OTTOMAN-ARAB TRANSATLANTIC MIGRATIONS IN THE AGE OF MASS MIGRATIONS (1870-1914)

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ABSTRACT

This thesis sketches out the history of Ottoman-Arab emigration from Greater Syria to the United States and to Argentina from the late nineteenth century up to the end of World War I, relying primarily (but not solely) on the related documents preserved in the Ottoman Archives. It depicts a wide range of this emigration history, including the scale and the number of immigrants, the causes behind emigration, the ways that emigrants managed to reach the Americas, the attitudes of Ottoman governments toward them, and the ways that emigrants adapted to their host societies. The thesis analyses the Ottoman-Arab emigration phenomenon from social and economic perspectives and in the larger context comprising other European population movements to the New World during this period, which has been called 'the Age of Mass Migrations.'

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CONTENT

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

From the late nineteenth century up to World War I, approximately half a million Ottoman citizens immigrated to the Americas from the Greater Syria[1] province of the Ottoman Empire. They went for various reasons, much like the European immigrants who arrived in the New World during the same period.

The main purpose of this study is to determine the social and economic features of the Ottoman emigration to the New World in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, including the scale and number of immigrants, the causes of emigration, how emigrants managed to reach the Americas, the attitudes of Ottoman governments towards them, and the ways that emigrants adapted to their host societies. This thesis is based particularly on Ottoman archival sources that to this point have gone unused.

Apart from sketching out the overall story of migration, this study aims to analyse Ottoman emigrations to the New World within the framework of global population movements in what has been called the 'age of mass migration.' Obviously, migration to the Americas was not a phenomenon unique to the Ottoman Empire. Even larger numbers of people from other nations, particularly Southern European countries, immigrated to the New World for similar reasons. Late nineteenth-century migration-history literature provides numerous European and Russian cases for comparison, as well as a theoretical

[1] Greater Syria is the term used in Ottoman history literature, geographically referring to the territory which today is made up of the states of Lebanon, Syria, Jordon, Israel and the West Bank.

framework that leads scholars to raise related questions and to develop a suitable methodology for approaching the topic.

This thesis is largely built on the hypothesis that nineteenth-century Ottoman history cannot and should not be considered something unique but should be analysed as a part and parcel of the nineteenth-century world order, which included what the literature generally deems 'the first globalisation.' In this period, liberal economic understanding dominated most of the world, and there were only limited restrictions on the flow of labour, capital, and commodities. This was also the period when worldwide exchange of these three items reached to the unprecedented levels.[2]

The macroanalysis of Kevin O'Rourke and Jeffrey Williamson shows significant convergence in real wages and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita between Atlantic economies and the economies in the New World in the nineteenth century. However, according to them, the eastern Mediterranean region missed the first great globalising boom. O'Rourke and Williamson's empirical study demonstrates that the economic conditions that gave birth to a convergence in living standards were not seen in the peripheries' economies, including that of the Ottoman world.[3] While an economic convergence between the Ottoman Empire and the New World cannot be determined from the evidence (there is a shortage of historical numerical data), this thesis will show that some of the social and economic developments that generated such a convergence in the

[2] Pamuk and Williamson analysed how the Ottoman economy was influenced and responded to the Global World order of the 19th century. See Şevket Pamuk and Jeffrey Williamson, eds, *The Mediterranean Response to Globalization before 1850* (London: Routledge, 2000).
[3] Kevin H O'Rourke, and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1999), 21

Atlantic economies, also took place in the Ottoman Empire. Among these developments, transatlantic mass migrations stand out as the most important.

The official documentary evidence and immigration estimations reveal that a large number of people emigrated to the New World from the territories of the Ottoman Empire, to such a degree that this migration influenced both the home country and some (if not all) destination countries for decades. Despite its importance and influence on the following generations, the history of Ottoman transatlantic migrations has not attracted the scholarly attention. So far, only a very limited number of academic studies have considered Ottoman emigration from Greater Syria and immigration to Argentina and the United States.

In world migration historiography, European migrations to the Americas—particularly the Spanish, Irish, and Italian cases—occupy the largest part of the scholarly literature on the nineteenth century, while the Ottoman migrations are disregarded. Several factors account for this neglect. One relates to the misperception among academics that the Ottoman transatlantic migrations were unimportant because their scale was small. Obviously, the total number of Ottoman-Arab immigrants during this period was not as high as the Spanish and Italian figures, but in the rankings of foreign nationals arriving in the Americas, the Ottomans were the fifth-largest immigrant group arriving in Argentina, the sixth-largest arriving in Brazil, and the ninth-largest arriving in the United States.[4]

[4] For Argentina see: *La Siria nueva: Obra histórica, estadística y comercial de la colectividad Sirio-Otomana en las Repúblicas Argentina y Uruguay* (Buenos Aires, República Argentina: Empresa Assalam, 1917), for Brazil see Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929); and for the USA, see William P. Dillingham and William S. Bennet, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1911), tables 9 and 10 (Hereafter: Reports of the Immigration…)

Thus, historically speaking, there is no legitimate excuse for ignoring the Ottoman transatlantic migrations.

Another important factor in this neglect has been the unavailability of primary sources. Until recently, some relevant documents from the files of the Ottoman Empire's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Hariciye Nezareti) and Ministry of the Interior (Dahiliye Nezareti) were not available for historians to use. Neither could researchers access the Ottoman vice-consular reports in France and England, which are also integral to such a study. This enquiry became possible when all these files were opened to researchers. In addition, modern digitisation of archival documents and the online exhibition of these documents and statistics facilitate historians' job. Today, almost all the immigration statistics of the United States and Argentina are electronically accessible.

The final problem contributing to the dearth of scholarly attention seems to stem from linguistic requirements. The Ottoman Empire was multilingual: many languages were spoken locally, while Turkish and French were used in bureaucratic and diplomatic correspondence during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth. In this respect, a comprehensive enquiry into transatlantic migrations requires working knowledge of a number of languages, including Ottoman Turkish and French, in order to read the documents preserved in the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministry (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri, hereafter BOA). Also, Spanish and English are additionally important for examining immigration data recorded in the United States and in South America.

As far as the existing literature is concerned, the gap is not limited to the quantity of research but exists also in terms of context. In fact, some articles and academic papers have

already been written on this topic by academicians from different fields and disciplines, particularly from Middle Eastern studies and Latin American studies.

At this point, two important edited books must be noted, not only for their pioneering nature but also because they articulate the major questions and methodology of this field, both of which would be inherited by the next generation of researchers. The first book, edited by Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi, analyses worldwide Lebanese emigrations from the perspective of departure geography (Mount Lebanon).[5] The second volume, comes from the field of Latin American studies. Edited by Ignacio Klich and Jeffrey Lesser, it includes information not only on Arab immigration but also on Jewish immigration to Latin America[6], and it treats Ottoman-Arab migrations from the point of view of arrival geography.

Among Ottoman historians, Kemal Karpat has investigated Syrian immigration to South and North America within the framework of the Ottoman policies governing the movement of people out of its territories. Karpat's main objective was to observe the way that the social, economic, ethnic, and religious structures of the Ottoman population were profoundly altered over time as a result of these emigrations.[7]

Two distinguished works from the United States have also contributed to this field, one each from Akram Khater and Alixa Naff.[8] While the former to a large extent

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[5] Albert Hourani and Nedim Shehadi (ed.), *The Lebanese and the World: The Century of Emigration* (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994).
[6] Ignacio Klich and Jeff Lesser, *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities* (London: F. Cass, 1998).
[7] Kemal Karpat, "The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (May 1985): 175–209.
[8] Akram Fouad Khater, *Inventing home: emigration, gender, and the middle class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). Alixa Naff, *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993).

illuminated the history of returnees, the latter focused on Arab integration into new societies based on oral testimonies. Recently, Sarah Gualtieri has discussed what gender differences can say about the chain migration history of Syrians[9], and Steven Hyland Jr. has examined how Syrian immigrants in Argentina responded to politics and nascent nationalism at home and in the host country[10].

In the literature as a whole, it is noteworthy that owing to their respective standpoints, the above-mentioned historical studies emphasise either the *emigration* process or the *immigration* process of overall Syrian migration history. For this reason, most of these studies were conducted under the umbrella of some specific realm of area studies, such as Middle Eastern studies, Latin American studies, Ottoman studies, or Arab-Oriental studies.

The pioneering historians who contributed to this literature—namely, Charles Issawi, Roger Owen, Philip Hitti, and Kais Firro[11]—handled this issue as an 'Arab migration.' Because of this perception, they disregarded the role or the effect of the central Ottoman government in the region at that time. In this area, Kemal Karpat tried to usher in a new approach. He attempted to 'rescue' (his own word) this topic from Arab studies and to introduce it to Ottoman studies, considering emigration during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, to be an imperial phenomenon. In order to fortify this

[9] Sarah Gualtieri, "Gendering the Chain Migration Thesis, Women and Syrian Transatlantic Migrations, 1878-1924," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, no.1 (2004): 69-80
[10] Steven Hyland Jr., "Arisen From Deep Slumber, Transnational Politics and Competing Nationalisms Among Syrian Immigrants in Argentina, 1900-1922," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 43, no.3 (2011): 547-574
[11] See Charles Issawi, ed., *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); Roger Owen *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1993); Philip K. Hitti, *The Syrians in America*, (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924); Kais Firro, "Silk and Socio-Economic Changes in Lebanon, 1860-1919," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, no.22 (1990): 151-169.

argument, Karpat stressed that these emigration movements were not restricted to the Syrian region of the empire but can also be seen on the Balkan Peninsula in similar forms.[12]

Similarly, academicians in Argentina and in other American countries have analysed the issue within the framework of Latin American studies. By far most of the literature produced in Latin America is based on local archives, memoires of immigrants, and oral-history records. For this reason, they include insufficient information about the process preceding the Ottoman arrival on the continent, just as Middle Easternists and Ottomanists can say very little about what happened to the Ottomans after they reached the New World.

In addition, since the first academicians in this field handled the issue on a local basis, the greatest focus was dedicated to the cultural and political side of the phenomenon, while the social and economic aspects were to a large extent overlooked. The kind of resources that historians used, moreover, determined their analysis of the issue. For example, in her excellent book *Becoming American,* Alixa Naff accepts the significance of the social and economic facets of the Syrian experience of immigration to the United States. However since she used mainly oral sources, those economic and social aspects were left out in the book.

Taking into consideration this gap in the scholarship, I believe my work will make a threefold contribution to the field. First, it contributes in its use of primary sources: the Ottoman Archives (BOA) are central to this study. What makes these archives original is

[12] Kemal Karpat, "The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (May 1985): 175–209.

the fact that, the documents concerning the transatlantic migration have not been efficiently exploited so far. The only exceptions are articles by Kemal Karpat and Engin Akarli, but both of these writers relied on the records of only one department in the Ottoman bureaucracy. In addition, when they wrote the articles, a very limited number of related files were available to researchers. In contrast, this study uses the documents of various departments, mostly consisting of diplomatic correspondence between the Ottoman central government (the Porte), on one hand, and local governors in Syria and Lebanon or Ottoman consuls general in some European cities, on the other. In addition to that, this study consulted records from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, War, and Education, and the Ottoman Cabinet as well as police registers.

However, the Ottoman Archives alone do not provide sufficient sources to illuminate the subject of this study. Here, reports of the French consuls in Beirut[13] provide useful additional sources. Apart from including richer and better-organised information about the Ottoman emigrations than the central archives themselves do, these records are valuable for measuring the reliability of those Ottoman records. Obviously, the Ottoman sources reflect the viewpoint of İstanbul, which may include exaggerations and manipulations that respond to ongoing political circumstances. Thus, the reports of French diplomatic missions, missionaries, travellers, and geographers[14] are crucial for cross-

[13] Adel Ismael gathered all of the French governmental correspondences upon Beirut and published them in 22 volumes. The last five volumes include the time period of the mass migration to Americas. See Adel Ismael, *Documents Diplomatiques Et Consulaires Relatifs À L'histoire Du Liban Et Des Pays Du Proche-Orient Du Xviie Siècle À Nos Jours. Première partie,* (Bierut: Œuvres politiques et historiques, 1983).
[14] Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie D'asie, Géographie Administrative, Statistique, Descriptive Et Raisonnée De Chaque Province De L'asie Mineure* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1890) ; Arthur Ruppin and Nellie Straus, *Syria: An Economic Survey* (New York: Provisional Zionist committee, 1918); Robert Widmer, "Population," In *Economic Organization of Syria,* ed. Said B. Himadeh, Reprint, **(**New York: AMS Press, 1973), 3-26.

checking purposes. The British National Archives also provide striking details about emigrations, particularly those from Palestine.[15]

Lastly, on the other side of the ocean, important surveys were conducted by the governments of destination countries, as well as by the Ottoman communities in those countries. The three national censuses of the Republic of Argentina in 1895, 1898, 1916 (*Censo Nationales de la República Argentina*) and the United States' Ellis Island records are the main sources to consider first. These documents include numerical information about Ottoman-Arab immigrants arriving in the Americas each year and from which particular region. Similarly, the survey of Amin Arslan, the consul general of the Ottoman Empire in Argentina, is an extremely valuable source as a study that includes the names and locations of Ottoman families in the Buenos Aires province.[16] In addition, the daily newspapers and other periodicals published in the United States and Argentina reflect the responses of society and government in these countries with regard to the immigration of Ottoman-Arabs, while the immigrants' own Arabic-language newspapers and journals facilitate a consideration of the inner world of Ottoman-Arabs in the United States and Argentina.

The second important contribution of this thesis comes in terms of context. The social and economic aspects of Ottoman-Arab emigrations are central to this work. As the following chapters make clear, the main motivation of the Ottoman-Arabs in going to the

[15] Especially Foreign Office department country code: 44 contain appreciable information about the immigrants who stop over in Egypt to go to Americas.
[16] Alejandro Schamun, *La Siria Nueva: Obra Histórica, Estadística y Comercial De La Colectividad Sirio-Otomana En Las Repúblicas Argentina Y Uruguay*, (Buenos Aires: Empresa "Assalam", 1917). A similar survey was conducted by Hassan Mattar for Ottomans in Chili. See Ahmad H. Mattar, *Guía Social De La Colonia Árabe En Chile Siria, Palestina, Libanesa,* (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Ahues hnos.", 1941).

New World was not political but economic, much as it was for those leaving European countries during the same period. Apparently, the movements of tens of thousands of people each year across five decades cannot be explained by politics or by culture alone. Even though economy and society are central to this thesis, however, the political and cultural aspects of the Arab intercontinental migrations cannot be entirely disregarded. Still these are complementary aspects of the phenomenon are indicated to explain the situation generated by economic factors. Politics and culture are especially significant in comprehending the emigrants' choice of destination country, and the mobility of Ottomans crossing into new realms.

Lastly, contextualising Ottoman transatlantic movements within the framework of the history of globalisation and nineteenth-century mass migrations—insofar as such contextualisation is possible—represents another significant contribution this study makes to the scholarship. As mentioned, one important claim this thesis makes is that the topic cannot be completely comprehended in any one realm of area-specific studies and, indeed, cannot be fully comprehended unless it is considered in a global context. The need for an international view stems from Ottoman history and from the organic ties between Ottoman migrations and world migrations. In fact, Ottoman migration became possible only after European shipping companies had penetrated the Syrian market.

Obviously, introducing the Ottoman migrations to the global migration context is a formidable task. Focusing on the Ottoman sources could make this study to remain entirely within the realm of Ottoman studies. Rather, applying Ottoman cases and numerical data in combination with European countries' data would be more useful in this larger context. Indeed, the similarities between Ottoman and European immigrations to the New World—

in terms of the causes of emigrations from the two regions, the profile of a typical immigrant, and the ways in which immigrants entered new nations—are striking and are indispensable in developing a global perspective. In order to construct a global narrative, this study applies the work of Jeffrey Williamson, Kevin O'Rourke, Blanca Alonso Sanchez, Carl Solberg, Jose Moya, Timothy Hatton[17], and others—forming a strong basis for a comprehensive perspective.

Even though this thesis is not a comparative study (only conclusion chapter is allocated to this purpose), comparison plays a certain role. When required, the data and information about European and Asian transatlantic migration are provided. Nevertheless, the Ottoman-Arab emigrations form the central topic, and I present an overall comparison in the conclusion. Of course, the larger global and domestic context and literature require a multidimensional evaluation that includes comparisons not only of Ottoman-Arab and European migrations but also within the various groups of Ottoman migrants who travelled to South and North America.

Throughout this work, the phrase *Ottoman-Arab* has been used intentionally. In the literature, a variety of terms—*Arab, Oriental, Middle Eastern,* and *Christian*—has been used to describe migrations from the regions governed by the Ottoman Empire, but each of

17 See, Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and history: the evolution of a nineteenth-century Atlantic economy*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999); Blanca Sánchez-Alonso, "Those Who Left and Those Who Stayed Behind: Explaining Emigration from the Regions of Spain, 1880–1914." *Journal of Economic History* 60, no. 3 (September 2000): 730-755; Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies and the Pampas: The Impact of Immigration on Argentine and Canadian Agrarian Development, 1870–1930," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 24, no. 2 (1982): 131–161; Jose Moya, Cousins and Strangers: Spanish Immigrants in Buenos Aires, 1850-1930, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Adam McKeown, World Migration in the Long Twentieth Century, (Washington, D.C. : American Historical Association, 2011); Timothy Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and Economic Impact*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

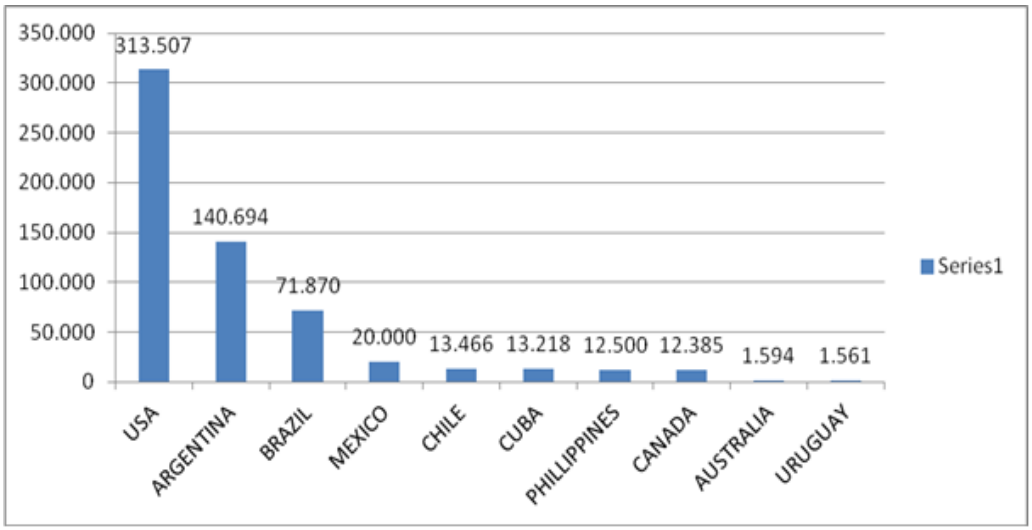
these involves some problems for encompassing the time, region, and people as a whole. Overemphasising the Arab character of the whole group of immigrants problematically implies that the region was not a part of the Ottoman Empire or that the immigrants were not Ottomans. Using the word *Christian* to refer to emigrants excludes Muslims and Jews, who were certainly also among those crossing borders. *Oriental* and *Middle Eastern* have culturally and politically loaded connotations that distract from an objective consideration of the issue. For all these reasons I believe, the term *Ottoman-Arab,* to be the most comprehensive and appropriate one. For one thing, the dominant majority of immigrants consisted of Arabs. Moreover, the *Ottoman* portion of the term not only indicates the political affiliations of the immigrants of the time, but also usefully includes the small number of non-Arab emigrants.

Given the context of this thesis, the period studied here includes the four and a half decades between 1870 and 1914, when both Ottoman and European emigrations to the New World took place. The geographical boundaries of this thesis on the Ottoman side encompass the area called Greater Syria, which includes modern-day Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Israel. In this period, people from Anatolia and the Balkans also left for the United States and Latin American countries, but since their numbers were smaller than those from Syria and Lebanon (see figures 1 and 2 for total and yearly numbers)[18], they are excluded from this study. Further, including Anatolia and the Balkans would necessitate diverging from the focus of this study because these regions had different economic and social structures.

[18] BOA, Y.PRK.TKM, 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909, *"The majority of these people (Ottomans in America) are of Syrian origin."*

Regarding destination countries, the main focus of this study is on the United States and Argentina, as these two countries absorbed the largest number of Ottoman-Arab immigrants during the period of greatest intercontinental Ottoman migration (see figure 1). Both countries began to attract Ottoman-Arab youth on a small scale beginning in the 1880s, and both continued accepting them on a large scale until the outbreak of World War I. Obviously, Arab immigration to other countries took place to an extent, but such immigration remained limited during this period.

Figure 1. The Total Number of Ottoman-Arab Immigrants, Arrived to the Americas between 1870 and 1914



Sources: For the United States: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929); and William P. Dillingham and William S. Bennet, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1911). For Argentina and Uruguay: *La Siria nueva: Obra histórica, estadística y comercial de la colectividad Sirio-Otomana en las Repúblicas Argentina y Uruguay* (Buenos Aires, República Argentina: Empresa Assalam, 1917), compiled from Censo Nationales. For Brazil, Cuba, the Philippines, Canada, and Australia: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929) vol. 1. For Mexico: BOA, HR.IM 131_67, 06.02.1925. For Chili: Ahmad H. Mattar, *Guía social de la colonia árabe en Chile Siria, Palestina, Libanesa* (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Ahues hnos., 1941).

One exception is Brazil, which received about seventy thousand Ottoman-Arabs during this period. The exclusion of this country from my study stems from the difficulty of accessing

and processing documents in Portuguese. However, this exclusion does not constitute a significant problem because the existing literature on Arab migrations to Brazil indicates circumstances similar to those in Argentina. The choice of Argentina and the United States may also provide a suitable basis for comparing the Ottoman emigration to the North with that to the South. Despite the common historical evolution, Ottoman-Arab integration and mobility within the two societies manifested significant differences. In this respect, the main points of comparison are occupational distribution, social mobility, and the integration into the host societies.

This study begins with a brief history of Syria and Lebanon, including their political and economic transformation in the 1830s,. It is a noteworthy point that Ottoman emigrations coincided with this transformations process when state-led reform projects for modernisation took place. As will be indicated the political concessions to the Christian Arabs would give birth to a new social and economic order in the region that would in turn lead to political turmoil and persecution on sectarian and religious bases. Mass emigration from the region would coincide with the peaceful époque that lasted until the First World War. In presenting the political and economic transformations before and during the emigration, chapter 2 raises the implicit question how emerging and developing circumstances paved the way for population movements out of the region.

Chapter 3 examines the fundamental reasons for emigration. After providing some descriptive information about the overall numbers of emigrants, their economic and religious background, marital status, and literacy, the chapter discusses the extent to which religious and political turmoil in Greater Syria during the 1860s played a role in impelling

people to leave their homes and cross the ocean. Lastly, in light of the Ottoman Archives, the real reasons behind emigration from Syria and Lebanon are explored.

Ottoman emigrants managed to reach the Americas in a variety of ways, both legal and illegal, and this is the focus of chapter 4. Intermediaries—that is, travel agencies and brokers—were central to this process. The chapter demonstrates that the global transportation market included Syria and Lebanon during this period, considering the role intermediaries played in transporting people to the far side of the ocean and the ways in which they smuggled out passengers who had run afoul of local and central Ottoman governments.

Chapter 5 questions the attitudes of the Ottoman governments towards emigration from Greater Syria. By examining diplomatic correspondence, this chapter attempts to determine whether the Ottomans developed well-defined migration or population policies, and if they did, what the parameters of these policies were and how they changed throughout the period being studied.

Lastly, chapters and 6 and 7 analyse what happened to the Ottomans after their arrival in America, exploring ways that Ottomans integrated into their host societies in both the North and the South. This thesis indicates that although Ottoman emigrants to both geographical regions shared a common historical background, their integration into the two societies differed remarkably. Reflecting that difference, the attitudes of governments, intellectuals, and societies in these two regions also differed towards Ottoman-Arab immigrants.

CHAPTER 2

Economy, Society, and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Greater Syria

Throughout its history, which can be traced back to biblical times, Syria was occupied by numerous empireskaz and civilisations, including Greeks, Romans, Persians, Arabs, and Turks. Obviously, this deep historical background has left modern-day Syria with a multiethnic and multireligious legacy[19], leading modern observers such as Lord Shaftsbury in 1853 to define the region as 'a country without nation.[20]'

Because of these complexities, it is highly difficult to scrutinize the migration movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Still, asking what happened in Greater Syria several decades before the mass emigration movements took place is indispensable for understanding the migration phenomenon. This chapter provides an overview of the social, economic, and political circumstances that characterised Syria and Lebanon in the nineteenth century under the Ottoman occupation that led to the mass emigrations, relying mostly on the existing scholarly literature about this period and region.

Until the end of the Ottoman period, Syria and Lebanon shared almost the same destiny. This has often led historians and academics in the relevant disciplines to refer to these two regions interchangeably when discussing the time before the formal establishment of the French Mandate. At some points, nevertheless, remarkable differences can be noticed throughout the period of Ottoman sovereignty, and these become readily

[19] The details of the historical backgrounds the different religious and ethnic affiliations existed in the Greater Syria is available in Leila T. Fawaz, *An Occasion for War: Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 8-13

[20] Cited in Daniel Pipes, *Greater Syria: The History of an Ambition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 19

apparent after the 1860s, when the semi-independent political status of Mount Lebanon was consolidated. However, even then, Syria and Lebanon did not diverge altogether. Based on this background, I examine the history of the Greater Syria region as that of a single entity, indicating the exceptional points of Mount Lebanon's history when needed.

I

A General Overview

After the Battle of Marj Dabiq (1516), Ottoman occupation in Syria began, and it lasted until the end of World War I (1918). The Ottoman regime did not introduce a new administrative system to the area (as it often did in newly conquered regions) but rather maintained the heredity governance of Memluk, renaming the old administrative units by applying Ottoman bureaucratic language. Accordingly, the smallest unit of administration during the Memluk period, the *niyabah*, became a *vilayet*, and the administrator of these units was called the *wali*.[21] Under Ottoman administration, the region was divided into three administrative *vilayet*s, namely, Aleppo, Damascus, and Tripoli, each of which comprised several sub-administrative units called *sanjack*s.[22]

For centuries, the Ottomans preserved the traditional understanding of the unity of these regions, and the whole territory was known as Greater Syria. The new rulers accorded a special position to Druze (a Muslim sect) and Maronites (a Christian sect) located in the mountainous regions of Lebanon, granting them several concessions, including a relatively light tribute. This preferential political status was granted to Lebanon because it had

[21] Philip K. Hitti, *History of Syria: Including Lebanon and Palestine*, (London: Macmillan, 1951), 664 Arthur Ruppin, Economic Survey of Syria..., 6
[22] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*, 13

supported the Ottoman army during the latter's war against the Mamluks. In addition, the Ottoman Empire chose to make concessions to Christians in Greater Syria in order to avoid possible uprisings, considering that their numbers equalled (and sometimes exceeded) those of Muslim populations.[23]

From the beginning, the concerns of the Ottoman government regarding Syria were limited to preserving Ottoman supremacy in the region, collecting tax revenues, securing the pilgrimage route to Mecca (the *hajj*) [24], and maintaining the region's status quo. All other matters (particularly in the social and economic spheres) were left to local authorities, who were considered to be under the oversight of the Ottoman *wali*s.[25]

However, these considerations often remained simple theory. Throughout Ottoman Syria's history, it was not unusual for local tribes to rise up against the Ottoman authorities or even for local Ottoman authorities to rebel against İstanbul. Because the Ottoman Empire did not rule Syria directly via its administrative and military apparatus, in order to consolidate its sovereignty over all the Syrian regions, the central administration developed a strategy of power politics: the Ottoman Empire collaborated with local elite families or tribes, strengthening these selected groups. In cases of conflict between various groups in Syria, the Ottoman regime would take the side of one particular group against the others. Whenever a governor grew too strong or ignored or disobeyed İstanbul, the Porte[26] set other local powers against him in order to cause his downfall.[27]

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[23] Philip K. Hitti, *History of Syria…,* 637-640
[24] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,14
[25] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine, 1840-1861: The Impact of the Tanzimat on Politics and Society* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 4
[26] "The Port" is often used in the Ottoman literature referring to the Imperial Administration located in Istanbul.
[27] Ibid.,4 Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,15

As far as economic structure is concerned, like that of any preindustrial society, the population of Syria was largely agricultural. According to the estimation of Arthur Ruppin, even in 1918, fully 60 to 70 percent of the population was engaged in agriculture, 10 to 15 percent worked in industries and trades, about the same percentage was involved in commerce, and 10 percent laboured in other occupations.[28] Most cultivated land belonged to the state; absolute ownership was rarely seen in Greater Syria and was generally found only for orchards, gardens, and vineyards in villages.[29]

The local people had the right to work the state-owned cultivable lands in return for paying a tithe.[30] Generally, however, the government did not collect the taxes itself but rather put them out to tender, applying what is called a tax-farming (*iltizam*) system. Under this arrangement, ruling families (generally called *muqataji* or *mültezim* families) were allowed to collect taxes locally as long as they sent a certain amount of money to İstanbul[31], provided military power when needed, and maintained security in the region on behalf of the Ottoman Empire.[32] This whole operation was under the control of local Ottoman representatives, *wali*s, who were not as strong in Lebanon as they were in the other parts of Ottoman Syria. It was the Lebanese leaders (*amir*s) who acted as tax farmers and who, for all practical purposes, governed their regions. In Syria's interior, tax farmers were less likely to possess political power.[33]

[28] Arthur Ruppin, *Economic Survey of Syria*…., 46.
[29] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…,* 33.
[30] Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı-Türkiye Iktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 39-42.
[31] Ibid., 146-148.
[32] Fawwaz Traboulsi, *A History of Modern Lebanon* (Pluto Press, London: 2007).
[33] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,15.

Multiplicity was the main characteristic of the region not only in terms of political authority and economic structure but also regarding religious affiliation. This multifaceted nature can be traced to even before the Ottoman occupation; however, imperial sovereignty strengthened and institutionalised these group identities. The Syrian region was shared by Muslim, Christian, and, to a lesser extent, Jewish populations. Only in Lebanon did the number of Christians exceed the total population of the other religious groups. The two major religious groups were not internally unified; instead, there was a sectarian diversification involving significant differences of faith. For instance, in the Muslim community there were Sunnis, Shias, and Druze, while the Christians were divided into Maronites, Orthodox, Chaldeans, Protestants, and other small groups.

