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Comparison Between Abdulhamid II and CUP's Arab Policies: Shifting from Pan-Islamism to Nationalism

II. Abdülhamid ile İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti'nin Arap Politikalarının Karşılaştırılması: Pan-İslamizm'den Milliyetçiliğe Dönüş

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ÖZET

19.yy, Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun en çalkantılı yılları olmuştur. Bu zaman aralığında, bir zamanlar dünyanın büyük güçlerinden olan Osmanlı, Batının büyük güçleri ile mücadele etmek zorunda kalmıştır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu yıkılmış ve orta doğuda ulus-devlet yapılanmasında ardıl devletler ortaya çıkmıştır. Osmanlı'nın son on yıllarında, geleneksel sosyal, siyasi ve felsefi yapılanmalardan modernizm dönüşüm ağır bir şekilde hissedilmiştir. Bu dönüşüm, merkezin iç ve dış politikalarında önemli bir etkiye sahip olurken, Osmanlı'nın taşra yapılanması, özellikle Arap eyaletleri, merkezin ideallerini aynı düzeyde takip etmemiştir. Bu çalışma, Arap eyaletlerindeki dönüşümü resmetmeye çalışmaktadır. Somutlaştırmak gerekirse, II. Abdülhamid döneminin Panislamizm ve İttihat ve Terakki döneminin seküler modernist politikalarının Arap eyaletlerindeki değişiklikleri karşılaştırılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Arap Eyaletleri, Modernizm, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, II. Abdülhamid, İttihat ve Terakki

ABSTRACT

The entire 19th century was the most controversial years of the Ottoman Empire. It was the time period that the Ottoman Empire, as once one of the great powers in the world, had to struggle with the great western powers. This struggle ended with the disintegration of the Empire and several nation-states were conceived of in the Middle East immediately after the First World War. Within this century, transformation from traditional social, political and philosophical structures to modernization had been severely felt by the last decades of the Empire. While this transformation had been a significant motive on both domestic and foreign policies of the centre, peripheries of the Empire did not follow the same ideals with the centre, especially Arab provinces. This paper seeks to depict the transformation in the Arab provinces. To crystalize, the eras of Abdulhamid II with pan-Islamist and of the CUP with secular modernist would be compared via tracing policy changes in the Arab provinces.

Keywords: Arab Provinces, Modernization, Ottoman Empire, Abdulhamid II, CUP

Introduction

The rise and fall of the great powers by Paul Kennedy (2010) reminds us that all great powers throughout history had several basic challenges when they are raising and falling. Likewise, the Ottoman Empire experienced and suffered from many problems such as military backwardness and multi-ethnic and multi-religious social structure. One of the significant questions that the Ottoman Empire faced is the emergence of modernism and nationalism in Europe and its diffusion into the Ottoman territory. Almost all Balkan territories had been lost due to this nationalist notion before the end of the Empire. Nevertheless, Arabian Peninsula from North Africa to Egypt to the Basra Gulf

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remained under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire until the end of the World War I although this is not to say that nationalist thoughts had not affected on the Middle East.

Integration of the Ottoman Empire to the modern world by lining with the great European powers had caused fundamental changes in the social, economic and administrative structure. During this process, almost all of the components of the Empire had been influenced by these changes. This influence was sometimes initiated from the above as reform movements and sometimes from the below as requests for reforms. Considering that the traditional government system of the Empire had been strongly embedded, the possible backlash or reaction of the ossified system to the changes could be readily understandable and predictable. There had been substantial changes, but the years in the late 19th and early 20th century represented the densest transformations in every aspects and closest moment to the end of the Empire.

