

Student Reference Number: 245028

Degree: MA in Near and Middle Eastern Studies

Name of the Course: the End of the Empire in Balkans and the Middle East

Course Code: 15PHIC004/ Master Dissertation

Nationalist Sentiments in Iraqi Provinces Compare to Egypt, Syria and Lebanon

by

Rahman DAG

Word Count: 10,171

Submission Date: 13.09.2010

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Abstract

From 19th century to up to now Arab nationalism has always been one of the fundamental issues discussed and analyzed by academicians. Most of the articles and books as to the nationalism in the Ottoman territory particularly in Arabian Peninsula have referred to Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon. It is true that one can find significant amount of resources for Arab nationalism in Modern Iraq but only a few of them were articulating nationalist sentiments and movements in Iraqi provinces of the Ottomans.

This remarkable distinction leads me to search the reason why Iraqi provinces are not remembered as a sort of centre for Arab Nationalism while Egypt, Syria and Lebanon are remembered. When these centres were debated in terms of nationalism, the reasons for planting the seeds of nationalist sentiments in Arabian provinces were generally mentioned; firstly European technological and cultural influence, missionary activities and the reforms, centralization policy and tribal structure. Therefore, the essay is going to analyze the effects of these reasons creating and rising nationalist sentiments in terms of Iraqi provinces. The fundamental question that the essay is seeking to answer is why Iraqi provinces did not become a kind of centre for Arab nationalism while several provinces did.

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Introduction

Nationalism was one of the strongest ideologies influencing the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans and the Middle East. Imported from Europe, it penetrated the political and intellectual life of the notables leading nationalist movements against Ottoman authority. Greek autonomy and independence triggered and expanded the desire for autonomy or indeed independence amongst subjects of different religions and ethnicities. Aside from the Balkan provinces, which gained their independence up until the last decade of 19th century, nationalist sentiments also emerged within the Arab regions of the Empire. Some authors, such as G. Antonius and E. Drawn attribute the origins of Arab nationalist movements to the beginning of 19th century, stemming from interactions between European and Arab culture which occurred with the French invasion of Egypt and the missionary activities that had been carried out for centuries among Christian Arabs in Lebanon. However, through carefully examination of the topic it becomes clear that these factors alone cannot be seen as the exact starting point of or indeed reason for Arab nationalism in the Middle East. Furthermore, Arab grievances were not due to nationalist demands but maladministration, corrupt officials and a desire for greater cultural freedoms.

Studying Arab nationalism in the Ottoman period, three regions tend come to mind: Lebanon, Egypt and Syria. The question that arises is why these cities were considered centres of Arab nationalism. If the preceding question is read differently, the issue is why other Arab regions did not become similar nationalist centres. This is the main question I seek to answer. In doing this, the focal point of my study will be the Iraqi provinces of the Ottoman Empire: Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. The reason for approaching the question above in a different manner is the lack of primary and secondary sources about nationalist sentiments and movements in these three provinces. Actually, this condition itself proves that there were no strong nationalist feelings there. In light of the whole situation, the main objective of this

essay is to examine and analyse the reasons for the absence of nationalism in these provinces and discover what aspect of these provinces meant that no study was made of Arab nationalism in them whilst a massive literature was compiled that focused on nationalism in Ottoman Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.

In regards to research, it is likely that Iraqi districts with nationalist movements have not been mentioned in academic literature due to the strong tribal social structure of Iraqi provinces, which impacted upon the economic and political interest in populations of Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. As the essay deals primarily with Arab nationalism, the province of Mosul will not receive the same degree of attention as the other Iraqi provinces due to its majority Kurdish population. The time period, which this essay covers, is between the 19th century with the interaction between European powers and the Arabs and the first attempts for reform and the First World War.

The essay comprises four main sections with a conclusion. First of all, the essay is going to begin with a short history of Ottoman Iraq from the conquest to the end of the Empire, which will provide a historical perspective on social structure of Iraq. Secondly, it is generally accepted that the reasons for Arab nationalism are the economic interactions with European Powers, the cultural influence of missionary activities on Arabs and the centralization policy of the Ottomans. These three reasons, which are going to constitute the following three sections and the reaction of the tribal structure to them, are going to be analysed in terms of the distinct Iraqi provinces. While doing this, comparing the Iraqi provinces with Egypt, Syria and Lebanon will also draw a clear picture for us to understand the significance of these three reasons in regards to the Ottoman Arab provinces and the differences between them. The essay will conclude with a comprehensive conclusion that shortly explains why the Iraqi provinces did not become a centre for the nationalist movement.

A short history of the Ottoman Iraqi provinces

These three main provinces of the Ottoman Empire had already lost their significance before the Ottomans took control over them. Due to the collapse of the Abbasid caliphate, the Mongol invasion and subsequent destruction in the thirteenth century (of the Baghdad irrigation system in particular), as well as the reinvasion by Timur-i Lenk (Tamerlane) in 1401, Baghdad and the adjacent provinces of Mosul and Basra did not regain their importance until the late 18th and early 19th centuries when the interests of the Ottomans and Western imperial power went increased in these areas. In fact, Mosul was important for the Ottomans because the presence of Kurdish tribes in this area acted as a buffer against the expansionist intentions of the Safavids over the Iraqi provinces and crucially, most of the people living the province were Sunni Muslims who were strictly opposed to the Shi`ite sect of Islam. Further south, Basra was no less significant than Mosul because of the vital ports located on its shores. This preserved the paramount important of the city until today. It was obviously the reason why there were some violent encounters between the Portuguese navy and the Ottomans during the 16th century. Furthermore, Baghdad has known as a seat of power and the capital of Abbasid caliphate. This does not mean that it had lost all the importance it had before. Hence, it was still a commercial centre where urban and tribal people interacted through commerce.