In the traditional Ottoman social system, which was prevalent throughout the empire, there was a hierarchy among these religious groups that consisted of three layers. In mainstream Ottoman historiography, this rough classification is denominated the *millet* system. Even though some new studies have challenged this classification[34], it is obvious that the rights and responsibilities of Muslim and non-Muslim groups were not the same. The most-privileged people were Muslims, who were generally peasants; the men among them were conscripted into the Ottoman military during wartime. The second layer constituted Jews and Christians, generally referred to as 'people of the book,' those affiliated with Semitic religions. The men of these populations were not supposed to be conscripted for military service, but they had to pay a head tax (*jizya*) in compensation.[35]

[34] Macit Kenanoğlu, *Osmanlı Millet Sistemi: Mit ve Gerçek* (İstanbul: Klasik, 2004).
[35] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…,*10.

The third layer, comprising members of other religious communities, did not have a large population or much claim to social rights or responsibility in the Ottoman Empire.

In the Ottoman Empire, further, a people's religious affiliation generally corresponded to its economic affiliation. Especially by the end of the eighteenth century, the non-Muslim component of Ottoman society tended to engage in the sectors more closely associated with urban areas, such as craftsmanship, trade, finance, and manufacturing, while Muslims were more likely to remain in agriculture and related sectors.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, the malfunctioning of the traditional Ottoman system was becoming clear to the empire's policy makers and intellectuals. Consecutive military defeats led Ottoman scholars and governors to ask why the imperial realm lagged behind Europe. In addition, problems with the fiscal system, increased conflicts between different religious groups, and social unrest made the Ottomans think about what had gone wrong.

II

Pioneer Reforms and the Egyptian Interlude, 1820–1840

The decline of the Ottoman Empire gave birth to the idea that reform was urgently needed and inevitable—the only way to heal the realm's fundamental problems. The names of Ottoman sultans in the early nineteenth century came to the fore as champions of the modernisation movement. Among these people, the impact of Sultan Mahmut II (r. 1808–1839) was most profound, and the repercussions of his rule lasted from the reformation movement's inception into the next generation.

Mahmut II dreamed of converting the old Ottoman regime into a well-developed European-style modern empire, economically and politically powerful; he also dreamed of introducing modern innovations and institutions to his realm. In fact, this ideal had been adopted by previous sultans, but they had failed because the empire was not strong enough to withstand the opponents of modernisation, supporters of the status quo, and local political powers in far-flung provinces.[36] Seeing the whole picture made clear that to achieve modernisation, a strong central authority was crucial. To carry out this centralisation project, Mahmut II realised the need for efficient, reliable civil services, and he therefore established new institutions such as modern schools, a military equipped and trained in the European style, and modern bureaucratic organisations.[37]

Ultimately, Sultan Mahmut II was successful in overcoming the political power of local elites who acted independently in Anatolia and in Rumelia (Ottoman territories in Europe), as well as that of some Arab notables in Arabia and Iraq.[38] However, he could not achieve the same in the Syrian territories, which were ruled by semi-independent local chiefs.[39] In times of crisis, not even Ottoman officials and troops in Greater Syria could be relied on to uphold the imperial authority of the Porte, and sometimes Ottoman *wali*s established alliances with other factions.[40]

The power vacuum in the region of Greater Syria generated by unsuccessful attempts at centralisation was filled by the Egyptian occupation that took place between

[36] In fact the reform movement before the Mahmut II was failed mainly because of the strong position of the opponent of the modernization and supporters of the status quo. See Stanford Shaw and Ezel K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
[37] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,3 see also Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey…*,80-84.
[38] Stanford J, Shaw and Ezel K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire* ...,15-16.
[39] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…,* 5.
[40] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…,* 6-7.

1831 and 1840. Officially speaking, Egypt was a province bound to the Ottoman sultanate at that time; however, taking advantage of the central authority's weakness, the governor of the region, Mehmet Ali Pasha, declared himself the *khedive* (viceroy) of Egypt, and acted independently from İstanbul throughout his governorship.

Ironically, during his tenure Mehmet Ali Pasha implemented Mahmut II's modernisation dreams on a local basis.[41] After establishing his sovereignty in Egypt, he accomplished a number of radical reforms in bureaucracy, military, and social organisation. He overthrew the landlords' monopoly on production by imposing extraordinary taxes that were impossible to pay. He also established a modern navy and trained a professional group of bureaucrats to govern his region.

All these reforms were so successful as to cause both European countries and the Porte to worry about Egypt. Mehmet Ali Pasha planned to expand his sovereignty and export his reforms to other Arab lands. He wanted to take control of Syria, especially, for its natural resources and for its strategic and historical ties with Egypt. His demand that he be granted authority over Syria and Palestine was harshly rejected by the Ottoman sultan. After this refusal, Mehmet Ali Pasha sent his son İbrahim Pasha, commanding the Egyptian army, to conquer Syria. But after capturing Syria and Palestine, İbrahim Pasha did not stop; he penetrated Anatolia and defeated the Ottoman army there, too.

Once İbrahim Pasha had marched his force to İstanbul in December 1832, the Ottoman sultan realised that the governor's son was likely to overcome the main army in

[41] According to Stanford Shaw, attribute his achievement to French expedition to Egypt (1798-1801) and the subsequent restoration of the Ottoman rule there. These take overs between the two strong empires removed the old Ruling classes. Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire…*, 9-5.

the imperial capital. The interventions of European powers eventually helped end the war between the Ottoman Empire and Egypt; an Ottoman defeat would have disrupted the status quo in the East, and that could have produced new controversies between European countries. To avert chaos, the Europeans convinced both sides to agree on a deal in which both were expected to make concessions. Accordingly, the sultan recognized the sovereignty of İbrahim Pasha as *wali* of Syria, while İbrahim Pasha's military force retreated from Anatolia.

Just as his father had done in Egypt, İbrahim Pasha introduced modernisation to Syria. First, he consolidated his authority over the whole region by undermining the leaders of important local families. To drain the strength of the Muslim religious authorities (*ulema*) and to deprive them of their privileged position, he introduced secularisation in the judicial and educational systems.[42] After overcoming his possible rivals in Syria, İbrahim Pasha concentrated on promoting Syria's economy. To increase agricultural production, new methods and crops were introduced, deserted lands were re-cultivated, and the taxes levied on agriculture were reduced. For economic development, considerable leaps were taken: new factories were constructed, new natural resources were exploited, and apprentices were sent to Europe to be trained there.[43]

His self-esteem bolstered in the wake of these successes, Mehmet Ali Pasha demanded more privileges from the sultanate, such as recognition of his hereditary claim to the governorship of Egypt and Syria. This demand was alarming not only for the Ottoman Empire but also for the European powers, which had conflicting interests in Syria and

[42] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,14.
[43] Ibid.,15-16.

Egypt that shaped their politics in the region: once again, disrupting the status quo would have produced tension between these powers. To avoid this risk, Europe decided to prevent the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and restore İstanbul's rule in Syria.[44] After long negotiations, on 12 July 1840 the European powers (except France[45]) signed an agreement promising to support the sultan against Mehmet Ali Pasha and to discount the latter's authority over Egypt and Syria.[46] Ultimately, a coalition of British, Ottoman, and Austrian military forces defeated İbrahim Pasha, captured major cities (including Damascus), and forced Pasha to withdraw from Syria entirely in February 1841.[47]

III

The Promise of Tanzimat, Its Failure, and Penetration of European Capitalism into Syria (1839–1860)

Just before Egypt's occupation in Syria was ended, the reformist Sultan Mahmut II died; his son, the new Sultan Abdulmecit I, inherited the reform process and consolidated it into a longer-term imperial programme. During his reign, the aspiration of creating a European-style imperial state reached its climax, culminating in a series of reform edicts.

The first of these was the Tanzimat Fermanı (*Tanzimat Edict*), proclaimed on 3 November 1839. The edict basically promised to improve conditions for Ottoman subjects—particularly, to abolish the disparities between Muslims and non-Muslims by officially upgrading the status of non-Muslims and making both groups equal before the

[44] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*, 21.
[45] France did not joined this club because it had a close economic ties with Syria, strengthened during the Egyptian occupation. Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire…*,56.
[46] Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire…,*57.
[47] Ibid., 57-58.

law.[48] For some historians, the timing of the proclamation appears to have been purposefully calculated to gain support from the European powers in order to overcome the rebellious abovementioned *wali* Mehmet Ali, who was perceived as a threat to the empire's integrity.[49]

The reform package had significant repercussions for the social and economic structures of Ottoman society, especially on two points. The first relates to military service. The new edict completely overturned the old *millet* system, introducing a new conscription scheme that made military service obligatory for all male Ottoman subjects, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Those who did not wish to serve in the military were allowed to pay a certain sum and be granted an exemption. This right to a paid military exemption was recognised by Muslims for the sake of achieving equality within society.

Secondly, the Edict introduced fundamental reforms which addressed the taxation system. The sultanate abolished tax farming, which was regarded as unjust and tended to favour the big land owners. The Porte realised that it could not obtain a great deal of revenue from tax farming because the tax farmers could (and did) manipulate the figures. Sometimes, showing production that was lower than actual harvests; these tax farmers sent less money to İstanbul than their production actually warranted. In addition, many of these tax farmers established their own local militias, and these were now taken more seriously by the Porte because of their potential to challenge its central authority. After abolishing tax farming, the Porte introduced a new system in which taxes were levied on an individual

[48] Bernand Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 103-104. In the Tanzimat Edict this issue took place as *"The Muslim and other peoples who are among the subjects of our imperial sultanate, shall be the object of our imperial objection without exception".* Cited in Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,21-22.
[49] See Ibid., 21; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey…*, 105.

basis and licensed state officials collected them. Under this arrangement, the total revenue of the state budget would become more likely to increase because it was expected that total production would be calculated accurately. In addition, the Porte aimed through this reform to deprive powerful provincial families of their influence by curbing the financial resources that tax farming had provided. Moreover, by abolishing tax farming the Sultanate aimed to deprive the main financial source of these families which enable them to maintain standing militias. In fact, the Porte had long considered the growing power of local elites an alarming point.

These two crucial areas of reform were expected to make a significant impact on Ottoman society; however, these expectations were not met, mainly because the empire was not strong enough technically or economically to implement the reforms. The dearth of state servants qualified to determine the tax revenue that each village throughout the empire should remit was the main problem. And on the other hand, the sultanate was not politically powerful enough to overcome the local elites, who were the main obstacle to universal military conscription. The economic conditions were insufficient to support the reforms, from feeding and hosting newly enlisted non-Muslim youths to covering the expenses of the state officials dispatched to collect taxes in the provinces. These deficiencies exacerbated the situation and made it impossible for the sultanate to implement its reforms.[50] The empire could not dismiss the power of the local elites; neither could it disarm them. Since the Porte failed to impose its direct rule, the tax-farming system

[50] For more detail see, *Tanzimat, Yüzüncü Yıl Münasebetiyle*, (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940).

survived throughout the century despite the decisive stance of the Ottoman sultanate in the Tanzimat Edict.[51]

Furthermore, neither of these reforms could effectively achieve peace and equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. Even though most Christians were pleased with the reforms, Tanzimat did not gain the support of every non-Muslim sect. For instance, the announcement of the reforms created unrest among Greek Ottoman subjects because they worried that they would be put on the same level as Jews, Armenians, Suryani and the other Christian groups, and this would mean a loss of the privileges they had gained throughout history. Likewise, some Syrian Christians concerned about military conscription were not convinced that the reforms would benefit them. In addition, some Jewish and Christian moneylenders in Syria who were involved in tax farming were dissatisfied with the system's abolition.[52]

To mitigate the concerns of the Christian population, the Ottoman Empire issued another edict, the Islahat Fermanı (1856), which complemented the earlier edict by more prominently spelling out the rights of Christian population.[53] However, this new reform package only created further unrest among Muslims and sowed the seeds of their antagonism towards Christians.

All in all, it can be said that the reformist attempts in the Ottoman Empire, in general, and their repercussions in Syria, in particular, were ill-fated because they dismissed the historical local systems and because these revolutionary reforms could not be

[51] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…,*8.
[52] Philip K. Hitti, *History of Syria…*,669.
[53] With this edict, the non-Muslims could serve as public servant, and enrolled in military schools. The pejorative and insulting phrases against non-Muslims were withdrew from the official correspondences. In addition the non-Muslims could establish their own council where they could discuss the internal affairs.

enforced by a strong economic or institutional imperial power at that time. The reforms did effectively upgrade the status of non-Muslims; yet according to some historians, religious disparities became ever more obvious under *Tanzimat* because they were accentuated.[54]

Despite disappointing developments in the reform process, the sultanate did not discard the effort altogether; on the contrary, it took further steps to accelerate and enhance it by introducing modern institutions. Following the *Islahat Fermanı* (1856), a new land code and penal code were issued in 1858, and commercial and maritime codes were promulgated in 1861.[55]

Other noteworthy reforms concerning provincial administration were introduced in light of the centralisation ideal. Obviously, the initial *Tanzimat* attempts of the 1840s failed to establish the absolute authority of the empire over local rulers: the imperial regime could neither abolish tax farming nor disarm powerful locals. Still, after the Egyptian withdrawal from Greater Syria, the local families' power was fragmented, preventing any of them from overwhelming the rest of the empire. In addition, in order to politically cripple the *wali*s (who posed the risk of following Mehmet Ali Pasha's example), the Ottoman Empire confined their purview to bureaucracy; meanwhile, it introduced a new position in local administration, namely, commander in chief (*serasker*), and assigned these officials responsibility for military issues.[56] The empire also set up provincial general assemblies (*Meclis-i Umumi-i Vilayet*) to inspect local civil servants.[57]

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[54] Samir Khalaf, *Persistence and Change in 19th Century Lebanon: A Sociological Essay*, (Beirut, Lebanon: American University of Beirut Press, 1979), 82.
[55] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,28.
[56] Ibid., 38-43.
[57] Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire…,*83-93; Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,28.

Apart from imperial reforms, growing European interest in Syria affected the new social and economic order after the Egyptian occupation was dispersed. In this period, Greater Syria attracted the economic interest of the European countries, which would give birth to greater investments of European capital and improved trade relations. The new economic order was mainly led by the collaboration of two actors: European capitalists and the Ottoman Christian bourgeois.

During the second half of the nineteenth century and up until World War I, it was primarily silk production and the expansion of the silk trade that left a mark on the Greater Syrian economy. Particularly, the French capital in the silk industry constituted the sector's backbone. Because of this French dominance in Syrian trade with Europe, commerce was conducted according to the French *Code de Commerce* (commercial code).[58] French indicators show that the volume of silk exports from Beirut to France jumped from 2.4 million in 1850 to about 9.8 million in 1857.[59] Roger Owen attributes this enormous increase to the significant drop in French cocoon production that resulted from silkworm disease, pébrine, in the late 1840s and the early 1850s. This crisis forced the manufacturers of Lyons to search for an alternative source of silk, and Syria and Lebanon met this need.[60]

In fact, silk production in Syria dates to an earlier period, one before European involvement in the sector. Until 1860, silk cocoons were processed with traditional

[58] Arthur Ruppin, *Syria : An Economic Survey…*, 55.
[59] Dominique Chevalier, *La Société du Mont Liban à L'époque de La Révolution Industrielle en Europe* (Paris : Bibliothèque Archéologiques et Historique, 1971), 226-230, cited in Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…,*155.
[60] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*,155. To come up with this conclusion Owen addresses the following article. John F. Laffey, "Roots of French Imperialism in the Nineteenth the Century: The case of Lyon," *French Historical Studies* 6, no.1, (Spring 1969): 78-92.

methods, but as France's needs for raw silk reached an urgent level[61], French entrepreneurs introduced modern mills.[62] In addition, during the early 1850s, ten European-style spinning factories owned by Europeans (mostly French citizens) had been established in Mount Lebanon and employed eight hundred to nine hundred workers.[63] At least four or five smaller factories were established by local entrepreneurs, French-protected Arab Christians. But these smaller-scale factories were dependent on borrowed French capital and produced presumably in order to serve the needs of the French market.[64] With the intensification of trade and the expansion of silk production, the region's financial sector improved. New local banks began introducing professional mechanisms for money transfers between France and Lebanon and began providing more credit to entrepreneurs.[65] The establishment of silk production and silk export to France was particularly important in Mount Lebanon, where it became the sole major economic activity. The only indicator shows is that in 1864, production in Mount Lebanon accounted for around four-fifths of the total production in Greater Syria. Silk production in Mount Lebanon became so critical that it also affected agriculture, industry, and trade broadly speaking.[66]

As the next chapter discusses, the expansion of silk made a significant impact on the lives of people in almost every sector of society, including bankers, the industry's

[61] The indicators show need of France for silk was obvious. Between 1870 and 1914, France imported approximately 40 to 50% of the total World production of raw silk. Kais Firro, "Silk and Socio-Economic…,154.
[62] Kais. Firro, "Silk and Socio-Economic…,154.
[63] Gaston Ducousso, *L'industrie de la soie en Syrie et au Liban,* (Bierut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1913), 125 cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,* 157.
[64] M. Emerit, "La crise syrienne et l'expansion économique française en 1860," *Revue Historique,* no.207 (1952). cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,*155.
[65] Chevalier indicates that a Syrian or Lebanese factory owner could obtain a hundred days advance from Lyons Bank at between 4-6 %, Dominique Chevallier, "Lyon et la Syrie en 1919: Les Bases d'une Intervention," *Revue Historique,* no.2 (1960):294.
[66] Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,*154.

financiers; peasants, who grew the mulberry trees that fed the silkworms; spinners and weavers, who processed the raw materials and produced the silk itself; and merchants, who marketed the good.[67] It seems that silk production at this heightened pace required additional workers; the local entrepreneurs tried to engage women as labourers in the silk industry, so that they could expand work that had so far been open only to men. They achieved this by persuading Christian families to allow their daughters to work.[68] Presumably, in this matter, the permission of the Maronite patriarch played a decisive role.[69]

At this point, it is important to emphasise that the people whose lives were shaped by the silk industry were of Christian origin. In fact, French intervention in the industry was maintained and strengthened by the Christian wholesaler elites who established networks between local producers and European merchants.[70] Despite the lack of a concrete example, it is reasonable to presume that the missionary school and European Christian organisation might have played a role in establishing—or at least contributed to—this network.[71]

The silk industry's rise therefore had significant repercussions not only on the economy but also on social order and balance of power between various social groups—

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[67] Ibid.,160.
[68] See Afif Tannous, "The Social Change in Arab Village," *American Sociological Review* 6, no.5 (1941): 665-666, cited in Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*,158.
[69] Gaston Ducousso, *L'industrie de la Soie en Syrie et au Liban,* (Bierut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1913), 154.
[70] Firro, Kais, "Silk and Socio-Economic Changes in Lebanon, 1860-1919," *Internatıonal Journal of Middle East Stud.* no.22 (1990):17.
[71] Although the missionary activities, trace back to earlier period, in institutional level (such as schools and churches) it intensified after the second half of the 19th century. See Mehmet A Doğan, and Sharkey. Heather J. *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters*, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011).

particularly Muslims and Christians.[72] Consequently, owing to increased trade with Europe, the economic position of Christians improved, while that of Muslims—who were generally not so directly engaged in the silk industry— relatively declined. As Charles Issawi has noted, the regions where silk production was considered important to France, such as Beirut and parts of Palestine, diverged from the rest of the Syrian region in terms of economic well-being.[73]

The economic discrepancy between Muslims and Christians negatively influenced relations between followers of these two religions. It seems that Christians, whom Europeans favoured (and who were becoming much more valuable in the region owing to the silk trade), created appreciable unrest among the Muslim community, previously considered to be the main social component in the region.

IV

Local Civil Wars and Their Consequences, 1859–1865

By the second half of the 1850s, discontent among Muslims reached a significant level as the economically advantageous position of Christians solidified. The proclamation of the Islahat edict fuelled fear among Muslims because the sultanate itself had declared that it would no longer favour them. Ironically enough, as discussed earlier, this reform package was meant to integrate all Ottomans into a political unity, abolishing disparities between Muslims and non-Muslims; however, it achieved exactly the opposite in Greater Syria.[74] Between 1856 and 1860 in various parts of the region, strife had grown between Muslims

[72] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*,153.
[73] Charles P. Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent, 1800-1914: A Documentary Economic History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 10.
[74] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,226.

and Christians, resulting in a large number of deaths, especially in predominately Christian areas.[75] Among the series of local disturbances in the Greater Syria region, those that took place in Nablus, Damascus, and Mount Lebanon had the most long-lasting effects.

The earliest strife arose in Nablus in April 1856—a number of Christians were killed, and European consular agencies were attacked. What sparked the event was that the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, on his own initiative, without the approval of authorities, placed a bell in the Nablus chapel and started ringing it after hearing the proclamation of the *Islahat Fermanı*. The situation was exacerbated when French, English, and Prussian consular agents in the city hoisted their countries' flags. These events inflamed the feelings of Muslims and led to demonstrations of protest against the new order.

A series of riots in Damascus starting in mid-July 1860 resulted in greater losses related to the city's demographics: Muslims there were more numerous than Christians and more sensitive about their religious affairs. The *wali* of Damascus, Serveti Pasha, indicated the sentiments of the inhabitants of the city as '… who are not in the same state as [subjects] in other parts of the empire'.[76] This statement implied that the residents of Damascus were demonstrably more upset by the situation in the wake of the reforms than Ottoman subjects elsewhere were. Moshe Maoz has noted that in the case of Damascus, apart from the economic disparity between Muslims and Christians generated by the commercial collaboration of European capitalists and Ottoman Christians, the other

[75] Actually the reactions against the *Islahat Edict* had arisen in different parts of the Ottoman Empire. For instance in Manisa a rumour was spread among the people that Muslims would attack the Christians. Likewise in Denizli Christians were restrained to practise their religious rituals. The similar cases were seen Bosnia, Harpout and Maraş. But the loss of the Christians in the Greater Syria was much more serious. Ufuk Gülsoy, "1856 Help ve Nablus Olayları," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, no.9, (1994): 279-281.
[76] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*, 231.

important factor that fed feelings of hatred among Muslims against Christians was the reluctance of the Christians in Damascus (in contrast to the Jews there) to either pay the head tax that exempted them from military service or be conscripted.[77]

The conflict that resulted was catastrophic and cost Muslim and Christian lives alike, although the Christians' losses were far more severe. Even though in the literature the number of Christians killed is not entirely clear, existing figures estimate it between six thousand and eight thousand Christians in Damascus alone, and twenty thousand people overall, throughout all the territories of Greater Syria.[78] Apart from numbers, it is important to note that the conspiracy that emerged in Damascus had an anti-Christian character and did not target other people of other religious affiliations.[79] As a matter of fact, local Jews and Samaritans remained unharmed during these local conflicts.[80]

In many places, Ottoman authorities managed to prevent an outright slaughter of Christians by Muslims. By taking strict military precautions, the Turkish military averted attacks against Christian subjects in Jerusalem, Aleppo, Nablus, Homs, Hama, and Latakia.[81] For instance, in Damascus Ottoman troops deploying cannon marched against a mob led by one Halil, killed many of them, and arrested 145.[82] In addition, those who were

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[77] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*, 233.
[78] Roger Owen casts different estimations in his book. Accordingly, one anonymous Christian writer estimated the number of killed Christians as 6000, while L. Schatkowski Schilcher gives a figure of 8000, "The decline of Syrian localism: the Damascene notables 1785-1870", (D. Phil., University of Oxford, 1978), 150. Meanwhile K.S. Salibi indicated 5500 people were killed on the first day. Kemal Salibi, "The 1860 upheaval in Damascus' in Polk and Chambers," In *Beginnings of Modernization* ed. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 191-192 All cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,*324 endnote 92.
[79] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria…*,226-227.
[80] Ibid., 227.
[81] Obviously the Port was not happy with these attacks and it mentions the leaders of the riots with scornful expressions like 'these vermin gathered by Omeroğlu Halil, revolted and during the turmoil, they plundered the houses of non-Muslim Ottomans and the foreigners' in Ufuk Gülsoy, *1856 Help ve Nablus Olayları,* 282
[82] Ufuk Gülsoy, 1856 Help ve Nablus Olayları, …, 283.

suspected of being involved with the riots were arrested or followed, and many of them were sentenced to penal servitude or exile.[83] However, the Porte significantly failed to take such pre-emptive action in Mount Lebanon, where Christians were harmed much more injuriously than in the cases just described.

The clash in Mount Lebanon deserves special attention, as it gave rise to some of the most fundamental changes in the region. The upsurge in the Christians' position, underwritten by French commercial involvement, was more significant in Lebanon than elsewhere in the area and can be traced back to the period of Egyptian occupation. After the restoration of Ottoman authority in Syria during the early 1840s, the Maronite Christian population felt unsafe[84], and community leaders community spelled out their request for more political rights. The most important complaint of the Christian leaders was that the appointed Muslim *wali*s took the side of Muslims in cases of conflict between Druze and Maronites.

The Porte took the case in Lebanon seriously, foreseeing that conflict in this part of the empire might produce formidable outcomes; this prediction would ultimately be realised. To dispel the strife between Druze and Maronites, a number of *wali*s were dismissed, and new names were appointed; however, this action did not bring peace. In an attempt to avert a possible clash between Druze and Maronites in December 1842, the European powers proposed a partition plan for the government of Mount Lebanon called

[83] Ufuk Gülsoy, "1856 Help ve Nablus Olayları, ..., 283.
[84] In the case of Lebanon, the sectarian groups of Christians should be specified because not all Christian groups took the same political position. As Fawaz indicates, the Orthodox Christians used the side of Druses in the power struggle of the Mount Lebanon. During the strife had taken place, Maronite Patriarch called for unification of Christians but this call did not echoed among Orthodoxies positively. Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,53.

the Double Qaymaqamate. This plan divided the region into two self-governing districts: the northern district would be administered by Christians, and the southern district by Druze. This partition, however, did not resolve the 'Lebanese question[85]', on the contrary, it exacerbated the situation. When the Catholic population of Lebanon was backed by France and the Muslim population by the British Empire, the situation became not only a conflict of two religions but also a conflict between two European powers played out on a local stage and on foreign soil.[86]

The increased animosity between the two religious groups ultimately ended in violence in various parts of Lebanon. Samir Khalaf accurately noted the epidemic characteristics of the conflicts as follows: 'One disturbance provoked another until the unrest in the region culminated in the Kirswan peasant uprising of 1859.[87]' Within a couple of years, disturbances spread to Latakia and then to central Lebanon in May 1860.

The Porte tried to resolve the Lebanese issue on a local basis by brokering negotiations between leaders of the different religious communities. But it later noticed that the tension had reached a level that could not be diffused by diplomacy. Looting because of a lack of police authority, and the situation exacerbated as greater numbers of people joined the looting. Following an international outcry, the Ottoman regime finally sent troops to re-establish order. But the Ottoman force itself was not strong enough to stop the turmoil; therefore, French forces joined the operation, and security was eventually restored. Nonetheless, the late intervention had dire consequences for Christians. In Deir al Qamar

[85] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,27-28.
[86] Kamal Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (Los Angles: University of California Press, 1988), 69 cited in Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,28.
[87] Samir Khalaf, *Persistence and Change in 19th Century Lebanon: A Sociological Essay*, (Beirut, Lebanon: American University of Beirut Press, 1979).

alone, 447 warehouses and shops, 1,738 rooms, and 711 houses were destroyed, apart from the thousands of dollars in capital that was stolen.[88] In total, two hundred villages in Mount Lebanon had been plundered and burned, and in some places, the mulberry trees were set on fire.[89]

After the conflict ended, an international commission representing a number of European powers, including Britain and France, was formed to discuss the future status of the area.[90] The commission proposed autonomous status for Mount Lebanon, referred to in Ottoman terminology as the Mutasarrifate (*mutasarrifiyya*). The Ottoman Empire was reluctant to accept the proposal; however, the imperial regime had no power to object to the project, so it ultimately recognised it. This new status for Lebanon was secured by a series of conventions signed between 1860 and 1864, generally called the *Règlement Organique*. According to these conventions, European powers would send soldiers (in numbers matched by the Ottoman army) to Lebanon to maintain security (Article 1). Lebanon thus separated from Syria, and it would be governed by an administrative council consisting of twelve members from six different religious communities, each of which (Maronites, Druze, Sunnis, Shias, Greek Orthodox, and Greek Catholics) elected two members. The council was headed by a governor called the *mutasarrif*, who was elected by the Ottoman palace, chosen from among non-Lebanese Christians. Lebanon's status was confirmed and

[88] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,47 The content of room is not properly given no elaboration is provided.
[89] Ibid.,164.
[90] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*,162.

made permanent by the convention of September 1864; this status would last until the outbreak of the First World War.[91]

After the proclamation of Mutasarrifate, then, Mount Lebanon emerged as a separate political entity even though it still shared cultural ties with Greater Syria. The region officially remained a part of the Ottoman Empire, but its people had gained substantial privileges.

V

After the Turmoil: Where Is the Long Peace? (1865–1900)

Akram Khater has noted that most of the history books on nineteenth-century Syria are mute about the years between the local civil wars and World War I [92]. This may stem from the fact that during this period, the religious and sectarian outburst was followed by political peace and stability[93]. The new political circumstances and the power politics around the interests of European powers did not allow any local power to become absolutely superior over the others, as had occurred in the case of Mehmet Ali Pasha.[94] Neither was the Ottoman central government strong enough to establish absolute authority over Syria.

The relative political stability that ensued in Mount Lebanon became more evident as the region gained new political status. Akarlı named the period between the end the civil war of 1860 and the establishment of Lebanon under the 1920 French Mandate the 'long

[91] Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Chapter II.
[92] Akram Khater, *Inventing Home…,*11.
[93] Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*,xiii.
[94] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*,167.

peace,' particularly in terms of internal concord and political stability. In this view, during the Mutasarrifate, social reconciliation and sociopolitical integration took place in Mount Lebanon, and in the coming decades these would create in the region a distinct political identity, a centralised government, and a political tradition characteristically its own.[95]

Some historians insist on a completely different vision from Akarlı's regarding the history of Lebanon between 1860 and 1914. To explaining this difference using Hitti's metaphor, it (this period) was 'the silver lining which enveloped the dark cloud of the 1860s.' According to this view, the so-called peaceful period did not bring a sustainable harmony to the region but generated a fifty-year interlude that ended in anarchy, conflicts, and hostility based on religious and sectarian differences, along with civil wars that erupted in the following decades.