To keep the Empire alive, reformer sultans, bureaucrats, prominent figures, and high-ranking military personnel had spent tremendous efforts via new social, administrative, military, economic and cultural applications. Within these efforts, as a result of highly rich intellectual debates among the influential actors had been conducted throughout the 19th century that resulted with several nationalist movements at the end (Khalidi, 1991: 1364). The way these actors choose to follow had been differentiated and even sometimes contradicted to each other. Tanzimat bureaucrats tried to restrain the sultan's authority whereas Sultans, especially Abdulhamid II, sought to keep as much authority as they could to perform their own way of resurrection. Young military officers opposed his way and tried to get power to implement their own way of reformation. These different perspective of seeing and defining the Ottoman Empire reflected themselves not only in domestic politics and also foreign policies. Under these circumstances, the main aim of this article is to compare the Arab policies of Abdülhamid II and the *Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Congress of Union and Progress, CUP) Governments and then to exhibit the shift from Islamism, so-called Abdulhamid's policy, to secular nationalism. Before making the comparison, fundamental social, administrative and economic changes until 1876 when Abdülhamid ascended to the throne are going to be illustrated. The primary differences between Abdulhamid II and CUP's policies on Arabs will be followed. At the end of the essay, evaluations of their policies are going to take place.

A-Century-Long Transformations in the Empire

At the end of the Russia-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (*Kuchuk Kainarji*) was signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. It was the point that Ottomans understood they were far from the military power of the European states. This acknowledgement forced them to change and to develop their military and administrative structures to catch up to the level of European power. This trend reflected itself into every inch of the Empire, including Arab provinces. The commencement point of the social and military changes in the Arab world was the French Invasion of Egypt in 1798 (Tibi, 1997). The main impact of this event on the Middle East was that they realized the West had reached high levels of industrialization, military power and administration vis-à-vis their backwardness in these three aspects (Lewis, 1966).

The invasion paved the way for a suitable background to bring forth nationalist ideas among the Arabs together with desperate requirements for military reforms. One of the most significant impacts of it was the entrance of European nationalist ideas to the Arab World, which was going to be called the Arab awakening (Antonius, 1936). Secondly, it brought the printing press to Egypt, which augmented the number of Arabic novels, books, newspapers and generally Arabic literature, which in turn induced prevailing Arab nationalist notions (Nuseibeh, 1956; Dawn, 1991). In addition to these effects, the endeavours of Muhammad Ali Pasha to make Egypt modernized and militarily strong, such as establishing new secular schools and reforming the administration of land and army, enhanced social mobilization and interaction in the Middle East (Fromkin, 2001). When Ibrahim Pasha (Muhammad Ali Pasha's son) occupied Syria and Lebanon, the same strategy was followed between

1831 and 1840 (Masters, 2013: 192). As a consequence of these events, Arabic as a language gained more importance than it had before, new education system came into force and even new universities were established by the missionary groups in Lebanon and Syria (Kirk, 1964: 103). The impacts of missionary activities were emphasized by Bassam Tibi (1997: 100) arguing, “*the impact of three missions- French Jesuits and Catholics, American Protestants and the Russian Orthodox and other Craziest Russia-varied considerably. While the American and Russian missionaries contributed considerably towards the Arab renaissance, the French missions followed an openly colonialist policy*”. Antonius (1938) considered activities of the missionary schools in Lebanon as the seeds of nationalist thought, but Kayalı (1997) argues that their curriculum included only religious subjects and science, so they did not have any nationalistic effect on young Arab children.

Another significant event that shook the social structure in the Ottoman Empire before Abdülhamid II ascended to the throne was the promulgation of the *Hatt-i Sharif of Gülhane* in 1839 and the decree of the *Hatt-i Humayun* in 1856. These two paramount promulgations made the legal status of religious components of the Empire equal to each other. This means that Muslims` traditional superiority over non-Muslims was abandoned. Moreover, they bestowed equal civil and political rights for non-Muslim and opened the way for their integrations into the social and political structure of the state. In this way, Ottomans` target was to gain the loyalty of the non-Muslim Communities to the Ottoman Dynasty and the state, which was generally known as Ottomanism.

