

## Introduction

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We know by now something of what the British thought about the Arabs, and of what Arabs thought about the British and Turks, but what the Turks, and in particular the Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress, thought about the Arabs is still largely an unanswered question.<sup>1</sup>

Fifteen years after they were written, Albert Hourani's words remain valid. This study addresses the very void Hourani mentioned. Its purpose is to illuminate not so much what the Turks *thought* about the Arabs (for the preoccupation with mutual perceptions only produces sterile and polemical analyses),<sup>2</sup> but what the policies of Ottoman governments were in the Arab-populated parts of the empire, as well as how these policies were refashioned at the beginning of the twentieth century, specifically during the last decade of the Ottoman state. An examination of Ottoman government and the Arabs also has to address the genesis and development of Turkish and Arab nationalism, because nationalist discourse is salient in the established scholarship on the period in general and the topic of the Arab policy of the "Young Turk" governments in particular.

The reinstatement of the Ottoman constitution (first promulgated in 1876 but suspended within two years by Sultan Abdülhamid II) on 23 July 1908 marks the beginning of the second constitutional period of the empire. Though only a brief episode when viewed against the vast span of Ottoman history, the second constitutional period (1908–18)<sup>3</sup> was marked by extraordinary social and political transformations. The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 introduced parliamentary rule and lib-

erties that recast social, political, and cultural life in the wake of the long autocratic reign of Abdülhamid. The revolution, however, failed to arrest the rapid territorial dissolution of the empire. In Europe, the events of July 1908 prompted Bulgaria's declaration of independence, Crete's decision to unite with Greece, and the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Within four years the Ottoman government ceded Libya and the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea to Italy and virtually all remaining European territories except İstanbul's Rumelian hinterland to the Balkan states. It confronted insurgencies in Syria, Albania, and Arabia (i.e., the Arabian Peninsula). The second constitutional period also encompasses World War I, the major watershed in the history of the modern Middle East.

One may argue that less is known about the second constitutional period than the earlier periods of Ottoman history. In spite of its significance and the presumable ease of treating a fairly recent period, this era of constitutional monarchy has escaped systematic examination and consequently has suffered from misrepresentation. There are a number of reasons for the historians' neglect of the period.

First, there is the elusiveness of Ottoman official documents for these years. This is partly explained by the disarray of documentary sources due to disruptions caused by revolutionary change, the administrative inexperience of the newly forged governing elite, the succession of unstable governments after the revolution, and the continual state of war in which the Ottomans found themselves from 1911 on. Important depositories of official documents were lost, while some remained in the hands of individuals.<sup>4</sup> Government documents pertaining to the period after 1914 remained classified until the nineties and are gradually being opened to research. Occasional memoirs produced by the period's statesmen make scant use of documents and treat the events of the period haphazardly and defensively.

A further problem in scholarship on the second constitutional period can be described as a case of losing sight of the forest for the trees. Some of the most important questions of the subsequent history of the Middle East originated in this period as a result of conditions created by the war and, to a large degree, of the involvement of European powers in Middle Eastern affairs in order to promote their wartime aims. This Western involvement, in particular Britain's deceptive and conflicting pledges to the Arabs and Zionists, has had momentous consequences for later Middle Eastern history. An attempt to better understand contemporary Middle Eastern political and social events has generated dis-

proportionate interest in the study of Britain's relations with its wartime allies and local agents and has emphasized the wellsprings of selected problems having contemporary relevance. The broader Ottoman context of the issues has failed to attract scholarly attention.

The general neglect of the period also has to do with the ideological attitude that there is little value in studying an era that was a relatively brief interlude before the inevitable downfall of a once illustrious empire led by one of the longest-ruling dynasties in history. In fact, the Ottoman Empire's collapse was hardly apparent until the late stages of World War I. The Ottoman state—"Sick Man" though it may have been—actually had more resilience in its last decade than historians generally credit it with.