Despite these two different approaches, it is certain that the region reached relative political tranquillity when important social and economic transformations took place. The rehabilitation of local economies was the most important affair in Greater Syria after the strife had ended. For one thing, during the disturbances of the 1860s, some silk factories and looms and other spinning and weaving equipment were destroyed. In the following years, these losses were recouped through both French and Ottoman initiatives. The scholarly literature discusses the role of French troops in re-establishing Christian-owned

[95] Engin Deniz Akarli, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

factories[96], as well as the foreign charitable organisations that sent some £250,000 to help the silk industry[97] recover, but the role of the Ottoman Empire has been disregarded.[98]

In fact, Ottoman archival documents reveal that the central imperial government contributed significantly to Lebanon's reconstruction. The Ottomans began paying compensation to Christians as negotiations were taking place with European countries regarding the new status of Lebanon[99]. After the civil war, the empire sent silkworm seed from two Anatolian cities[100], Edirne and Bursa, to Lebanon in order to revive silk production there.[101] For those whose houses had been set on fire, the Porte declared that it would release funds for reconstruction[102], and the principal clerk of Mount Lebanon was assigned to follow up on the compensation process.[103]

From the rest of the files, it can be understood that the empire faced difficulty finding the money for this compensation, given the regime's chronic financial straits. While the empire was in search of money, on 13 August 1860 a famous broker (no name is indicated) offered the empire twenty-five million francs as a loan. The proposal was considered but ultimately refused because the amount was insufficient and the conditions of the loan unfavourable.[104] Ottoman bureaucrats suggested obtaining a loan from European countries instead, but this suggestion was likewise rejected; it was decided that

[96] Muhammet Said Kalla, "The Role of Foreign Trade in the Economic Development of Syria 1831-1914" (Ph.D. diss., American University, 1969), 209-210 cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…*,157.
[97] Marcel Emerit, La Crise Syrienne et L'expansion Economique Française en 1860, (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1952), 226. Cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,*165.
[98] Only Leila Fawaz notes that Ottomans achieved to establish a deal and cooperation with France to manage the reconstruction of Lebanon and Syria. Leila T Fawaz, *An Occasion for War…*, 173.
[99] BOA, A.MKT. NZD, 329_5, 13.R.1277, 29.10.1860.
[100] BOA, A.MKT. NZD, 342_27, 30.B.1277, 11.02.1861.
[101] BOA, A.MKT. NZD, 345_51, 25.Ş.1277, 08.03.1861.
[102] BOA, HR.MKT, 355_86, 29.R.1277, 03.11.1861.
[103] BOA, A.MKT. NZD, 410_11, 08.L.1278, 31.03.1862.
[104] BOA, HR.MKT, 344_95, 25.M.1277, 17.08.1860.

doing so would cause an even greater burden to the imperial treasury. Ultimately, the Ottoman Empire decided to issue bonds to raise the money needed for these compensations.[105] The funds must be claimed by 15 November 1863, and then the process was complete.[106]

As already indicated, the post–civil war years brought not only political stability but also economic improvement in most of Greater Syria. During the 1860s, the economic expansion of European capitalism, which entailed growing trade with European countries and enlarging commercial agriculture, was consolidated[107], and the local economy in Greater Syria was then fully integrated into the French market. The French dominance in Syria's silk production is most obvious in the following indicators: according to the data of Boutros Labaki, in 1873, more than 40 percent of the Syrian-produced silk was exported to French markets, while this number had reached 90 percent by the early 1900s.[108]

In addition, it seems that during this period, local entrepreneurs gained trade experience from their relationship with Europe, and they became involved in production themselves. After peace was secured, and given the significant rise in global silk prices during the 1860s, more Syrian merchants and bankers began to invest in silk manufacturing. While the number of European silk factories remained constant at about ten, Syrian and Lebanese entrepreneur-owned factories rose from thirty-two in 1862 to forty-seven in 1867. By the 1880s, this number had jumped to about one hundred.[109]

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[105] BOA, İ..HR., 333_21439, 22.M.1280, 09.07.1863.
[106] BOA, HR.SFR.3…, 83_2, 15.10.1863.
[107] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*,153.
[108] Boutros Labaki, *Introduction a L'histoire économique du Liban: Soie et Commerce Extérieur en fin de Période Ottomane (1840-1914),* (Bierut: Université libanaise 1984).
[109] Gaston Ducousso, *L'industrie de la Soie en Syrie et au Liban,* (Bierut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1913), 125-127, cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…*,157.

Obviously, the locals' factories were smaller in scale than the Europeans' factories were[110]; however, the numbers nevertheless reflect Syrian and Lebanese entrepreneurs' great interest in silk production, along with the endeavours of local capitalists to enter this sector.

This prosperity reached its peak during the second half of the 1860s. The relatively high prices of agricultural products gave birth to agricultural boom in Syria during this period. Roger Owen has noted that the Syrian cultivators made 'an impressive response' to the increasing demand for cereals.[111] The situation was even better in Mount Lebanon, since the greater part of the harvest was grown there, rather than in the other districts of Greater Syria.

However, the economic heydays of Syria and Lebanon did not last long, especially in Syria's interior. The good years of production were followed by reduced economic activity beginning in the 1870s. Apart from poor harvests, falling silk prices on the world market injured the local economy. The results were dramatic for entrepreneurs, silk producers, and those who had invested in silk. As the industry's recession deepened, land prices fell significantly, and many silk factories suspended production activities altogether.[112]

What happened after the recession of 1870 in the Syrian and Lebanese economy was complicated, and the overall picture is difficult to discern because data are lacking from that time up to World War I. Even though the studies of Roger Owen show that the depression of 1870 was followed by a partial recovery, it is almost impossible to estimate

[110] Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,*158.
[111] Ibid., 168 and 171.
[112] Ibid., 171.

how long and to what extent it lasted.[113] Still, from the existing glimpses of information it is possible to say that economic performance varied in different parts of Syria until the beginning of World War I.

In many parts of Syria during this period, significant fluctuations also took place in agricultural production.[114] More than half of the Ottoman Empire's overall harvest was imported to the European market or sold to the other parts of the imperial realm; only what remained was used for local consumption.[115] The good news in Syria eventually came from silk production. According to Kais Firro's data, the share of Syrian-produced silk in Lyons' silk imports increased from 3.9 percent in the period 1873–1875 to 7.1 percent for 1901–1905.[116] Rapid improvement in the transportation system, especially in port-city navigation services and railway construction, would make internal and external marketing possible.[117]

In Lebanon, on the other hand, it seems that after the recession of the 1870s, silk production recovered more quickly, and that recovery seemed complete by the mid-1880s. In this period new mulberry trees were cultivated, and these eventually covered almost half of all Lebanon's cultivable land. The suspended silk factories reopened, and their numbers rose from just over one hundred in the 1880s to two hundred, to around two hundred in the

[113] This may stems from that the land records were either lost or destroyed during the World War I. See Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…*, 255.
[114] Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…*,254-255.
[115] Ibid., 245 and 247.
[116] See Kais Firro, "Silk and Socio-Economic…, table 1.
[117] For the list of train line and their construction date see Owen p. 246. Şevket Pamuk and Jeffrey Williamson depicted very significant picture on how construction of Ottoman railroads enabled the integration with the World market. Section I. Şevket Pamuk and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "Ottoman De-industrialization, 1800–1913: Assessing the Magnitude, Impact, and Response," *Economic History Review* 64, no. 1 (2011): 160-163.

first decade of the twentieth century and during this period the total silk-production workforce increased to more than ten times its pre-recession size[118].

As for politics, from the late 1870s until the 1908 Revolution, the new political atmosphere in İstanbul had a profound effect on Anatolia and, to some extent, in the Balkans; however, it had little effect on Greater Syria. During this period, the demand for reforms and freedom articulated by Ottoman intellectuals became louder. Ultimately, these demands had political repercussions, and Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) recognised the constitution as soon as he ascended the throne on 23 November 1876. Even though this constitution gave vast authority to the sultan, it also facilitated the establishment of a parliament—consisting of both Muslim and non-Muslim representatives—that would function to express public opinion. However, this first constitutional attempt in Turkey did not last long. Abdülhamid, relying on the rights he possessed through the constitution, suspended that constitution and the parliament on 13 February 1878 owing to 'extraordinary conditions,' namely, war between Turkey and Russia. These extraordinary conditions would not end until 1908, when the second constitution would be ratified. During those thirty years, known as the time of despotism (*istibdat*), the sultan would suppress reformist voices and establish his absolute authority in the empire.

In contrast to what extant Ottoman historiography on this period implies, during the time of despotism, the sultan's authority could not be totally restored in either Syria or Lebanon.[119] In Mount Lebanon, the Mutasarrıfate regime enjoyed an immunity guaranteed

[118] Gaston Ducousso, *L'industrie de la soie en Syrie et au Liban,* (Bierut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1913), 125, cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…,*250.

[119] Even though no comprehensive academic studies had been done regarding how much Abdulhamit regime was dominant in Syria, the book of Abdulhamit Kırmizi on Ottoman *wali*s during Abdulhamit period, include some glimpses of information which makes one to deduce that the Ottoman representatives in local base used

by the European powers. Moreover, the influence of those European countries was no longer restricted to the economy but extended to the political sphere, as well. France and Russia were officially recognised by the Ottoman Empire as the protectors of Maronites and Orthodox Christians. Maintaining a balance of sorts, the status of Britain as the protector of Druze Muslims and Protestants was likewise confirmed.

As far as the other parts of Greater Syria are concerned (and as discussed in chapter 5 in more detail), the lack of political and military power led Abdülhamid II's regime to apply the traditional method in attempts to keep those areas under Ottoman control: establishing a balance of power between different local groups by supporting one over the others in response to particular circumstances.

Between 1870 and 1900, significant changes were seen in the social and demographic spheres of Syria and Lebanon; these can be divided into the three categories of population increase, emigration, and immigration. All three phenomena are interrelated, and one led directly to another. The rise seen in demographic indicators and their effects are treated in detail in the following chapter. To briefly touch on the topic here, in this period, for various reasons, both Syria and Lebanon experienced population growth. In several districts, including Damascus[120], the population almost doubled, and emigration to the Americas began in large numbers simultaneously.

Population influx to Greater Syria is the other reality of that time that deserves to be mentioned. After the Turco-Russian War of 1877, thousands of Caucasian Muslim refugees

to behave independent against the authority of the Porte, or sometimes the Porte was not powerful enough to reclaim on them. See Abdulhamit Kırmızı. *Abdülhamid'in Valileri: Osmanlı Vilayet Idaresi: 1895-1908*, (İstanbul: Klasik, 2007).

[120] For more concrete numbers about rise in population see Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*, 544 table 59.

penetrated Ottoman territory to escape massacre. Many of these people settled in Anatolia and Rumelia on state-owned land. Even though the exact number cannot be determined, a few thousand of them were sent to Greater Syria.[121] İstanbul expected that the fallow state-owned land available for cultivation in Hama, Humus, and Aleppo would be cultivated by these immigrants.[122] In addition, taking advantage of the aggressive, fighting nature of the Caucasians, Ottoman authorities intended to use them to maintain security in the Bedouin-dominated areas of Syria, directing the Caucasians to these distant regions and licensing them as rural gendarmerie.

Contrary to imperial expectations, however, some of these immigrants did not settle and begin producing economically in Syria because they could not adapt to the new weather conditions and natural environment. Others did not receive help from Ottoman *wali*s in Syria, who were unprepared for the arrival of so many refugees. These dissatisfied groups set their eyes on the property of local people; some resorted to armed robbery, banditry, and even the sale of their own children to survive.[123]

During this period, the unfavourable economic conditions that were exacerbated by the significant population growth were partially mitigated by the flow of remittances sent by Ottoman-Arabs in the Americas. Some economic historians contend that these remittances made significant contributions to Greater Syria's economy.[124] For instance,

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[121] Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire…*,115-118; Kemal Karpat, "The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (May 1985): 175-209; Philip K. Hitti, *History of Syria: Including Lebanon and Palestine*, (London: Macmillan, 1951), 67

[122] Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800–1980*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 99-100.

[123] Ibid., 99.

[124] The way in which these remittances could be sent to home does not take place in the secondary literature. However the Ottoman archival sources allows us to see some methods of this kind of money transmission. These related documents indicate that money transfer were often held in a more professional way and that the role of brokers remained limited, especially by the beginning of the 20th century. Several other actors played

Arthur Ruppin has calculated that thirty million francs of Syria's total income of sixty million francs came in the form of remittances from the across the Atlantic.[125] Similarly, A. A. Naccache, an inspector of public works and agriculture in Mount Lebanon, estimated that ninety million francs (almost half that region's total income) had been remitted from the New World to the Mount. These remittances helped establish an infrastructure in Lebanon. In Zahleh, for example, numerous stone houses were built with these funds.[126] In Mount Lebanon, remittance money was used to build several characteristic red-roofed villages, especially from the 1890s onwards, and it was this money that funded the construction of the first mountain hotels in summer resorts such as Aley.[127]

intermediary roles in the transmission of remittances from the Americas back home. U.S. Presbyterian missions were one. At the beginning, these missions transferred money from one person's account by endorsement to the account of another trustworthy individual. Later, as the amount of remittances increased considerably, they deposited the collected money from Syrian–American immigrants into the mission office in the U.S. The list of beneficiaries and money senders were in turn sent to the U.S. council and then forwarded to the U.S. mission press. Money senders were then called to receive the equivalent of those remittances in Turkish piastre at the legal rate. To pay these remittances, the mission press sold dollar promissory notes at an average rate of USD $3.25 per Turkish lira.
The Red Crescent was also active in collecting money, especially for wounded Turkish soldiers and the destitute in Anatolia. This institution especially served Muslim communities. For instance, in February 1916 the Ottoman Community in New York sent 570,40 francs to the Red Crescent to be spent on Muslim soldiers wounded in the Dardanelles Campaign of World War I (BOA, HR.SYS. 2172_12, 10.02.1916). Sometimes the Ottoman Consul General also participated in gathering money and sending it home. (BOA, HR.SYS. 2172_12, 10.02.1916, nu.6)
Ottoman Arabs often used these intermediaries to send money home in return for some amount of money as beneficiaries. The remittances were sent via these institutions presumably because they were considered trustworthy. Still, other individuals sent money themselves via bank transfer. Until World War I, French Banks were especially chosen by Ottomans wanting to send money, though later branches of the Ottoman Bank or German banks allied to the Empire witnessed increased monetary transfers. For instance in February 1916, 570,40 francs were collected by the Ottoman Society in New York. This money was sent by the Ottoman Bank to the account of Red Crescent in İstanbul. Interestingly enough, a significant portion of the Ottoman Bank was of French origin, yet the bank acted as a Turkish bank during World War I.

[125] Arthur Ruppin, *Syria : An Economic Survey…*,12.
[126] Charles Isawi ed., *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1971), 271.
[127] Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie : Géographie Administrative Statistique Descriptive et Raisonnée de Chaque Province de l'Asie Mineure*, v.3 (Istanbul : Isis, 2001).

VI

Another Turbulence: Economic Deterioration, Revolution, and World War I (1900–1914)

The twentieth century did not bring fortune to Greater Syria's economy. Even though little is known about economic conditions in the province during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, it is quite certain that during the first decade of the twentieth, production was depressed almost everywhere, and unemployment emerged. The available data compiled by Owen show that the total number of textile workers decreased from forty-nine thousand in 1900 to twenty thousand in 1909[128].

In Lebanon, the economic deterioration that paralleled the silk industry's decline appeared just several years before the outbreak of World War I. The main reason for this decline was falling global prices. The Lebanese silk industry could not compete, especially with its Japanese counterpart, which expanded silk production extensively in the late nineteenth century and onwards.[129] Waning Lebanese silk production is visible in British records, which report that many mulberry trees were being uprooted and replaced with orange trees, and the view of the vice-consul in Beirut was that silk production was doomed. The inevitable result of this would be unemployment and the shutdown of thirty to forty factories.[130]

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[128] Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy…*, 261

[129] Dominique Chevallier, "Lyon et la Syrie en 1919: Les Bases d'une Intervention," *Revue historique*, no.2 (1960):291, cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…*,250.

[130] Ducousso, L'indutrie de la soie…,125. The study of Pamuk and Williamson shows, in fact de-industrialization process were seen in various sectors in many other parts of the Ottoman Empire especially during the second half of the 19th century. They also indicate that in this general trend, some branches of domestic industries persisted until World War I. It seems the silk industry in the Mount were among these sectors which stayed alive for a long time. See Şevket Pamuk, and Jeffrey G. Williamson Şevket Pamuk and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "Ottoman De-industrialization, 1800–1913: Assessing the Magnitude, Impact, and Response," *Economic History Review* 64, no. 1 (2011): 159-184.

The political sphere of the Ottoman Empire also experienced radical shifts. The rise in dissenting opinions, the vocalisation of a demand for liberalism, and the reclamation of a constitution all culminated in 1908. That year, the Young Turks, a group consisting of Turkish nationalists and European-oriented secularists, accomplished the Constitutional Revolution and soon afterwards dethroned Sultan Abdülhamid II, whom the revolutionaries considered a true tyrant. The Young Turks gained support for the revolution from different religious and sectarian groups, promising to end censorship, extend religious and political liberties, and prepare a new constitution.

The revolutionaries were welcomed by Syrian and Lebanese Muslims and non-Muslims who were unhappy with the sultan, even though they were among the groups that had suffered the least during the period of Abdülhamid's absolutism. The three slogans of the Young Turks (merely Turkish translations of the tripartite motto of the French Revolution) created an expectation of equality across religious lines. Even so, the most important expectation among the people of Syria and Lebanon was the improvement of the local economy, which was one of the promises of the revolution. But within several years it was plain that these expectations would not be met. After the revolution, with the decision of the Young Turks' political party, Union and Progress (UPP), the Ottoman Empire entered into a series of wars: first in Tripoli and the Balkans, and then World War I, joining the German side.

Under the extraordinary conditions of war, the old revolutionaries behaved in a manner directly opposed to what they had promised during the 1908 Revolution. The concomitant defeats of the Turkish army in both wars brought about a significant shift in

ideology and politics. The liberal Ottomanist[131] ideals of the Young Turks turned out to be extremely Turkish-nationalistic and étatist. The regime's new stance was reflected in the politics of Syria and Lebanon. As a first radical operation, the UPP abolished the privileged status of Mount Lebanon and appointed its own local governors there.[132] Second, addressing the Tanzimat reforms, the UPP declared that it would maintain the same distance from all citizens, regardless of religious affiliation; the announcement was made that all privileges had been lifted and all imperial subjects were now equal before the law. This equality of the religious sects and ethnic groups throughout the Ottoman Empire was to obtain not only in terms of rights but also in terms of duties. In this light, exemption from military conscription for the non-Muslim population was rescinded, and by 1909, all Muslims and non-Muslims were obliged to serve in the armed forces.

This loss of rights and privileges created significant disappointment among Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The conscription requirement for young Christians created particular unrest because this was a period of war, and conscripts would be obliged to fight against other Christians. In addition, using weapons was strange for them because until the late nineteenth century, non-Muslims had not been allowed to carry arms under the Ottoman system. The rise of Turkish nationalist discourse and propaganda in both the political and the popular sphere, too, created Christian hostility towards the government.

This fomenting resentment ultimately gave rise to Arab nationalism in Syria. During the First World War, some illegal Syrian organisations supported separation from

[131] The ideology which support the idea that all religious and ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire should have equal rights

[132] Muhammet Talha Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria: Cemal Pasha's Governorate during World War I, 1914-1917* (London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 93-98

the Ottoman Empire, and some of them called for the French Mandate. The Ottoman occupation of the region ended after World War I's conclusion, and the region was divided between two great powers: France began to govern the region's northern part under the French Mandate, while the southern part was allocated to Great Britain.

CHAPTER 3

Why Ottoman-Arabs Immigrated to the Americas

Defining the causes behind the Ottoman-Arab immigration to the Americas has been a very controversial endeavour in the academic literature. The pioneer Arab American intellectuals of the early twentieth century tended to attribute emigration from Lebanon and Syria to the political conflicts and massacres of the 1860s, which were reviewed in detail in the previous chapter.[133] This line of thinking, which was later formulated as the 'persecution theory,' would affect the studies of later academicians.[134] Inspired by this grand narrative, the subsequent historians who studied Syrian and Lebanese immigration to the Americas argued that emigration movements had begun as a result of fears aroused among Syrian Christians by attacks against them during the strife of the 1860s in various parts of Greater Syria.[135] In other words, the according to persecutions theory, these people felt unsafe under the Ottoman Turkish regime and sought alternative places where they could establish new lives.[136]

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[133] One example: Abraham Mitrie Rihbani, *A Far Journey: An Autobiography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914).

[134] For the general overview for this debate see the Ignacio Klich and Jeff Lesser, "Historiography of Arab immigration to Argentina: The Intersection of the Imaginary and the Real Country," In *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities* ed. Ignacio Klich and Jeff Lesser (London: F. Cass, 1998), 204-227

[135] Robert Widmer, "Population," In *Economic Organization of Syria,* edited by Said B. Himadeh, Reprint, **(**New York: AMS Press, 1973), 14.

[136] For this argument see Charles P. Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) also see Roger Owen, *The Middle East Economy in the World Economy, 1800–1914* **(**London: I. B. Tauris, 1993).

While this approach was directly adopted by some contemporary historians[137], it has also come to be criticised by newer researchers in the last several decades.[138] Among critics of the hypothesis, Akram Khater, Kemal Karpat, and Alixa Naff have come to the fore. According to Khater, the persecution theory was a total fabrication created by first-generation American Maronite intellectuals (such as Philip Hitti[139] and George Haddad) that rests on their intention to create a 'Maronite nation,' gaining the support of Western powers that shared a common religion. These writers thought that crafting a narrative about Arab immigrants who escaped attacks by Muslim Arabs backed by 'ruthless Turks' would help them obtain that support.[140]

Refuting this 'persecution myth,' Khater has pointed out that the Ottoman government behaved more leniently towards the people of Mount Lebanon than it did towards other Ottoman people insofar as the empire imposed lower taxes than what might have been levied according to *Règlement Organique* conventions. In addition, the imperial regime exempted the people of Mount Lebanon from conscription entirely, even during wartime.[141] According to Khater, this picture overturns the persecution approach; instead, he has put forward economic motives as the main cause of emigration from the region.

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[137] For example, Clark Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in São Paulo, Brazil," In *The Lebanese and the World: The Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nedim Shehadi, (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in Association with I.B. Tauris, 1994), 286, cited in Akram Khater, *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 208

[138] For the general overview for this debate see the Historiography of Arab immigration to Argentina: The Intersection of the Imaginary and the Real Country. See Ignacio Klich and Jeffrey Lesser, *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities* (London: F. Cass, 1998), 204-227

[139] Even Philip Hitti do not avoid to declare the economic factors as an important determinant of mass emigrations from Syria. See Philip K. Hitti, *The Syrians in America* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924).

[140] Akram Khater, *Inventing Home…*,49

[141] Ibid., 50-51

Likewise, the important historian Alixa Naff, whose studies are based mainly on oral testimonies from first-generation Syrian immigrants to the United States, has underlined that the Arab emigrations did not result from an 'emergency or panic flight; it was a deliberate and calculated choice made by individual families.' According to her, 'all various explanations are marginal to the economic reason and essentially consequential to it.[142]

The newer literature challenging the earlier persecution theory has raised the argument about economic forces, which has contributed to the debate significantly; however, it is still not possible to safely assert that the new approach has overcome the older one. For one thing, because the scope of Khater's study was limited to Mount Lebanon, it omitted the other parts of Syria. Moreover, the oral sources that Naff has used do not convince all historians of her argument, especially those who question the extent to which Naff's informants represent the tens of thousands of Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the Americas. Kemal Karpat's article depicts a very general overview of Ottoman migrations to the Americas in thirty-four pages, including not only Syria and Lebanon but also the Balkans and all of the Americas, using the primary documents in the Ottoman Archives. Since the scope of this article is so broad, it overlooks the differences in migration patterns from different parts of Syria. For instance, the exceptional status of Mount Lebanon and its effects on emigration is largely ignored. In addition, the article does not address the changes in Syrian-Lebanese migration during four and half decades of emigration; neither does it cross-check its cases using non-Ottoman sources.[143]

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[142] Alixa Naff, *Becoming American*…, 83

[143] Kemal Karpat, "The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (May 1985): 175–209

Taking into consideration this unresolved debate in the scholarship, then, this thesis in general and this chapter in particular aim to contribute by formulating the proper questions, using a variety of sources, and analysing them in a historical context. The first question raised is whether the persecution theory is valid and convincingly explains mass emigrations from Greater Syria to Argentina and the United States during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth. If it does not, what are the possible causes behind that phenomenon?

To develop the broadest possible picture, I use primary sources from the Ottoman Archives in combination with American and Argentinian immigration records, a method that also provides cross-checks for cases on either side of the ocean. The Ottoman documents examined generally consist of bureaucratic correspondence between various segments of the imperial bureaucracy: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of War, and the police department, as well as local governorships.

The descriptive statistics presented here for the years until 1911 are largely derived from the official surveys of what was then the United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. For the remaining years of the period, another important primary source is used—namely, *International Migrations*, the work edited by Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi—which in two volumes presents rich statistics about worldwide migration in tables developed for the population of each sending and receiving country. Even though Willcox and Ferenczi's estimations involve a number of miscalculations,

missing data, and typographical errors[144], *International Migrations* has proven quite useful for its precise numbers and its inclusion of the gender and age of immigrants by year.

Although the Ottoman Empire and Argentina also kept partial statistics, these are not detailed enough to sketch even the most general features of Ottoman-Arab immigrants. Nonetheless, in order to outline the most probable picture of their characteristics, I have employed the Argentinian national censuses and small portions of the Ottoman numerical records as complements to the US statistics.

Obviously, it is not possible to attribute the entire phenomenon of Ottoman-Arab migration, which lasted forty-five years, to a single cause, nor is every reason for moving applicable to every emigrant. The causes of these migratory movements were diverse because the profiles of the emigrants themselves were diverse. Changes in socioeconomic conditions in Syria and Lebanon affected the characteristics of these emigrants accordingly, and the causes for emigration therefore varied during this period.

Given these changes and variations, of course, it is difficult to develop a good methodology for fully prying open the exceedingly complex issue of motivation for emigration. This chapter therefore approaches the task by first reviewing in detail the reasons suggested as primary motivations for immigration that appear in both primary and

[144] Regarding the history of Ottoman–Arab immigrants, several errors appear in Willcox and Ferenczi's text. For example, on page 427 the number of immigrants reported to have relocated from Turkey to Asia in 1888 is 272, though on page 387 this number changes to 273. Others problems are not limited to typographical errors. Besides, some researchers questioned how much Willcox&Ferenzi dataset is representative to estimate the number of immigrants at all. Based upon the administrative records of 24 million migrants who entered Ellis Island, Imran Rasul, Oriana Bandiera and Martina Viarengo's empirical study suggested that the flow into the USA 20% and 170% higher than Willcox&Ferenzi's estimations. See Imran Rasul, Oriana Bandiera and Martina Viarengo, "The Making of Modern America: Migratory Flows in the Age of Mass Migrations," *Journal of Development Statistics*, no.102 (May, 2013): 24-47.Since the scale of the Ottoman immigrants to USA is smaller than the European immigrants' this study consider no fallacy in relying upon the Willcox&Ferenzi dataset.

secondary sources. It then analyses these reasons in the historical context and measures them against additional primary sources in order to discuss their relevance, consistency, and persuasiveness in explaining Ottoman immigration to the Americas.

For the sake of consistency regarding timing and historical context, I evaluate the primary sources within the historical framework for Syria and Lebanon provided in the previous chapter. Further, this study has been written based on the notion that it is essential to consider the general profile of the emigrants (including their social and economic backgrounds, as well as their geographical and religious affiliations) while analysing what prompted these people to relocate to the Americas. In addition, it is altogether critical to weigh the exceptional status of Mount Lebanon in the Ottoman Empire while examining migration from this region. Obviously, some motivations, such as military conscription, do not apply for Mount Lebanon (because its people were exempt from conscription), whereas in other parts of Greater Syria this was one of the most important forces pushing people to America.

Apart from the local context, there existed a worldwide trend of transatlantic migration in this period, and as it is argued in the concluding chapter, the Ottoman-Arab case should be considered as a part of this global phenomenon. The data on the general profiles of the Ottoman emigrants and on time trends for the emigration movements provide a useful basis for comparing Ottoman migrations with other European population movements.

Given these sources, methodology, and context, the first section of this chapter describes Ottoman emigrants in terms of their social, economic, and religious backgrounds, since emigrant profiles reveal much about motivations to leave the Middle East. Section II

discusses the famous political persecution thesis and presents some of its weaknesses and inconsistencies. Lastly, sections III and IV offer a more convincing explanation for the emigration phenomenon.

I

Syrians: The New Immigrants

In 1907, the US Congress and federal government realised that the character of that country's immigration trends had changed. Specifically, recently arrived immigrants unexpectedly differed from those of earlier periods. At the turn of the century, the US government demonstrated its worries about these newcomers, who were called 'new immigrants' in order to distinguish them from 'old immigrants.' New immigrants were seen as threatening the well-being of American society and were denigrated because they did not work in either agricultural production or railway construction.

In order to understand these emerging trends in immigration, to keep immigration under control, and to take pre-emptive measures against any potential danger, in 1907 the US government authorised the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration to gather all kinds of statistics and qualitative information about immigrants. Congress's purpose in establishing these newcomers' difference stemmed from its lack of sufficient data to drive changes to national immigration policy in either direction. To overcome this lack of essential information, Congress tasked the Immigration Commission with making a 'full inquiry, examination, and investigation' of recent immigrants and immigration trends.[145]

[145] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,11.

The commission's work verified the hypothesis that significant changes had occurred in immigration, particularly in the characteristics of immigrants, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The first observable difference between so-called new and old immigrants related to their geographical origins. In its reports, the commission explained that before the 1880s, the great majority of immigrant groups had consisted of people from Northern and Western Europe. More recently, however, a rapid change in the ethnic character of European emigrants had occurred; by the first decade of the twentieth century, more than 70 percent of immigrants were originating from Southern and Eastern Europe and from other parts of the world.[146]

According to the commission, another significant difference between the two immigrant groups, each from a different period, involved their economic engagement in both their native countries and the United States. Many old immigrants had arrived in the States seeking agricultural work and, accordingly, often worked as skilled farm labourers. By contrast, new immigrants took part in a movement of largely unskilled labourers—mostly men—who, upon entering the United States from less developed countries, intended to work in the host country only temporarily. These people arrived in response to calls for industrial workers in the eastern and midwestern United States and typically avoided agricultural work altogether.

The commission's reports also emphasised that the naturalization process of new immigrants was slower than that of earlier non-English-speaking peoples.[147] As evidence, it identified other distinguishing features of new immigrant groups that are worth reciting.