In the Ottoman system, the population of the Empire was defined upon a confessional basis, not upon a territorial or linguistic one. It was composed of religious communities, each of which had its own internal organization and was controlled by a religious hierarchy. Socially and culturally, each society (*Millet*²) generated a distinct entity. Before and during the 19th century, there was no Arab question in the agenda of Ottoman governors and the concept of “Arab” rarely could be seen in the documents. In this concern, Zeine (1973: 33) states that “*Indeed, the word “Arab” itself as a designation for the inhabitants of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire rarely occurs in the books and documents of the period. It was reserved mainly for the Bedouins of the desert and all the non-town dwellers in the Near East. The general terms “Muslim” and “Christian” were used to describe the two principal classes of inhabitants in this area. As to the great majority of the Muslim subjects of the Sultan, whether Turks or Arabs, they were “brothers in the Faith,” i.e., they were Muslims before being Turks or Arabs*³. This quotation is quite meaningful since, until World War I, social movements in the Arab provinces had not generally been separatist ones. Instead, most of the resentments or even uprisings were for having better economic and social conditions and broadly against the corruption of governors (McCarthy, 1997).

Furthermore, the increasing number of Western economic relations with Arabs via port cities such as Beirut, Basra, Aleppo and Egypt and newly graduated students from secular and scientific school throughout Ottoman territory produced a new middle class that affected social conditions (Abu-Manneh, 1980). This newly born class originating from implementation of mass education as a part of reform movements and so being influenced by western ideologies (Provence, 2011) were anxious for the situation in that time and willing more liberal arrangements from the authorities (Açıkgöz, 2016). The demands that were expected by that new class were not related to the nationalist concept but associated with personal interests and ambitions. Eventually, these social changes and mobilization created some grievances and resentments among Arabs.

The traditional administrative structure of the Ottoman Empire changed with the *Vilayet Law* in 1864. Administrative responsibilities had been fulfilled by the military commander of the region and local notables and Sheiks (religious leader of society) who were intermediaries between people and governors. This law not only gave the administrative function to the civilians but also divided

² As a concept, Millet refers to religious not ethnic identity. This was Islamic notion of determination of subjects of the state.

³ If this argument was accepted, it completely explain why there was no any official documents about Arabs in the Ottoman archive but it does not mean that all Arabs had been neglected by the Ottomans it means that if the history of Arabs in the suzerainty of the ottomans is searched, the keyword should be Muslims instead of Arab as ethnic origin.

provinces into the subdivisions. The main reason for the administrative reforms was the centralization policy of the Ottoman Empire put into effect after they had noticed that they needed a more efficient system for the stable army and so, conscription. Increased tax revenues were necessary to subsidize the expenditure of the reforms. By the law and impulse of centralization policy, henceforth, the army commander was not the only governor of all aspect of the provinces; a Pasha would be head of a province but was responsible to *Grand Verizate* in the Capital.

The fundamental outcome of centralization policy, which was an inevitable result of social, administrative and economic changes, damaged the interest of mediators who could be a chief tribe, a notable or a sheikh. Endeavours to render centralization more efficient continued until the end of the Empire. In the Tazimant period, Hamidian era and the term of *Ittihat ve Terakki Partisi* (Congress of Union and Progress, CUP) centralization strategy had never been neglected but conversely improved. Thus, the personal interests and power of notables or *Ayans* had begun to pine away. As a consequence of this process, notables and efficient people who benefited from the traditional administrative system had been disturbed and due to their dwindling high social position and economic interests, they started to preserve their advantages by supporting opposition groups and thoughts against the Centre.

Due to the fact that the Ottoman Empire had lost its Balkan territory, which was the source of tax income that covers a high proportion of the budget, the direction of the economy turned to the Anatolia and Arabian Peninsula. Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, one of the most influential statesmen of the Abdülhamid period under consideration and a mentor of the Sultan, had emphasized this point. *“Because of the devastation of Rumelia, the revenues of the Government have become reduced by nearly a half. In order to make up for this loss, the most important issue for us now is to render prosperous and increase the wealth of the Anatolian and Arab provinces... The development of Syria (i.e. Damascus and its environs), Aleppo and Adana would turn this area into an Egypt... This can be accomplished with ease under the aegis of our sovereign.”* (Akarlı, 1986: 75).

