

Thousands of young Moslem reformers took their cue from this feature of Japanese experience; viz., their achievement of scientific, industrial, and social progress without a national change of religion. Henceforth, without hesitation, they could urge any degree of reform—and reform according to Western standards—without the implication of disloyalty to Islam. This was one phase of the education of the nation previous to the proclamation of the Constitution.

Another equally important phase of the social education of the Ottoman world has resulted from the introduction, near the beginning of the Hamidian régime, of the Kanuni Humayun, or the system of law and the machinery of courts and legal administration based on the Code Napoleon. This new code of law had been prepared, about 1876, by the Midhat Pasha school of reformers, in conjunction with the Constitution and the representative system of government which they had devised. The Constitution and the Parliament Abd ul Hamid soon suspended by an arbitrary exercise of autocratic will. By an equally arbitrary decision, he set in operation the principles and the machinery of the Kanun or Code Napoleon. Thus there had been established by imperial fiat a system of law other than the Sheriat or the sacred law of Islam. Both systems of law were henceforth to serve as parallel codes ostensibly on a par with each other, each to serve certain functions of individual and national life. In general men were left free to bring their lawsuits before the courts of either system as they preferred. Religious questions growing out of the life of Mohammedan citizens, such as inheritance, marriage, or divorce, were automatically referred to the Sheriat courts for decision. Cases not directly religious, or those in which other than Moslem interests were involved, all came before the Kanun system of courts, and