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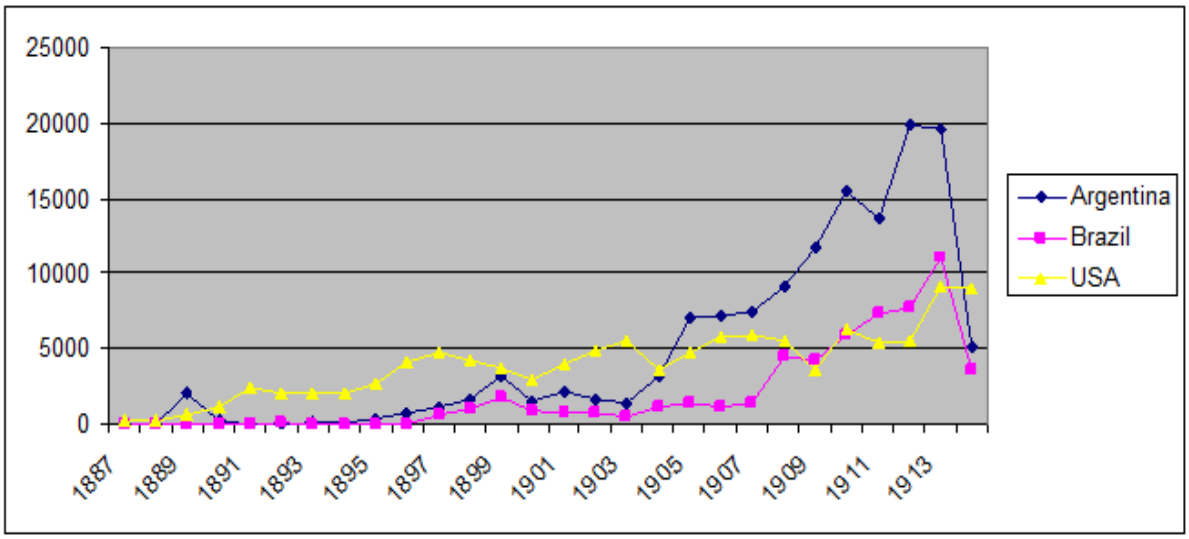
[146] Ibid.,23.
[147] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,14.

New immigrants, for example, were allegedly far 'less intelligent'[148] than old immigrants, and one-third of those over fourteen years of age when admitted were illiterate. In ethnic terms, in contrast to the old wave of immigrants, far fewer new immigrants were white.[149] Furthermore, new immigrants had no intention of integrating into American society, nor were they keen on staying in the United States permanently. They wanted to make money in the host country and then return home with it.

The features of new immigrant groups were also more or less the characteristics of typical Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the United States; these are described in detail in the following paragraphs. Further, there is a noticeable overlap between the Ottoman-Arab and other European migrations in terms of immigrant totals over the course of twenty-five years, which is a noteworthy data point. World migration data indicate that the transatlantic migrations of new immigrants started during the 1870s and had gained momentum by the beginning of 1890s. Figure 2 illustrates that even though Ottoman-Arab immigration movements started two decades later than their European counterparts did, they overlapped with European migrations between 1890 and 1915; both movements took on greater scale in this period.

[148] This is not the language of the author. They are quoted exactly as the same as it took place in the reports. The racist rhetoric here implies the mind-set of immigration policies at the time.
[149] Skin colour was taken seriously by receiver countries. Prior to 1880, most immigrants to the US were from the U.K., Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherland, Belgium, France, and Switzerland; in other words, they were white. Though immigrants from such countries were highly acceptable to the US government, economy, and society, a significant shift in the racial composition of immigrants eventually emerged; the majority of immigrants began to come from Eastern and Southern European countries or not from Europe at all. The reports find this racial shift alarming. See Ibid., 23.

Figure 2. The Number of Ottoman-Arab Immigrants, Arriving Each Year between 1880 and 1914.



Sources: For the United States and Brazil: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations* (New York: International Bureau of Economic Research, 1929); for Argentina: *La Siria Nueva: Obra Histórica, Estadística Y Comercial De La Colectividad Sirio-Otomana En Las Repúblicas Argentina Y Uruguay*. (Buenos Aires: Empresa "Assalam", 1917).

Although this is not indicated in the figure, it is important to note that Ottoman population movements to the United States began before the 1880s; however, until 1888, the total number the immigrants to this country never exceeded five thousand in any one year. According to the Ottoman sources, such small-scale flows consisted of business-oriented merchants who visited countries only briefly—precursors of present-day business travellers[150]—and therefore they cannot be considered to have immigrated. The noteworthy jump after 1908 can be explained by domestic political affairs rather than international trends: this was the year of Constitutional Revolution, and the revolutionaries' regime allowed numerous people to move away.

[150] The Prime ministry Ottoman Archives (hereafter BOA), BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ, 13_68, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888. For all references to the Archives, the letters indicate the department of the file where the document is kept; the subsequent two numbers indicate the dossier and file numbers; and the rest indicates the date of the document.

The technological innovations that facilitated the sudden rise of European emigration in the 1900s all over the world must have played a vital role in the Ottoman case also. As Jose Moya has pointed out, the transportation revolution was crucial to enabling greater numbers of Europeans (and Ottomans) to emigrate from the Old World.[151] Specifically, the increasing power of European powers in Greater Syria during the late nineteenth century facilitated the rise of several port cities, which in turn enabled Ottomans to leave their home countries.[152]

Moya and Vazquez have demonstrated that transportation had become less time consuming, less expensive, and safer by the second half of the nineteenth century. As a result, a typical immigrant could travel from northern Spain to Cuba by boat in approximately nineteen days in the 1880s, and by the 1910s the same trip took as few as twelve days.[153] Ellis Island records indicate that travelling to the Americas often took two to three days longer for Ottomans than it did for their European counterparts, a delay that presumably reflects the additional distance from the new ports in Greater Syria, among others, to points further west.

Figure 2 also shows that the United States was the primary receiver of Ottoman-Arabs in the Americas until 1905. Afterwards, it was superseded by Argentina, and in 1910, the number of Ottomans immigrating to Brazil exceeded the number going to the United States. The shift in Ottoman-Arab immigrants' choice of destination can be

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[151] Jose Moya, *Cousins and Strangers*…,35-36.
[152] For the rise of Port cities and the penetration of European Capitalism to the Ottoman World, see Çağlar Keyder and Y E. Özveren. *Port-cities of the Eastern Mediterranean 1800-1914* (Binghamton, NY: Binghamton University, Fernand Braudel Center 1993).
[153] Gonzalez A. Vázquez, "La emigración gallega a América, 1830-1930," (Ph D dissertation, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 1999) cited in Blanca Sánchez-Alonso, "The Other Europeans: Immigration into Latin America and The International Labour Market 1870-1930", *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History*, no.3 (2007): 395-426.

explained by the nationally restrictive policies that US government implemented in 1906.[154]

Inspired by the Immigration Commission's reports and taking into consideration the perceived threat of new immigrant groups, the US government passed the Immigration Act on 20 February 1907, which significantly amended the precedent law. Though the act proposed no changes to formal immigration policy, it imposed restrictions upon new immigrants in response to the rise in their numbers, as well as to the new profile of typical American immigrants. The Immigrant Act increased the head tax on each immigrant from two US dollars to five; more specifically, prostitutes, feeble-minded people, unaccompanied children less than seventeen years of age, and anyone who could not pass both a physical and a mental examination at Ellis Island were dubbed the 'excluded classes and were not allowed to enter to the US.' The act arguably had far-reaching effects, for beginning in the same year, steamship companies were obliged to furnish passenger lists.[155]

As official reports show, the United States was often the first destination of choice for Ottoman-Arab immigrants.[156] Only when Ottomans were unable to meet new federal requirements for admission to the United States did they seek alternatives. At this point, Latin American nations served as suitable substitutes. In showing that the shift in the targeted geographical destination from North to South America was typical of late nineteenth-century European emigrants, Blanca Alonso Sanchez has pointed out the similarity of the Ottoman case in this respect to that of Europeans. As Sanchez's study

[154] The Ottomans were also pursuing the American polities with their missions in the USA. See BOA, BEO, 3928_294527, 19.Ş.1329, 15.08.1911 and Y.PRK.ZB, 23_43, 06.R.1317, 14.08.1899.
[155] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,9.
[156] BOA, YPRK AZJ 13_68 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888.

argues, transatlantic mass migrations beginning in the 1880s reveal that as latecomers to the race, Latin American destinations could not compete with the United States. By the first decade of the twentieth century, however, these countries could provide a wider array of alternatives and had made themselves more attractive, which in turn made transportation to those destinations safer, cheaper, and faster.[157]

Gender Distribution

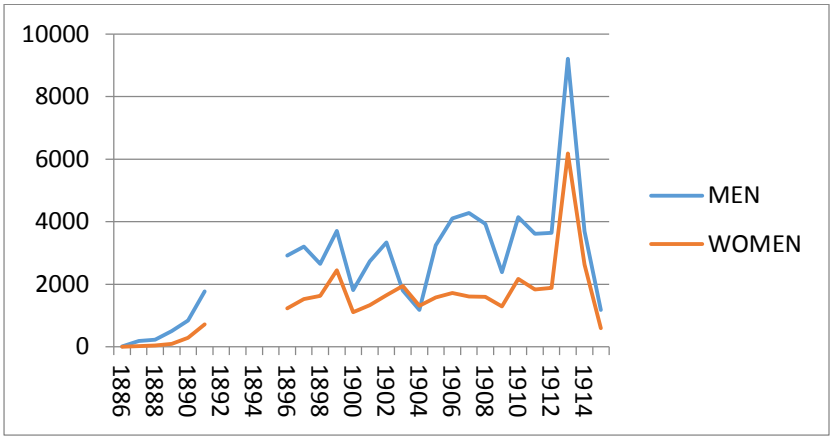
Considering all immigration during the study period, the gender distribution of Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the United States largely paralleled that of European immigrants. The Immigration Commission estimated that 67.9 percent of all Ottoman-Arab immigrants who entered the United States between 1899 and 1910 were men; only 32.1 percent were women.[158] Among all Ottoman-Arab immigrants to Argentina, men (79 percent) also outnumbered women.[159] Across the board, the gender distribution of Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the Americas is consistent with the commission's data indicating that of all new immigrants, men accounted for 70 percent between 1899 and 1910.

From the outset, the Ottoman emigrant population had largely lacked women, and for the next two decades, the gender gap persisted and never entirely disappeared. Immigrants' motivations often reflected their gender; Ottomans had come to the Americas to seek economic opportunity, and given the time's occupational gender norms, immigrants were most likely men (see figure 3). One Ottoman document illustrates the imbalance of male and female populations in the emigration from Greater Syria: 'Most of the villages

[157] Blanca Sánchez-Alonso, "The Other Europeans: Immigration into Latin America and The International Labour Market 1870-1930", *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History*, no.3 (2007): 403.
[158] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,table 10, 97.
[159] *Segundo Censo Nacional de la República Argentina. 10 Marzo 1895* (Buenos Aires: T.I. Población. Ed. Taller Tipográfica e Penitenciaria Nacional, 1898).

now lack men population. The only people you can see are old people and women who suffer severely to survive under unpleasant economic conditions.[160]'

Figure 3. The Number Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the United States by gender, between 1886 and 1914.



Source: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929), v.1, 439.

Ellis Island records indicate that a group of single Syrian female immigrants was sometimes accompanied by an older woman holding a list of the younger women's surnames, chaperone style.[161] Philip Hitti has explained that Arab girls were called to the New World once their economic value there had been discovered. Arab immigrants in the Americas learned that they could benefit from the zero-cost labour of future wives in producing or selling cheap but profitable wares (clothes, amulets, etc.) on the streets. In short, Syrians emigrants who believed that in the United States women were regarded as

[160] BOA, HR.SYS, 70_30, 17.08.1911, nu.5

[161] For instance, it was recorded in the Ellis Island immigration records that in in December 1913 two single Syrian girls namely; Rahil (age:21) and Sarussen Khaury (18) set sail to the USA together with Almaz Khaury (39, housekeeper, single) in order to reach their Fall River (Mass).

assets, not liabilities, were encouraged to bring their wives with them or to have them come later; if they were unmarried, men were urged to import Arab women to wed.[162]

On the point of marriage, the issue of polygamy among immigrants requires a brief discussion. Literature on US immigration history generally indicates the American government's strong disapproval of polygamy—in particular, its implementation of anti-polygamist policies vis-à-vis immigrants during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. These policies initially targeted Chinese immigrants but would later include all non-European nations. In the 1891 Immigration Act, the US Congress first officially listed polygamists among immigrants who would be categorically denied entrance to the country. Congress ultimately expanded upon this prohibition by excluding not only practising polygamists but also any immigrants who '[admitted] their belief in the practice of polygamy.'[163]

In effect, Ellis Island records thereafter began to record among categorical characteristics whether the hopeful immigrant was a polygamist. However—and despite any generalisations to the contrary—empirical results indicate that polygamy was not widespread in Ottoman society.[164] Similarly, this study's sample of Ellis Island records shows that very few Ottoman-Arabs were deported for practising or condoning

[162] Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America* (New York: George Doran, 1924), 58 The same argument was spelled out by Philip and Josep Kayal see *The Syrian-Lebanese in America: A Study in Religion and Assimilation* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), 71.
[163] Claire A. Smearman, "Second Wives Club," *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 27, no.2 (2009): 389-398.
[164] See Alan Duben and Cem Behar. *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880-1940* (England: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

polygamy.[165] Nevertheless, in February 1914, the Ottoman government was reminded by US authorities of the American stance on the practice.[166]

Literacy

Statistics concerning education and the literacy rate of immigrants during the study period reveal surprising trends.[167] Immigration Commission records suggest that from 1899 to 1909, slightly more than half (54.1 percent) of Ottoman-Arab immigrants at least fourteen years old who were admitted to the United States could neither read nor write. Compared to those of other major new-immigrant groups, Ottoman-Arab immigrants' illiteracy rate was close to that of southern Italians (54.2 percent) and lower than that of the Portuguese (68.2 percent). Meanwhile, the Ottoman-Arabs were far behind the other European immigrant groups in terms of literacy—including Spanish (14.6 percent), Russian (38.5 percent), and French (6.3 percent) newcomers.[168] It is also interesting that the Ottoman-Arab illiteracy rate was higher than that of other geographically related immigrant groups, especially the Armenians, whose illiteracy rate was 24.1 percent, much closer to that of developed European countries.

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[165] According to the data of Jamil Butrus Hulwah, between 1905 and 1908, over 2361 rejected people, only 17 of them were deported from Ellis Island for being polygamist or supporter of polygamist. The majority of rejected people consisted of beggars and those who bear trachoma. Jamil Butrus Hulwah, *Al Muhajir al Suri: wa-ma yajibu an yahrifahu wa- yahmala bih*, (New York: Matbaat Jaridat al Huda, 1909).

[166] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO, 51_37, 08.Şu.1329, 13.02.1914.

[167] Immigrants seeking to enter the US were not tested for their ability to read and write; on the contrary, literacy data stem from immigrants' answers to the questions, 'Can you read?' and 'Can you write?' In these cases, any immigrant's assurance that he or she could read in a language or dialect was accepted as proof of literacy. But sometimes, if not often, it seems that the declaration of native language were not taken into consideration by the American officials they were expected to be able to read or write in a European language. *The Commission* acknowledged that the data secured by this method were not conclusive. It can nevertheless be argued that since the inquiries quoted were straightforward enough and the immigrant's educational status in no way affected his or her right to entry, the information obtained is substantially accurate William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,98.

[168] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,vol.4 Table XV p.30 See also vol.1 table 11, 99.

The Ottoman Archives also attest the difficulties that Ottomans faced while seeking to enter the United States. One petition dated 14 June 1910 was sent from London by an Ottoman who complained that Ottoman citizens, as if they were Asian, were not allowed to enter the United States because they could not speak any European language. The petition called upon the Ottoman government to contact its American counterpart in order to resolve the problem.[169]

Geographic Background

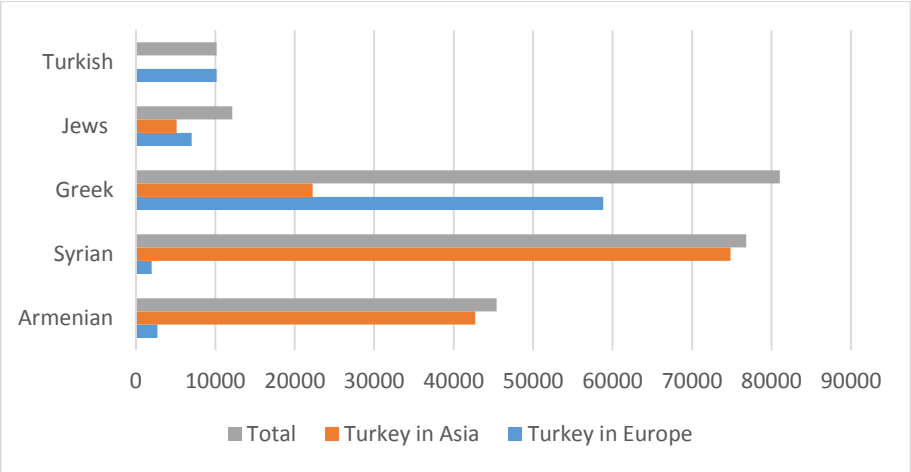
Another facet of Ottoman-Arab immigration to the Americas worth considering is the immigrants' geographic backgrounds.[170] The rising numbers and the variety of emigrants from contemporary empires arriving in the New World by the 1880s motivated the US Immigration Commission to categorise immigrants according to their ethnic (*racial*, in the original text) backgrounds. Prior to 1880, an immigrant's origin signified his or her birthplace, and in the process of bureaucratic consolidation, all immigrants from the Ottoman Empire were labelled 'Turks' though very few were originally Turkish. The commission later identified eight different ethnicities within the Ottoman Empire: Armenian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Croatian, Slovenian, Turkish, and Syrian. In the eyes of the Commission, Lebanese and Syrians remained identical.[171]

As shown in figure 4, between 1880 and 1914, the majority of Ottoman immigrants to the United States were of Greek Orthodox origin; the second-most populous group, Syrians, trailed only slightly. By contrast, in the case of immigration to Argentina, Ottoman

[169] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO, 200_26, 05.C.1328, 14.06.1910.
[170] According to the Bureau's statistics, not only citizens of the Ottoman Empire but also those of the empires of Austria–Hungary and Russia were categorised into 12 and seven distinct races and ethnic groups, respectively.
[171] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,18.

sources attest that a significant majority of Ottoman-Arab immigrants there originated from Greater Syria.[172]

Figure 4. The Total Number of the Ottoman Immigrants to the United States by Ethnic Groups, between 1880 and 1914



Source: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929), vol.1 489, 491, 493, 498. The 'Turkish' category here includes Anatolians Muslims only. The 'Greek' category refers to Orthodox Christians living in Ottoman territories. In this category the orange stick mostly indicates Arabic Speaking Greek Orthodox Christians and partially Anatolian Orthodox Christians (also known as *Rum*) while the blue one shows the number of Greek Orthodox people from European parts of the Ottoman Empire. Syrians category indicate people, particularly of Maronite origin, who emigrated from Syria and Lebanon in this period.

To a large extent, data provided by the American government overlap with those of an Ottoman enquiry completed in June 1910. According to that study, which was compiled by survey, the majority of Ottoman-Arab emigrants choose to go to South America, while Balkan emigrants preferred North America.[173]

Chain migration patterns were also at work in Ottoman transatlantic mass migrations. In the Ottoman case, pioneer immigrants played a magnetic role in motivating subsequent waves of migrants and in determining their destinations. In the Ottoman

[172] BOA, HR.SYS, 71_70, 29.03.1892.
[173] BOA, DH.MUİ, 94-1_17, 04.Ca.1328, 14.05.1910.

Empire, several cases demonstrate that Syrians sailed to the Americas in order to join relatives there. As a result, people of one geographic region in the Old World can often be linked to a particular Latin American destination country. Most Lebanese immigrants, for example, choose to go to Argentina, while Palestinians, less interested in Argentina, preferred Chile. Meanwhile, most inland Syrians chose to immigrate to Brazil.[174]

Returnees

Similar to the average figure for new immigrants from all parts of the world, approximately one-third of Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the United States and Argentina returned home.[175] Specifically, 26 percent of Syrian immigrants to the United returned to Syria, while 33 percent of Syrians who had immigrated to Argentina also did so. It is important to note that the ratio of Syrian returnees was lower than that for several other immigrant groups, namely Italians, Russians, Spanish, and French.

Table 1. The Number of returnees per one hundred immigrants, 1870–1914 (percentage)

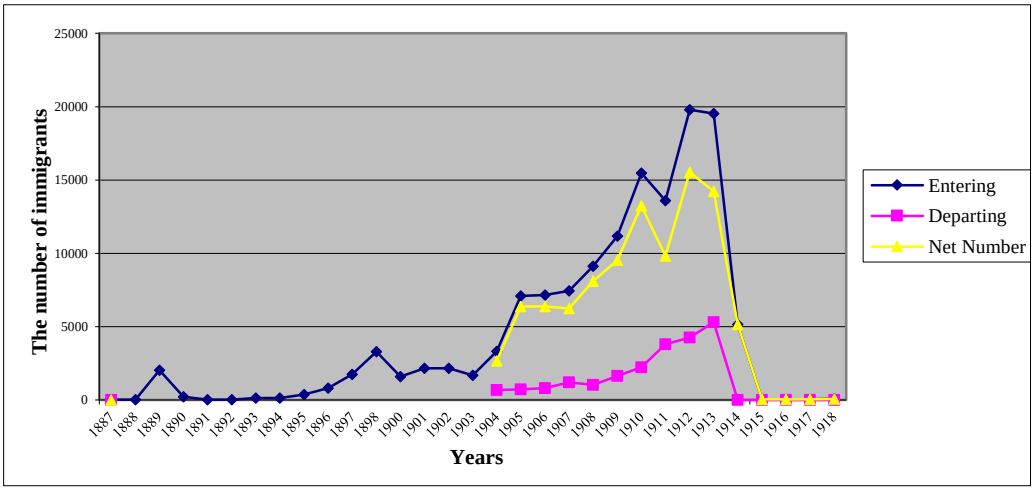
Nations	From USA	From Argentina
Italian	55	56.69
Russian	41	38.15
Spanish	35	45.9
Syrian	26	33.04
French		81.93

For Argentina: *Resúmenes estadísticos 1876–1924*, *Memorias del Departamento de Inmigración*. Cited in Jorge Omar Bestene, "L'immigration Syrienne et Libanaise en Argentine 1890-1950" In *Les Arabes du Levant in Argentine*, ed. Michel Nancy (Marseille : Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes des sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman, 1998). For the USA: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929).

[174] BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ, 13_68, nu.24,25,26, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888.
[175] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,23-25.

The ratios of returnees encourage an investigation of the ways political developments at home motivated emigrants to return. Though in the first place these returnees might have been encouraged to return under the safer political atmosphere generated by the French Mandate, detailed data regarding the number of returnees per decade reveal that emigrant returns had occurred in significant numbers under the previous political regime as well (see figure 5).[176]

Figure 5. The Total Number of inward and outward flow of Ottoman-Arab migrants from and into Argentina, for each year between 1870 and 1914.



Sources: *Segundo Censo Nacional de la República Argentina, 10 Marzo 1895* (Buenos Aires: T. I. Población, *Ed. Taller Tipográfica y Penitenciaria Nacional, 1898); Tercer Censo Nacional de la República Argentina,* (Buenos Aires: Ed. Talleres Gráficos, 1916).

Ottoman sources indicate that a large proportion of Ottoman emigrants returned in order to take back money to reinvest in their native villages, to spend the rest of their lives at home, or to get married and then return to the Americas with their families.[177] A far less significant number of people who returned, however, had been unable to establish

[176] See *Segundo Censo Nacional de la República Argentina. 10 Marzo 1895* (Buenos Aires: T.I. Población. Ed. Taller Tipográfica e Penitenciaria Nacional, 1898). *and Tercer Censo Nacional de la República Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Ed. Talleres gráficos, 1916).
[177] BOA, Y.PRK.TKM, 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909.

themselves in the Americas and likely faced even greater economic hardship in America than they had in their home country.[178]

Occupational Distribution

The occupational distribution of Ottoman-Arab emigrants differs only slightly from that of their European counterparts. According to the Immigration Commission's estimations, approximately half of Ottoman immigrant men were reportedly labourers; some were more specifically identified as farm labourers. Of the total 56,909 Ottoman emigrants during the period, only 441 had been engaged in professional occupations; by contrast, those recorded under the column headed 'other occupation' tallied at 9,287. As table 2 indicates, a similar distribution occurred in the Russian and Italian cases, in which farm labourers and general labourers account for at least half of total immigrant numbers.[179]

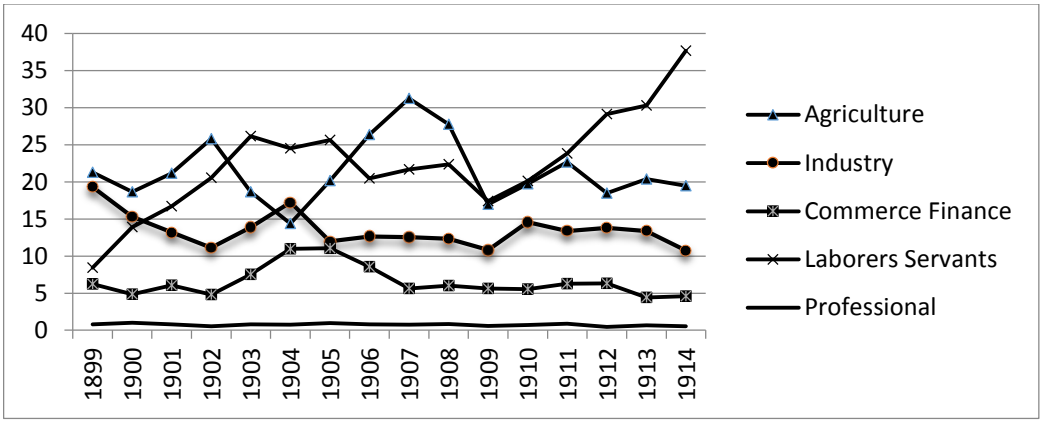
Table 2. The occupational distribution of immigrants to the United States, 1880–1911

Nations	Total number of immigrants	Professional occupation	%	Skilled occupation	%	Farm labourers	%	Labourers	%	Other occupation	%	No occupation
Italian	1,911,933	6,012	0.4	215,510	14.6	507,659	34.5	626,144	42.5	116,334	7.9	440,274
Spanish	51,051	1,676	4.4	16,828	44.1	2,995	7.8	7,869	20.6	8,788	23.0	12,895
Russian	83,574	969	1.4	6,363	9.1	27,593	39.4	30,334	43.3	4,727	6.8	13,588
French	115,783	6,532	9.3	24,137	34.5	6,302	9.0	11,926	17.0	21,141	30.2	45,745
Ottoman-Arab	56,909	441	1.2	8,349	22.7	10,901	29.7	7,744	21.1	9,287	25.3	20,187

Source: William P. Dillingham and William S. Bennet, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1911), vol.1, table 12.

[178] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50, n.22, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[179] In the classification of immigrant occupation, distinctions between 'labourer' and 'farm labourer' were unclear; in some micro-datasets, these designations are used interchangeably.

Figure 6. Trends of Ottoman-Arab immigrations of Different Occupational Groups, Each Year between 1899 and 1914 (in thousand)



Source: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929)1:459, table 12.

Another striking point about the occupational distribution of Ottoman-Arab immigrants concerns changes in that distribution over time. As figure 6 illustrates, pioneer immigrant groups largely consisted of industrialists and agriculturalists. Just before the beginning of World War I, the picture changed significantly; though the total number of industrial entrepreneurs remained unchanged, the number of agricultural workers increased considerably. The unprecedented increase in number of labourers corroborates the general overview that Ottoman Syrians in earlier decades often ventured to the Americas for trade, while in subsequent decades most immigrants were general labourers.

Financial Conditions

Even though no significant primary sources are available to support precise estimations about the financial background of Ottoman-Arab immigrants, the statistics of the Immigration Commission, which included the money declared by immigrants entering the United States, allows at least speculation about the economic situation of Ottoman-Arabs

compared to that of other immigrant groups. According to the American Immigration Laws of 1893, all immigrants who intended to enter the United States were expected to possess and declare at least thirty dollars. A 1903 revision to the law increased the minimum to fifty dollars; the same provision was also restated in the Immigration Act of 1907[180]. The Immigration Commission provided a dataset of cash on hand which indicates that between 1899 and 1903, some 23.8 percent of all Ottomans possessed at least thirty dollars at port. Interestingly, increasing the required amount did not change the percentage; in fact, Commission estimates show that 24 percent of Ottomans could verify that they possessed at least fifty dollars.

Comparing these figures to European cases and other ethnic immigrant groups makes clear that Ottoman-Arab immigrants did not possess any less than other European immigrants did; on the contrary, in some cases, they proved to have more money. For instance, from 1899 to 1903, the rates of Italians and Russians with more than the minimum amount were 6.9 percent and 14.2 percent, respectively, figures that fall below that for Ottoman-Arabs. From 1904 to 1910, the gap between Ottomans, on one hand, and Italians and Russians, on the other, did not change, though Ottomans possessed less than the minimum more often than the Spanish and the French did.

Furthermore, another (perhaps more revealing) indicator—namely, the per capita average cash holdings of immigrants—does not change the picture just described. According to estimations, the average amount of money reported per capita was $45.42 for

[180] Though the law did not require that all immigrants have a specific amount of money in order to enter the US, the financial circumstances of each immigrant would significantly influence whether entry was allowed.

Ottoman-Arabs, $17.14 for Italians, $23.51 for Russians, $58.97 for Spanish, and $86.18 for French.

Table 3. Money reported by immigrants to the United States, 1888–1911 (in American dollars)

Groups	Total number of people admitted (A)	Total number of immigrants showing money (B)	Total amounts of money shown ©	Average amount of money shown per capita		Percentage of those who showed $30 or more, 1988–1903	Percentage of those who showed $50 or more, 1904–1910
				Based on number admitted (C/A)	Based on number showing money (C/B)		
Italian	1.911.933	1487975	25505551	13.34	17.14	6.9	5.4
Russian	83574	68103	1601384	19.16	23.51	14.2	7.2
Spanish	51051	42274	2493026	48.83	58.97	46.3	38.8
French	115783	73389	6324527	54.62	86.18	56.7	53.0
Ottoman-Arab	56909	38282	1738872	30.56	45.42	23.8	24.0
Ottoman Turkish	12956	12083	394871	30.48	32.68	27.7	7.4
Ottoman Armenian	26.498	13389	613969	23.17	31.67	14.2	11.2

Source: William P. Dillingham and William S. Bennet, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1911).