The concrete evidence that proves the government’s intent to pay more attention to Anatolia and Arabia was the formation of railways to improve economic relations and as well as to facilitate administrative function. In addition to the railway, equipment of Arab provinces and Anatolia with telegraph lines provided straightforward communication between the centre and provinces. Automatically, a new western taxing system and economic decisions were implemented in Arab cities.

So far, these new conditions evidently generated more advanced and close relationships among people and governors, more active profitable economic relations, more dynamic social structure and more diversity among social classes. In the light of this brief background, within these social, economic and administrative conditions, it is impossible to expect people to stand apathetic. Therefore, the reactions of the capital stemming from the different paths to keep the Empire together show differentiation from the reign of Abdülhamid II and the CUP government until the end of the First World War.

Comparison of the Eras of the Abdulhamid II and the CUP

The international and internal situation of the Empire was harsh when Abdulhamid took power as the Sultan. On the one hand, internationally, the empire had economically collapsed and it lost almost the whole territory that was the main source of tax income and the most industrialized part of the Empire. On the other hand, domestically, the Empire seemed to be a Muslim Empire, and like Balkans was affected by the nationalistic thoughts, the Arabs were influenced by nationalism rooted in Europe and spreading out to the Middle East (Masters, 2013: 193).

Due to these internal and external conditions, he afforded to improve the condition of the Empire without any uprising and sought to make the appearance of the Empire more Islamic than before. These internal and external conditions created Pan-Islamism pioneered by Abdulhamid II. Therefore,

while he tried to render the Empire more centralized, he preferred to co-opt with Arab local notables and sheikhs and to whatever he did, he added an Islamic character (Zürcher, 1993). The first and the paramount instance of cooperation with notables according to the Pan-Islamic strategy was the establishment of the Council of State (Şura-i Devlet) whose members were appointed directly by the Sultan and the members of which were deliberately chosen from among notables and sheikhs to ensure their loyalty to the Sultanate and Caliphate; a spiritual institution protecting all the Muslims in the world. He started to use the title of Caliph as much as any Ottoman Sultan before had not used it.

Moreover, he supported and gave the opportunity by employing them in high positions jobs for Arabs (Buzpinar, 1993) and those who graduated newly established secular school which continued to be formed in each province and major cities in the Hamidian era. The best example of mutual benefit for Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamic and educational policy was the foundation of the Asiret Mekteb-i Humayun (the imperial school for tribes), which was opened in Istanbul in October 1892 to provide an Ottoman education for the sons of leading tribal notables (Rogan, 1996). The reason that Abdulhamid made such a decision was that he realized the threat of national separatist movements, which had been experienced in the Balkans, and the tribal structure of Arabs and Kurds in the eastern provinces (Dag, 2014). By doing so, he sought to guarantee that the next generation of leaders would be influenced by Ottoman education and culture. Furthermore, not only free education but also all expenses, including pocket money, were provided by the Sultanate to render potential tribe leaders in the future loyal to the Sultan and Caliph.

In the strict sense, Abdulhamid's Arab policy was a process to integrate all Muslim components, especially Arabs into the state structure. In addition to these practises to get loyalty from Arabs, his dedication and endeavours to establish telegraph lines and railways throughout the Ottoman Empire partly included the aim of integrating Arabian provinces into the centre. As a consequence of these foundations, the communication between Istanbul and the districts became effortless and in a short time, contributed to the economic, social and administrative improvements.

Arabs' reaction towards the Pan-Islamic policy of Abdulhamid II differentiated. The Muslim's resentments and grievances about his policy were wholly related to the religion and did not contain any separatist or extreme nationalist feelings except several Christian Arab intellectuals in Lebanon and Syria (Dawn, 1961). Cemal Ad-Din Afgani, Muhammad Rasid Rida, Abdul Rahman al-Kawakebi and Muhammad Abduh were prominent intellectuals of Abdulhamid II reign. Invariably, they were supporters of the Caliphate as an institution, although they commonly stated that Arabic due to the fact that it is the Qur'an's language has priority over Turkish. The core point in their thinking was caliph and caliphate must be in the path of Qur'an which is the holy book of Islam and of the Prophet Muhammad, who is the messenger of God (Allah) and cannot be tyranny or corrupted (Nuseibeh, 1956). The generally accepted idea among Arabs whether they were religious or not was that "*Arabs would not be secure in their welfare and future if Istanbul were not in the hands of the Turks*" (Hanioglu, 2008).