A generalization that has survived without critical scrutiny against the failure to examine this era in its own right pertains to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the conspiratorial constitutionalist society that engineered the 1908 Revolution. The prevalent view of the CUP is as a military oligarchy (the favorite term is "triumvirate") that governed throughout the second constitutional period with a commitment to promote, overtly or covertly, Turkish nationalism. The CUP, however, neither adhered to a coherent agenda nor always succeeded in exerting its will in imperial politics during this period. Initially, its inexperience led to excessive dependence on the statesmen of the old regime. Subsequently, it was challenged vigorously by its decentralist opponents and even briefly lost power to them. When the Committee finally attained power in January 1913, it exercised a collective leadership that was not decisively dominated by military officers.

Even more problematic and pervasive in existing studies of the second constitutional period is a prejudice that has distorted the social and political picture of that era: the nationalist bias shared by Western observers contemporary with the period as well as by later Middle Eastern historians.

Contemporary European eyewitnesses viewed the prewar Middle East with their own nationalist perspective. They portrayed nationalism as a major, if not *the* major, political force in this late phase of the Ottoman Empire, even though for most Muslims the notion of belonging to a nation (much less to a nation-state) had no meaning at the time. Often Western European observers looked at the Balkan Christian communities that were experiencing nationalist movements and drew parallels between them and the Muslim communities. Their perceptions were occasionally shaped not only by uninformed extrapolations but

also by an element of wishful thinking, especially in the appraisal of domestic unrest in the empire.

Central Europeans maintained a more discerning perspective on the nationalities question. We find that German and Austrian observers did not as a rule view Middle Eastern events through the prism of nationalism. They offered different insights compared to their Western European counterparts, perhaps not only because nationalist ferment in the Ottoman Empire did not usually serve German or Austro-Hungarian political interests but also because they were more familiar with the realities of a multiethnic empire.

The use of the term “Young Turk” has reinforced nationalist-minded interpretations of the period under study. It is an expression coined by Europeans to refer to the constitutionalist opposition to Abdülhamid. In addition, the second constitutional period is alternatively referred to as the Young Turk period. The designation is an unfortunate misnomer, because it implies that the group of liberal constitutionalists called Young Turks consisted exclusively of Turks, or even of Turkish nationalists. The Young Turks, in fact, included in their ranks many Arabs, Albanians, Jews, and in the early stages of the movement, Armenians and Greeks. Even Karl Deutsch, a keen observer of nationalism, described the 1908 Revolution as a Turkish nationalist affair and also linked it to the Kemalist Revolution, noting that “Turkey had a revolution that overthrew Sultan Abdülhamid and put the Young Turk nationalists in power by 1908, and a second installment of this Revolution followed in 1918 when Kemal Pasha came to power.”<sup>5</sup> It would be wrong to view the 1908 Revolution as a nationalist revolution, though the argument can be made that it set afoot political and social changes, which, after many transformations, facilitated a revolution of the Kemalist kind. The Young Turks wanted to preserve the empire and its main institutional underpinning, the monarchy. More accurate is Cyril E. Black and Carl Brown’s recent appraisal that

although the Young Turks can now be seen as the penultimate link in the historical chain leading to the establishment of the Turkish Republic it would be anachronistic to argue that the Young Turk leadership after 1909 was prepared to do what Atatürk did 14 years later—abolish the empire and establish a Turkish nation-state.<sup>6</sup>

Western accounts and archival sources also informed indigenous Middle Eastern scholarship after World War I<sup>7</sup> and reinforced the nationalistic ideological concerns of official histories in the successor states