Apart from numerical indicators, the testimonies of immigrants and their descendants make clear that Ottoman-Arab emigrants to the other side of the world were generally poor but not destitute.[181] Immigrants needed a certain amount of money for travel expenses and survival until they could secure employment in the destination country. Archival sources attest that some immigrants borrowed money to meet these costs, while others applied to their tribes or families in order to pay entry fees and travel expenses.[182] The only numerical data regarding assisted immigration among Ottoman-Arabs come from 1921, at which point approximately half of Ottoman Syrians (55 percent) paid their own transportation to the Americas. Meanwhile, another 43.9 percent appealed to their families or tribes for financial assistance. The percentage of Syrians who paid their own way to the United

[181] Alixa Naff, *Becoming American…*,13.
[182] BOA, ZB, 474_42, 28.05.1323, 10.06.1907.

States in 1921 was also lower than that of Armenians. By contrast, only 0.6 percent of Syrians received assistance from other sources, a figure far lower than that for Armenians or that for all other immigrants the same year.[183]

In short, though Ottoman emigrants belonged to lower social strata than immigrants from other European nations, they were not among the poorest.[184] Data regarding the money reported at ports of entry by the US Immigration Commission indicate that Ottoman-Arab immigrants fell into the lower-middle range among all immigrant groups.

Religion

Detailed estimates on the religious background of Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the New World are unavailable. Ellis Island records did not include the category of religion for travellers seeking entry to the United States. In addition, it is extremely difficult to detect or estimate the religious affiliation of Syrians, since ethnic identity does not in any way reflect religious identity—they were all Arabs—though such an inference is possible for Armenian and Greek immigrants. Furthermore, that some Muslims concealed their religious identity or even converted to Christianity in order to more easily enter the United States makes describing Ottoman-Arab immigrants' religious background nearly impossible.[185]

Nevertheless, by relying on Ottoman documents with qualitative content, it is possible to estimate that more than half of the Ottoman emigrants consisted of Christians

[183] Annual Report of Commission General of Immigration for the year end in June 30, 1921, p.36 cited in Edith M. Stein, "Some Near Eastern Immigrant Groups in Chicago", (Master Dissertation, University of Chicago, June, 1922), 69.
[184] Statistical Review, table 35, 357.
[185] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.01.1896.

from various sectarian affiliations.[186] Among these Christians, Maronites seem to have constituted the largest chunk, though indicators also suggest a significant number of Syrian Orthodox Christians (Suryani), Armenians (Gregorian), and a few Protestants. Argentinian records verify that Christian immigrants composed the majority of immigrants to that country, but they also indicate that Muslims formed a significant proportion overall. According to the 1909 estimation (Ottoman migration to Argentina was then on the rise), 11,765 Ottoman-Arab immigrants entered the country, of which 5,111 were Muslims.[187]

Other quantitative indications found in the 1936 census of Buenos Aires show that the proportions of different religious groups changed after the Ottoman Empire had been dissolved. According to this record, among all Ottoman immigrants, Jews and Muslims constituted 28.5 percent and 11.2 percent, respectively, while the Christians of all sects represented approximately 54 percent.[188]

In general, Ottoman-Arab immigrants to the Americas did not intend to stay there. On the contrary, they primarily sought to earn as much money as they could as quickly as possible in the New World and then return home, where they could thereafter enjoy better lives.[189] Given this intent, most Ottoman-Arab immigrants did not cancel their Turkish

[186] BOA, HR.SYS, 71_70, 29.03.1892; BOA, Y.PRK.TKM, 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909; BOA, Y.PRK. ZB, 23_43, 1317.R.06, 14.08.1899.
[187] Juan A. Alsina, *La Inmigración En El Primer Siglo De La Independencia* (Buenos Aires: F.S. Alsina, 1910). In the original document, the Muslim category is indicated as 'Mahometanos'. The number of Christians were 6428 while the number of Jews was 226. Jeffrey Lesser depicts a similar picture on the religious composition of the Ottoman immigrants to Brazil, where the percentage of Muslims were around 15%. Jeffrey Lesser, "Elite Image of Arabs and Jews in Brazil", In *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities* ed. Ignacio Klich, and Jeff Lesser (London: F. Cass, 1998), 41.
[188] Argentinean censuses indicate that Muslim and Jewish immigrants in Buenos Aires accounted for 11% and 18% of the population, respectively. See Anuario Estadístico de Buenos Aires, (Buenos Aires: Briozzo Hnos, Humberto, 1936).
[189] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.01.1896 also see BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 (22), 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902 and BOA, TFR.I.MN. 131_13021, 05.08.1907.

citizenship[190]; this was an especially important backup strategy for those who did not achieve any tangible success in the Americas and therefore decided to return home, applying to the imperial government to fund their transportation expenses.[191]

Given all the data regarding Ottoman-Arab immigration to the New World, it is safe to conclude that mostly young, unmarried, poor (but not destitute), illiterate Syrian men were likely to immigrate to the Americas for a short period of time. There, they sought to earn enough money to pursue better lives upon returning home. This generalisation provides some clues about the emigrants' decision-making processes and implies that the main motivations for travelling to work in the Americas were social and economic. Based on descriptive views of immigrants themselves, the two following sections examine the push and pull factors that drove Ottoman subjects' movement out of the empire and into the Americas.

II

Push Factors

As far as the factors driving emigration were concerned, the persecutions against Christians during 1860s strikes, and the oppressive policies of Abdülhamid II have often been put forward as central[192]. For example, one of the most distinguished economic historians of the Middle East, Charles Issawi, has identified the massacres and political oppression of

[190] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 115_57, 05.N.1319, 16.12.1901.
[191] BOA, BEO, 735_55099, 13.Ş.1313, 29.01.1896 see also DH.MKT, 1570_27, 28.Ra.1306, 02.11.1888 and A.MTZ (04), 161_4, 4.L.1325, 10.11.1907.
[192] In an early dissertation on Syrians in the Americas, Edith M. Stein investigates the main causes for the exodus of people with unfavourable political, economic, and religious conditions. Considering that the dissertation's results were inspired by local American sources available in 1922, it is quite possible that any ideas of motivation by persecution emerged even while the movement was still occurring.

Christians as a primary reason for an exodus from Syria and Lebanon. This argument is based on the estimation that from 1860 to 1900, some 120,000 Arabs left the region—this is indeed true. However, this estimate may have misdirected Issawi's claims, since large-scale emigration did not occur during the three decades after the civil wars ended in the region. To return to figure 1, mass migration from Greater Syria began only after the 1890s. In fact, before 1905 the annual total of Ottoman-Arab emigrants never exceeded five thousand. Until 1880, Argentina's and Brazil's immigration records did not even include an Ottoman or Arab category.

Apart from this misevaluation of the time-series statistics, other evidence discredits the reductionist, anachronistic approach of the persecution theory. First, as mentioned in chapter 2, after the civil war ended in Lebanon, Mount Lebanon gained autonomy and was thereafter governed by a local parliament, and its governor was elected from among the Christian community. When emigration occurred from Mount Lebanon—a place that large numbers of Ottoman-Arab emigrants set sail to the Americas—the region was ruled not by an oppressive Ottoman Muslim regime but by a Christian government.

Second, the persecution theory implicitly focuses on Christian emigrations, since Christians were the victims of mass killings during the 1860s. But the above-mentioned dataset on immigrants to Argentina and documentary evidence from the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs both indicate that Christians were not the only religious group to set sail for the New World. Muslims, Jews, and members of other religious and sectarian groups that did not face oppression in the region must have been motivated to emigrate for different reasons.

Third, the issue of returnees throws a suspicious light on the extent to which religious persecutions had catalysed emigration in the first place. As mentioned earlier, one-third of Ottoman-Arab immigrants returned home for various reasons. If religious and political turmoil had afflicted their homes, why would these people have returned while the old Ottoman regime was still ruling the region? In addition, even though no statistics were kept about the religious affiliations of returnees, some cases in Ottoman documents make clear that the returnees were not all Muslim Syrians, a group that had no reason to fear the ruling regime. On the contrary, the existing records (provided in chapter 4 in greater detail) show that returnees to Greater Syria were mostly Christians who had 'illegally' (this is how the Ottoman government phrased it) left Syria and; though they should not have been allowed to re-enter the local officials, they could managed to do so by bribing those officials.

Finally, the persecution theory is dubious in light of a petition sent to the Porte by the Maronite patriarch dated 30 August 1904. The petition complains about the mass emigration of younger generations of Christian to the Americas; this demographic felt obliged to leave and to obtain work overseas. The petition also declares the Maronites ready to collaborate with the sultanate in order to stop mass emigration.[193]

Together, these four points compellingly indicate that mass emigration from Greater Syria cannot be explained only by massacres or persecutions against Christians. The oppressive policies of Abdülhamid II likewise could not have driven the emigration in this geographic area because, as discussed in the previous chapter, his regime was not strong

[193] BOA, DH.MKT.M, 178_34, 1322.Ca.18; 31.07.1904.

enough in Syria and Lebanon to have oppressed Christians there. The debate on the causes of emigration and the weaknesses of the persecution theory require that historians identify strong reasons for political difference and the alternative motivations people (especially economic) had for leaving the region *en masse*.

Yet, it is important to account for the fact that most immigrants were Christians. One probable contributing factor behind the vast Christian emigration may be traced to this group's economic and institutional relationships with European companies and entrepreneurs (particularly those of French origin); with the missionary schools established by Christian societies in the region; and with the French consulates in Syria and Lebanon, which had been set up by the second half of the nineteenth century. This institutional network connected elements of Christian society backed by European institutions and helped Christians access assistance in journeying to the Americas. Presumably, using this network, Christians could better grasp the situation across the Atlantic, including the opportunities there and ways to seize those opportunities.

In addition, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, considering the issue at the time, suggested that regional changes in social demographics and economic dynamics at this point encouraged Ottoman-Arab youth to seek new opportunities in the Americas.[194] According to the ministry, these Ottoman subjects emigrated because they could not adapt to three important developments in the region of Greater Syria: rising population density, economic deterioration, and compulsory military conscription.

[194] BOA, HR.IM., 168_90, 12.08.1925.

Population Growth

Ottoman sources consider that overwhelming population growth in Greater Syria ranked high among reasons pushing Ottoman-Arabs to the Americas.[195] Overpopulation in almost every part of Syria, which began in the 1860s and persisted until the onset of World War I, seems to have produced unemployment across the region. Since economic development lagged behind population growth, the region's economy could not meet the people's needs.

The demographic trends in Greater Syria are uncertain, for the Ottoman Empire did not institute annual censuses. The data regarding Greater Syria's population rely mostly on the estimates of European consulates, Protestant and Catholic missionaries, and tentative observations made by the local Ottoman governors. Consequently, nothing optimistic can be said about the reliability of the sources. For political reasons, Ottoman governors and French missions each accused the other of manipulating data. In fact, the debate on population composition that began during the civil wars in Greater Syria did not subside until Ottoman withdrawal from the region.

Despite the scarcity and unreliability of the sources, it is nevertheless reasonable to infer that almost every part of Greater Syria experienced significant population increases during the second half of the nineteenth century. The figures supplied by Cuinet and Ruppin show that the population of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine doubled from 1860 to 1900.[196] Moreover, according to Issawi's estimations, the population of Syria's interior rose from 1.2 million in 1800 to approximately 1.5 million in 1840; by 1878, this had

[195] BOA, DH.MKT, 1658_130, 1307.M.22, 18.09.1889. This argument takes place in the following articles also; Robert Widmer, "Population," In *Economic Organization of Syria,* edited by Said B. Himadeh, Reprint, **(**New York: AMS Press, 1973), 10

[196] Arthur Ruppin and Nellie Straus. *Syria: An Economic Survey*…,8-10.

jumped to 2.5 million and ultimately reached 4 million by 1914.[197] Similarly, the population was growing 1 percent annually in the first half of the nineteenth century; this increased to 1.4 percent for the period 1895–1914. A similar increase was clear in Beirut, where the population rose from approximately forty thousand in 1857 to sixty-five thousand in 1875 and to eighty thousand in 1880.[198] Palestine also witnessed a significant population increase, especially after the 1880s; by 1913, its population had risen from 0.5 million to 0.7 million.[199]

Growing populations themselves, however, are arguably insufficient cause for mass emigration from a region. But the problems precipitated by overpopulation can be further clarified from the perspective of population density. As shown in table 4, at this point, population density increased significantly; within a period of twenty years, population density nearly doubled in Beirut and Damascus and increased by half in Aleppo and Jerusalem.

Since the leading economic sectors in Greater Syria were agriculture and animal husbandry, high population density emerged as a problem, for residents were forced to share less arable land with more people. The consolidation of land for agriculture and husbandry inspired a wry proverb in the area: 'Happy is he who has but a goat's perch in Mount Lebanon.'[200]

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[197] Charles P. Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 94 table 6.1
[198] Muhammet Said Kalla, "The Role of Foreign Trade in the Economic Development of Syria 1831-1914" (Ph.D. diss., American University, 1969), table iv, cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East Economy…*,166
[199] Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie : Géographie Administrative Statistique Descriptive et Raisonnée de Chaque Province de l'Asie Mineure*, v.3 (Istanbul : Isis, 2001), 93, 179, 493 and 520
[200] Fawwāz Ṭarābulsī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, (London: Pluto, 2007), 51

Table 4. Population density per square kilometre of arable land in Greater Syria (unit: number of people)

	1897*	1909**	1918***
Beirut	25.19	30.0	34
Mount Lebanon	21.29	154.1	159
Aleppo	7.86	5.7	15
Damascus	7.02	9.5	13
Jerusalem	17.46	N.A.	25

Sources: * Tevfik Güran, *1897: The First Statistical Yearbook of the Ottoman Empire* (Ankara: State Institute of Statistics, Prime Ministry, Republic of Turkey, 1997). ** J. Scott Keltie, *The Statesman's Yearbook* (London: Macmillan, 1909). In this source, the data are provided as population per square mile; I have converted these to square kilometres. *** Arthur Ruppin and Nellie Straus, *Syria: An Economic Survey* (New York: Provisional Zionist Committee, 1918), 8.

These quantitative data are supported by qualitative data from Ottoman documents, which attest concrete indications that the land could no longer meet the needs of Syrian peasants. For example, shortages of arable land are detailed in the petition submitted by the religious head of the Maronite community, Bahuri Yunus İsa, sent to İstanbul in 1904. After grumbling about the situation, the leader asked the central government to take serious action against emigration. To halt the exodus from the region, the patriarch suggested that the sultan grant to Maronite peasants state-owned lands where they could cultivate crops and livestock for their survival.[201]

Like those of other regions in which economic development occurs, Ottoman Syria's considerable population growth and population density can be attributed, in part, to better nutrition, improvements in medication and treatment, and relatively secure political circumstances. The other important reason for such growth can be identified in the influx of Caucasian, Balkan, and Kurdish peoples into Syria and Lebanon, population movements that partially reshaped the region's ethnic composition.[202]

[201] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 178_34, 18.Ca.1322, 31.07.1904.
[202] BOA, DH.MKT, 1348_16, 29.Z.1302, 9.10.1885. See also Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914.* (London: Methuen, 1981), 264.

As a consequence of the expansionist policies of the Russian Empire, a large number of Muslim Turks and Caucasians were forced to leave their homes in order to escape massacre. The Ottoman Empire seemed to be the only possible destination for these people, for it remained the strongest Muslim country and seemed to have vast territory that could accommodate new settlement. The political unrest in the Balkans, which disadvantaged Muslims, augmented the number of immigrants moving to the Ottoman Empire, and to safely acclimate these newcomers to the Ottoman social system, the imperial government allocated lands to them and provided them with means for survival. To these ends, a separate ministry for immigrants was established.[203]

But at the beginning, these new immigrants do not seem to have caused extensive problems for the imperial regime. Rather, as mentioned earlier, the Porte intended to make use of these newcomers in order to strengthen its authority over distant regions that could not be easily controlled from İstanbul.[204] Furthermore, immigrants from Russia and the Balkans were thought to be knowledgeable about new techniques in agricultural production. By allotting them vacant state-owned arable land, the Ottoman government intended to increase agricultural production.[205]

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[203] See Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics,* Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, chapter iv.

[204] BOA, DH.MKT. 1814_86, 02.Ra.1308, 16.10.1890. The rhetoric of the diplomats in the documents reveals that Ottoman governments of the time pursued this consciously developed settlement policy in order to debilitate the politically strong tribes as well as to control the Bedouins.

[205] BOA, DH.MKT, 1814_86, 02.Ra.1308, 16.10.1890. The situation in Greater Syria at the beginning of the 20th century demonstrated that Ottoman political manoeuvres had reversed in terms of agricultural development. In fact, before and during the population influx into the region, the Ottoman government planned to facilitate the modernisation of agricultural production by introducing new machines and agricultural techniques. The quick adaptation of immigrants to these modernisations in agricultural production were planned yet failed. Many Caucasian immigrants considered that these innovations threatened their traditional ways of production, while others insisted that factories would not allow the preservation of their nomadic lifestyles See BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ, 13_68, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888. The following Ottoman document include a number of different cases that the poor and uneducated emigrants settled in the private owned lands and processed the land forcefully for their own benefit. This disrupted improvement of

For this purpose, the Ottoman government settled Caucasian and Balkan refugees in Greater Syria in substantial numbers once it had decided that the Anatolian territories could no longer absorb additional immigrants. According to estimates of the British consulate in Damascus, the total settlement in Syria was 5,540 households, or thirty thousand people in 1906. In addition, 670 households were settled in Hama and an even larger number in the city of Aleppo.[206] Some Kurdish tribes also joined the flow of people towards Syria. Even though the Porte did not intervene in this movement, it was nevertheless displeased by it.[207]

The ultimate result of the concomitant inward and outward population movements in this period was the change in the ethnic and socioeconomic makeup of the region. As newcomers began to join the economic life of Greater Syria, the economic situation of the Syrians and Lebanese began to deteriorate—perhaps ultimately motivating many to emigrate.[208]

Ottoman records indicate that the cost of hosting newcomers was not limited to economic change. The terror created by some of these people initiated security problems. According to a report from Luiz Sabuncuyan, whom the Ottoman government assigned to visit the United States and observe the Ottoman community there, the joint attacks of Kurds and nomads (possibly Caucasians) had influenced the emigration decisions of many

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plantation techniques and modernization of manufacturing. Thus the Syrians could not compete with European products in world market BOA. Y.PRK.AZJ, 13_68, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888, However, among the other immigrant groups, it seems that only Balkan immigrants contributed to the modernisation of local agricultural production since they had already adopted modern techniques at home Ruppin, Arthur, and Nellie Straus. *Syria: An Economic Survey*...,33-35 Nevertheless, since their arrival occurred after the Balkan Wars (1912), their contribution to the Syrian economy seemed to have remained limited.

[206] Ṭaraabulsii, Fawwaz. *A History of Modern Lebanon*…,16

[207] BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ, 13_68 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888. In traditional Middle-Eastern history, Kurdish immigration to Syria does not receive significant attention; by contrast, Caucasian migration does.

[208] Professor Karpat also indicates the role of population influx to the region see Kemal Karpat "The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860-1914", *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, v.17, n.2, (May, 1985), 177

Arab youth in Syria whose quality of life had dramatically declined.[209] Similarly, a French report issued in 1899 identified Muslim nomads as causing the anarchy whose ultimate result was that 'the population gets poorer yearly, the poor suffer, and the middle class becomes more and more wretched.'[210]

Nevertheless, taking into consideration the total domestic population in Syria and Lebanon during this period (which is estimated to have fluctuated between four and six million[211]) and the estimations for Caucasian and Balkan immigrants, it seems that this influx to Greater Syria could have played only a limited role in the population increase that drove native-born people to the Americas.

In addition, it would be misleading to regard the population influx and its influence on Christian emigration as a religious or political reason for emigration, just as it would be inaccurate to metaphorically characterise the situation in terms of Muslim newcomers evicting Christian natives. The extant documents show that Muslims too—not Christians alone—suffered from the influx of Caucasian immigrants. For instance, on 6 June 1894, the *wali* of Syria, Rauf Bey, reported attacks by Caucasian immigrants against Druze Muslims that resulted in fifty-six fatalities (slit throats) and fourteen break-ins to Druze Muslim homes[212].

The Ministry of the Interior's documents indicate that Ottoman bureaucrats were displeased with Caucasians stirring up trouble in Syria, and they took measures against

[209] BOA, Y.PRK.AJZ, 13_68, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888.
[210]Charles P. Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent…*,12
[211] *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun ve Türkiye'nin Nüfusu, 1500-1927= The Population of Turkey and The Ottoman Empire 1500-1927*, (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1996).
[212] BOA, Y.A..HUS, 299_40, 03.Z.1311, 07.06.1894, in Kemal Gurulkan, *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2012), 354-357.

these acts. For instance, on 30 April 1879, the Ottoman officer Rifat (no information is available about his affiliation) sent a telegram to the Ministry of the Interior noting that Christians and 'foreigners' (presumably the European inhabitants in Syria) were unhappy with the Caucasian newcomers, arguing that no more immigrant movements to Syria should be approved. A month later, İstanbul warned steamship companies against carrying Caucasian passengers to Syria.[213]

Economic Deterioration: Bad Harvests, New Taxes, and the Failing Silk Industry

As one can see from the evidence just cited, changes not only in population composition but also in regional economics eroded the living conditions of Arab Ottomans in Greater Syria. As mentioned in the previous chapter, an economic crisis had engulfed Syria by the 1890s after repeated poor harvests in almost every part of the region except for Lebanon, where real economic crisis would take root from 1909 onwards.[214] From the Ottoman documents reflecting the economic situation of Syria at the time, one can understand that significant new taxes imposed on agricultural production also exacerbated the economic situation and convinced many people that emigration was a more viable option than remaining where they were.[215] The Ottoman Archives include plenty of reports that

[213] BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 484_25, 21.Ca.1296, 13.05.1879, in Kemal Gurulkan, *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri…,* 289-295.
[214] Robert Widmer, "Population," In *Economic Organization of Syria,* ed. Said B. Himadeh, Reprint, **(**New York: AMS Press, 1973), 15; Charles Issawi, ed. *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 171.
[215] Obviously, increase in taxes was not applicable to the Mount Lebanon. The Ottoman government did not chose to impose taxes over the solvency of the inhabitant of the Mount Lebanon even though it has right to receive a certain amount of taxes according to Règlement Organique. One rare example is clear in a correspondence sent from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezareti Celilesi*) to the Ministry of Interior (*Dahiliye Nezareti*) titled 'On the Reasons of Immigration from Syria to the Americas'. In this document, the foreign ministry argues emigration from Syria chiefly stemmed from excessive taxes and bad harvest in Syria.

starvation and other economic problems triggered movement to the Americas.[216] People were crossing the Atlantic in order 'to earn their keep in peaceful conditions.'[217]

The coincidence of higher silk prices worldwide with relatively secure political circumstances in Greater Syria during the early 1860s had prompted many Arab merchants and bankers, as well as European entrepreneurs, to invest capital in the region's silk production (as discussed in the preceding chapter). Merchants and entrepreneurs had come to depend on the silk; [218] spinners and weavers engaged in silk production (often after borrowing heavily from merchants to purchase their equipment);[219] the silk factories employed local labourers, and housewives spun silk yarn at home.

But as discussed earlier, the collapse of the silk industry, which had been considered the 'vein of life' in Syria and Lebanon, fundamentally affected every sector of the local economy and provoked an exodus from the region. Agriculturists constituted one group whose lives were tied to the silk industry: they had supplied mulberry leaves to feed silkworms. According to the estimations of Kais Firro, Lebanon had become home to a monoculture; close to 80 percent of arable land in Mount Lebanon was covered with mulberry trees. Most peasants earned their living by growing mulberry trees in their own fields and selling the leaves to silk factories.[220] Once silk production in the region stopped, these cultivators could no longer earn a living.

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[216] BOA, HR.SYS 70_30, 17.08.1911.
[217] BOA, DH.MKT 1835_4, 12.L.1308, 21.05.1891,'saika-ı huzuretle maişetlerini tedarik üzere....'
[218] Gaston Ducousso, *L'industrie de la soie en Syrie et au Liban,* (Bierut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1913), 125 cited in Roger Owen *The Middle East in the World* Economy, 157
[219] Ibid.,160
[220] Dominique Chevalier, *La Société du Mont Liban à L'époque de La Révolution Industrielle en Europe* (Paris : Bibliothèque Archéologiques et Historique, 1971), cited in Kais. Firro, "Silk and Socio-Economic…, chapter 14.

The deterioration of the silk industry produced unemployment and decreased real wages for workers, encouraging the emigration of Syrians and Lebanese youth to the Americas, where real wages for comparable work were invariably better. No concrete data are available to demonstrate the wage differences between the United States and Ottoman Syria, apart from the reports of Ottoman bureaucrats. However, in one report from the Ministry of the Interior, US wages are described as high enough to dazzle unemployed Ottoman citizens.[221]

Issawi has underscored that death from starvation and the epidemic diseases that appeared at the time were important additional factors prompting thousands of people to emigrate.[222] Unsurprisingly, Ottoman emigration peaked in 1914, at the height of the economic bottleneck and wartime conditions; escaping these realities in many cases became a matter of life or death during 1914-1915.

Compulsory Military Service

The Ottoman Archives consistently identify military conscription as a factor driving emigration from Syria. Before the Constitutional Revolution (6 July 1908), emigration was a way to avoid compulsory service; this was important for Muslims at this point because (as discussed in chapter 2 in detail) Christians were not yet obliged to serve in the Ottoman military. One report from the governor of Beirut relates that 'military conscription had spread fear among young Muslims, while Christians' reasons for escape were mostly

[221] BOA, DH.MKT, 1178_28, 14.Ca.1325, 25.06.1907.
[222] Charles Issawi, "The Historical Background of Lebanese Emigration, 1800-1915", In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*. edited by Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994).

economic.'[223] Another document, dated April 1895, mentions the Ottoman chief commander's concerns about Muslim conscriptions: 'Many Muslim youth flee to the Americas, passing through Tripoli and Junieh in order to escape conscription. If such movements proceed, in the long run the military force will be debilitated'.[224]

Avoiding conscription became a prime reason non-Muslims emigrated after the UPP proclaimed that military service was obligatory for all Ottoman citizens regardless of their ethnic and religious backgrounds.[225] As already mentioned, Ottoman youth of many backgrounds, but especially non-Muslims, felt they were in great danger when this policy change occurred, for it clearly indicated that the empire had entered into continuous warfare.[226] One Ottoman document reveals that several Ottoman Jews claimed to be Argentinian citizens in order to avoid conscription.[227]

Another primary source, a Presbyterian Mission Report for 1910, depicts the profound effects of the new legislation among Syrian Christians and Jews:

> The Turkish Revolution was expected to remove so many of the evils that drove the Syrians to foreign lands and to increase the facilities and attractions of life in Syria, [such] that large numbers of voluntary emigrants would follow the returning involuntary exiles and re-people the decimated towns and homes. But the decree included non-Muslims in military conscription, and the new census ordered for the Lebanon, which is suspected to be an entering wedge for extending conscription to Lebanon

[223] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 119_9, (1) 13.Za.1319 21.02.1902. This argument was verified by the other dispatch from Mount Lebanon in the same year BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 (12), 1320.R.11; 28.07.1902.
[224] BOA, DH.MKT, 325_61, n.2 03.B.1312, 31.12.1894.
[225] The avoidance of military conscription and fear of being recruited occur largely in the literature of Arab immigrants in Argentina. See Nissim Teubal, *El Inmigrante de Alepo* (Buenos Aires: Macagno, Landa) 1953, 31; Antonio, Jorge. *¿y Ahora Qué?*Buenos Aires: Ediciones Verum et Militia, 1966, 23, cited in Ignacio Klich, "Criollos and Arabic Speakers in Argentina: An Uneasy Pas de Deux, 1888–1914", in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I. B. Tauris, 1994).
[226] BOA, BEO, 854_64024, 13.Ca.1314, 20.10.1896, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.01.1896.
[227] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO, 10_32, 20.T.1332, 02.08.1916.

> also, kindled afresh the emigration fever [and] is stripping the land of many of its best youth, who were otherwise contentedly toiling.[228]

At this point it is important to note that conscription was a big concern for non-Muslim Syrians and not for non-Muslim Lebanese. As a matter of fact, exemption from conscription for the Christians of Mount Lebanon was preserved through the Règlement Organique of 1860. This exemption encouraged a great number of young Arabs in other parts of Syria to migrate to Mount Lebanon and so escape military service.[229] Presumably, this movement towards Mount Lebanon also increased the area's population (see table 4). According to one intelligence report from the imperial Ministry of the Interior, several Ottoman 'draft dodgers' from different villages had taken midnight trains to Beirut in order to avoid police patrols and, from there, had escaped to the Americas.[230]

Shortages in soldiers were first recognised during the Turco-Italian War in Libya (September 1911–October 1912), during which Ottoman troops were handily defeated by Italian forces. Seeing an opportunity in the easy defeat of the imperial military, the Balkan League attacked Ottoman territories in Europe before the Turco-Italian War had even come to a close. Before and during the Balkan Wars, a greater number of soldiers were needed, and the conscriptions issued were therefore taken more seriously in many provinces of the empire than they had been in the past.[231] The Ottoman government enforced severe

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[228] *Seventy third annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* (New York: Presbyterian Building, 1910), 433 cited in Clark Knowlton "The Spatial and Social Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in Sao Paolo Brazil", In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi, (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994), 288

[229] BOA, A.MTZ.CL 7_286, 04.Z.1332, 24.10.1914.

[230] BOA, DH.TMIK.M.,243_ 58, 01.R.1325, 14.05.1907.