On the other side, there could be individual exceptions who had separatist nationalist thoughts among Arabs such as Najib Aruzi, who was an extreme supporter of an independent Arab nation separated from the Ottoman Empire, although they were Christian and their views were advocated by a small group of people (Hanioglu, 2008:144). In that context, one more Christian intellectual example is going to be suitable: Burtus Al-Bustani. He graduated from missionary school and became a teacher in one of them. In spite of being passionately a supporter of Arab revivalism in culture and literature, he had never been against the Empire with the nationalistic approach (Abu-Manneh, 1980). Generally speaking, Pan-Islamic policy of Abdülhamid gained the heart and the mind of the Ottoman subjects because Islam was still the main cemented belief among them (Soleimani, 2016: 93-95; Tufekci, 2017b). It does not mean that he did not do anything wrong, but he always had Islamic motifs in his practice and discourse.

One of the most interesting and striking points of Abdulhamid era is that almost every nationalist movement was nourished by the secular schools⁴ which Abdulhamid himself proceeded to establish and subsidize. Almost every ethnic nationalist movement were nurtured in these schools in the central cities, as in the case of founders of the Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti, Committee of Union and Progress, who were Abdullah Cevdet, Ibrahim Temo, Ishaq Sukuti and Mehmet Resit gradually turned into Kurdish, Albanian, Circassia and Turkish nationalist, respectively.

The CUP took power in 1908 via a coup d'état and reimplemented the constitution that was promulgated by Abdülhamid II, right after the Ottoman-Russian War in 1876. As a result of that, a more liberal term had begun in the Empire. During the CUP period, the will for autonomous status for Arabs or provinces had remarkably emerged. First of all, most of the CUP members and even most of the young people, in other words, the last generation had grown up with the western liberal, nationalist and modern concepts like freedom and democracy. Moreover, during Abdulhamid period, most of the opponents both Arabs and Turks had been sent to exile to the European states. The increasing communication facilities rendered the ideological interaction between Ottomans and Europe such as newspapers, telegraph and developed printing-press which fostered the number of the books and finally secular or modern schools that teach critical thinking. In addition, a considerable number of students had been sent to Europe to study generally engineering and social sciences. These conditions were viable for both Arabs and Turks. In addition to this, with reimplementation of the constitution, the local election to choose representatives for new parliament was held and that obviously heightened the political activities.

The fundamental indication of the centralization policy of the CUP was to make the Turkish language in all educational institutions and legal correspondence. Strikingly, the first decision for using Turkish in all kinds of school in the Empire was made by Abdulhamid II. Before that time, an eminent Syrian reformer Sheikh Tahir al-Jaziri convinced Mithad Pasha, the governor (Vali, 1879-1880) of Syria to use Arabic as the language of religion and it remained in force until 1885 when Abdulhamid ordered using Turkish instead (Haddad, 1994). Another significant question comes to mind within this context: why his decision of using only Turkish in education had not attracted attention too much while the CUP's one seems the main reason for the growth of Arab nationalism.

While CUP was dismissing Arab officers in the provinces and the centre due to the fact that they did not know Turkish (Haddad, 1994), Abdülhamid II gave the high positions not only for older people but also for newly graduated young Arabs while he was trying to centralize the Empire. The policy of depositions of Arabs from the bureaucracy might have been due to the will to eliminate the bureaucratic corps which were still loyal to Abdulhamid II, but it does not truly explain why local Arab officers were laid off because he appointed Turks to the positions in provinces and Arab notables or leaders to the high positions in the Centre. So that, for instance, "*with the formation of official committees of reorganization (Tansikat Komisyonlari), which operated in both provinces and the Capital, 27,000 officials were dismissed and removed from the payrolls of the various branches of services.*" (Haddad, 1994) However, Al-Asali, the one of the Syrian deputy of the CUP in the Lower Chamber of Deputies (Meclis-i Mab`usan) gave an extremely inflammatory speech about the policy of the CUP on the deposition of Arab officials and not giving new position for newly graduated Arab youth. Although all the critics, the government maintained its strategy and went on by "*... thirteen Arab mutasarrifs and unspecified number of district officials (kaimmakams) were reported to have been on fire*"(Haddad, 1994) in 1911.