During the 16th century, the main struggle over Iraqi provinces was between the Ottoman Empire and the Safavid Empire. This continued until the collapse of the Ottomans in World War I and it has been considered that it has carried on between Turkey and Iran (successors of the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, respectively). The first entrance of the Ottoman Empire into the Iraqi areas was with the conquest of Mosul in 1516-17 by Sultan Suleiman I, (known as "Suleiman the Magnificent") and then Baghdad in 1534 and finally, the southern part of Iraq (Basra) between 1538 and 1546. From the first day of the invasion up to the early 19th century, the administration of these provinces was not completely organized and under the

direct control of the capital, Istanbul. As Cetinsaya states *“Like other outlying provinces which joined the Empire late, such as Egypt and the Yemen, Iraq was never fully integrated into Ottoman Administrative system, and the Porte did not maintain an all-embracing political control there.”* in his book, *“Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908”*

The weakness and strengths of the administration of these provinces resulted very much from the wars with the Safavids and tensions with the Portuguese until the late 18th century. Except in times of war, their administration was left to local notables and provincial tribal chiefs due to the fact that they were far from the centre, Istanbul, and that at this time, the main interests and areas of expansion of the Ottomans were to be found in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire was accepted until the last day of the Empire although the pre-eminence of the Empire was sometimes threatened by local notables and foreign powers such as the French and British. However, acceptance of the Ottomans was never officially challenged.

The Notables were of great importance in the administration of Mosul, Baghdad and Basra provinces. In Mosul, the Jalili family were involved in the local government apparatus from 1726 to 1843. In Suleymaniyah, the Baban family held power until 1850. The Mamluks¹ (military slaves) administered Baghdad from the early 18th century until the reign of Da`ud Pasha in 1831 and in Basra the Afrasiyabs were governors between 1612 and 1688. They were followed by the Muntafiq and Hawiza families. They were sometimes appointed as rulers of the city under the authority of the Empire and sometimes even the officials appointed to posts in the area from Istanbul were determined through negotiation with these notables (Al-Tikriti, 2007). Another factor affecting the administration process was the

¹ This self-perpetuating class of military strongmen had originated from Ottoman slave converts from the Caucasus. Raised in the *ko`le* slave ranks of Ottoman martial tradition, these Georgians were at times so powerful that they controlled affairs from Basra and al-Hasa on the Gulf to Mardin and Urfa in Eastern Anatolia. (Al-Tikriti, 2007, “Ottoman Iraq”)

presence of the Sufi Orders (Tarikats in Turkish), most notably the Qadiri and increasingly the Naqshabandi which were strongly shaped by Kurdish Shaikhs and Sayyids² (Tripp, 2002). Generally speaking, in these three provinces of the Empire, dynastic, parochial, and tribal identities and loyalties governed people's lives.

The traditional land system of the Ottoman Empire was implemented in these provinces according to the interests of the Ottomans. Mosul experienced the implementation of the *Timar* system in which cavalry officers had the right to collect taxes and engage these resources in agriculture whilst providing, in times of need, military service in return. It is obvious that it was because the rival power of the Safavids bordered the province. On the other hand, Baghdad and Basra were administered as *Salyane* provinces in which the local governor had the right to collect the taxes but also had to send fixed annual sums to the Imperial Treasury (Cetinsaya, 2006).

In the second half of 18th century, Iraq became a significant part of the Ottoman Empire. This could be because the Ottomans' perception of themselves gradually changed when they compared themselves to Western European powers. By the late 18th century the Ottomans had begun to reconsider their power, especially in regards to the military. During this period, since the Ottomans were interested in the city of Baghdad and its two neighbouring provinces (Mosul and Basra), Baghdad had become the main administrative centre in Iraq and Basra increased its significance within the Empire because its harbour was strategically crucial for supporting actions against the navies of expanding European powers, this time not only Portugal but also Spain and England. It became the main gateway to the rest of the world for not only Iraq but also Syria and Egypt. As these developments occurred, the names of appointed pashas and the provinces where they were appointed increasingly begin to be seen

² People who claimed that they were directly descended from the Prophet Muhammed.

in documents from the time (Nissen and Heine, 2009). This is a good enough indicator to show that the provinces started to distract the Ottomans from their agenda.

The late of 18th and early 19th century can be seen as one of the breaking points in Ottoman history due to the fact that the Ottomans realized that they were far behind Europe in terms of their military, administration and economy. Accordingly, Ottoman history students can identify the last century of the Ottoman Empire as a series of reforms and see that these reforms had an inevitable effect on the Ottoman provinces. The genesis of the reform period in Ottoman history is considered in some circles to have been in the reign of Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) and was followed by the reign of Mahmud II (1808-1839). The central characteristic of the reforms period was the policy of centralization in administration, military improvements and a taxation system that would fund expenditure that arose through the reforms. Reforms in these three fundamental areas went on until the end of the Empire covering the Tanzimat, Hamidian and Young Turk eras with fluctuations in momentum.

The first thing done to achieve a more centralized administration was the reclaiming of power back from local power centres. For this reason in 1831 Ali Riza Pasha, the commander and the governor of Aleppo, was sent to remove the Memluk governor of Baghdad and Da`ud Pasha was defeated. Following that, Ali Pasha ended the Mamelukes governorship in Basra and the administration of Mosul under the Jalili family in 1834. The beginning of the reforms began with putting Mosul province under Baghdad's control and Basra under the direct control of the capital, Istanbul. Thus, by the beginning of Tanzimat, three major provinces in Iraq were under the direct control of the Ottoman Administration in the reign of Sultan Abdulmecit. In a word, this was a clear attempt at expanding the power of the Porte, which had a tendency to centralize administration of the provinces by rendering local government ineffective.

The *Gulhane's Khatt-i Sharif Decree* in 1839 and *Khatt-i Humayun Decree* in 1856, known as the Tanzimat Reforms, were proclaimed by Sultan Abdulmecit and included restructuring administration of provinces, the taxation system, property registration, military conscription for all people (not only Muslims), equal citizenship in legal terms and the nature of the education system. Furthermore, the law of the Vilayet³, related to the provincial structure in 1864 and the law of the Land⁴ in 1858 were the two other fundamental reforms in the Tanzimat Era.

The reforms were brought firstly to Baghdad by Necip Pasha in 1844 and to Mosul by Vecihi Pasha in 1848 but nothing changed in Baghdad until the period of Abdulkерim Pasha as Vali of Baghdad and Mehmet Namik Pasha as the commander of the army in the Iraq and Hijaz regions. The first initiative they carried out was the registration of the population for the purposes of conscription. An exemption from tax for Baghdad was requested for a period of three to five years in order to finance reforms. A modern high school and a dam to decrease the effects of flooding coming from the Euphrates were established. These initiatives indicated that the cost of reforms in Baghdad and the Iraqi provinces was going to be extremely high. It was also realized that the problems of the Iraqi provinces would have been better dealt with by a single administration. Therefore, Mosul was reduced to the status of a *Sancak* of Baghdad and Vecihi Pasha was sent to Baghdad and asked to prepare a report to tackle the problems of the region. In the report he claimed that the key solution to problems was the establishment of law and order and the control of the tribes who had to be made to pay taxes (Cetinsaya, 2006). One of the conspicuous Pashas in the reform Period in Iraq, Mehmed Namik Pasha (1861-1867) stated that “*Beside the public works and administrative*

³ According to the Law of Vilayet in 1864, the old system of eyelet was replaced by the Vilayet which is divided into Sancaks, the sancaks into kazas, the kazas into nahiyes and villages.