of the Ottoman Empire. Often historians made selective and distorted use of the Ottoman past. The Young Turk period did not cater well to the needs of postwar projects of imagining and constructing political communities. Turkish Republican historians sought the beginnings of Turkish nationalism in the pre-Ottoman period, in the steppes of Central Asia, and among the Hittites of Anatolia. While they appropriated the glorious periods of the Ottoman Empire, they viewed the Young Turk era as the sorrowful period when Balkan and Middle Eastern peoples treacherously rebelled against the Turks, who for centuries had shed their blood to defend them from the very foreign enemies with whom these peoples colluded. Arab historians, on the other hand, dwelled on what they saw as the four-centuries-long oppression<sup>8</sup> of the Arabs (and, to be sure, of the Lebanese, Syrians, Iraqis, Palestinians, etc.) under tyrannical Turkish rulers, who exploited their ancestors and usurped Islam. The Young Turks were portrayed in this conception of Arab history as pan-Turkist dictators desirous of eliminating the Arab national identity and “Turkifying” all under their rule. Thus, twentieth-century Middle Eastern historians have tended to see the beginnings of particular nationalistic movements (be they Arab or Turkish) in a more distant past than may historically be justified. They have viewed the second constitutional period in retrospect as one in which conflict and separation had already occurred, and Arab and Turkish nationalism had already defined political discourse. While the mutual misperceptions ingrained by nationalist writings continue to this day, in the last three decades a succession of historians have refined the interpretation of the development of Arab nationalism.

In this regard, attempts at a systematic reexamination of early Arab nationalism have far outweighed similar efforts to understand the origins and maturation of Turkish nationalism. The interest in Arab nationalism has been inspired by the turbulent course nationalism has taken in the Arab Middle East since World War I. Large parts of the Arab world remained under imperialist rule, which gave new and diverse turns to Arab nationalist thought and activity. Confronting Israel has posed new questions about the meaning and scope of Arab nationalism in the past and the present. If dynastic and other hegemonic claims on the leadership of the “Arab nationalist movement” have recently waned, tensions between regionalism and pan-Arabism, on the one hand, and secular nationalism and Islamic formulations, on the other, are still ripe and stimulate interest in the origins and growth of Arab nationalism. It is probable that the recent challenges to Turkish Republican nationalism

from the Kurdish autonomist and Islamist movements will awaken interest in the essence and early manifestations of Turkish nationalism. Turning to the past with contemporary problems, though, poses the peril of “plundering the past.”<sup>9</sup>

No reappraisal of Arab nationalism can start without reference to George Antonius’s seminal work, *The Arab Awakening*.<sup>10</sup> For more than two decades after it was published in 1938, this account of an awakening, or *nahda*, constituted the definitive history of the Arab nationalist movement. Antonius placed the beginnings of Arab nationalism in the first half of the nineteenth century. He saw in the activities of a Beirut literary and scientific society composed of liberal Arabs exposed to missionary influences, mostly Christians but also including Muslims, the first expression of national consciousness developing in response to long and oppressive Turkish domination. Relying on the testimony of postempire nationalists, he traced the progressive development of the Arab national idea from the mid-nineteenth century to World War I, culminating in the Arab Revolt of 1916, and beyond.

Our understanding of early Arab nationalism today is more accurate than the picture drawn by Antonius, thanks to the interest that a new generation of scholars rekindled during the sixties in the origins and content of Arab nationalism through research in works of Arab intellectuals, prosopography, and diplomatic sources. More recently, in the last two decades, scholars who have come to be known as the “revisionist” historians of Arab nationalism further refined our understanding of early Arab nationalism by promoting the research agenda in directions that included local archives and journalistic sources.

Zeine Zeine was the first to challenge Antonius’s idea of a secular and liberal Arab awakening as well as the notion of a tyrannical Ottoman rule that catalyzed this nationalist awakening.<sup>11</sup> He accurately, though superficially, identified the role of Islam in the development of Arab political consciousness. He pointed to the allegiance of most Arabs to the Islamic caliphate embodied in the Ottoman sultans. According to Zeine, the critical phase in the development of Arab nationalism was the second constitutional period, when the overly secular Young Turks broke with established Ottoman practice and enforced Turkish nationalist policies. “[S]eparation was almost forced upon some Muslim Arab leaders by the short-sightedness and chauvinistic Pan-Turanian policy of the Young Turks.”<sup>12</sup>

Albert Hourani<sup>13</sup> and A. L. Tibawi<sup>14</sup> further explored the origins of