Another notable instance of centralization policy was, in 1909, a new law that prohibited the use of any other language but Turkish in courts throughout the Empire. Moreover, there was a new procedure implemented in the same year, which says that all judges of the State Courts would be

⁴ Fortna's article which is about school structure and curriculum in the time of Abdülhamid presents archival evidence that the school that Abdülhamid established cannot be called as secular because their education system and the subjects in the curriculum were Islamic rather than secular.

appointed by the Centre.⁵ In comparison, during the Abdulhamid II reign, some of them were sent directly from the centre, but the governor of provinces chose the rest and generally they were people who know the local language because they were indigenous. Furthermore, the CUP government interfered in the non-state and millet schools that belong to minority subjects of the Empire and tried to get the right to appoint their teachers.

The backlash of Arabs against the centralization policy of the CUP government through Turkification of non-Turkish subjects⁶ of the Empire was more rigorous than Abdulhamid II faced when he implied almost the same policy. The fundamental reason for different reactions was the language that had been used in the process of implementation of centralization policy. As it was mentioned above, although the term of Abdülhamid II was mostly called tyrannical such as by Bernard Lewis, Hasan Kayalı, and George Antonius, his term was obviously considered as more Islamic than CUP's term but this can not be the only reason. In addition to this, as Haddad mentioned this could be a continuation of the process; the centralization policy had started in the Tanzimat period because it was believed that it was the only way to keep the Empire alive and the flag of that policy was carried by Abdulhamid II and then by the CUP. Therefore, in the last version of it, the mixture of Turkification had reached a high level and as parallel to that, the level of reactions dramatically increased.

The other fundamental reason why the reaction of Arabs increased in the term of the CUP was the changes in the understanding of the world and in Islamic discourses that Abdulhamid II intensively used. The roots of their understanding relied on European concepts and ideology due to the fact that most of them either studied abroad or in the modern Ottoman schools⁷ teaching scientific subjects rather than Islamic subjects. Hence, positivism, materialism and antireligious ideas had a significant impact on prominent Young Turk Intellectuals who were served in the Balkans where initial nationalists, modernist, secular and positivist ideals were disseminated (Önsoy and Atmaca, 2016). What is more, they considered themselves as modern, enlightened, schooled in modern science and criticized the religious scholars and functionaries for being conservative, traditional and bigoted (Bein, 2007). For example, Ahmet Rıza, the leader of the CUP in Paris, in a letter which he sent to her daughter, explicitly wrote down his general inconveniences about the religious thinking and his admiration for materialist and positivist thoughts (Kayalı, 1997). These antireligious approaches of the CUP members pulled out some conspicuous religious members such as Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi, who can be called a modernist Islamist and advocated that religion and science are not contradictory but complementary.

These explanations shed light on the reason why autonomous demands became dominant subject among Arabs Muslims. As it was mentioned before, autonomous will had been mounted by only Christian component of Empire because of Pan-Islamic policy of Abdulhamid II but whether Christian or Muslim, the Arabs demand for autonomous status had peaked in the period that the CUP governed the Empire. Also after 1908, when the CUP took power, some legal and clandestine organizations are a good example of that will against the CUP's Arab policy. The establishment of the decentralization party in 1912 in Cairo, of the society of the young Arab nation (*Jam'iyyat al-Umma al-Arabiyya al-Fatat*) known as *Al-Fatat* in 1909 in Paris, of *Al-Qahtaniyya* (the name of the legendary ancestor of Arabs) in 1909 in Istanbul, of *Al-Ahd* (Covenant) in 1913 and the Arab Revolutionary Society in 1914 in Cairo were some of them (Tauber, 1997).