⁴ According to The Law of Land in 1858, the categories of the land were as follows: Private Property (mulk), State property (miri), religious endowment land (Vakf), communal or public land (metruk), and idle or barren land (mevat)

reforms, his improvement in navigation in the Tigris and rising agricultural production raised the hope, which proved justified, that increasing trade and production would increase the provincial government's tax revenue (Cetinsaya, 2006).

The implementation of laws and decrees remained ineffective in the provinces until a strong and energetic Pasha was appointed from the Capital in 1869, Midhat Pasha. He started to implement new laws of *Vilayet* and property. He also began the land tenure system which aimed to increase the amount of revenue coming from agriculture by encouraging nomadic people to settle down and lead sedentary lives. In regards to the law of the *Vilayet*, he fully implemented the law with its amendment as made in 1867. Midhat Pasha did not only implement the Law of Vilayet and Land but also arranged some fundamental changes to organize the land and tax system of Baghdad and Basra. He realized that the main problem was the tribal structure of society. Therefore, he delivered the state lands (*miri*) to the public with title deeds (*tapu sanadi*)⁵, a document that indicated ownership of a particular piece of land in the name of an individual. The backlash against the new laws was too harsh and unfortunately they were not fully implemented. For this reason, these sorts of documents were put into the names of Sheikhs or powerful and prestigious individuals, meaning that they did not bring about too many changes. (Tripp, 2002) Moreover, he classified these lands with title into three types and taxed them according to their productivity. He also decreased the high rate of taxes on agriculture which he thought angered tribes and turned them against the government.

Beside technological changes, social and political changes occurred generally in the Iraqi provinces during the reign of Abdulhamid II. Firstly, he did not trust his bureaucratic corps and sometimes by-passed official authorities. This empowered some sheikhs, tribal leaders

⁵ The land remained the property of the state, but the registered owner of the title deeds would enjoy virtually complete rights of ownership. (Tripp, 2002)

and notables and provided him with sources of intelligence on the officials who were opposed to him (Tripp, 2002). The growing body of educated officers trained in the newly opened schools established in the Tanzimat Era were more liberal and so eager to bring back the constitution. They were therefore opposed to Abdulhamid's absolute authority throughout the Empire. He had already noticed this development and took the new situation into account in making political decisions. Therefore, the number of local notables and chiefs and especially sheikhs gradually increased, as well as their power. A good evaluation of the situation has been written by Tripp: "... such as the *naqib al-esraf* in Baghdad, *Abd al-Rahman al-Kailani*, or the *naqib al-esraf* of Basra and his son, *Sayyid Talib*, as well as by *Kurdish chieftains*, such as *Sheikh Sa'id Barzinji*, scion of a sheikhly family of the *Qadiriyya* order. They cultivated their links with the Sultan in Istanbul in part to outmanoeuvre the transitory parade of Ottoman provincial officials and thereby to secure their own positions."

Overall, his reign was a most pioneering period of fundamental reform which certainly made the Empire appear more westernized. Aside from the abandonment of the constitution, his strategies maintained the presence of the Empire on the world stage. These strategies had positive effects on the Iraqi provinces but the negative effects of nationalism, opposition driven by the senior bureaucrats in Iraqi provinces (and even in Istanbul) and the interference of foreign powers, especially the British Empire⁶, more than outweighed than Abdulhamid's positive efforts. As a result, in 1908 he was forced to abdicate by a coup d'état organized by the *Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Committee of Union and Progress, CUP), also known as the Young Turks.

By the start of the First World War, local conscription was reorganized for the 6th army in Baghdad and the implementation of educational reforms was improved. Additionally, the

⁶ Many reports had been prepared about the strategic presence of the British Empire in the Gulf area, for example, by Mehmet Ali Pasha who was a former Mutasarrif of Basra In January 1889. In this report, Mehmet Ali Pasha warned the Porte about the strategic and dangerous aims of the British Empire in the Gulf. (Cetinsaya, 2003)

Baghdad-Istanbul Railway was close to completion and a network of telegraph lines covered the Iraqi provinces. These changes increased political and social mobilization across the provinces as well as in the Porte.

Unsurprisingly, the consequence of new educational system not only produced Young Turks but also Young Arabs who were sent to the capital for education in a new western style school. Most of them were the sons of notables, sheikhs and chieftains in the Iraqi provinces. When they finished their education they returned to the region and began to occupy positions in local administration. This new generation increased political activity in the Iraqi provinces with the help of journals and newspapers. For example, decentralization was one of the main discussions going on between the government and Young Arabs⁷, fuelled by the desire for autonomy in the administration of Arab provinces. They looked to the semi-independent Arab rulers in the Persian Gulf supported by the British Empire (Tripp, 2002).

The suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire in Iraqi provinces came to an end with the invasion of Basra in 1914 at the beginning of the Great War. It was followed by the capture of Baghdad in 1917 and Mosul in 1918. Military reforms of the Ottoman Empire in Iraq could be seen in the victory of the 6th army against British troops in 1916 but it was unable to continue holding out for more than another year against British military power. It is obvious that inhabitants of the Iraqi provinces had generally lived in peace from the 16th to the early 20th centuries in spite of the multi-ethnic and religious social structure. This was because of the Ottoman Empire's traditional system of administration in remote areas, based around allowing self rule and carrying out minimal intervention. In the 1800's the reforms began to affect every part of the Ottoman Empire and the Iraqi Provinces benefited from these improvements up until the Great War. It can easily be concluded that the reforms and changes carried out throughout the

⁷ Such as Tawfiq al-Suwaidi, Naji Shawkat, Handi al –Pachachi and Hikmat Sulaiman (Tripp, 2002)

19th century allowed the infrastructure of the Iraqi provinces to be such that it could support an independent state.