[231] Rifat N. Bali, *Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünya'ya: Amerika'ya Göç Eden Türklerin Yaşam Öyküleri.* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2004), 298- 302.

punishment—including the death penalty—on those captured attempting to avoid conscription.[232] The draft dodgers were judged in the courts, and those who managed to escape were stripped of Ottoman citizenship.[233]

However, the UPP could not successfully meet its need for soldiers by conscripting non-Muslims, and the avoidance of military service reached unprecedented levels, especially in the regions close to Mount Lebanon. According to a record preserved by the Ministry of the Interior, of some 7,000 individuals who had reached draft age in Beirut, only 1,500 of them were actually enlisted. The rest fled into the mountains and hid. The ministry warned Mount Lebanon's Mutasarrifate to take action against the empire's deserters who fled to that jurisdiction, admonishing it not to accept them.[234]

Yet sometimes even reaching the Americas did not necessarily mean escape from military service for Ottomans who had crossed the Atlantic. Diplomatic correspondence shows that Ottoman statesmen also dealt with the military responsibility of young Ottomans abroad.[235] On several occasions, the imperial government issued a general call for young Ottomans abroad to serve in the army.[236]

Not often, but occasionally, the issue of conscription became a matter of politics between Muslims and Christians in Syria. Some members of the Muslim Druze community

[232] BOA, DH.MKT. 191_2, 24.C.1311, 02.01.1894.
[233] BOA, BEO, 4520_338957, 09.N.1336, 09.06.1918.
[234] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1911 and afterwards.
[235] BOA, HR.HŞM.İŞO, 50_23, n.1, 28.11.1914.
[236] DH.SN.THR 31_109, nu.7, 24.12.1911. In this document the wali of Erzurum depict the whole procedure of conscription of the Ottoman youth in Russia and in the USA. He underlines that according to the Imperial Edict dated 12.04.1911, Ottoman young people in these countries would be recorded local governorships due to the testimonies of the relatives of these young people in their villages. However he complains that none of the relatives of these young people provide them true information about location or age of these young people.

were keen to serve in the military in order to gain the sympathies of the UPP government. These Druze may have sought in this way to strengthen their position against Christians in the region.

One example illustrates conscription's role in such political positioning. Two important figures of the Druze population in Mount Lebanon, Muhammed Hamad and Muhammed Tabi, sent a telegraph to the Porte on 19 November 1911 indicating that their community was ready to join the Ottoman army.[237] Though initially welcomed by the Ottoman government, the offer was later politely refused with a brief reply indicating that such aid would be reconsidered if more soldiers were needed.[238] In a subsequent document, an Ottoman bureaucrat noted that the offer was rejected in order to avoid upsetting the balance of power in Syria.

More Minor Groups: 'Criminals,' Students, Adventurers, and Others

From the point of view of the Ottoman regime, convicted and 'accused criminals' who journeyed to the Americas to escape punishment (or those who were actually avoiding judicial process) formed a discrete group of emigrants, though they did not constitute a large share in the overall numbers.[239] The records of the Ministry of the Interior's Police Office offer one important example dating to October 1919. This case involved two racketeers who, having stolen money from the Imperial Ottoman Bank, had made use of legal loopholes and then fled to the United States. Given the wartime conditions, these two men aimed to avoid being tracked by Ottoman courts. Though the case's conclusion is

[237] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, nu.4, 22.01.1896.
[238] BOA, BEO, 3964_297287, 27.Za.1329, 19.11.1911.
[239] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, nu.4, 22.01.1896.

unclear, the file includes correspondence between Ottoman diplomats and their American counterparts regarding the men's extradition.[240]

In addition to criminal offenders among Ottoman-Arab emigrants, there was also a small group of political activists who worked for the political independence of Syria and Lebanon. These people published books, flyers, and journals meant to be used in a possible uprising against the Ottoman Empire, and they met in various parts of the United States and Argentina. The Ottoman officers classified these individuals as 'political criminals.'[241]

The influence of American missionary schools in Greater Syria was often cited in academic literature as a factor triggering immigration to the Americas, especially for the educated classes.[242] According to Incius Miller, 'better education and increase in enlightenment deepened the impatience of people to go to America.' In 1909, however, the Department of Education in İstanbul noted only a few names of people who had crossed the Atlantic for educational purposes; these people had disguised themselves as workers in order to more easily obtain passports.[243] But American missionary schools were arguably not influential in Ottomans' movement to the Americas. For one thing, since the *lingua franca* in Greater Syria was French, not English, for highly educated people relying on language skills would not have been feasible. And as discussed earlier, the significant majority of immigrants emerged from lower social strata in terms of education and occupation. These indicators imply that foreign schools would have had limited influence on Ottoman emigration. The weakness of the 'American schools' hypothesis is enhanced

[240] BOA, DH.KMS.55_3_19, 03.S.1338, 28.10.1919.
[241] BOA, HR.HŞM.İŞO, 50_23, 28.11.1914 n.3.
[242] Lucius Hopkins Miller, A Study of the Syrian Population of Greater New York, (New York: s.n., 1904), 5
[243] BOA, I.HUS..176_76, 21.Ca.1327, 10.06.1909.

by numerical estimates from American archives: the US vice-consul in Beirut reported on 12 September 1904 that of 842 secondary-school graduates, only 37 had gone to America.[244]

III

Pull Factors

Incredible economic development in the Americas was the primary factor drawing Ottoman-Arabs to the New World, which was commonly known as the 'land of opportunity.' Greater Syrian immigration to the Americas thus exemplifies the well-known migration maxim that populations tend to flow from resource-scarce, labour-abundant regions to labour-scarce, resource-abundant regions.[245]

The propaganda of travel agencies and brokers who profited wildly by mediating the voyages of immigrants is another crucial factor worth considering. Arab newspapers of the time were full of advertisements and incentives for immigration that depicted the Americas as a fabulous land where people could establish happy lives. The pamphlets distributed in the streets of the Ottoman Empire included exaggerated accounts of opportunities in America[246] and these fabricated images of America rooted themselves deeply in the minds of Ottoman-Arab youth and persuaded many to cross the ocean.

[244] From Magelssen to Loomis, 12 September 1904, US GR 84, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Beirut, cited in Charles P. Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent…*,71

[245] Kevin O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

[246] Robert Widmer, "Population," In *Economic Organization of Syria*, edited by Said B. Himadeh, Reprint, **(**New York: AMS Press, 1973), 15. In a report of Ministry of Interior it is indicated that these ads were published both in Turkish and Arabic. See BOA, DH.MKT, 2078_43, 28.12.1896.

Moreover, the encouragement of relatives and friends who had already immigrated to the Americas, especially Argentina, and had achieved economic success there significantly influenced the decisions of young Syrians to follow suit. Remittances and funds sent by Syrians in the Americas to their native villages impressed people contemplating immigration. Moreover, letters sent home by early immigrants played an important role in adding momentum and motivating new waves of immigrants.[247] Finally, returnees who had amassed significant amounts of money and returned to invest in their homeland sparked the desire of their young relatives to also journey to the Americas.[248]

The politics of American destination countries were also influential in attracting Ottoman Syrians to the other side of the Atlantic. The governments of most of these nations, especially Argentina, were keen to import labour from Europe. After gaining independence from Spain, Argentina developed a series of immigration strategies to pull people from Europe in order to meet the need for labourers in the Pampas and to create a European-like, 'superior' white race for Argentina.[249] The Ottoman Ministry of the Interior recorded that some Latin American countries did not ask for passport from immigrants arriving in their ports, instead requesting only an identity card. In a document dated 8

[247] Clark Knowlton, "The Spatial and Social Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in Sao Paolo Brazil," In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994), 290 For the role of personal contact with the people in Argentina see also Charles Issawi, "The Historical Background of Lebanese Emigration, 1800-1914", In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*. edited by Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994), 30
[248] BOA, MV.65_44, 10.Za.1308, 17.06.1891.
[249] See Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies and the Pampas: The Impact of Immigration on Argentine and Canadian Agrarian Development, 1870–1930," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 24, no. 2 (1982):131-161.

October 1912, this procedure is presented as an important factor for acceleration of emigrations.[250]

Likewise, the US government did not impose extraordinary restrictions against the entrance of Ottoman-Arabs to its territory. The inflow of Ottoman-Arabs did not stop even after the Immigration Act of 1906 introduced a series of prerequisites for admission to the United States and categorised Syrians and Lebanese as an unfavourable immigrant class, namely, Asians. The problems with the legislation were surmounted by negotiations between Ottoman-Arab communities and the American authorities that created conditions that favoured Ottoman-Arabs until the Quota Act of 1924 drastically limited the number of eligible immigrants who would be admitted from Southern and Eastern Europe, as well as from the eastern Mediterranean.

Another pull factor attracting Ottoman-Arabs to the Americas was the padrone system, first institutionalised among Italians in the United States and adopted by Arab immigrants by the nineteenth century. *Padrones* (patrons) refers to people who had arrived in the United States in the early stages of immigration and established themselves economically there. As immigration to the United States gradually increased to significant numbers, padrones made use of compatriots as labourers for their own businesses. Though not an Ottoman innovation, the system was particularly common among Ottoman-Arabs in the United States and Argentina.[251]

In the case of Syrians, padrones furnished newly arrived compatriots—generally their relatives—with cheap small goods to peddle on the street. The US Bureau of

[250] BOA, DH.HMŞ, 15_47, 26.Ş.1330, 10.08.1912.
[251] William Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration*…,29-30.

Citizenship and Immigration noted that padrones profited unduly by exploiting the labour of others. Under this system, padrones took advantage of their knowledge of English and of local circumstances to control the labour of new immigrants.

IV

Conclusion

On the whole, several crucial conclusions may be reached. First, the civil wars in Syria and Lebanon in the 1860s offer inadequate explanation for mass emigrations: the emigrants were not only Christians, some of them returned to their original countries after acquiring substantial amounts of money, and even the religious representatives of the Christian population in Greater Syria were loath to see young people emigrating. Rather than political persecutions, a dramatic rise in population, shrinking labour opportunities, and compulsory military service more convincingly explain the outflow of young Ottoman-Arabs. The political oppression of the Ottoman government during the reign of Abdülhamid II with regard to religious disparity also remains limited as an explanation when one considers the Porte's inability to consolidate its authority over Syria. Military conscription and the influx of Muslim Caucasians can be considered political motivations for emigration, but it should emphasised that not only Christians but also Muslims and members of other religious groups suffered from these two factors. Lastly, Ottoman emigration to the Americas owed to the coincidental development of worldwide conditions that facilitated the transportation of people, their entry into American nations, and the growing enthusiasm of the younger generation for seeking better living conditions across the Atlantic. As the governor of Mount Lebanon astutely summarised in 1903, 'These

people were going to the New World not because they were *akl-ı kalil* [idiots] but because of their high expectations for [what awaited] after their arrival.' [252]

[252] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 (12) 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

Chapter 4

Global Interlopers: Ottoman *Simsar*s and European Travel Agencies

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Syrian port cities resembled those of Europe; both were flooded with emigrants bound for the Americas. As detailed in the previous chapters, Syrian port cities flourished because of increased commercial trade with European countries. Initially, these ports functioned as gates for the exchange of commodities with Europeans; only later did their function encompass the transmission of finances and people. As a growing number of Ottoman-Arab emigrants moved to Europe and often onwards across the Atlantic, Syrian port cities increasingly became sites of emigrant embarkation.[253]

This chapter aims to analyse the migration processes of Ottoman-Arabs to the Americas, from the moment the decision to emigrate was made until their arrival in their destinations. Generally, the processes included ways of learning about life and job opportunities on the other side of the ocean, the establishment of social networks, and means of earning money to cover transportation expenses. For sources, I here rely chiefly upon Ottoman diplomatic correspondence among three types of actors: the central government in İstanbul (i.e., the Porte), the local governorships in Syria, Beirut, and Lebanon; and Ottoman consulates in various European countries. This triangular web of communication attests official complaints that the Ottoman exodus from Syria and Lebanon could not be stemmed (also the topic of the following chapter). Weeding out these

[253] For more information about the rise of port cities, see Çağlar Keyder and Y. E. Özveren, *Port-Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean, 1800–1914* (Binghamton, NY: Binghamton University, Fernand Braudel Center 1993). In this collection, Y. Eyüp Özveren's chapter on Beirut provides details of how European capital entered the region.

complaints from the source material illuminates the framework of the migration process; in this chapter, these bureaucratic protests illuminate the migrants' logistical and practical processes.

I

Brokers and Travel Agencies

For young Ottoman Syrians, crossing the Atlantic was a long, arduous, stepwise process: it involved contacting a foreign steamship agency, boarding a ship, enduring a lengthy sea voyage of several weeks, often travelling with unfamiliar immigrant groups, and finding employment in order to survive in the destination country. The generally disadvantageous position of Ottoman-Arabs, most of whom were uneducated, made guidance services indispensable. The absolute need for intermediaries was fulfilled by two groups of actors—brokers and travel agencies—that had established themselves in the port cities of Syria and Lebanon once emigration from the region become a profitable commercial concern given the increased number of America-bound emigrant hopefuls. As individuals, these intermediaries appeared as brokers; in institutional form, they appeared as travel agencies.

Brokers—or *simsar*s, as they are referred to in the Ottoman sources—were the individual intermediaries who, in exchange for a certain amount of money, provided what Ottoman-Arab emigrants needed to get to the Americas. They assisted emigrants at every stage of their journey, including obtaining the necessary travel documents, buying tickets to the destination port on the passenger's behalf,[254] and locating work opportunities and accommodations in the destination country.

[254] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903 nu.1 and BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.22 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

Very little is known about the origins of brokers and the emergence of this profession in Greater Syria, but the observations of Ottoman officers in Lebanon reveal something about their background. Most of these people were tradesmen or commercial intermediaries of Christian origin who had served European capitalists in conducting commercial relations and guiding their investments in Arab cities. Once they realised the increasing demand for all the particulars of emigration, they expanded their functions to meet emigrants' needs, using their established networks with European steamship companies to do so.[255]

A Presbyterian mission report from 1907 on Lebanon sheds light on the activities of ticket agents and moneylenders:

> The emigrant business has become a very profitable one, [and] the method used in Germany in the seventies [1870s] is used here as well. A native, usually one that has been in America, visits a village, holds meeting, tells of the wonderful way to make money, where to go, what to do, in fact everything necessary for an emigrant to know. It is a poor day when he does not obtain a number of deposits for steamer tickets. This man is one in a long chain whose links are located all the way from Syria to North and South American seaports. From time to time, this chain of workers will send and receive warning to avoid or to go to this or that place. Word will come to avoid New York if diseased; then go to Mexico and then go to North, etc. At the present writing, the flow is towards Argentina.[256]

Brokers appeared not only in Syria but also in various Ottoman port cities that became hubs for emigration: Smyrna, Mersin, Trabzon, and İstanbul.[257] The Ottoman Archives reveal that Syrian brokers were active in Anatolia, as well, after noticing

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[255] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.104, 23.S.1328, 06.03.1910.
[256] *Seventy third annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* (New York: Presbyterian Building, 1910), 433 cited in Clark Knowlton "The Spatial and Social Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in Sao Paolo Brazil", In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994), 288
[257] BOA, ZB, 465_12, 1317.A.27, 09.09.1901.

opportunities for profit or after being banned from practising their profession in their villages.[258] Nearly every village in Greater Syria had its own broker, whose territory could not be invaded by another. Brokers wandered through their villages telling 'often exaggerated' stories about life in the Americas in order to recruit Ottoman youth.[259] Once an interested client and the broker had set the price of service—generally by bargaining—[260] the client was not allowed to contract the services of any other broker.[261] Furthermore, he was obliged both to embark on the ships designated by the broker and to arrive at broker-designated ports. Clients became, in the Porte's word, 'total slaves' of the broker they paid.[262]

Though Ottoman records also show a small number of Muslim brokers, in Lebanon and Syria, most brokers appear to have been Christians, judging from the few papers that registered their full names. The great majority of these Christians had a history of trade relations in the region. Nevertheless, some Muslims also engaged in brokerage services, especially in order to escape military service.[263] After temporarily serving as brokers, some of these entrepreneurs were able to run their operations in more institutional and formal ways. In effect, brokers who worked with travel agencies often set up agencies of their own. Beirut police records indicate that a number of agencies were established this way.[264]

The functions of travel agencies were similar to those of *simsar*s, yet it seems that they performed their jobs differently, earning pejorative characterisations from the

[258] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903 nu.2.
[259] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.22 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[260] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[261] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[262] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[263] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[264] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 119_9, nu.2, 13.Za.1313, 26.04.1896.

Ottoman government (e.g., 'relentless institutions with unclear characteristics'[265]). Traditionally, these agencies were either foreign companies or branches of European companies operating in Syria that had for decades transported commodities to Europe. Later, as they realised the potential for profit, these companies began to transport people, as well.

Like *simsar*s, travel agencies also propagandised their activities to attract passengers. Popular newspapers sold advertising space to steamship agencies, the ads for which promised every kind of help to potential passengers to facilitate their safe voyage to Brazil or the United States[266], as well as good job opportunities once there[267]. In popular periodicals, flyers, and newspapers, the Americas—especially the United States—were idealised, if not eulogised, as a place where people earned a good deal of money in a brief period. These newspapers also published the required procedures for officially applying for a passport and obtaining permission to exit the country, as well as ticket prices and information about job opportunities in the Americas.

Five major steamship companies of French, Austrian, Russian, and Italian origin operated between Syrian and European ports cities—namely, Société des Messageries Maritimes (in Marseille), Öesterreichischer Lloyd (in Trieste), the Russian Steamship Line (in Odessa), Marittima Italiana (in Venice), and Servizi Marittimi (in Genoa). In addition to

[265] In original text: *'mahiyeti meçhul insafsız müesseseler'* see BOA, DH.İD., 11_9, nu.23.
[266] BOA, DH MKT, 2078 _43, 29.B.1314, 03.01.1897.
[267] In one of the advertisements, there was a call for young people to immigrate to the Americas under the headline (in huge font) "There is need for 2000 persons." If you are the one who want to get money and learn craft, then apply to us urgently. In the details of the advertisement, the agency mentioned the conditions in the emigrants would work and the money they would possibly earn (presumably with some exaggeration). Such promises, of course, were very much appreciable for those who were in economic strife. See BOA, D.H. İD. 11_9, n.26.

these, a Romanian and a Bulgarian line each ran less frequently, while two English lines operated only freight steamers[268].

Germans agencies seem to have been latecomers to this competitive market. In fact, just before the outbreak of World War I, the UPP government strengthened its relationship with Germany, and the repercussions of this relationship touched a number of economic sectors, including shipping. Even during the war, in 1916, the German shipping company Hamburg America Lloyd sent a letter to Talat Bey, a uniquely important figure of the UPP, requesting concessions in the transportation of Ottoman passengers to the United States.[269] The response of the Ottoman Empire is unknown, but presumably this concession was granted because the empire was Germany's ally.

These companies mostly offered services twice weekly. Apart from the Italian companies, which offered direct routes between Italy and Beirut, ships docked at all the ports in Syria, as well as at Mersin in Anatolia, en route to Europe.[270] These companies retained mostly large steamships, while Italian companies deployed smaller boats that made stops at either Rhodes or the Piraeus Islands.

Some of the French ships carrying Syrian and Lebanese passengers routinely stopped in Anatolian port cities, especially in Smyrna and Mersin, presumably because these cities were less strictly controlled, and empty space in the ships could be filled with passengers embarking there (legally or not).[271] It seems that the French shipping companies minimised their costs by gathering Anatolian and Syrian emigrants into a single ship.[272]

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[268] Arthur Ruppin, Economic Survey of Syria…, 77-78.
[269] BOA, DH.KMS, 41_24, 07.Za.1334, 05.09.1916.
[270] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 65_56, 19.N.1316, 31.01.1899.
[271] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 45_18.B.1315, 13.12.1897. Apart from these cities, Constantinople and Salonika were the other alternatives for stopping over. See BOA, DH.MKT, 1607_5, 18.B.1306, 20.03.1889.
[272] BOA, DH.TMIK.M., 57_6, 15.Ra.1316, 03.08.1898.

The Ottoman Archives make clear that some Lebanese and Syrian emigrants moved to these Anatolian port cities specifically in order to board ships bound for America[273], especially once the Ottoman government began imposing tighter control on emigration.[274]

The primary sources do not provide enough data to describe in any comprehensive way the relationship between *simsar*s and travel agencies. Some documents reveal stiff competition between the two groups, both of which sought attract emigrant clients for profit. In one newspaper advertisement written in Ottoman script, a travel agency warns emigrants not to believe brokers unless they want to be swindled. [275] Compared to travel agencies, brokers presumably limited their profit margins in order to recruit more passengers. At the same time, one Beirut police record, relying on the statement of arrested *simsar* Abdulfettah Beyhum Efendi,[276] indicates that brokers and agencies might forge partnerships in order to maximise the number of customers they served and the amount of money they collected. [277]

It seems that collaboration between brokers and travel agencies occurred when the interests of the two groups intersected without conflicting. Given that the travel agencies often involved foreign companies, they presumably made plans to reach the villages and other interior regions of Syria, where they perceived great potential for new clients, by working with brokers who had strong ties with local populations and were familiar with

[273] Ellis Island records also verifies that Ottoman Syrians used to travel in same ship with emigrants from Anatolia embarking from the same port cities in and Anatolian city.
[274] In some cases, when the Ottoman government imposed this control over Armenians of Anatolia, they arrive to Lebanese and Syrian port cities to set sail to America. BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.81, no date
[275] BOA, D.H. İD. 11_9, nu.26.
[276] According to the document this person was captured because of to be engaged in smuggling people or attracting them for illegal emigrations. As will be noticed in detail in the Chapter 5, for a long time emigrations from Syria and Lebanon was strictly prohibited and thereby the profession of *simsar*s was illegal. For the travel agencies, only those who obtained licence from the Port could conscribe passengers.
[277] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 119_9, nu.1, 13.Za.1319, 21.02.1902.

locals' expectations. These agencies received information from brokers regarding how many Syrians would embark at each Ottoman port and when. From the perspective of the *simsar*s, travel agencies were useful, allowing *simsar*s to profit from their experience and knowledge of the voyage process, as well as from the official networks they had established with shipping companies in Europe and Cyprus, and with European and American authorities.

II

Heading to the Americas

The routes the immigrants sailed were shaped very much by the stance of the Ottoman government towards migration. The Porte was reluctant to allow its subjects to emigrate to any American or European country for various reasons (detailed in the following chapter); therefore, population movement both within and beyond imperial territories was, at least in theory, strictly controlled. Even passengers travelling to nearby cities were registered, and Ottoman passengers needed to meet official requirements in order to go abroad.

The main Ottoman ports of departure to the Americas and Europe were Haifa, Jaffa, Sidon, Beirut, Tripoli, Latakia, Mount Lebanon, and Jounieh; though it was very rare, direct travel to the United States from Beirut was possible.[278] Passengers who wished to set sail for a different part of the empire had to obtain a 'passage receipt' (*tezkire-i müruriye*), while those who wanted to travel abroad needed a passport, which indicated that the holder was permitted by Ottoman authorities to move about outside imperial borders. Passage receipts and passports were generally issued in the Ottoman port cities. Travellers carrying them could move within the empire, generally for one year[279], but obtaining a passport was

[278] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.26, no date and MV, 65_44, 17.06.1891.
[279] BOA, DH.MKT, 19_34, nu.2, 22.L.1310, 09.05.1893.

much more difficult, and generally only exceptional people (diplomats and large-scale traders) were permitted to travel abroad. Overall, the documentary evidence for emigration indicates that passport applications in the Ottoman Empire (particularly those filed through consulates in foreign countries) were used to detect the re-entrance of people who had left imperial territory without official sanction and needed a passport in order to return home.

The Ottoman-Arabs of Syria and Lebanon found various ways to flout the rules restricting emigration, and the deliberate choice of ports and routes of passage were one. For instance, when emigrations were strictly controlled by the Porte or its local government in Syria and Lebanon, Ottoman-Arab passengers often stopped over in Jaffa, Egypt, or Cyprus, from where they could depart for Europe and the Americas, often even without the proper documentation[280]. The selection of these ports was not accidental. Brokers routed their customers to one of these regions in order to overcome official requirements by exploiting the imperial politics of the time, as well as certain loopholes. This is how the game was played.

At the time, Cyprus and Egypt were under British control—both politically and practically—even though the Ottoman Empire did not recognise British sovereignty. Further, in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, sailing to most European countries, including France and the UK, was quite easy: often a passport or other official documentation was not required; it was enough to present only identity papers.[281] Given the Ottoman Empire's political stance, then, a passenger receipt (more easily obtained than a

[280] BOA, ŞD, 2289_30, nu.5, 12.B.1316, 26.11.1898 and BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.6, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[281] The Ottoman Foreign Office counted countries that did not request passports for Ottoman citizens: the U.K., France, Greece, Switzerland, Montenegro, and Brazil. See BOA, DH. MB.HPS.M, 6_29, 29.Ş.1330, 13.08.1912.

passport) was sufficient for travel to Egypt or Cyprus.[282] Aware of this, Ottoman emigrants often first obtained a passage receipt by disguising themselves as travellers bound for Egypt; from Egypt, they would set out for Europe or the Americas aboard a British or a French ship without a passport[283]. The records indicate that this tactic was widely used not only by Syrians and Lebanese but also by Anatolians. One report indicates that for Anatolian Armenians who intended to go to the Americas, obtaining a passage receipt for Beirut and Jerusalem and passing through Alexandria would allow subsequent passage to either the Americas or Europe.[284]

Ottoman governors were generally on the horns of a dilemma given these quasi-legal practices. On one hand, the regime could not require passports from Ottoman passengers bound for Egypt because doing so would amount to an official recognition of the British occupation. On the other hand, requiring passenger receipts was ineffective in preventing emigration. In many cases, the Porte failed to overcome this dilemma: the empire's despair of doing so is well represented in the reports of Ottoman consuls in Europe. According to one such report, dated May 1898, a broker named Reis Khalil had smuggled six men, two women, and two children into Cyprus in return for six gold Turkish lira. The broker put these passengers into small boats and had them taken to Cyprus, both under British control.[285] The consul noted that in doing so, the broker had clearly violated the law, for it was obvious that the passengers' real intention was to go to the United States, and this was prohibited. However, nothing could be done to prevent these

[282] BOA, DH.MKT, 1570_27, 28.Ra.1306, 02.11.1888.
[283] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.26, no date.
[284] BOA, DH.TMIK.M., 17.C.1320, 21.09.1902, and DH.TMIK.M, 148_35, 20.R.1321. 16.07.1903.
[285] The scenarios described by the Ottoman Archives are also verified by oral testimonies. See the Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-c, Interview with Michel Haddy, 1962, cited in Akram Khater, *Inventing Home…,*1.

passengers from arriving in Egypt.[286] The other officers in this dispatch complained about the empire's inability to take action and urged governors to enact new laws.[287]

To people who could not obtain passage receipts, other clandestine emigration methods were made available. By bribing the local gendarmerie[288] or local state officers[289], brokers enabled their passengers to board ships sailing to Egypt en route to Marseille.[290] After arriving in Egypt, passengers did not disembark but stayed on board, hidden from officials, and moved on to Europe aboard the same ship.[291] Mail ships and other cargo ships also facilitated clandestine Ottoman emigration.[292] Not all immigrants were so fortunate as to travel aboard passenger ships, and some Ottomans settled for the relatively less risky (if perhaps less comfortable) option of travelling among freight possibly considering that they would be less likely to encounter with Ottoman officers. If they were unable to meet official requirements for departure, emigrant hopefuls sometimes embarked on mail ships bound for the Americas. Others travelled in cabins hidden among cargo[293], and still others sailed on ships carrying tradable goods or even animals[294].

The relevant Ottoman documents witness that in order to recruit more passengers, brokers engaged in illegal acts—that is, they violated contemporary Ottoman laws—other than procuring for their clients restricted passage to Egypt and Cyprus. Especially in Mount Lebanon, an autonomous region where Ottoman control was weak, some instances were

[286] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 115_57, 05.N.1319, 16.12.1901.
[287] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 19.N.1316, 31.01.1899.
[288] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.9, no date.
[289] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.11 and 12 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[290] Marseilles is the most pronounced port city in the Ottoman Empire referring to the second stop over of the Ottomans emigrated to the Americas.
[291] BOA, DH.MKT, 19_34, nu.1, 22.L.1310, 09.05.1893. Other documents show that the same method was used to sail through Salonika. See BOA, DH.MKT, 85_35, 08.S.1311, 13.08.1893.
[292] BOA, DH.MKT, 321_7, nu.3,16.B.1312, 13.01.1895.
[293] BOA, 190_14204, nu.2, 13.L.1310, 30.04.1893.
[294] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.5, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

reported to İstanbul in which brokers had issued their clients with passenger receipts using false identities.[295] Some brokers would switch the name of a passenger with that of his father, for example, to circumvent police control and enable the client to go to the Americas.[296] (Though this technique was initially of great use to emigrants, problems often arose later, when they wanted to return home and were found to have used false identities or the identification information of someone deceased.)[297] It was also reported that local officers were bribed, and the Mutasarrifate of Mount Lebanon, which constantly denied any responsibility for people-smuggling operations, regularly declined to help the central imperial government.[298]

According to the Ottoman reports coming from Lebanon, even travel agencies (especially of French origin) engaged in clandestine emigration operations, though not as often as brokers did.[299] When Ottoman police officers performed their job well in terms of preventing the French steamship companies from receiving Ottoman passengers in the evening, the travel agents would help their clients embark on the sly.[300] Under the auspices of the French consulates, French travel agents could behave more freely and expect the consulate's intervention if they were accused of illegal activity.[301]

In 16 May 1896, a dispatch from an Ottoman police officer to the Porte illustrates this protection. Complaining that French ships were being boarded two or three miles beyond the anchorage point, the officer noted that the shipping company had violated the regulations: embarkation at night was strictly prohibited, but these ships had received

[295] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[296] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 119_9, nu.1, 13.Za.1319, 21.02.1902.
[297] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 3_124, 21.L.1320, 21.01.1903.
[298] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[299] BOA, Y.A.HUS, 220_9, 04.R.1306, 08.12.1888.
[300] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.3, no date and BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.22 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[301] BOA, DH.MKT, 1607_5, 18.B.1306, 20.03.1889.

passengers with the help of boatmen who ferried Ottomans out to the ships. The officer wanted the Porte to cooperate with French and British representatives in order to address the situation. His dispatch suggests, too, that the Ottoman government was in constant correspondence with European embassies, frequently expressing displeasure with European maritime companies, which violated Ottoman navigation rules provided by international law by carrying Lebanese passengers without reporting to the Ottoman officers.[302] However, the follow-up documents reveal that the report failed to curb the practice, and agencies continued to freely embark passengers. To circumvent the rules that were in place, these companies moved their ships twenty miles beyond the harbour and continued to receive passengers.[303] From the point of view of the Ottoman officers, these agencies dared to violate these navigation laws by relying on their own countries to shield them from prosecution under Ottoman law.[304]

III

Financing Emigration

In 1903, the total cost of emigration for a typical Ottoman-Arab emigrant was approximately twenty gold Ottoman lira; this included passport or passage-receipt fees, the ticket price, perhaps an additional sum for meals and accommodation in Europe or Egypt, and the broker or travel agency's commission.[305] A cursory calculation indicates that this amount was equivalent to 376 days of wages for an ordinary agricultural worker—wages

[302] BOA, DH.MKT, 166_51, 04. My.1310, 16.05.1894.
[303] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.63 no date.
[304] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.9 and 64 no date.
[305] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.

that met only people's absolute needs.[306] Thus, a wage-earning Ottoman youth could save up to meet the cost of emigration in two years' time only if he saved half of his total income. Unsurprisingly, most Ottoman-Arab emigrants could not afford this expense, given the very unemployment and poor economic conditions that motivated their emigration.