Arab nationalist consciousness and substantiated Zeine's conclusions about its Islamic thrust. They questioned the political content and significance of the activities to which Antonius referred, as well as the latter's contention that the Arabs educated in missionary schools, where they acquired a secular and pro-Western outlook, were the forerunners of Arab nationalism. Hourani examined the ideas of Islamic modernist intellectuals of the late nineteenth century, which later ignited an Arab ethnic consciousness among the Muslim youth in the Arab provinces. The concern of the Islamic modernists with the glories of early Islam was conducive to an exaltation of the Arabs as the carriers of the Islamic faith. Islamic modernism was formulated as a response to imperialist encroachments and as such stressed Islamic unity against Europe. Therefore, while Islamic modernist ideas led to an enhanced Arab consciousness, this consciousness did not translate into a political agenda that undermined the legitimacy of the Ottoman state.

Hourani wrote that historically "there were no lines of exclusion which kept the Arabs out" of the Ottoman state and society.<sup>15</sup> He also analyzed the linkages between the Arab provinces and the Ottoman center, Istanbul, within his paradigm of the "politics of notables." He concluded that a large segment of Arab leaders became integrated into the Ottoman ruling elite during the Hamidian period, but subsequently, "under the Young Turks and then the Mandatory governments, the idea of Arab nationalism provided them with a new instrument of resistance."<sup>16</sup> Like Zeine's, this analysis suggested that the overthrow of the Hamidian regime by the Young Turks resulted in Arab alienation and, again, coupled with nationalistic policies of the CUP, politicized Arabism.

More recently, another historian of Arab nationalism, 'Abd al-'Aziz Duri, further focused on historical internal developments among Arabs. Duri corroborated Tibawi and Hourani's arguments with respect to the Muslim component of Arab nationalist consciousness. However, his stress on the formation of Arab identities in the early Islamic period undermined not only any decisive Western influence but also the long Ottoman legacy in the historical development of the Arab nation.<sup>17</sup> Thus, according to Duri, the Arab nation existed since the Prophet's time. It "gained momentum . . . when the Turks clearly displayed their inability to stand up to Europe, and similarly, when the Unionists introduced a grave provocation by opposing the Arab language and adopting a policy of Turkification."<sup>18</sup>

The most radical departure from these analyses is Ernest Dawn's. In

a series of articles he began to write in 1958,<sup>19</sup> and in particular in his "Rise of Arabism in Syria,"<sup>20</sup> Dawn analyzed Arab nationalism in the second constitutional period in the context of a social conflict within the Damascene elite and as a function of the ability of the members of this elite to attain government positions. Dawn's two basic arguments are, first, that the ideological foundations of Arabism, which owed a lot to Islamic modernism, were well established before 1908 and cannot be viewed as a reaction to the Turkish nationalism of the CUP; and, second, Arabism failed to break out of the realm of narrow elite politics into a movement with popular appeal until the end of the empire.<sup>21</sup>

Dawn's views, in turn, have been questioned by Rashid Khalidi, who sees a growing middle class of merchants, intellectuals, and lower-level bureaucrats in Syrian cities during the second constitutional period as the vanguard of modern Arab nationalism.<sup>22</sup> Khalidi argues that Arab cities closer to the Mediterranean have been ignored by students of Arab nationalism, who have focused on Damascus, the traditional cultural center of the Arab world. He points to journalistic writing and consular reports from towns such as Jerusalem and particularly Beirut, which were experiencing rapid demographic and economic changes at the turn of the century, and argues that a public sphere conducive to the growth of popular Arabism was emergent in these urban centers.

Opinion differs as to the significance of the Arab movements before World War I. Dawn's revisionism about the scope and strength of Arabism has been noted in more recent scholarship.<sup>23</sup> In contrast, his conclusion about the unlikely role of Turkish nationalism in the development of Arab nationalism has not received similar attention. The view still prevails that the 1908 Revolution gave a most significant impetus to Turkish nationalism in the Ottoman polity, which in turn elicited a response in kind from the Arabs. To be sure, there is more recently the realization of the need to modify this view in two directions: by differentiating more precisely between Turkification and perceptions of centralization, and by focusing on the impact of European colonialism (on the rise during the Young Turk period) as another important factor in the growth of Arab nationalism.<sup>24</sup> In the absence of research in Ottoman sources, however, Turkish nationalism and "Turkification," as systematic policies of the Young Turk governments, have remained immune to serious revisionist scrutiny.