The Reason for Arab Nationalism

The notion of nationalism emerged in Europe in opposition to the religiously dominant social structure as a result of the Enlightenment, whose main principle was the importance of rationality over religion. This rendered European thinking more rational and scientific and led to a strong movement away from the religiously determined social structure. For that reason the fundamental factor that kept people together and formed people's identity changed from religion to nationality. Whilst European communities identified themselves as Christian before enlightenment, following it their primary identity became their nationality, such as British, French, and German. Political integration of the Italian city-states and German lands was a product of that new philosophy. Nationalism placed itself on a substantial basis and exported itself to other part of the World. Additionally, thanks to rationalism without religious pressure, scientific and technological development boomed with incredible speed. The political integration and well-established economic conditions of European national states automatically became an admirable model for all other states after that as European powers proved their strength with military victories against other states. This created an environment in which it became considered that only way to become powerful was to be ethnically organized and rational.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Ottomans were intellectually forced to accept the military and economic superiority of Europe, they definitely realized their militarily backwardness when they were defeated by Russians in 1770's and were forced to sign the Treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca, which marked the first time that the Ottoman Empire had lost territory. In the course of time, that backwardness showed itself in every aspects of life, such as in administration, intellectual and cultural life or the economic situation. In the light of these conditions, generally speaking it is more accurate to say that the source of all nationalist movements within the Ottoman borders, including Turkish, Kurdish and Arab nationalism,

was the revival of Western European states compared to Eastern states. The efforts of the Ottomans to catch up with the power of Western States paved the way firstly for Arab and then for Turkish and Kurdish nationalism. Although this explanation of Arab nationalism is highly generalised, it is meaningful in regards to giving an expanded historical perspective.

Besides that general reason, there are specific and detailed reasons for Arab nationalism. In early works, Antonius's book and Dawn's article about Arab nationalism claim that such a condition was to be found amongst the Arabs themselves, this being their fierce inherent nationalism and long standing desire for an independent Arab state. Contemporary authors, such as Hourani, Hanioglu, Cetinsaya, Tibi, Haddad, Abu-Manneh...etc, with more academic and archival research brought more evidence to state that whilst there were some radical Arab nationalists, most of them were Lebanese and Syrian Christians and the influence of missionary schools on Arab nationalism was not really as strong as much as Antonius claimed.

Figuring out the reasons for Arab nationalism is not the objective of this essay but looking at them would be beneficial in order to compare the Arab nationalism found in the tribally structured Iraqi provinces with that of other Arab provinces, those that primarily come to mind in a discussion of Arab nationalism. It is helpful to understand the response of the tribal structure of Iraqi provinces to the causes of Arab nationalism.

It is well known that in terms of the social and cultural features of the Arab people, loyalty and solidarity began firstly with the family, then clan and tribe, indicating that loyalty depended primarily on kinship (Holt, 1996). This feature was theorized and broadly analysed by Ibn-Khaldun as *asabiyye*⁸. If, however, this were a general characteristic of the Arab

⁸ In Arabic terminology, *asabiyye* means the feeling of being together according to blood-relationships. Ibn-Khaldun extended the meaning of the concept as a group solidarity and group assertion and considered it as one of the main determinants in Arab and Islamic history.

peoples, it begs the question of why the tribal structure continued in the Iraqi provinces whilst it disappeared in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon where nationalist sentiments emerged instead, leading to these regions being remembered as centres of Arab nationalism.

Building upon this point, the essay will focus upon the link between the tribal structures of the Iraqi provinces and the fundamental cause of Arab nationalism. There are several crucial questions that arise in this regard such as the extent to which European penetration influenced the nationalist movements in the Iraqi provinces and whether it was as profoundly influential in the Iraqi provinces as it was in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. There is also the question as to whether or not western missionary activities were responsible for arousing nationalist sentiments. If this is not the case what was the response of the strict tribal structure in these provinces? How did the relationship between policies of centralization and the tribal structure affect Arab nationalism in Iraq? These main questions will be discussed below.

European Influence

It is undeniable that the emergence of nationalist sentiments amongst the Arabs was related to changes in the social and economic structures in which they existed. With the development of the interests of European powers in the Ottoman territories and the decreasing power of the Ottomans themselves, the dependence of the Ottomans upon Western powers gradually increased from the late 18th century onwards. The first indication of this new condition was the invasion of Egypt by France in 1798 and the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768-1774. The French invasion of Egypt in particular opened up the Middle East to the European powers. Although the French presence in Egypt lasted only 3 years, the landing of French expeditionary forces in Alexandria was most significant in terms of it being the first encounter of a European power with the Middle East (Philipp, 1984). Its significance stems from the fact that the Europeans brought new military and industrial technologies which were very different from the traditional military technologies and systems of production of the

Ottomans. The knowledge of the Europeans was admired by the Egyptians as Al-Jabarti, an Islamic historian, emphasized in his records (Hourani, 1991). If carefully considered, this invasion can be seen as the starting point of the meeting of Europe and the Middle East, whose influence would be carried through as far as Basra via Syria. This does not mean, however, that nationalism was transferred directly to the Middle East by Europeans in the early 19th century but it demonstrated a different military and intellectual model that could be modelled for the inhabitants of the Middle East. The changes which occurred in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria due to relations with European powers, when compared to changes in the Iraqi provinces, will give clear evidence explaining why tribal structures preserved themselves in Iraqi provinces and these areas did not become a centre for Arab nationalism.

In early 1800's, commercial relations boomed with regular steamship lines running from the Mediterranean port cities such as Alexandria and Beirut, to London, Liverpool, Marseille and Trieste. British exports to these port cities increased approximately 800% in value between 1815 and 1850. At this time, Bedouins in Syria were wearing skirts made in England from Lancashire cotton. The trade of raw materials and food between Europe and Egypt went up dramatically. For instance, in the second decade of 19th century a French engineer, Louis Jumel, planted long staple cotton for high quality textiles, an initiative that sharply increased the cultivable land area for the cotton exported to England. The profit coming from this export reached 1.5 million Egyptian pounds from almost nothing by 1860's. Another conspicuous aspect was the population of Egypt, which increased from 4 million in 1800 to 5.5 million in the 1860's. This ratio might seem low but given the conditions of the times it is a significant increase. Furthermore, Muhammad Ali, a Turk of Macedonian origin, who was the governor of Egypt, made use of European military power and technology. He therefore used the European powers as models to help cement his power in Egypt, commencing a reform movement which included sending students to Europe for education, restructuring his

troops in the mould of the French and British armies and forming new modern schools to train officials of extended administration. Moreover, he confiscated all agricultural lands and the property of religious endowments and built modern irrigation canals and dams to water the agricultural lands.