Although a number of banks, mostly of European origin, existed in various parts of Syria,[307] they seemed reluctant to supply credit to emigrants. Instead, they preferred to finance agricultural production and small-scale industries. Some branches of the Imperial Ottoman Bank in Aleppo and Beirut engaged in moneylending to businessmen and bankers at low rates that corresponded to the borrowers' credibility, but such loans were inaccessible to ordinary Ottoman citizens. This situation led many Ottoman youths to apply to moneylenders, who were often nothing other than practising brokers. Bargaining was possible between brokers and passengers, especially in cities, where the number of emigrant candidates was larger and bargaining was thus more functional.[308]

In his survey, Arthur Ruppin has explained that some usurers provided cash to immigrants at enormous interest rates—sometimes as high as 75 to 100 percent[309]—provoking a sense among Ottoman police officers that young Ottoman-Arabs were being exploited by brokers. One fitting example is an Ottoman report that mentions an Anatolian Armenian, Barsum Efendi Batrusyan, accused of loaning money at a shockingly high interest rate to young men who wanted to travel to the Americas.[310] The Ottoman records

[306] This cursory calculation was made by relying on Charles Issawi's estimations of the wages and prices of foodstuffs in Syria. See Charles P. Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent…,* 89.
[307] Arthur Ruppin, Economic Survey of Syria, 66-70.
[308] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[309] Arthur Ruppin, Economic Survey of Syria…,70.
[310] BOA, Z.B., 474_42, 28.My.1323, 10.06.1907.

also mention Muslims who enjoyed this barrowed money. In classical Islam, charging interest on borrowed money, regardless of the rate, was strictly prohibited. Nevertheless, the archives show that this principle was violated regularly by Muslim money landers.

Emigration became costlier when the Ottoman central government issued legislation on 8 October 1894 stating that emigrants who intended to go to Cyprus or Egypt would be required to deposit a certain amount of money as a bail bond (*teminat akçesi*, 'earnest money') that they could collect upon their return.[311] This was another deterrence policy that the Ottoman government intended to stem emigration; the deposit (approximately fifty gold Ottoman lira[312]) was meant to guarantee that emigrants would return home.[313] It would also serve Ottoman passengers who were robbed or rendered penniless en route by covering their passage home. Furthermore, the money could be used by traders who remained outside Ottoman borders for a long time and would need to pay accumulated taxes or other debts due upon re-entry. [314]

Ottoman passengers who failed to find a way to pay these fees turned to illegal practices, as described earlier; here again, brokers stepped into the emerging role.[315]

IV

The Circuitous Road to America

The broker's function did not end after the passenger boarded a ship but also encompassed stopovers in Cyprus and European port cities, arrival in the New World, and even the

[311] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.22 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[312] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.103, 27.C.1314, 3.12.1896. In 1893 this money was declared as 60 Turkish Liras, BOA, DH.MKT. 16_4, nu.3, 29.L.1310, 16.05.1893.
[313] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[314] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.22, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[315] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 119_9, n.6, no date.

process of returning home. The triangular global network established between Ottoman Syria, the European port cities, and final destinations in the Americas enabled brokers to make even more money from their clients. This network was based on relationships that brokers residing within the Ottoman Empire maintained with others in European port cities and in the Americas.

As soon as Ottoman-Arabs arrived at their second stop, a European port city (often Marseille), they were welcomed by another broker who had been in touch with the broker at the home port, the one who had sent the passengers to Europe. Just like their counterparts in Ottoman villages, brokers in Europe provided emigrants with meals and accommodations for several days until they boarded another ship to cross the Atlantic.[316] Alixa Naff has written that increasing commercial trade between Syria and Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century may have spawned Syrian-owned hotels and restaurants in European port cities.[317] These establishments also functioned as ticket agencies, providing additional emigration-related services; brokers in Europe sold tickets for the rest of the voyage and exchanged money in these restaurants.

Just as Syrian brokers at home and in European port cities cooperated with one another, so travel agencies in Europe also benefited from collaboration with agencies in Syria and Lebanon. According to reports of Ottoman consuls in Marseille, some shipping companies bought agency information concerning the number of Ottoman emigrants who had set sail for France and their estimated arrival date, if not the very hour, in order to recruit them instead of relinquishing them to competing agencies.[318]

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[316] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[317] Alixa Naff, *Becoming American…*,92.
[318] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.2, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.

The services of the Syrian brokers were not limited to facilitating the arrival of their customers but included seeing to their primary needs after their arrival in the final destination country. Brokers could ensure their customers of work and accommodations upon arrival by using networks of Arab employees. As later chapters discuss, Ottoman-Arab emigrants often engaged in itinerant peddling and sold housewares collected from Syrian wholesalers. By establishing links between Arab merchants in the Americas and emigrants, brokers were able to profit from both sides. They received a commission from both emigrants for providing jobs and from American employers for providing cheap labour. It seems that family ties also played an important role in constructing this primitive guaranteed-work pattern.

Finally, brokers also helped people to return home, especially emigrants who had abandoned their homelands without passports and subsequently faced difficulty upon re-entry. Returnees who had left illegally might try to obtain documents through the Ottoman embassies in Europe or the Americas. Here again, brokers could be of service. The archives show that to help Ottomans to re-enter Syria, brokers applied methods similar to those they used to get them out—smuggling them onto vessels, falsifying papers, and so forth—though this time with far heavier charges.[319]

Obviously, travelling was exhausting for emigrants. Ellis Islands records show that for Ottomans who left from Port Said or Beirut, it usually took thirteen to sixteen days (excluding stopovers presumably) to reach New York. Ottoman-Arabs frequently travelled on ships alongside other Ottomans of different geographic backgrounds[320], as well as with

[319] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.5, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[320] BOA, DH.MKT, 1765_ 52, 13.S.1308, 28.09.1890.

other immigrants who had boarded in European ports.[321] At the outset of the twentieth century, both Ottoman men and women passengers travelled together.[322] Many young Ottoman men travelled alone, having left their families behind.[323] Once they had established themselves in the Americas, they would return home to accompany their wives or other family members on yet again transatlantic journey.

The monotony of the voyage to the Americas was sometimes interrupted by storms and quarantines, the latter of which were made necessary by cholera epidemics in Egypt that endangered sanitation on shipboard. The conditions of sea travel were harsher for women, especially those with children.[324] One important, though unusual, anecdote from the archives concerns a pregnant woman, Musa (? or Mevsiye) Atiye, the wife of Michael Atiye, who gave birth to a son on board a ship bound for the United States. After arriving in their destination city, the couple petitioned İstanbul regarding the procedure for determining the child's nationality.[325]

It was entirely possible for emigrants who were travelling in illegal or quasi-legal ways to be captured by Ottoman officers, detained, and incarcerated.[326] Records of the Ministry of the Interior attest a number of cases in which immigrants were captured, punished, and sent back to their villages.[327]

In addition to these dangers, passengers were not always treated well by brokers.[328] In the words of one piece of Ottoman correspondence, the attitudes of brokers towards

[321] Ellis Island records verify U.S. immigrant diversity.
[322] BOA, DH.MKT, 2087_66, 15.Ş.1315, 09.01.1898 and BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.78 no date.
[323] BOA, A.MTZ. 04., 161_6, 4.L.1325, 10.11.1907.
[324] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1306-1328, nu.14.
[325] BOA, DH.MKT, 804_46, 11.L.1321, 31.12.1903 The document does not include what the ultimate decision was given about the nationality of the children.
[326] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.50, no date.
[327] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 232_98, 12.L.1324, 29.11.1906.
[328] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 (20), 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

Ottoman passengers were 'inhuman' and 'severe'[329]; 'once [passengers had] fallen into a broker's clutches,' they could not avoid exploitation. Brokers often demanded extra money for unexpected expenses, and as one official reported, 'Ottoman passengers have no way of paying these new expenses in order to reach their destination.'[330]

The conditions that Ottoman emigrants arriving in Europe faced were no different from those of the voyages themselves. Nothing confirms this better than the reports of vigilant Ottoman consuls general in Marseille and Barcelona, who wrote to their home offices in the Porte describing people who had been swindled by brokers, people without enough money to go further, people who had been robbed in the port city. Meanwhile, for various reasons, other emigrants could not even reach Europe but remained stranded in Cyprus or Egypt.

Another sort of tragedy was experienced by those Ottoman-Arab emigrants who were turned away or deported from the United States for various reasons, including failing the health test, not possessing sufficient money, and being disabled or beggars. Some evidence indicates that steamship companies were obliged to return these passengers to their embarkation points, that is, the European ports. The Ottoman consuls in these port cities reported that these people were then stuck in Europe and could not return home because they had no money.[331] The other group of stranded travellers comprised those who had departed from Syria or Lebanon without passports. The Ottoman government did not readmit people who had left the empire's territory illegally. To re-enter, these people

[329] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[330] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.22, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[331] BOA, HR.TO, 83_63, 14.04.1889.

applied for passports through the Ottoman consulates in European cities; however, these attempts at return often failed because the Porte was reluctant to grant such applications.[332]

To solve their problems, Ottomans stranded in European port cities applied to the consuls general of the Ottoman Empire in order to establish a communication channel with the Porte and attempt to persuade the government to rescue them from their predicament. According to descriptions recorded by consuls general, these Ottoman subjects were desperate urban wanderers who had been rendered penniless by swindling brokers; in turn, they and their families had been forced to live 'the life of a dog' (*ser-sefil*) and needed shelter immediately.[333] Ottoman ambassadors reported that under these harsh conditions, some Maronites sought support from religious Christians by disguising themselves as Muslims bent on converting to Christianity. These Ottomans appeared in churches and asked for help from Catholic priests.[334]

The problem of stranded Ottomans presented the consuls general with difficulties. They could not abandon their citizens, but at the same time, they did not have funding to send them all home or to the Americas.[335] The issue of responsibility for—of providing compensation to—destitute Ottoman-Arab immigrants in Europe became a top priority. Even if ambassadors intended to do their best to preserve the rights of these Ottomans (this is generally what they wrote), in many cases they did not have the opportunity to carry out that mission.

Ottoman governments, both local and central, were reluctant to assume this burden, largely because most of these stranded passengers had travelled illegally. Further, the

[332] BOA, DH.İD., 11_9, nu.22.
[333] BOA, DH.MKT, 321_7, nu.3, 16.B.1312, 13.01.1895 and BOA, Ş.D., 2286_9, 24.C.1314, 30.11.1896.
[334] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1306-1328, nu.13.
[335] BOA, Ş.D., 2286_9, 24.C.1314, 30.11.1896.

deposits of earnest money paid before departure were insufficient to transport many back to their villages. When the empire's reputation abroad began to tarnish, however, the imperial government began took a greater interest its impoverished subjects begging and wandering the streets of Europe. Generally, though, the way the empire treated its people on this point differed according to time, place, and circumstances. In some cases, the problem remained unsolved, even if funding for the return voyage was found. Some Ottoman-Arab emigrants less keen on returning home tried to find ways to continue their travels. For instance, in April 1889, the Ottoman consul general in Marseille reported some Ottomans' reluctance to return home; these individuals insisted instead on going to South America, though funds to cover their return expenses had been provided by the lieutenant governor of Mount Lebanon.[336]

V

Intermediaries: How Good and How Bad Were They?

Brokers and travel agencies were often presented in the contemporary Ottoman archival material as the chief actors in swindling emigrants, misusing their hopes, and ultimately creating difficult situations in European port cities. Documents related to emigration from Syria and Lebanon are rife with petitions submitted by Ottoman-Arab emigrants who intended to go to the Americas but were instead exploited by brokers.

Two cases reported in the Ottoman sources illuminate the dimensions of such swindling. The first appears in a letter written by undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hariciye Nezareti Müsteşarı on behalf of the minister himself. Dated 25 April 1911, the account discusses the case of eight Ottoman emigrants who had reached an agreement

[336] BOA, HR.TO, 342_94, 4.16.1889 and HR.TO, 342_101, 2.5.1889.

with a broker named Jorge Nabdo, whom they paid to transport them to Buenos Aires. Each emigrant had paid 240 francs to sail to Genoa, from where they planned to board another ship bound for Argentina. However, Nabdo distributed tickets to the passengers that would take them only as far as Fiume (present-day Rijeka, Croatia).

After arriving in Fiume and realising that Nabdo had cheated them, the Ottomans appealed to the imperial consulate there to resolve their problem. The Ottoman head consul reported that the men were to depart immediately for Genoa and board a ship bound for Buenos Aires. It was soon learned that an Italian steamship, *Regina Elena*, would cast anchor in Fiume the following day and then sail for Genoa, from where the Ottoman passengers could sail on to Argentina. At this point, however, the Ottomans no longer had enough money for passage to Genoa. The Ottoman head consul's letter requests advice in the matter.[337]

The second case appears in a report from the Ottoman consulate in Trieste (preserved in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs file dated 28 November 1912); it is another striking example of fraud involving a broker, this one named Hanini. Though Hanini did not have an official contract with the Cunard Line, he sold tickets on the line's behalf to Syrian emigrants, presumably to take them from Beirut to Trieste and then on to the United States. Hanini received 360 *guruş* (i.e., Turkish pennies) from each passenger in exchange for the tickets he had bought and the services he had rendered.

Upon arriving in Trieste, the passengers realised that they had been swindled: Hanini had given them tickets for passage from Trieste to the United States worth 120 *guruş*; however, the current price of the trip was 180 *guruş*.[338] A travel agency and the

[337] BOA, D.H. İD., 11_9, nu. 3.
[338] BOA, D.H. İD., 11_9, nu.22.

police directorate of Trieste asked the head consul what they should do with the Syrians who had arrived in their city. After the head consul declared himself unable to provide the 60 *guruş* per ticket, the travel agency proposed three options for the passengers: it would carry those passengers able to pay the difference to their intended destination, and for those unable to do so, it would either refund the 120 *guruş* or take them back to Beirut using the ticket they had in hand. The head consul reported that the passengers who had accepted the refund quickly exhausted it and had begun begging in the streets. After making clear that the incident had damaged the prestige of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, the head consul asked the Ministry of the Interior to investigate Hanini and to instruct Beiruti people seeking to emigrate not to trust such brokers.[339]

Travel agencies were also accused of swindling emigrants, as the following examples show. The Ottoman consulate in Marseille mentioned that eighteen Muslims had deceived 108 emigrants who later complained to the travel agency in Beirut. The emigrants claimed to have paid 310 francs to the agency for tickets from Marseille to New York, though the current price from Naples to New York was only 160 francs.[340] In another report, the head consul of Marseille, Hakkı Bida, sent a telegraph to İstanbul requesting an indemnity of 1,500 francs from the travel agency İskmiksiros Okatina Dürautmahi, which had cheated ten Ottomans of 150 francs each.[341]

Despite abundant similar cases, a significant number of Ottoman-Arab youth preferred to endure maltreatment at the hands of brokers and agencies, and even if they were defrauded outright, they kept quiet for the sake of reaching their destination. The

[339] BOA, D.H. İD., 11_9, nu. 23.
[340] BOA, İdare, 346, 12 December 1907 cited in "The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (May 1985): 183.
[341] BOA, D.H. İD. 11_9, nu.17, 05.Z.1332, 25.10.1914.

letters they sent to home after arriving in the Americas could only related their past misfortunes.[342]

It is noteworthy that both the Ottoman-Arabs on their way to the Americas and those who were already established there and intended to return home (often temporarily) underwent such bitter experiences. These difficulties were often revealed by relatives of the Ottoman returnees who were still living abroad. In April 1895, for instance, a group of Syrian Americans living in New York sent a dispatch to İstanbul complaining that civil servants in Lebanon and Syria had torn up their relatives' passage receipts, which had issued by Ottoman consulates in Europe, and those relatives were therefore not allowed to re-enter Ottoman territories.[343] They also described the significant fines that their relatives faced during their temporary return home and complained about restrictive imperial policies regarding passage to the United States. These complaints were generally followed by demands for clearer rules and regulations governing Ottoman emigration and travel.[344]

All this evidence underscores the difficulties involved in the process of emigrating from the Ottoman Empire to the Americas as reflected in the Ottoman Archives. Complaints about intermediaries, the hardships of travelling, and disputes with rules and officials fill most of the documents about Ottoman emigration. Nevertheless, Ottoman emigration flows continued for three or four decades with ever-increasing numbers; the annual number of emigrants from Mount Lebanon alone reached fifteen thousand in the early twentieth century.[345] Perhaps the great expectations of Ottoman emigrants were enough to steel them against such poor conditions—or perhaps the experience was not

[342] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903, nu.2.
[343] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.120, no date.
[344] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.124, no date.
[345] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.6, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

entirely without merit. It should be emphasised that the travelling process, though not uneventful, was not tragic for most Ottoman passengers; generally only the most extraordinarily negative cases were registered with the Ottoman state and preserved in the archives. As the next chapter analyses in detail, the negative attitudes of the Ottoman government may also have contributed to the bad image assigned to intermediary groups and to the overall emigration process.

In fact, the unflattering image of brokers and travel agencies evident in the perspective of government officials can be traced in the very language of the documents. Brokers and agencies are often characterised pejoratively with words such as *swindler*, *defrauder*, *smuggler*, and *traitor*, to name only a few. Beyond the language, the reasons for such defamation might stem from several sources. First, the activities of these two intermediary groups challenged the empire's migration policies. From the beginning, the empire intended to curb mass-emigration movements for the sake of military manpower and domestic production. Brokers and agencies were perceived as the prime movers behind emigration and as having crippled imperial tactics to stop it.

Second, the Porte accused brokers of unjustly collecting unprecedented profits by illegal or at least immoral means.[346] For instance, one report sent to İstanbul about brokers' incomes in January 1913 indicates that *simsar*s were accustomed to receiving, on average, four gold Ottoman lira from each emigrant in order to exit Ottoman territory. At the same time, emigrants who wished to return were required to pay at least one or two gold lira to brokers to do so. Ottoman reports show that *simsar*s mediated the immigration of roughly 4,000 to 5,000 people to different Western countries, helped around 2,500 returnees regain

[346] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.3, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

access to the empire, and as a result, had amassed on average twenty to thirty thousand gold lira each. Such a substantial sum of money was considered ill-gained since the total required true cost for each emigrant to go to the Americas was estimated at fifteen or sixteen gold lira, whereas brokers received at least twenty.[347] The empire also accused *simsar*s of engaging in smuggling not only people but also foodstuffs into Europe—yet another source of ill-gotten gains.[348]

In sum, the imperial government had little use for the mediators who helped make a great deal of Ottoman-Arab emigration possible in the early twentieth century. Ottoman governors accused brokers of defrauding Ottoman-Arab youths, in particular, to whom they promised unrealistic opportunities in the Americas, and of treating people quite poorly after receiving their money. Travel agencies too were accused of treating passengers as if they were herds animals and of placing them forcibly in inhuman conditions. When Ottoman subjects were left stranded in Europe, this reflected poorly on the empire, which was in no position financially or administratively to address the underlying problems.[349]

[347] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[348] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 nu.18, 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.
[349] BOA, DH.İD., 11_9, nu.23.

CHAPTER 5

Ottoman Emigration Policy: New Global Conditions and Local Responses

On 2 December 1888, Feridun Bey, former consul general of the Ottoman Empire in Athens, Greece, sent a telegram from Marseille to İstanbul describing what he had witnessed while sailing from Egypt to Europe. In that telegram he reported that roughly fifty Arabs, most of whom were from Mount Lebanon, the region from which emigration had been prohibited by decree of the sultanate. Though other reports about emigrants from Mount Lebanon had been issued, Feridun's was one of the severest that Ottoman statesmen had received, and the case was immediately relayed to the local governors in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. After some investigation, it was discovered that the number of Ottomans sailing to Europe and the Americas was far greater than Ottoman bureaucrats had presumed. Just as these emigrants from Mount Lebanon had done, many others from Lebanon and Syria also obtained passage receipts from their local governors in order to travel to Egypt or Cyprus on French ships and from there, most embarked to the Americas, often returning home after spending two or three years abroad.[350]

Ottoman records of the Ministry of the Interior and the Foreign Office reveal that emigration from Ottoman Syria occurred amidst a host of ceaseless additional affairs and events that threatened the empire's political unity and stability. Consequently, emigration from the empire had grown less important, especially compared with more vital agenda items. The government in İstanbul became aware of the importance of the emigration issue through correspondence with local governors and consuls in several European port cities, yet this occurred only after emigration had accelerated to an alarming rate.

[350] BOA, DH.MKT, 1570_27, 28.Ra.1306, 02.11.1888.

This chapter examines the attitudes of the Ottoman governments—both local and central—towards emigration from the imperial realm. Various forms of correspondence between officials in İstanbul, Beirut, and Mount Lebanon, as well as Ottoman consulates in Europe, constitute the chief primary sources I use to sketch the empire's policies on emigration from the beginning of the trend in the 1880s until its cessation with the beginning of World War I.

Traditionally, the Ottoman Empire controlled its population's movements using policies that dated back to the sixteenth century. During this period, Ottoman subjects' movements were controlled in order to both secure cities and regulate mass migration from rural areas to urban ones. [351] However, in the modern era, a different motivation for controlling the people's movement emerged: to facilitate imperial estimates of the empire's sources of tax revenue and manpower so that either or both could be called upon when necessary. By the beginning of the Tanzimat era, Ottoman subjects were registered by residence in a system that would, in 1831, support the first census of the empire. Thereafter, all Ottomans were obliged to inform government officials about any change of residence, as proclaimed on 27 February 1841 in the Prohibition of Passage Code (*Men-i Murur Nizamnamesi*). Under this code, Ottomans who wanted to travel within the empire's territories were required to possess a passage receipt issued by their respective village headman (*muhtar*) that indicated the traveller's physical characteristics, including height, eye colour, and (if man)whether they wore a moustache.[352]

[351] Musa Çadırcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde Çıkarılan Men-i Mürur ve Pasaport Nizamnameleri," *Belgeler*, no.19 (1993):169-170.
[352] Ibid.,172

With improvements to transportation technologies, population movements within and across the empire's borders increased considerably. These new conditions required new legislation, and Ottoman administrators had to deftly mediate the movement of Ottomans out of the empire. Doing so required additional legislation on passports.

Looking overall at the emigration documents of the Ottoman Empire at that time, one notices that Ottoman approaches to emigration were quite ambiguous and even conflicting—cause to wonder whether there was in fact a guiding policy and whether the government's overall stance could truly be defined as a policy. But despite this cacophonous picture, it is possible to discern the main stance the Ottoman Empire took on emigration: basically, during periods of peak emigration, the Ottomans were keen to keep younger subjects within imperial territory to support military operations and agricultural production, as outlined earlier. But as new developments took place after the 1890s, additional concerns were added to these; one stemmed from the negative propaganda originating with Ottoman-Arab immigrants in the United States and Argentina who were decrying imperial policies. In combination, these concerns spurred the Ottoman administration to action, and it moved to develop different strategies for curbing emigration.

Within the overall Ottoman approach to emigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, three phases can be distinguished: restriction, regularisation, and liberalism. At each stage, local and central Ottoman governments adopted different strategies to stop emigration, according to the political and economic situations of both region and empire.

I

The Anatomy of an Exodus, up to the Mid-1880s

The Ottoman Porte was made aware of the alarming rate of emigration from its territory by an influx of reports from governors in Greater Syria that French shipping companies were transporting Lebanese emigrants, especially from Mount Lebanon, to Marseille and, from there, to the Americas.[353] These reports often underscore that French steamship companies were not obeying local rules because they were backed by the French consulate, which was quite powerful in Lebanon.[354] In fact, one source reported that the companies 'did not hesitate to smuggle passengers surreptitiously at midnight' in order to evade local police forces.[355] The overall issue became urgent as time went on and these intelligence reports began arriving in İstanbul more frequently, particularly mentioning possible shortages in military recruits. But all this was the culmination of circumstances that had been developing for some time.

In the early 1880s, the central Ottoman government was apparently unconcerned with developing a consistent policy to impede emigration, for it faced more fundamental and urgent questions, many of which related to keeping the empire viable and not losing any more territory. During the 1870s and early 1880s, the empire had handled emigration with police-enforced measures originating from articles in the Passport Law (proclaimed 14 February 1867) that defined certain emigration movements as criminal and thus punishable.[356] The empire sought to overcome any gaps in the law by applying

[353] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.1, 17.11.1886.
[354] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.2, 09.04.1887.
[355] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.3, 10.04.1887.
[356] For the all articles of Passport Law see Musa Çadırcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde Çıkarılan Men-i Mürur ve Pasaport Nizamnameleri." *Belgeler*, no.19 (1993):178-181.

amendments that had been passed decades earlier aiming to regularise the empire's population movements, as well as by updating imperial laws piecemeal to meet new international standards. In short, mass emigration was perceived not as a social movement but as disobedience to imperial law—and therefore a crime.

Regarding emigration to the Americas, the empire did not consistently enforce regulations across all categories of leavers but adjusted its enforcement according to the socioeconomic background of each emigrant. Generally, the Ottoman administration both in Syria and in other parts of the empire allowed imperial subjects to venture to Europe or the Americas for trade purposes yet prohibited movements of the poor.[357] To a large extent, this general practice was justified by economic circumstances. İstanbul encouraged the emigration of merchants, for the imperial government anticipated that these people would benefit village economies upon their return to their homeland, having concluded profitable business abroad. Officials did not expect these people stay in the Americas indefinitely or permanently simply because they possessed real estate and other domestic investments at home. In contrast, and as the records of Ministry of Interior show, the empire hesitated to allow poor young people to leave its borders: these groups were the primary source of military strength should war break out,[358] and agricultural production depended on their labour to prevent any shortage in foodstuffs across the realm.

For these reasons, leaving Ottoman territory without meeting official requirements—a trend that was becoming widespread—was considered a significant

[357] DH.MKT, 2031_30, 1310.Ca.25, 15.12.1892.
[358] BOA, DH.MKT, 1620_18, 1306.Ş. 28, 29.04.1889 and DH.MKT, 1628_137, 1306.L.15, 14.06.1889. Also the *wali* of Beirut in his dispatch to the ministry of Interior in 1.January 1895 indicates the same idea that immigration would debilitate Ottoman military force *'...halin devamı kuvve-i umumiye-i askeriyeye nakısa-ı irad edeceği gibi*.....BOA, DH.MKT, 325_61, 31.12.1894, nu.2.

problem; Ottoman governors knew that uncontrolled outward population movements jeopardised the stability and strength of the state. Consequently, nearly all the official documents of the time clearly frame leaving the country illegally as a serious crime. Attesting that the burden of illegal emigration exasperated Ottoman officials, these documents also refer to illegal emigrants in pejorative terms, including *firari* (escapee), *kaçkın* (runaway), *akl-I kalil* (meathead) [359], and *serseri* (punk), instead of the more respectable *muhacir* and *göçmen* (emigrant).[360]

Reports from Ottoman consulates in Europe and the Americas indicate the Porte's acknowledgement that Syrian migration had reached an unexpected level and was steadily worsening. By the 1870s, the Ottoman government had begun issuing even more orders to Mount Lebanon, Jerusalem, and Beirut demanding that local administrators there strengthen measures against emigration from their regions. However, İstanbul was not the only actor determining the politics of migration. Two other forces also shaped migration policy in Ottoman Syria and Lebanon: local administrative powers and the diplomatic representatives of France in the region.

II

Central Efforts at Stringent Restriction, 1886–1893

Power politics in Greater Syria took shape independently of the actors' legal status—that is to say, the local powers could easily overstep the authority that they legally drew from the Ottoman Empire. Though scholarly literature suggests that Sultan Abdülhamid II was powerful enough to exercise authority over each subject within and beyond the empire's borders, at times the realities contradicts this assertion, thereby changing the grand

[359] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 115_57, 05.N.1319, 16.12.1901.
[360] BOA, MV, 65_44, 10.Za.1308, 17.06.1891.

narrative. Local governors in Greater Syria—particularly in Mount Lebanon, given its special status—certainly behaved independently. Though none could explicitly challenge the authority of the sultanate in his region, these administrators were quite successful in finding excuses to avoid implementing official orders, especially those aimed at preventing emigration from their regions. In September 1892, based on intelligence received from various sources, the Porte called to account the Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate because it was allowing returnees to re-enter the region despite standing orders to the contrary: 'escapees' were not to be readmitted. Mount Lebanon defended its actions by referring to Article 16 of the Passport Law, which indicated that returnees without passports *could* be readmitted if they paid double the normal re-entry fee.[361]

At the same time, the only mechanism available to İstanbul when it came to control over Greater Syria was making use of conflicts between the local governorships of Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and Aleppo and establishing a political balance of power that favoured imperial authority. The central Ottoman government acted on intelligence reports sent from each of these provinces—reports that typically contained information about rival (and often) neighbouring provinces. Individual local statesmen sought closer relations with the central government in order to acquire greater power in their respective regions.

Emigration became another facet, even a tool, in this game of power politics: local governors generally eschewed responsibility in reports submitted to İstanbul, claiming that other provinces were responsible for any reported 'escapes.' By collecting information and reporting on the questionable (alleged) acts of rival governors, local administrators

[361] BOA, DH.MKT, 2001_23, 21.S.1310, 14.09.1892. This article should be the amended version because in the original version of 1867, the article does not mention about charging of extra money but it only says that they would be punished.

informed on their neighbouring colleagues and made excuses for their own actions, attempting to legitimise themselves and position themselves favourably vis-à-vis the Porte. At least they were reporting at all, they asserted; otherwise, İstanbul could have accused them of irresponsibility.[362] One such a war of intelligence occurred between the governorship of Beirut and the Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate. İstanbul would review the reports of these two provinces and ask both for explanations.[363] Unsurprisingly, each province accused the other of not taking measures to stop emigration. The reports sent to İstanbul make clear that both these regional governments sent spies to ports in the other territory in order to collect evidence that illegal emigration was indeed transpiring there.[364]

Outside this web of regional rivalries were the Ottoman consulates in European countries that had to address the issue of stranded Ottoman subjects stranded abroad. While the local administrators in Greater Syria engaged in one-upmanship via mutual denouncement and irresponsibility, administrators abroad were left to deal with the consequences. In June 1890, for example, the Ottoman consul general in Barcelona accused the governments of Mount Lebanon and Beirut of not doing their jobs:[365] those administrators were responsible, the consul wrote to the Porte, for roughly 250 Syrians who were wretchedly stuck in Spanish port cities.[366] The acts of local governors had repercussions beyond their own borders and even outside the empire.

