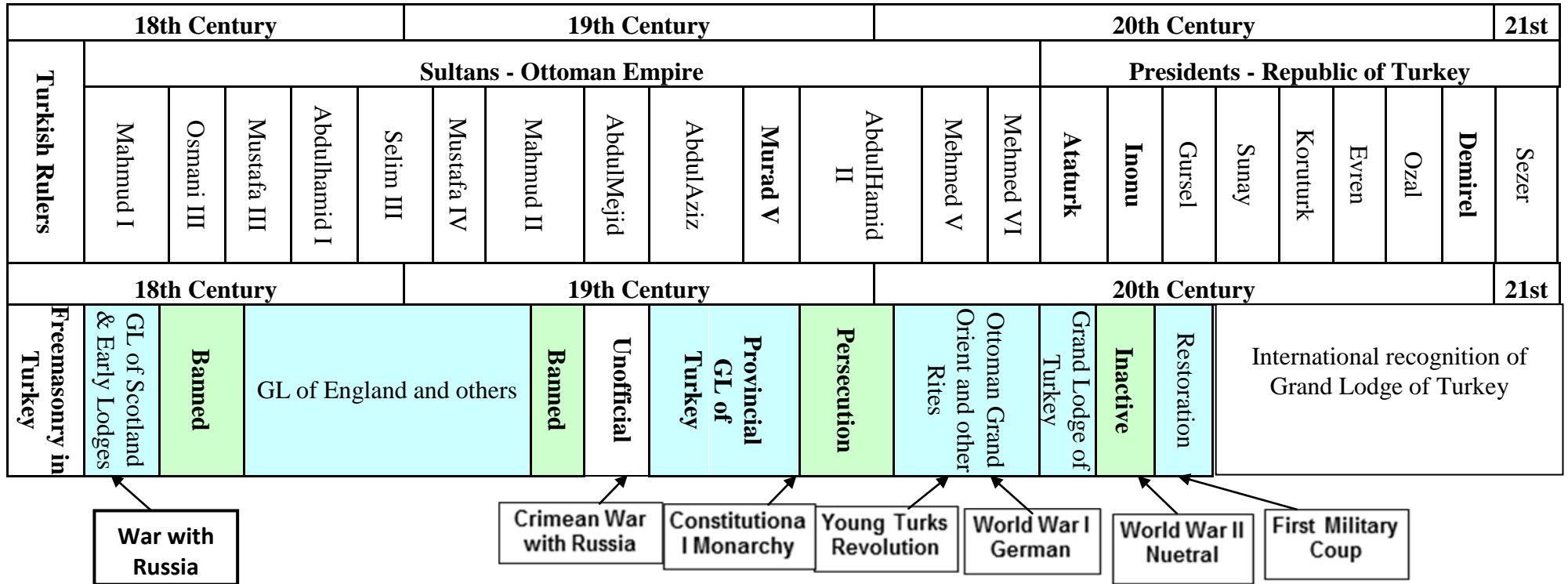
¹⁵ In 1973 the High Court of Casablanca ruled that Freemasonry was compatible with Islam and the Grand Lodge of Morocco was consecrated in 1999.

¹⁶ Paul Rich Ph D, "*Masonry and the Middle East*", Hoover Institute, Stanford University

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Appendix A - The Modern History of Turkey



Appendix B – The Heads (Sultan) of the Ottoman Empire

<u>Osman I</u> (1281–1326) (<i>bey</i>)	<u>Ibrahim I</u> (1640–1648)
<u>Orhan I</u> (1326–1359; <i>bey</i>)	<u>Mehmed IV</u> (1648–1687)
<u>Murad I</u> (1359–1389; Sultan from 1383)	<u>Suleiman II</u> (1687–1691)
<u>Bayezid I</u> (1389–1402)	<u>Ahmed II</u> (1691–1695)
<i>Interregnum</i> (1402–1413)	<u>Mustafa II</u> (1695–1703)
<u>Mehmed I</u> (1413–1421)	<u>Ahmed III</u> (1703–1730)
<u>Murad II</u> (1421–1444) (1445–1451)	<u>Mahmud I</u> (1730–1754)
<u>Mehmed II</u> (the Conqueror) (1444–1445, 1451–1481)	<u>Osmani III</u> (1754–1757)
<u>Bayezid II</u> (1481–1512)	<u>Mustafa III</u> (1757–1774)
<u>Selim I</u> (1512–1520; Caliph from 1517)	<u>Abd-ul-Hamid I</u> (1774–1789)
<u>Suleiman I</u> (the Magnificent) (1520–1566)	<u>Selim III</u> (1789–1807)
<u>Selim II</u> (1566–1574)	<u>Mustafa IV</u> (1807–1808)
<u>Murad III</u> (1574–1595)	<u>Mahmud II</u> (1808–1839)
<u>Mehmed III</u> (1595–1603)	<u>Abd-ul-Mejid</u> (1839–1861)
<u>Ahmed I</u> (1603–1617)	<u>Abd-ul-Aziz</u> (1861–1876)
<u>Mustafa I</u> (1617–1618)	<u>Murad V</u> (1876)
<u>Osman II</u> (1618–1622)	<u>Abd-ul-Hamid II</u> (1876–1909)
<u>Mustafa I</u> (1622–1623)	<u>Mehmed V</u> (Reşad) (1909–1918)
<u>Murad IV</u> (1623–1640)	<u>Mehmed VI</u> (Vahideddin) (1918–1922)

Post-imperial Heads of the House

<u>Abdul Mejid II</u> (1926-1944)
<u>Ahmed IV Nihad</u> (1944-1954)
<u>Osman IV Fu'ad</u> (1954-1973)
<u>Mehmed Abd-ul-Aziz II</u> (1973-1977)
<u>Ali Vâsib</u> (1977-1983)
<u>Mehmed VII Orhan</u> (1983-1994)
<u>Ertuğrul Osman V</u> (1994-)