Due to all these reforms Egypt noticeably developed. It even became powerful enough to be able to threaten the capital, Istanbul. But such a politically and economically strong power was not acceptable for the Europeans and the Ottomans. As a result of political conditions, Muhammad Ali's Egypt was restrained and controlled by the British. Generally speaking, from that point to the end of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt preserved its status as a Europeanized centre in a stationary position under British supervision. In the light of these historical facts, it is highly possible to say that thanks to early interaction with the European powers and their culture Egypt was inevitably influenced by European military power, political and economic administration, culture and life style. Within that period, the cities of Cairo and Alexandria turned into major urban areas and intellectual centres. Automatically the notion of a nation was exported from Europe to Egypt via merchants and students who had been sent to Europe. Eventually, Muhammad Ali Pasha, who thought that he was now stronger than the Ottomans themselves, turned his attention to Syria.

Syria, as another centre, had already been significant for the Ottomans because of its geographic location which allowed it to act as a passageway to the port cities. Most of the goods produced in the Arabian Peninsula were delivered to the ports through Damascus and Aleppo. As a consequence of this aspect of Syria's nature, the level of urbanization and mobility of city life were immensely high. Muhammad Ali's and the Europeans' expansionist intentions caused a great level of interaction amongst the peoples of Syria and Europe. He eagerly sought to do what he had done in his lands in Syria as well by sending his son, Ibrahim Pasha who took control of Damascus for a decade in 1830's. Almost the same effects

which had happened in Egypt occurred in Syria. In addition to the Egyptians' intentions, western economic influence in Syria, as it had done in Egypt, transformed the life of Syrians from a narrow to an open society and the economy from a subsistence economy to a market one (Abu-Manneh, 1980). All these factors paved the way for the increasing political influence of the European powers on the Arabian areas of the Ottoman Empire.

Another centre of Arab nationalism was Lebanon, which encountered almost the same experiences. In the early 19th century, the ports in Beirut and inhabitants of the city had already met French commercial ships, merchants and companies. Because of this, local companies in Beirut established several commercial contacts with the markets of Marseilles, Genoa and Trieste to sell their local products. After the 1830's, British commercial interests in Beirut and in Syria generally dramatically increased the area's economic and trade potential. As Issawi states in his book, *The Fertile Crescent 1800-1914*, the relations between western Syria (today's Lebanon) and the European states was not only in trade but also in industry, transport, finance and social areas. This proves the extent to which the interactions among them were immense.

As a part of human nature, the exchange and borrowing of thoughts and ideas inevitably occurred while these commercial relations were taking place. The concept of liberty and nation naturally took their place in the minds of the Levantine and Arab peoples. In the light of the explanations above, it is easier to claim that the interactions with Europeans changed the traditional way of life and thinking of the inhabitants of the area. As a sociological fact, when the level of urbanization increased, tribal social structure, that's to say loyalty to small communities, decreased. Due to the early meeting of the Levant with European thoughts, it produced suitable conditions for the emergence of nationalist sentiments. It does not mean, as Antonius and Dawn claimed that, even in early 19th century, nationalist demands had reached a great level but it seems true if one says that the conditions for national discourse were

gradually generated through European influence upon the area. While Egypt, Syria and Lebanon were having close commercial relations with Europeans, in the Iraqi provinces there was no such thing, though this is not to say that there were no commercial activities there. In this regard, Shields and Sluglett put forward evidence that proved the existence of trade relations between urban and rural areas and nomads and semi-nomads. For instance, pastoral products constituted the most important part of Mosul trade and arable products became the most important goods in Baghdad and adjacent areas due to their commercial value. As can be seen in the Iraqi provinces, intra-provincial or intra-tribal trade relations were dominant and did not have the same effects as the trade between European states and the Arabs had on the society.

The peak of European influence in the early 19th century is one of the fundamental reasons for why Iraqi provinces did not become centres for the Arab nationalist movement. Apart from Basra (which gained some importance due to the British presence to protect the route to India) neither Mosul nor Baghdad were faced with direct invasion or strong penetration by European powers and therefore the people living there did not encounter the concepts of nation or nationalism in early 19th century, whilst the economy and trade relations in the Iraqi provinces did not grow as it did in Egypt and Syria. In other words, during the 19th century the Iraqi provinces had remained almost totally isolated from European influence and most of the political and trade relationships there were based on traditional structures and Islam (Longrigg, 1953). Due to the lack of expanded commercial relations and intellectual interaction with European powers; the tribal structure of Iraqi provinces could preserve itself. Contrary to other cities, the first interference to eliminate the tribal structure of Iraqi provinces came from the capital, Istanbul. For example, the Egyptian reforms were not an Ottoman initiative; indeed they were owed to Muhammad Ali Pasha. But in the Iraqi provinces as mentioned in the historical background at the beginning of this essay, the

centralization policy in the administration of all provinces of the Empire started in 1831 in Baghdad.

Furthermore, the concrete consequences of the reformist policies of the Ottomans, which began in the reign of Sultan Selim and Mahmut II in the first three decades of 19th century gradually made themselves felt. Graduated students from the modern schools and students graduated from European universities were integrated into the administrative corps. As a result, the percentage of literate people increased, new newspapers were published and delivered throughout the Empire and Europe. If these improvements are compared between the Iraqi provinces and Egypt and Syria, they give us a clear idea with which to evaluate the conditions of the Iraqi provinces and others. While in Egypt and Syria there were more than 10 newspapers in the early 19th century the first newspaper in the Iraqi provinces was only established in Baghdad in 1869 by Mithad Pasha, the governor of Baghdad between 1869 and 1872. According to these figures, a crucial question should be asked, whether it is to be expected the strength of intellectualism or ideologies should be great in an area where literacy was low and there was only one newspaper. The answer of course is that such things cannot be expected. Eventually, it can be said that without discussion as to whether or not European influence was positive, it remained a turning point, bringing changes in the traditional Ottoman ways in all aspects of life and paved the way for new thoughts and ideas. For this reason and their interaction with European culture, technology, knowledge and military power, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon became Europeanized earlier and more suddenly than the Iraqi provinces and for the same reason, whilst the names of Egyptian and Syrian cities are remembered and considered as centres of nationalist thought, the names of the Iraqi provinces, Baghdad, Basra and Mosul were never associated with any nationalist movements until the very late 19th century.