Critics of nationalist-minded historiography have not modified the prevailing common wisdom. With respect to the early modern period,



for instance, Rifa‘t ‘Ali Abou-el-Haj aptly comments, “[W]e must research, think, and write less within the parameters of an inevitable but exclusive nationalist model, and more along the lines of an inclusive, universalist culture and society.”<sup>25</sup> In the epilogue of his book, Abou-el-Haj looks beyond the period he examines to remark, “The nineteenth century Ottoman state took on other characteristics of the modern state, including a new ideology, Ottomanism, an uneasy mix of the old ideology (Ottoman culture and Islam) and modern nationalism.” He proceeds to conclude (and to converge with conventional wisdom), however, that “in the early twentieth century some Ottoman cultural elements and Islamic elements were abandoned in favor of Türkism, a more potent device based on an ethnic identity and dependent on a language-based nationalism.”<sup>26</sup>

It is reasonable to assume that the Western-oriented segments of the Ottoman elite were drawn to the concept of the nation-state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but not in any ethnic sense. Şerif Mardin argues that in their attempts “to build a state modeled after the nation-state” these elites confronted three problems, all of which “brought into play the relations of the center with the periphery”: the integration of non-Muslim peoples, the integration of the Muslim periphery (which consisted in large part of the Arab provinces), and the incorporation of these two elements into a modern political system.<sup>27</sup> The steady loss of largely non-Muslim-dominated regions made the integration of the Muslim periphery even more imperative. The creation of an inclusive society and polity based on consensus rather than coercion remained as the objective, to which an ethnic agenda would be anathema.

Eric Hobsbawm describes “belonging to a lasting political entity” as “the most decisive criterion of protonationalism.”<sup>28</sup> The Young Turks envisaged the creation of a civic-territorial, indeed revolutionary-democratic, Ottoman political community by promoting an identification with the state and the country through the sultan and instituting representative government. Though they remained committed to the monarchy within the constitutional framework, they conceived of an Ottoman state and society akin to the French example in which religion and ethnicity would be supplanted by “state-based patriotism.”<sup>29</sup> While it would be easy to dismiss the notion of a voluntaristic “Ottoman nation” based on rights of representation at this juncture, a quest for political integration that was premised on such a conception was perhaps not much more naïve than were French revolutionary postulates about

integration, as analyzed by Eugene Weber.<sup>30</sup> The Young Turks did promote state-patriotism and clearly recognized the political risks, hinted by Hobsbawm, of blending it with “non-state nationalism.”<sup>31</sup>

As prototypes of what we recognize as Arab and Turkish nationalism today, the terms Arabism and Turkism, despite (or perhaps because of) their indeterminacy, have served a useful purpose in thinking about early forms of Arab and Turkish nationalism. It would, however, be useful to bring more clarity to these terms, particularly because they do not have entirely parallel connotations.

The most common use of Arabism and Turkism is with respect to Arab and Turkish cultural and literary sentiments and currents. Cultural Arabism and Turkism, as they emerged in the late nineteenth century, signified more than an articulation of the distinctness of Arab or Turkish cultural markers. Rather, they represented the activation of cultural elements by intellectuals responding to social, political, and economic currents of the second half of the nineteenth century. Arabism and Turkism resulted from the mobilization of latent as well as newly forged elements of identity. Since Ernest Dawn identified Arabism as an oppositional cultural-political identification to Ottomanism, historians have referred to Arabism in describing a variety of political movements and currents among Arabs short of demands for Arab sovereignty. The range of connotations that Turkism has conveyed, in contrast, has remained rather narrow.