⁵ One of the official prove of the CUP's turkification policy was a report belonged to the British Council and dated on 4 April 1910: "The ministry of Justice abolished the old system of assigning judicial membership in Damascus to natives elected for a term of two years, and appointed permanent members to fill these posts. Four of newly appointed members are natives of Damascus, while the other eight are Turks. Similar procedure has been applied in four cazas of the vilayet, viz.: Homs, Baalbek, Bekka and Salt." (Haddad, 1994)

⁶ In the second annual convention of the CUP in Salonika in 1910, a decision had made, that was "the Turkish language be employed in all schools throughout the Empire, aiming at denationalization of all non-Turkish communities and instilling of patriotism among Turks." (Haddad, 1994)

⁷ The concept of "modern schools" was not accepted, especially for the reign of Abdülhamid II by Benjamin Fortna although it is being used and accepted by the most of the Ottoman historians. In his article (2000) he claims that the curriculum of the schools that Abdülhamid established was reorganized and controlled according to Islamic teaching.

The only reason for emergence of Arab nationalism was certainly not the CUP's national centralization policy and less Islamic attitudes. The uprising of Arab literature due to missionary activities in Syria and Lebanon and of Arabic as a language of the Qur'an and the Prophet due to the religious strategy that provided solidarity among two major components of the Empire might be put into an account as another reason. Moreover, the corruption and distortion in the Ottoman administration should be put into words. It is obvious that albeit the appearance of several groups demanding autonomous status, there was still not any extremist nationalist organization which directly wanted the independence from the Empire before World War I. Haddad's statement explains the condition; "*the Arab nationalist movement was not aiming at independence but autonomy*" and even Ernest Dawn admitted that by writing down that "... *despite the obvious value of Arabist theory in bolstering Arab pride, most Arabs remained Ottomanist until 1918*" although he tended to bring the roots of Arab nationalism in early years of 19th century. For all, it is likely to say that Turkification accelerated momentum to the Arab nationalist social movements after 1908.

Conclusion

Two crucial points should be extracted for general evaluations. First one is that the both Abdulhamid II and the CUP governments were both aiming to keep the Empire safe against penetration of European powers but they had different paths to follow. Secondly, the Ottoman Empire was not the only multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religion political entity, which the First World War diminished, but Austro-Hungarian Empire and British Empire had to dissolve. Therefore, triumph of modernism has transformed the Ottoman Empire together with all Europe and the rest of the world.

It can be said that the centralization policies had never ceased to continue throughout the 19th century, which includes Hamidian and CUP eras. They were wrapped with religious motifs in the Hamidian era while nationalistic motives in the CUP period. Naturally, the Arab responses to centralization policies were mostly reactionary but not generally secessionist in nature. Despite Turkification policy of CUP, Turks and Arabs generally showed their togetherness relying on Islam and the primary position of religion, Islam to identify people did not cease until the First World War. As demonstrated by Rasid Khalidi, Arabs and Turks lived side by side and allowed a broad and flexible range of identifications in the Ottoman context.

The general evaluations of the last decades of the Ottomans should not cover the initial conceiving nationalist policies among the subjects of the Empire. During the Abdülhamid era, these nationalist sentiments were restrained with the religious discourse and policies but not able to dissemination of it. However, the CUP's turkification policies enhanced the process and when the Ottoman were gone from the scene, Albanians, Turks, Kurds, and Arabs were looking for separate ethnic-oriented states for their future projections. It does not mean that these policy changes in Hamidian and CUP eras were the only reason for emergence of successor nation-states as there had been a century-long modelling of great western powers which then already initiated a nation-state structure forcing secular and ethnic-oriented polity.

Different paths to modernization have been one of the core political debates in modern history of Republic of Turkey, even now. Since AK party got the power in November 2002, these discussions have been influential in both domestic and foreign policies of Turkey (Tufekci, 2014; Tufekci, 2017a). Internationally (Dag, 2016) and domestically religious sensitivity in the policymaking has re-emerged in Turkey and this also re-initiate different world perspectives which are leading to polarizations social and political realms.

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