Missionary Activities

Missionary schools are explicitly another factor opening the doors to new ideas in the Middle East and especially in Greater Syria where the largest Christian population lived. This does not mean that they are one of the causes of Arab nationalism but they were really influential on Christian Arabs. It is only for this reason that the missionaries were interested in the Arab Christians with the intention of spreading their religion amongst Muslims and of converting other Christian denominations into Christians of their own sect. For instance, the presence of the French Jesuits dated back to the 17th century even earlier but they had a break through in Syria and Lebanon at the beginning of the 19th century and finally, in 1831, they were allowed to practice in Ottoman territory.

The first thing they did was to establish schools. This kind of activity was very effective and they formed the first modern university, St. Joseph University in Beirut in 1875. Another active missionary group were the American Presbyterians, who arrived at Beirut in 1820 and established a printing press in 1834. By the 1860's they had thirty-three schools accommodating a thousand children. Their activities ended up with formation of the Syrian Protestant College in 1866, whose name was changed, as the American University of Beirut and which still exists today. On the one hand, the Jesuits' printing press produced academic works in French and Latin, whilst the Americans spent too much effort printing school books in Arabic. It would not, therefore, be wrong to say that they contributed to the levels of literacy and the revival of Arabic literature in contrast to Turkish (Kirk, 1964).

As a result of these activities, the incidence of placards and sign boards should be given as an example to explain the extent to which missionary activities improved society in terms of literacy and culture and language. A group of twenty-two people, including Muslims and Druze but originally lead by educated Christians from the Syrian Protestant College covered the cities with placards demanding Arabic as the official language, freedom of the press, and

self government for Syria. This event was an implicit indication of the level of politicization of the society and its openness to the concepts of liberty, freedom and self-government because of the developments in education started in the early 19th century.

For instance, the renaissance of literacy was triggered by the Christian scholar Nasif al-Yaziji (1800-1871), who deeply studied the Arabic language. His studies and research were unique for the time. As Hourani says, “almost all Arab writers of the nineteenth century were his pupils, either directly or indirectly”. Even the American missionaries wanted him to correct and re-edit Arabic religious texts about Christianity. Another product of the missionary activities contributing to the revival of the Arabic language was Faris al-Shidyaq (1805-1887), working with the American missionary and who was the first Christian who converted to Protestantism. Lastly, one of the most important nationalist authors was Burtus al-Bustani (1819-1883), a Syrian Christian who taught the missionaries Arabic. The ideas of these three authors intersected on the belief that Arab culture and language were not inferior to any other languages or cultures but were, on the contrary, superior to them, having simply lost their influence. To regain their lost dignity, Arabs should learn from the achievements of the European culture (Tibi, 1997). In spite of such thoughts, they did not directly mention complete independence from the Ottomans whilst criticising the administration.

Another significant reason for why the Lebanon was the fundamental gateway for the entrance of Western influence into the Arab provinces of the Empire was commercial intercourse it had with Europe. It is known that even in Phoenician times the shores of Lebanon were the major trade centre between the Arab world and the West. In the Ottoman administration, Christians did not have the right to own land until 1867 so this led them to work in trade and they established themselves in the towns instead of the villages (Zeine, 1973). As Toynbee states that this could be the principle reason for why most Christians

remained merchants and were in contact with Europe, due to both their common religion and trade relations.

Compared to Syria and Lebanon, there were no missionary activities in the Iraqi provinces until the late 19th century. The first mission located in Baghdad was the Church Missionary Society presided over by the British. They established their church and hospital in Baghdad in 1882 and enlarged their area of activity to include Mosul. The first European empire interested in the Iraqi provinces was the British Empire, due to its traditional policy of keeping secure the route to India. As a result, they landed in Basra to control steamship lines along the Tigris and the external commercial waterway to India. Although the French missions were the oldest ones in Iraqi provinces, they then began to work actively in the 1880's and had two boy's schools, a press, a dispensary and an orphanage in Baghdad. Americans followed the French mission with the Arabian mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of America, establishing a school, a dispensary and a hospital in Basra (Longrigg, 1953). In regards to trade, most Christians in the Iraqi provinces were also associated with trade but their numbers in Iraq were not as great as in Greater Syria which consisted of today's Lebanon and Syria. This situation could be seen in the Arabian provinces due to the prohibitions on Christians owning land.

As is obvious from the information above, whilst missionary activities in Syria began in the early 19th century, they only began in the Iraqi provinces in the late 19th century. That also meant that the influence of missionary activities in increasing literacy and imposing new ideas such as liberty and equality in Syria did not appear in Iraqi provinces until the very late 19th century. Additionally, in Iraqi provinces there were no intellectuals who articulated nationalist sentiments and modern concepts coming from Europe as there were in Syria. This was another significant reason for why the Iraqi provinces considered when Arab nationalism is discussed.

Actually, there had always been missionary activities throughout the Ottoman lands as Christians made up the second largest component of the Empire, though they were in peace under the Ottoman system. Socially and politically, each religious community existed as a separate entity. This system was known as the *Millet* system, inherited from preceding Islamic states and successfully worked until the 19th century. Thanks to the Millet system, Christians were always recognized as a separate and internally independent group in their religious practice but they were not the equals of Muslims. Yet, new economic, social and educational improvements originating in Europe forced the Ottomans to accept fundamental changes such as the edict of Tanzimat in 1839 and the reforms edict, Hatt-i Humayun in 1856. The vital importance of these edicts stems from the fact that they brought equality in civil and political rights between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. The aim was to create an identity covering all subjects instead of local identities based on religion. To Resit Pasha and his colleagues these edicts would cease the spread of nationalism and separatism among Christian communities and restrict the ability of foreign powers to intervene in internal affairs (Zurcher, 1993). In other words, they aimed to transfer the local loyalties of people, whether religious or ethnic, to the Ottoman dynasty and the state.