Arabism did not evolve into political nationalism during the period under study. To argue this on the basis of Ernest Gellner’s conception of nationalism as “a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent”<sup>32</sup> would, of course, not be of much value in studying the empire. Somewhat more nuanced is John Breuilly’s conception that views a movement as a nationalist one if it seeks to secede from the state, to take it over, or to unite it with another state.<sup>33</sup> Despite their denunciation of the Ottoman government, viewed as Turkish and Turkifying, most Arabists did not disavow the monarchy and lacked a clear conception of the territorial basis of a national Arab unit. Nevertheless, Arabism was closely connected to politics. Even if one does not subscribe to Dawn’s instrumentalist representation of Arabism, its relationship to empire-wide political agendas needs to be appraised in addressing it as Arab protonationalism.

Hobsbawm, who subscribes to a similar approach in the study of nationalism as Gellner by privileging its relationship with the nation-

state, distinguishes three phases in the development of national movements (following Miroslav Hroch).<sup>34</sup> Phase A is “purely cultural, literary and folkloric [with] no political or even national implications.” In phase B militants and activists engage in political propaganda to mobilize the cultural group. Finally, in phase C “nationalist programmes acquire mass support, or at least some of the mass support that nationalists always claim they represent.”<sup>35</sup>

The first phase of Arabism and Turkism in Hroch and Hobsbawm’s terms predated the second constitutional period. Starting in the late nineteenth century there was an increased consciousness of an ethnic community among the Muslim groups. On the one hand, readily identifiable (primordial) group attributes were activated under the influence of enhanced communications, education, and commerce. On the other hand, there was the formulation and embellishment of these group attributes as new constructs. This did not occur under the direct influence of European cultural or political nationalism, rather as independent indigenous responses to reform and relative decline. Phase B of the Arab movement started in the second constitutional period, spurred by new freedoms of expression and beginnings of politics. Turkist trends in this period lagged in the category of phase A. Extrapolations of Turkism in the form of pan-Turkism did not impart to it a political content that had relevance to imperial political realities. Arabism, on the other hand, nourished political agendas that fit in with broader imperial patterns of political contestation, though it did not engender a coherent exclusionary or separatist Arab nationalist program. Its proponents vied for political goals and enhanced recognition within the imperial system. Politicization of Arabism did not lead to nationalism in the sense defined by Gellner or Breuilly, nor did it culminate in Hobsbawm’s phase C.

This volume portrays the political, social, and ideological currents in the Arab-populated periphery of the Ottoman Empire in relation to transformations in the imperial center, İstanbul. It pursues Ernest Dawn’s critique of existing scholarship further and attempts to nuance the inert view of the center shared by most scholars by introducing evidence about political contestation and shifting imperial alliances and their repercussions in several Arab provinces. The premise is, first, that processes in İstanbul and Arab linkages to this center have shaped Arab trends in important ways; and, second, that political and social processes in the Arab areas contributed to imperial policy making

and ideology. Thus, this study seeks to move beyond established historiographical paradigms.

In general studies of the late Ottoman Empire, scholars have devoted very little attention to the Arab regions. Similarly, as mentioned above, the Arab regions have been studied with inadequate reference to the rest of the empire and to the issues confronting governments in İstanbul. The reason for this fragmentation has to do with particularist and nation-state oriented ideological preoccupations of historians and the implicit, but mistaken, assumption that the two approaches are complementary. An artificial compartmentalization of the subject matter has developed between Arabist and Ottomanist, which today is not just methodological but also ideological and is more rigid than the corresponding division of labor in nineteenth-century Orientalist scholarship. The implications of this dichotomy go beyond the study of the second constitutional period, but are particularly acute for this period, which many consider the critical and decisive phase of the unfolding of the history of Middle Eastern nation-states rather than the denouement of the history of empire.