The Reforms, Centralization Policy and Tribal Structure

The Russo-Ottoman War of the 1770's was not the first military defeat but was the most serious and the great resultant territorial loss sparked the need for military reforms. Thanks to the war, the Ottomans realized that they were far behind the military power of Europe. For that reason, the first concrete initiative to improve the army and replace the mobile army with a standing army commenced in the reign of Sultan III but this target was only reached under Sultan Mahmud II, who abolished the Janissaries and established the “the triumphant soldiers of Muhammad.” The reforms, which were started in the field of military, brought with them new demands in different fields (Cleveland, 2004). The reforms employed in the Ottoman army had, by the end of the century, helped create a new idea that reforms should be carried out in all aspects of the Empire for it to arrive at the level of Europe, this emerging and finding adherents amongst the Ottoman elite.

Fundamental noteworthy steps were taken by Mahmud II. The influence of *Derebeys* who were mediating between the centre and those in administration was removed and the traditional Ottoman bureaucracy was reorganized by establishing the ministries for internal centralization and the translation office for correspondence with abroad. These reforms were followed by forming of modern schools teaching science in addition to religious courses. Furthermore, to decrease of the power of *ulama*, respected religious people, he confined them to render their institutions a part of the state bureaucracy. That was mainly for controlling the economic resources of *waqf*, which was controlled by *ulama* to cover the expenditure of Europeanization of the Ottoman army. If all these reforms are taken together, the picture that can be seen is that of centralizing all power in the Ottoman Empire. The rest of the Sultans after Mahmud II and the government of the Progress and Union party sought to increase the level of the centralization policies to keep the Empire safe and united. While the requirements of the reforms were implemented, society was naturally transforming itself from a traditional

model to a modern one. Within this period until the end of the Empire, the same effect which the intervention of European power had on Arabs happened to Ottoman society at large. The more modern schools, the more educated students were inspired by European ideas such as liberty, constitution, fraternity...etc. The improvements in communications via newspapers, telegraph, railways as well as the level of literacy paved the way for a more open society and the demands from authorities dramatically increased to a level which the Ottomans could not meet. For example, an Arab national consciousness emerged amongst Arabs and they sought to have more positions in the administration of Arab provinces. While this was happening, the Ottomans intended to implement all the reforms in the Balkans and the Arab provinces to survive and keep their presence in these regions.

Yet the centralization policies in administrative, economic and social spheres challenged the interests of those people who had benefited from the traditional Ottoman systems. As Cleveland states, they also disrupted the political and social harmony that had endured for nearly 300 years. The reaction of the Janissaries could be given as a primary example of that situation but for the Arabian provinces in particular, the local notables who fulfilled the role of intermediaries between the centre and the people in urban and rural areas reacted to the reforms according to their interests. The interaction between the notables and the authorities can be called the politics of the notables. In short, the Ottoman reforms had been implemented to bridge the gap between the considerably powerful states of Europe and the Empire in terms of military power and administration, encompassing an enormous number of areas, from tax collection to the land ownership system. As a consequence, there had emerged a strong intention to reshape the military, administration, legislation and education systems during the previous century. The implications of these fundamental reforms showed themselves much later. For instance, the students educated in modern schools did not appear until the 1830's and at that time their number was not adequate to meet the demand

for professional officials in the newly established administration and military. As mentioned, the centralization policy of the Empire undermined the position of the notables and sheikhs in the provinces due to the fact that governors of provinces and sub-regions were directly appointed from the centre and only answered to the centre (Tripp, 2002). The appointment of these educated students to high positions cemented the central control but also created an interminable struggle amongst the notables, sheikhs and governors. This condition could be claimed to be the state of affairs for almost all the Arabian provinces including Egypt. It is because of this that the tribal and sheikhdom based social structure of Arabs, Kurds and to some extent also Turks was more or less the same. This seems to be one of the fundamental reasons for nationalist movements amongst all the ethnic groups within the Empire. It was this struggle, intentionally or not, which forced the defeated side to embrace the popular and sensitive concept of nationalist ideology. Another position that should be mentioned here is that leading tribes or families could see popular sentiments such as nationalism and support them so as not to lose their influence (Khoury, 1991). In short, the explanations of the clashes of interest, though not entirely, are certainly partly suitable for describing the struggles amongst the different actors. Several examples of centralization policies are given below, together with the challenges which they brought to notables in Syria, in comparison with the Iraqi provinces.

As an example of the resistance offered to the centralization policy due to the increased demand for taxes, a rebellion inspired by the notables erupted in Syria in 1819 but was suppressed by the Ottoman garrisons. Another one stemming from the same reason occurred in 1831. As a result, the governor was killed, the army driven out and government buildings were burnt down. Syria was then occupied by Ibrahim Pasha until 1840 when the Ottomans established their administration there again. Afterwards, the Ottoman military presence in the Syrian provinces became generally approved and unchallenged. The struggle for power

between the notables and the governors in the city thus did not take a military form until the last decade of the Empire; it was conducted instead along more modern and sophisticated lines and was concentrated mainly in the local council (the Majlis), which was the fundamental institution formed by the Tanzimat reforms (Maoz, 1966).

Although the effectiveness of the reforms in regards to the tax system and administration showed differences from province to province, period to period and governor to governor (Zurcher, 1993), the principle attempts at centralizing the Empire were the Land Law of 1858⁹ and the Law of Vilayet of 1864¹⁰. The first aimed to bring order to the system of land tenure in the Empire, providing an official guarantee for owners and increasing the acreage of agricultural land contributing to the treasury. The Law of Vilayet aimed to reorganize the administration of the Empire and extend the authority of the state to every corner of it. In the case of Syria, the nature of the politics of notables changed with the newly emergent conditions which were as described: *“Certainly, by the late nineteenth century, class formation was well underway in Damascus. Families from different status-determined social backgrounds (religious scholars, military personnel, merchants) had coalesced into a bureaucratic-landholding class closely allied to the increasingly powerful central government. The Ottoman Land Code of 1858 was a milestone in the stabilization of property rights and thus the consolidation of the bureaucratic-landholding class”* (Reilly, 1992).

Generally speaking, after the 19th century, the notable families of the Ottoman Empire took active positions in politics, forming the future of the Empire (Özoğlu, 2001). This evaluation directs us to acknowledge the ideas of Khoury and Hourani who claim that, in the context of Damascus, the role of notable families such as the *Azm* family played a significant role in the

⁹ According to The Law of Land in 1858, the categories of the land were as follows; Private Property (mulk), State property (miri), religious endowment land (Vakf), communal or public land (metruk), and idle or barren land (mevat)

¹⁰ According to the Law of Vilayet in 1864, the old system of eyelet was replaced by the Vilayet which is divided into Sancaks, the sancaks into kazas, the kazas into nahiyes and villages.

emergence of nationalist movements in Syria. With notable families having such an effect on nationalist movements, one must ask why they failed to have the same influence in the Iraqi provinces which did not have the same reputation for Arab nationalism. The answer to this crucial question can be found within the extremely fragmented social structure existing along ethnic and religious lines in the Iraqi provinces.

The difference between the Arab provinces was that some of them, such as Egypt, Syria and Lebanon had already encountered and been familiar with such centralized systems through their previous interactions with the European powers. As has been illustrated, the Iraqi provinces did not have the same experiences as the other Arabian provinces. In the light of what has been observed, it can be claimed that the tribal structure of Arabian society lost its strength as a result of its early interactions with European powers, causing a sharp process of urbanization and thus creating a new middle class that included educated professionals and merchants. Compared to them, in Iraqi provinces almost all modern concepts and ideas were brought to the Iraqi provinces by the hands the Ottomans themselves through an effective governor, Midhat Pasha in 1869¹¹. Thanks to the implementation of the Vilayet and the Land Laws by Midhat Pasha, the territorial boundaries of the three Iraqi provinces were mapped out and a new administrative structure was formed running from a provincial to a village level. The tribal chiefs officially accepted the Land Law but in practice their attitudes were against it because title deeds were recorded under the names of chieftains instead of the majority of tribe members. This did not bring about the desired the result of the Law (Tripp, 2002). Additionally, the census imposed by these Laws was not appreciated by the tribal leaders because they knew it was made for the purposes of conscription and collecting more taxes. In terms of the Iraqi provinces, implementation of the reforms did not create suitable

¹¹ Although Midhat Pasha governed Baghdad for only three years (1869-1872), he dramatically changed the appearance of the province. He established the first tramway, public park, modern hospital, technical schools, newspaper and several urban projects such as an irrigation channel.

conditions that eroded the tribal structure because trade relationships in the region were confined to intra-tribal trade whilst the ethnic and religious diversity of the Iraqi provinces was extremely high. That naturally preserved local and tribal loyalties and consolidated the tribal structure instead of undermining it.

To solidify the claims above, a couple of instances would better provide an understanding of the situation. In Ottoman times the Arabs, who formed the major population group in the region were divided into two main religious sects, Sunnis and Shiites. Furthermore, as the second largest community in Mosul and the surrounding areas Kurds were almost all Sunnis but also had different sects such as Shafi'i or Qadiri. A small minority of them were Yazidis, living to the west of Mosul. Turcomans were another ethnic group also living around the Mosul area. Christians and Iraqi Jews were other significant religious minorities in the region, as well as Armenians. Furthermore, there were also sectarian differences within these different religious and ethnic groups themselves. They comprised tribes with distinct social, economic and political structures. This distinctive condition enabled them to establish their own separate rule independent from central authority. For this reason, Al-Atiyah claims that there was *the notion of the intrinsically distinctive nature of the tribes' threats to settled population and central authority*. This does not prove, however, that tribes in the Iraqi provinces were always opposed to central authority. For instance, when the Ottomans implemented the Land Code of 1858 in the Iraqi provinces to expand agricultural production and settle nomadic populations, the responses of different tribes ranged from active cooperation to resistance. The new Ottoman laws offered the tribes of *Shammar* and *Anayzah* the opportunity to settle down. While *Anayzah* accepted the offer in exchange for title deeds, the *Shammar* did not accept the offer and resisted the rules whilst other tribes that resisted could easily find adherents among those reluctant to obey central authority (Haj, 1991). These kinds of struggles between tribes and central power in the Iraqi provinces continued

until the end of the Empire. Differently from other provinces, the centralization policy was unable to meet its objective due to the strict tribal structure and ethnic and religious diversity in this region. As a consequence, nationalist sentiments could not encompass most of the inhabitants of the Iraqi provinces.

Conclusion

Recent research has revealed that not all nationalist claims made by the Arabs contained demands for a distinctly separate state from the Ottomans until the last decade of the Empire. Whilst some Christian thinkers might prove an exception to this it is generally true. For instance, Arab nationalists have employed two incidences as concrete indications of the presence of nationalist movements in the Arab regions. One of them is a revolt in 1860 Syria in which placards propagating the demand for separation from the Ottoman Empire were put up on walls. This was organized by Christian Arabs though they did not represent all Christians in the region (Tibi, 1997). The other example is the revolt of the Sharif of Mecca, Hussein, who wished to establish an Arab state in his kingdom. His attitudes, though based in nationalist feeling, were driven also by personal interests as was the case with most other tribal leaders. Kayali explicitly demonstrated this in his recently published book. Therefore, it is not entirely possible to talk about Arab nationalism until the end of the Empire though it remains possible to talk about nationalist sentiment. In this regard, the information and comparisons presented in this essay deal with the conditions which prevented the transformation of the Iraqi provinces into a centre of Arab nationalism whereas Egypt, Syria and Lebanon became cornerstones for the study of Arab nationalism.

In short, the strict tribal structures of the Arab communities were stretched in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon through the process of urbanization caused by European influence, missionary activities and the Ottoman reforms whilst this did not happen in the Iraqi provinces until the late 19th century. In other words, early rapid urbanization, the spread of education and the extension of central administration into the countryside gradually dissolved tribalism in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon and the struggle for power moved to the cities, whereas in Iraqi provinces this process began only began from 1870 onwards. Tribes across the Arab provinces preserved themselves but some adapted to the new conditions but others in the

Iraqi provinces did not. The ignorant attitudes of the Empire until 1870s towards the Iraqi provinces and the weakness of its centralization policy did leave the area intact. Kurdish dynasties in the mountainous areas of the north and the Arab social structures in the centre and south reinforced tribalism (Marr, 1992). For that reason, the Iraqi provinces did not become a centre for nationalism in parallel with their new conditions. Evidence proving this is found in the number of associations that were established to spread the nationalist ideology. According to research done by Tauber, there were sixteen groups with a nationalist agenda between 1908 and 1914. Only two of them originated in Iraq: the Reform Society of Basra and the National Scientific Club, whilst the rest of them originated in Syria, Egypt and Lebanon.

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