Arab nationalism has so far been viewed exclusively from the vantage of the provinces, whereas it, too, should be examined with an integrative approach that takes into account both the local perspective and the central imperial one. The methodological concern here will not be with a particular Arab province, region, or town but with the entirety of those Arab-populated parts of the empire that were not colonized at the beginning of the second constitutional period. As it will be evident, this general approach is informed on the one hand by the scrupulous monographic studies of Arabists who have illuminated social and political trends in late Ottoman Damascus, Beirut, Hijaz, Iraq, Palestine, or Transjordan, and on the other by the work of Ottomanists who have examined the social, political, and economic history of the core regions of the empire. The present study makes inquiries into the power structure in İstanbul, the workings of Parliament, party politics, the ideological basis of the empire, and political and social change. Its central concern is to demonstrate the interactions between the center and the Arab periphery and to situate the genesis of nationalist currents among Ottoman Muslims in the imperial context. It makes use of documentation on the Arab provinces in the Ottoman archives, hitherto unexploited by Ottomanists or Arabists for reasons pertaining to problems of access and organization mentioned earlier.

A main proposition of this study is that among the chief Muslim

groups of the Ottoman Empire political nationalism was not a viable force until the end of World War I. Appeals to religion, which constituted a significant component of individual nationalist ideologies, paradoxically prevented nationalism from becoming the primary focus of allegiance for Muslim peoples, and as such actually defused nationalism. It is further proposed that if Young Turk policies fostered the growth of Arab nationalism, it is more appropriate to seek the explanation in the processes of socialization that the revolution set in motion. The introduction of mass politics, a liberal press, and greater educational opportunities enhanced ethnic communal consciousness among certain groups, whereas they were promoted by the government with the purpose of achieving greater societal integration and administrative amalgamation. As Edward Shils has argued in his classic essay "Center and Periphery," processes of social and political integration on the one hand imparted "the central value system . . . a wider acceptance than in other periods of history," and on the other "increased the extent . . . of active 'dissensus' or rejection of this system."<sup>36</sup> Historians, particularly when their outlook is affected by nationalist biases, tend to focus on instances of "rejection" and conflict and not sufficiently on consent.

Chapter I examines the impact of the administrative, social, and political restructuring of the Tanzimat (1839–76) and Hamidian (1876–1908<sup>37</sup>) eras on the Arabs and the Arab provinces of the empire. In this period, Ottoman governments subscribed to different interpretations of Ottomanism as a supranationalist outlook transcending communal divisions and focusing on the institution of the sultanate-caliphate. The glimmerings of a cultural nationalist consciousness emerged in this period as a result of (1) the central government's attempts to project its rule to the imperial periphery, (2) the incorporation of the Ottoman economy to that of Europe, and (3) the entry of Western modes of thought as well as social and political organization. However, among Arabs *and* Turks this new consciousness failed to supersede the parochial allegiances on the one hand and the imperial-universalist ones on the other. Since the role of Arab deputies in Ottoman parliaments after 1908 is examined in some detail in later chapters, the short-lived Parliament of 1877–78, and Arab representation within it, is analyzed in the first chapter as a basis for comparison. In discussing the background to the second constitutional period, the opposition to Abdülhamid's regime is stressed, because it is from the ranks of this constitutionalist opposition that the political cadres and agendas of the second consti-

tutional period emerged. Arab elements, particularly intellectuals and middle-class groups, were active in this opposition. Finally, the chapter's general examination of the Tanzimat and Hamidian eras illustrates not only the changes that came about after 1908 but also the often unnoticed continuities from the preceding era of reform.

The new conditions that the 1908 Revolution brought about in both the capital and the Arab provinces are dealt with in chapter 2. The revolution initiated a new level of political discourse with the reopening of Parliament and the lifting of restrictions on the press. The disappointment of unrealistic expectations, the inexperience of the CUP, and a unified effort of all opposition forces contributed to a counterrevolutionary movement that could be crushed only with the help of the army. The ensuing restrictions on certain freedoms and the initiation of a determined policy of centralization caused widespread unrest and resulted in the formation of political parties rival to the CUP and with significant Arab representation in them.

Centralizing administrative measures gave rise to accusations of a CUP-led "Turkification" campaign. The claim that the governments of the Committee of Union and Progress carried out a methodical policy of Turkification often goes together with the contention that they rendered support to extreme notions of Turkish nationalism and to fantastic schemes, such as a political union of all Turks throughout the world. In fact, the CUP subscribed to the supranational ideal of Ottomanism. There is no convincing evidence that it formulated or pursued a Turkish nationalist cultural or political program.

During 1910 and 1911 the CUP strengthened its control over the government machinery, while its liberal political opposition organized along party lines and formed a rival bloc in Parliament. A significant segment of Arab deputies was active in the ranks of this opposition. Chapter 3 addresses the issue of Turkification and the clash between the CUP and the opposition over central issues that concerned the Arabs and the Arab provinces: the concession to the British Lynch Company on the Tigris and Euphrates, Italian occupation of Libya, and Zionist immigration into Palestine.

In chapter 4, the reform movements in the Arab provinces are analyzed in the context of the political contest between the CUP and its decentralist rival, the Liberty and Entente Party, and with reference to growing Great Power interest in the Arab districts. After the CUP consolidated its power in 1913 and neutralized the reform movements in the Arab provinces, a new compromise was reached between İstanbul and

the Arab leaders. It was accompanied by a growing emphasis on Islam in the ideology of an Ottoman state now much diminished in size as a result of the Balkan Wars (1912–13). The analysis here contrasts with the more widely accepted view that, following the Unionist takeover in 1913, Turkish nationalism played a growing role in the state ideology and that the Arab element was increasingly estranged. When Ottomanism, the secular state ideology that called for a multiethnic and multireligious empire in which political equality and representative government would foster an imperial allegiance, failed, the Young Turks did not turn to Turkish nationalism but rather to Islamism as the ideological underpinning that would safeguard the unity and continuity of what was left of the empire. Islam became the pillar of the supranational ideology of Ottomanism, with religion imparting a new sense of homogeneity and solidarity.

The province of the Hijaz is presented in chapter 5 as a case study of Young Turk rule in an Arab province. There are several reasons for choosing the Hijaz, a province that stands out from the other Arab provinces because of the differences in its social and political organization. The Hashemite family has received considerable attention because of Sharif Husayn's alliance with Britain, which influenced the shape that the Arab Middle East took in the aftermath of the war. Nevertheless, very little scholarly attention has been devoted to the study of the Hijaz as part of the Ottoman Empire. Sharif Husayn's term as emir of Mecca started with the Young Turk Revolution and continued until 1916. An assessment of his relations with the central government during this time illustrates the nature of the interaction between prominent local dignitaries and İstanbul and the thrust of İstanbul's centralizing policies and their provincial repercussions. The focus on the Hijaz also allows the examination of the increased attention given to religion in the formulation of political ideologies, not only at the center of the empire but also in the provinces.

The last chapter addresses the strains on the Arab policy that World War I ushered. On the eve of the war the CUP had established itself as unquestionably the strongest political group in the empire. Once the war broke out, Sharif Husayn initiated the Arab Revolt (which "Lawrence of Arabia" and his fans later helped to popularize and romanticize around the world), because Husayn felt that rendering support to the Ottoman government would lead to his political demise given the empire's weak defenses against the British in the Red Sea. The Arab Revolt was not so much the culmination of Arab nationalist activity or a rejec-

tion of the refashioned Ottomanist ideology, but a convergence of dynastic ambition and strategic exigency that contributed to the eventual political separation of Arabs and Turks.<sup>38</sup> Husayn's revolt under British promises of an independent Arab state and the hardships arising from the war embittered the relations between the Unionist government and the Arabs. Once the empire had disintegrated and the European powers had imposed their will in the reshaping of former Ottoman territories contrary to the wishes of the indigenous peoples, Turks and Arabs sought renewed possibilities for cooperation. A significant portion of the Arab elites in towns like Damascus, Beirut, and Jerusalem hesitated before embracing Arab nationalism. The consequences of Anglo-French victory were to prove anything but sweet for the Arabs, who were forced to confront the prospects of direct European rule. The potency of the supranational ideology of Ottomanism is reappraised in this chapter against the background of imperial collapse and foreign occupation.