Given France's influential role in Syria (see chapter 2), it is no surprise that French consulates in Greater Syria—especially in Mount Lebanon, the hub of emigration—

[362] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.2, 09.04.1887.
[363] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.4, no date.
[364] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.4, no date.
[365] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.7, 1890.
[366] BOA, DH.MKT, 1735_66, 06.Za.13.07, 24.06.1890.

constituted the second important actor in the migration process. According to the Ottoman Archives, by the 1880s the Porte had become aware of the role that French consulates played in facilitating French-based companies' smuggling of Syrians to Europe and the Americas. On 20 March 1889, the Ottoman government learned that the French ship *Masajeri* had embarked from Mount Lebanon to Marseille and from there to the United States despite the surveillance of Ottoman state officers in Trabluşşam, none of whom could intervene because of the involvement of the French consul.[367] The local governors wrote to French representatives in the consulates, asking them to withdraw their support of French shipping companies that recruited Lebanese passengers illegally; they never received the response they wanted. Later, when the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs intervened and presented the issue to its French counterpart, the outcome was again unfavourable.[368]

Given reports from the Ottoman consuls in Europe and the Americas, the Porte initially aimed to stop emigration by sending numerous dispatches ordering local governors both to be more careful about emigration and to actively work to prevent 'escapes' from their respective territories. Although the Porte's position was firm, it failed to articulate exactly what it wanted local governors to do to cope with increasing emigration. Dispatches generally ended with a mandate that the governors 'do whatever is required'—[369] this would soon become a classic command from İstanbul that future bureaucrats would incorporate into the dispatch genre. The order encapsulates an important reason why the

[367] BOA, DH.MKT, 1607_5, 18.B.1306, 20.03.1889.
[368] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.50 and 52 and 64, no date.
[369] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.4, no date and BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.2, 09.04.1887.

empire failed to halt emigration: orders were not specific, and local administrators were unwilling to take initiative.

The ambiguity of these directives illustrates how unprepared the Ottoman government was to address emigration at its borders. In April 1889, when the governor of Mount Lebanon asked whether the Porte had a specific policy for emigrants from Mount Lebanon and Beirut,[370] İstanbul could only refer to the Passport Law, which declared that no Ottoman without a passport could venture across the border.[371] Armed with this law alone, the central Ottoman government sought to capture emigrants in ports and return them to their villages,[372] as well as to prevent ships from transporting Lebanese and Syrian residents who did not have passports.[373]

Meanwhile, repeated dispatches from Ottoman diplomats in France and the United States were replete with stories of miserable Ottomans unable to leave the ports of Europe, as discussed earlier. Droves of stranded Ottomans applied to the imperial consulates in Europe for help; initially, these consulates lacked the resources to assist stranded travellers, who wandered the streets of Europe, begging in hunger. The problem eventually attracted the Porte's attention, especially when news of 'Lebanese beggars' appeared in European periodicals.[374] Consular reports describe the problems in terms of legal concern about the illegal trafficking of emigrants, and, as just noted, they accused the Syrian and Lebanese governments of not implementing rules of their own. In response, the Ottoman government finally acted to produce a comprehensive migration policy,[375] and in the process, the

[370] BOA, I.MTZ.CL, 3_197, 09.Ş.1306, 01.04.1889.
[371] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.4, no date.
[372] BOA, DH.MKT, 1500_114, 03.Ş.1305, 15.04.1888.
[373] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.3, 10.04.1887.
[374] BOA, DH.MKT,1360_120, 18.Za.1303, 18.08.1886.
[375] BOA, DH.MKT,1360_120, 18.Za.1303, 18.08.1886.

central government—especially the Department of Foreign Affairs—was forced to study emigration in great depth. To begin this enquiry, the department requested two lists: one of passengers who had arrived in Marseille and another of those who had been denied entry to the United States, along with their birthplaces.[376] The most immediate remedy that the consul in Marseille could find was to return these people to their home villages by subsidising their travels.

At this point, the most deliberated topic was who would pay these subsidies, since the budgets of the Ottoman consulates in France and other European countries were insufficient. The Ottoman consul general in Barcelona who found himself dealing with 250 stranded Syrians in June 1890 requested that local governors in Syria be warned against permitting emigration.[377] Following suit, other consuls also emphasised that stemming Ottoman emigration was the responsibility of the French consulate[378], and local governors (particularly Beirut) proposed that the Mutasarrifate of Mount Lebanon bear the cost of repatriation because it was most directly responsible for the emigration.[379] But local budgets were unprepared to absorb the cost of transporting all these Ottomans home.

The problem of Ottomans stranded in Europe grew worse: İstanbul was soon informed in 1888-1889 that some of these Ottoman subjects were illegal migrants who did not possess passports, which were necessary for them to re-enter the empire. The Ottoman consul in Marseille reported that these people had requested passports from their offices by showing the only official papers in their possession: passage receipts issued in Beirut or Mount Lebanon. As explained in an earlier chapter, the imperial administration was

[376] BOA, DH.MKT, 1419_72, 18.Ş.1304, 12.05.1887 and BOA, DH.MKT, 1491_9, 18.C.1305, 02.03.1888.
[377] BOA, DH.MKT, 1735_66, 06.Za.1307, 24.06.1890.
[378] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.7, 1890.
[379] BOA, İ.HUS, 60_37, 18.Ş.1315, 12.01.1888.

reluctant to grant such applications for passports precisely because the applicants had left the empire illegally. But the consul proposed that these people be granted Ottoman passports so that they could return home; the cost of allowing them to stay in France would only increase, burdening imperial coffers and tarnishing the empire's reputation abroad. Reluctantly, the central Ottoman government accepted the proposal, hoping to avoid more serious problems. [380]

To some extent, this situation was a product of brokers' activities, which had enabled young Ottomans to exit their countries without the proper legal documentation or with obtaining these documents illegally. The Ottoman government realized that the young and poor Ottoman immigrants –with the guidance of their broker- used to present themselves as merchants who intended to travel for business purposes. Since the Ottoman rules allowed the movements of the merchant, the Ottoman youth could get an opportunity to go to the Americas. This misuse alerted the central Ottoman government to implemented the requirement of bail bonds and bondsmen for Ottomans who wanted to leave the empire only temporarily in 1889. Accordingly, the merchants who were willing to travel for business needed to deposit a certain amount of money, to receive back after their arrival[381].

At the beginning it was thought that this implementation would differentiate the businessmen from the poor immigrants, however it soon became apparent that the system of bail bonds, too, was failing. Collaborating with local officials, *simsar*s would deposit money sufficient for the emigration of one person, and through underhanded arrangements, ultimately allow multiple people to emigrate for the cost of one. At the same time, *simsar*s

[380] BOA, HR.TO, 83_63, 14.04.1889.
[381] POA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.5, 12.12.1887.

also repeatedly produced fraudulent bills signed with the names of non-existent people—sometimes even those who had died long before.

Another challenge was that passports themselves were being obtained illegally. In November 1889, Kamil Pasha (who was known as 'English Kamil Pasha') reported that the Ottoman government had written to the French consulate about prohibiting French steamship companies from taking Ottoman passengers to Egypt. In effect, the request sought that every means of travelling to Egypt be cut off immediately, since Ottomans were travelling to Europe by obtaining passports from Alexandria.[382] As detailed in the previous chapter, the Ottoman Empire had hesitated to restrict movement between Egypt and other parts of the empire[383], not wishing to acknowledge in any way the contradiction between Egypt's *de facto* and *de jure* status as a (former) Ottoman territory under British control. Creating restrictions would have effectively recognised British rule. But the worsening situation, including the accessibility of illegal passports in Egypt, forced the empire's hand.[384]

In addition to all these difficulties, it was generally understood that the chief obstacle to measures that would curb emigration was that *simsar*s were bribing police officers in port cities. According to a report from the governor of Beirut in 1890, its own control of the migration process had failed because these officers were shirking. Although they were ineffective, they could not accused of not doing their job properly because on paper, they had.[385] Beirut's governor even complained about his officers in another dispatch sent to İstanbul in May 1891, asking that the bribed officers be dismissed if their

[382] BOA, I.MTZ.CL, 3_198, 13.04.1889.
[383] This was not only true for Egypt and Cyprus, but also Bosnia Hergosovia, Eastern Rumelia and Crete.
[384] BOA, DH.MKT,1448_92, 01.M.1305, 19.09.1887.
[385] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.9, 03.04.1890.

illicit actions were proven and, if they were not, that they instead be removed to another region of the Empire.[386] For several years at least, the Ottoman government remained silent on this issue, taking no action against local officers—perhaps because it was too weak to exert such a profound influence on the bureaucracy.

The problems involved in mass emigration were not limited to Ottoman emigrants unable to move from European ports. Those who had successfully reached and entered the Americas also increasingly faced hardships, reports about which were regularly dropped on the desks of İstanbul bureaucrats. The Porte's concern about the rising tide overwhelming Ottomans in the United States is clear from its responses to these reports, most of which contain at least one sentence that begins with the phrase '…for preserving the rights of Ottoman emigrants…' The principle of preserving the rights of Ottomans was first put into practice after the War of the Pacific (1879–1884) was fought by Chili, Bolivia, and Peru. According to a brief report sent to İstanbul, the Ottoman government had learned about Ottomans who had suffered in the war, as well as of their applications to the French consulate in Port Santiago (de Chile) requesting diplomatic initiatives in response to their claims of damages.[387]

At the same time, other documents show that Ottomans encountered the problems they did because they were unable to speak Spanish or English, were unfamiliar with local customs, rules, and regulations, or were unable to find intermediaries who would apply on their behalf to officials and civil servants in the host countries. As a means of expressing their frustration, some Ottomans resorted to recounting the hardships they faced in the Americas in letters sent home. In one letter, the writer—his name is now illegible—relates

[386] BOA, DH.MKT, 1835_4, 12.L.1308, 21.05.1891.
[387] BOA, HR.TO, 206_105, 14.10.1884.

that four Ottoman tradesmen (Kura, Antonias Murad, Jeorge Saden, and Salamon Celal) were arrested by police in Havana, Cuba, for an alleged act of theft. Since the court in Havana was prepared to imprison the tradesmen, the writer felt compelled to send a letter beseeching Ottoman officials to suspend the case in Lebanon in Ottoman courts.[388]

Attitudes towards Emigrants of Various Religious Groups

As Ottoman emigration became more sophisticated, the problems it posed in the eyes of Ottoman statesmen came to extend beyond concerns about labour shortages in agricultural production and the military. Once political concerns in the empire had reached their peak, the central Ottoman government paid significantly more attention to emigrants' religious, ethnic, and regional backgrounds.[389] Though the standing principle that allowed the movement of traders and hindered that of labourers remained unchanged for Muslims, for non-Muslim groups the attitude of the central government fluctuated for various reasons.

For one thing, Ottoman officials were disappointed by non-Muslim returnees' abuse of the legal rights reserved for Muslim groups. After reaching the United States, some Ottomans had obtained US citizenship, and upon returning to their Ottoman villages and engaging in trade, they claimed the privileges—what are called 'capitulation rights' in the scholar literature—and conveniences that were granted to foreigners in Ottoman territories.[390]

The emigration of Syrians was prohibited as part of overall imperial migration policies developed to stem emigration from Anatolia and the Balkans. Yet particular

[388] BOA, HR.TO, 68_70, 9.10.1889.
[389] BOA, DH.MKT, 1491_9, 18.C.1305, 02.03.1888.
[390] BOA, MV, 65_44, 10.Za.1308, 17.06.1891. The document informs that according to the Citizenship Law of the USA at that time, the new citizens were allowed to stay in their homeland for two years. That provided a good deal of time for American Ottomans to gain money in their home country using their American identity. See also BOA, DH.MKT, 1561_92, 02.Ra.1306, 06.11.1888.

attention regarding this prohibition was paid to emigration from Mount Lebanon, and not to that from Beirut or any other city in Lebanon. Ottoman sources do not provide any definitive reason for this inconsistency, although numerous documents underscore that the sultanate prohibited movement from 'the Mount.'[391] Despite the lack of specifics, it is not difficult to attribute the sultanate's position to the Mount's exceptional legal status. The empire might have been concerned about the region's possible declaration of total independence as a result of its interaction with Western powers, interaction led by Lebanese immigrants to the Americas. In addition to its already semi-independent status, moreover, Mount Lebanon had become in the eyes of Ottoman politicians a hub for criminals and illegal separatist organisations.[392] Indeed, criminals and social 'undesirables' regularly fled to Mount Lebanon to avoid being trailed in Ottoman territories that exercised stricter police control. In addition, Lebanon functioned as a temporary shelter for emigrants (especially Armenians) from different parts of Anatolia who likewise intended to evade police.[393]

At the same time, the Ottoman government seems to have developed several strategies to regulate the movement of various Christian sects within Lebanon. Some records suggest that Greeks in Lebanon were considered to be closer to the empire than Maronites were, and Ottoman rules were enforced more leniently for Lebanese Orthodox Christians.[394] In this regard, the case of Yusuf Mihail elucidates this group's privileged position. Mihail returned home after failing to pay US customs officers the required entry

[391] BOA, DH.MKT,1394_97, 29.R.1304, 25.01.1887.
[392] One document mentions about the verdict of death penalty for two persons (namely Mihail Ṣubara and Rasim Betros) who incited people to up rise against the Ottoman sovereignty. BOA, I.HB, 168_69, 26.C.1333, 11.05.1915.
[393] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 208_6, 19.Ş.1323, 19.10.1905.
[394] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 120_36, 09.Z.1319, 19.03.1902.

fee. On shipboard bound for the empire, Lebanese custom officials were puzzled by Mihail's case because according to new legislation, he could not re-enter his country after having left. However, because he was a member of the Greek community in Lebanon, he was afforded the privileges that Greeks throughout the empire enjoyed and was ultimately allowed to return home.[395]

In contrast to the Orthodox Lebanese, Armenians were strictly prevented from re-entering the Ottoman realm. Armenians who had, upon departing the empire, signed forms indicating that they would not return (a strategy implemented as a disincentive, discussed later) were thereafter not treated as Ottoman citizens. Ottoman bureaucrats questioned whether this provision would ultimately prevent these Ottomans' re-entry; since the families of these emigrants remained in Ottoman territory, the emigrants themselves could still access the empire by laying claim to family ties. Nevertheless, the central government remained firm in its decision and enforced the provision.[396] But much to the central Ottoman government's chagrin, doing so did not deter many Armenians from emigrating. Above all, the Ottoman government's concern focused on Armenians who were escaping to the United States via ports in Aleppo and elsewhere throughout Syria.[397] As can be deduced from the dates of police records, by the beginning of the twentieth century, more Armenians than Lebanese had used Arabian ports to embark on ships bound for America.[398] In response, Ottoman statesmen in İstanbul continually sent dispatches to local

[395] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 147_41, 06.R.1321, 02.07.1903. This point spelled out over and over again during the whole process of emigrations. Here are some other documents which include the same pint: BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 20.05.1903.
[396] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 120_36, 09.Z.1319, 19.03.1902.
[397] BOA, DH.ŞFR, 279_15, 21.Şu.1317, 06.03.1902.
[398] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 257_18, 10.L.1325, 16.11.1907; DH.TMIK.M 236_65, nu.1, 25.Z.1324, 09.2.1907.

governors ordering them to investigate Armenians in their ports and, if possible, to send them back to their villages.[399]

The government's concern about Armenian immigration stemmed from intelligence reports indicating that Armenians were disseminating propaganda harmful to Ottoman interests. Meanwhile, other reports refer to rumours about the illegal activities of Armenian Freedom Committees abroad. In fact, one agent's communication from New York reveals that Armenians abroad were receiving military training[400] and smuggling weapons into Ottoman territory in order to arm Armenians there.[401]

Of all religious groups, Jews alone were granted the most freedom by the Ottoman government to embark for the Americas. This unique stance can be traced to rumours—later spread more widely, especially in the 1890s—that Jews were establishing a colony in Palestine, an Ottoman territory. Furthermore, Theodor Herzl, arguably the pioneering proponent for the foundation of a Jewish state, had also identified Ottoman realms as land where Jews could suitably establish an independent nation.[402] Yet alternative locations, including Argentina, had also been recommended for the proposed Jewish state, so the Ottoman government seems to have encouraged Jewish emigration to the United States and Argentina in order to forestall the possibility of a Jewish state in Palestine. One Ministry of the Interior document dated 17 October 1891 mentions that Jews from Russia had migrated into Ottoman territory. Since these newcomers could not be sent back to Russia, the

[399] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.29, 07.08.1892.
[400] BOA, HR.SYS. 2742_12, 19.03.1899.
[401] BOA, BEO, 372_27872, 04.N.1311, 11.03.1894 and BOA, DH.MKT. 232_6, 26.L.1311, 02.05.1894.
[402] Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York: Dover Publications, 1988), 95-96.

ministry ordered that they be encouraged to relocate again, this time to Argentina or the United States.[403]

The political stance of Sultan Abdülhamid II's regime towards Jews seems to have shaped the attitude of the empire as a whole towards Jewish emigration to the Americas. Ottoman sources show no special effort to keep Jews within Ottoman territory, in sharp contrast to the imperial regulations on the books for other religious and ethnic groups. Since the Jewish population was relatively small, and again given the momentum behind the proposed establishment of a Jewish state based in Jerusalem, the empire adopted a uniquely liberal position on Jewish emigration from the empire.

An interesting illustrative case appears among the records of the Ministry of the Interior. Josef Rihal, a Lebanese Jew who had gained US citizenship, applied to the lieutenant governor of Mount Lebanon via the Ottoman consulate in New York to be allowed to take his family, then in Zahleh, to the United States. After lengthy debates between local and central governments regarding how to interpret several items of Ottoman citizenship law, the central government approved Rihal's petition, as long as his family would agree to have their Ottoman citizenship annulled.[404]

In the eyes of Ottoman administrators, it was generally thought that Jews newly arriving in Ottoman territories from Russia and other neighbouring countries—in contrast to Ottoman Jews—intended to help establish a Jewish nation in Palestine. Since Turkish Jews in Anatolia and other parts of the empire were economically better established than members of other religious communities, they were less keen to go to Palestine or to immigrate to the United States. A report from the Military Secretariat Commission dated 5

[403] BOA, DH.MKT, 1878_121, 13.Ra.1309, 17.10.1891.
[404] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 83_26, 4.Z.1317, 05.04.1900.

August 1891 alleges the intention of Jewish groups from neighbouring countries to establish at least one Jewish colony in Palestine and questions why they did not join the existing colonies in Argentina and the United States. The report indicates that these people were backed by foreign consulates in Palestine, including consulates of countries that had expelled Jews or permitted those within their borders to immigrate to Palestine. The commission's report also suggests that poor Jews be encouraged to go to the Americas, where they could make better lives for themselves, instead being allowed to settle in Palestine[405].

Of all religious groups whose members emigrated, Muslims contributed most to the Ottoman government's fears because they were the empire's primary source of tax revenue and military manpower. The Ministry of the Interior sent a number of dispatches to the Ottoman Prime Ministry Secretariat indicating that Muslim emigration was increasingly widespread and asking that appropriate measures be taken immediately.[406] In support, a survey was commissioned to assess Muslim émigrés, the results of which satisfied Ottoman governors by indicating that in fact the scale of Muslim Ottoman emigration did not threaten the empire. The results also suggested that allowing Muslims to return to Ottoman territories would be highly beneficial to the empire's image on the world stage.[407]

In fact, the migration to neighbouring countries seen in previous years was generally seasonal. What worried the Ottoman government about mass migration to the United States was that emigrants seemed to stay in that host country permanently. These people's religious and ethnic affiliations also bothered statesmen, since their possible

[405] BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK, 22_89, 29.Z.1308, 5.08.1891.
[406] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.104, 13.C.1312, 13.12.1894.
[407] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.01.1896, nu.6.

political acts could counter imperial interests. In 1889, the Porte underscored that its prohibition of migration by labourers did not include Ottomans venturing to Greece, Bulgaria, or Romania for work but rather those heading to the United States for purposes the administration deemed questionable.[408]

The Ottoman government seems to have been unsuccessful in inhibiting corruption and bribery in Greater Syria, and under these conditions, Mount Lebanon especially began acting more independently than ever. On 23 December 1902, from intelligence sent from the governorship of Beirut, the Porte learned that passage receipts other than those officially issued by the empire were being distributed—explicitly called Lebanese passage receipts (*tezkire-i lübnaniye*)—by the Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate. At the same time, Beirut informed the central Ottoman government about the Mount's intention to extend its autonomous territory, disconnecting telegraph lines from İstanbul and reconstructing new lines independently.[409] In response, Mount Lebanon denied having distributed its own passage receipts, but it also indicated that fees charged for the issuance of official documents should remain in Mount Lebanon's budget. Ultimately, the Porte realised that it would be unable to acquire this revenue from Mount Lebanon and recognised the Mutasarrifate's right to it, as long as the latter did not issue any receipts or other official documents without the Porte's authority.[410]

In general, none of the Ottoman government's coercive measures stopped or slowed emigration. Appointing new police forces, using steamboats, and issuing arms to port

[408] BOA, DH.MKT, 1620_18, 28.Ş.1306, 29.04.1889 and BOA, DH.MKT, 1628_137, 15.L.1306, 14.06.1889.
[409] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 3_24, nu.4, 26.Z.1319, 5.4.1902.
[410] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 3_24, nu.5, 26.Z.1319, 5.4.1902.

authorities particularly failed to stem the tide of Ottoman emigration.[411] By the end of 1892, the Ottoman government clearly understood that this serious problem could not be addressed through police force against illegal movements. On the contrary, emigration persisted in ever greater numbers. A report submitted to the Cabinet of the empire in June 1891 indicated that emigration to the Americas had not subsided and that, in fact, the success of earlier immigrants who could now send money home was inspiring youth in the empire to venture across the ocean and try achieving similar economic prosperity.[412] At the same time, the empire's lack of funds and insufficient technical equipment (including officers, arms, facilities and boats) ensured that corruption, bribery, and the manufacture of fraudulent identification cards, bail bonds, and passports only persisted.[413]

Another reason why the Ottoman government failed to halt emigration in this period was the haziness of imperial legal regulations. The central Ottoman government had especially been unclear in defining the legal status of returnees and so could not control their movements. In the case of disputes, local governors asked the Department of Police (*Zaptiye Nezareti*) to clarify the legal status of disputed Ottomans[414], yet they often received unsatisfactory answers. The governorship of Mount Lebanon used the lack of legal regulation as an excuse for not halting emigration, and officials there reported to İstanbul that 'these people can leave Lebanon not because they are idiots or escapees but because they can meet the necessary official requirements for going to the Americas.'[415]

[411] DH.MKT, 1835_4, 12.L.1308, 21.05.1891.
[412] BOA, MV, 65_44, 10.Za.1308, 17.06.1891.
[413] For instance in Ministry of Interior explained the emigration of people with fake identities, (using often the identity of death people) to lack of full physical description of people in passage receipts. BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 3_24, 26.Z.1319, 5.4.1902.
[414] BOA, DH.MKT, 1546_16, 17.M.1306, 23.09.1888.
[415] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 127_50 (12), 11.R.1320, 18.07.1902.

Faced with the reality of all of these ambiguities and numerous failed attempts to curb emigration—and given the urgent call from the governor of Aleppo—the central Ottoman government began searching for more bureaucratic ways, rather than additional ineffective coercive ones, through which to gain control of emigration.[416]

III

Times of Regulation and Channelling Mobility[417]*, 1893–1909*

Once Ottoman statesmen understood that it would be impossible to stop emigration by sheer police force, it adopted a different strategy to control the phenomenon. After 1893, the government abandoned its approach to emigration as a criminal activity, instead attempting to develop legislation both to clearly indicate that moving outside the country was not illegal and to place a burden on emigrants that not many would venture to accept. Specifically, if an Ottoman citizen left without the official permission of the state, he or she would be penalised with certain sanctions, denial of re-entry, and even stripping of citizenship. Since the Passport Law alone and even in combination with other regulations

[416] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.29, 07.08.1892.

[417] This term was introduced by Valeska Huber for defining the global trends in World government towards emigration in the 19th century. According to Huber, the 19th century, which saw the rise of globalisation, was not the era of "unhampered acceleration" and unhindered mobilities, as it is often depicted; neither was it the time in which governments were "hardening borders" and increasing controls. Instead, the era is better characterised by the "differentiation, regulation, and bureaucratisation of different kinds of movements". In part, Huber's conclusion stems from the fact that the Suez Canal's opening not only shortened distances between faraway lands and facilitated unprecedented acceleration in the movement of goods and people—both of which could especially benefit receiving countries. At the same time, the Canal's opening gave birth to dangerous problems, including the propagation of diseases and the transmission of unwanted people. For Canal sovereigns, the pros and cons of increased transportation and transmission prompted the development of new regimes with which to "channel" such increased mobility to their advantage. In this sense, the overall story of Ottoman policies toward emigration in this period, is just one example suitable to Huber's historical model. As will be detailed in this chapter, to benefit from migration's positive contributions and to prevent its unwanted side effects, Ottoman bureaucrats sought to influence the movement of people, though always to varying degrees of success and consistency. Valeska Huber, Channelling Mobilities: Migration and Globalisation in the Suez Canal Region and Beyond, 1869-1914, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

on population movements was not enough to deter emigration (even when properly implemented), the Ottoman government instead framed the problem in terms of citizenship, beginning with the Citizenship Code of 1869, which was later updated with several amendments.[418]

To comprehend this instrumental role of the Code in this context there is need to examine its historical background at least from the beginning of the 18th century. In the classical Ottoman legal system, foreigners living within Ottoman borders—most of whom were diplomatic and/or economic missionaries or consuls—were tried according to their home legal systems (Yasemin Saner Gönen, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Yabancıların Adli Ayrıcalıkları", (PhD dissertation. Marmara University, 1998)), 171. Workers in foreign consulates, who were generally non-Muslim Ottoman dragomen, were able both to engage in trade for their own gain and to obtain *patante*, which was a sort of licence which indicated the owner was under the protection of that foreign country. a privileged position that made prestigious the positions of consulate employees in the eyes of Ottoman Christians and Jews, a great deal of whom applied to work at consulates or to at least appear to be employed there on paper. Ottoman governors were consequently unhappy with such malfeasance, which made the Sultan spell out the famous phrase, "Seemingly, all of our subjects will become foreigners in the near future" (BOA, HAT, 1409_57217, Arz Tezkiresi, 29 Zilhicce 1206, 18.08.1792, cited in İbrahim Serbestoğlu, *Osmanlı Kimdir?: Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tabiiyet Sorunu* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2014), 33. Ottoman sources reveal concerns that distributing *patante* or passports primarily benefitted foreign countries, which intended to spread their influence in Ottoman politics by using their influence among non-Muslims. Russia and France were particularly accused of selling these licenses to bolster their influence among orthodox Ottomans, Armenians, and Maronites. According to reports from a U.S. state mission, in 1860 in İstanbul alone the number of people under foreign protection had reached 50,000 (See Salahi Sonyel, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Koruma Sistemi ve Kötüye Kullanımı", *Belleten*, no.213, (1191): 367. All of these problems convened at defining who was officially Ottoman. Existing laws could not sufficiently meet the needs of the modern capitalist global world order, and the legal status of *Ottoman* became even more complicated when new territories began to declare their independence from the Empire. The legal status of these newly independent countries posed serious problems. For instance, after Greece declared its independence, the Ottoman government received word that some orthodox Greek Anatolians had immigrated to Greece and later returned home to Ottoman territory. There, by bearing Greek passports, they could enjoy the privileges that the Empire offered foreigners (İbrahim Serbestoğlu, "Ottoman Nationality Law, as an Example of a Forced Modernization", *OTAM 29*, (Fall: 2011):193-214). At the same time, the legal status of both Ottomans married to foreigners and their children remained unclear in the Empire for quite some time. Marriages between Ottomans and foreigners became an increasingly significant problem as the number of these marriages grew. The legal status of people who had converted to Islam or Christianity and the compulsory military service of former Ottoman foreigners compelled Ottoman governors to roll up their sleeves and solve the citizenship problem (Mahmud Fuad, *Tabiiyyet*, (İstanbul, n.s.,1312,(1896)), 25-27. Ultimately, on 28 January 1869, the Ottoman Empire proclaimed the Law of Citizenship, and a special Commission of Nationality was issued to implement the new regulations. With the Law, being an Ottoman citizen was bound to two conditions; citizenship required a person first to have reached the lawful age of 20 years and second to have resided in Ottoman territory for at least five years (BOA, İstişare, no.10-12, 12 Teşrin-iSani 1324, pp.433 and 438 cited in Serbestoğlu, Osmanlı Kimdir?...,70). Military service in a foreign country was enough cause for expatriation (Mahmud Fuad, *Tabiiyyet*.., 78-83) , while Ottoman women married to foreigners were considered to be citizens of their husband's nation—as a common rule in Europe (See Rona Aybay, *Kadının Uyrukluğu Üzerinde Evlenmenin Tesiri* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları,1980), 3-8. The nationality of foreign married women was determined by the Ottomans, taking reference to French Civil Code. See BOA, DH.HMŞ, 1-1-/8-5 Teba-yı Ecnebiye ile İzdivaç eden Teba'-yı Osmaniye'nin Tabiiyyetleri hakkında 4 Temmuz 1333-4, cited in İbrahim Serbestoğlu, Osmanlı Kimdir….,71).

In the Amendment of 1893, the Ottoman sultanate declared that emigrants who became citizens of any foreign country would automatically lose their Ottoman citizenship.[419] The legislation was enhanced with additional phrasing concerning emigration to indicate that movements to any country not allowed officially by the Ottoman government would be 'tolerated,' and the individual permitted to move, only if they cancelled their Ottoman citizenship and signed a declaration stating that they would never return to Ottoman territory.[420] The Citizenship Code allowed imperial officers to authorise relevant departments to deport people who violated the rules and to override any intervention by foreign consulates in such situations.[421]

The Citizenship Code was also revised to negate returnees' claims to commercial privileges. The empire proclaimed that former Ottoman citizens could not enjoy the commercial privileges granted native-born US citizens, regardless of whether they adopted American citizenship. In addition, it was declared that Ottoman returnees from America could not engage in a sector different from that in which they had established themselves before going to America.[422] Returnees were no longer allowed to go back to America unless they first resided in their villages for at least two years. Otherwise, their Ottoman citizenship would be automatically rescinded.

In light of these changes to Citizenship Code, alterations were also introduced concerning passport applications. Ottoman subjects could now obtain passports from Ottoman embassies abroad—this was meant to aid those stranded in European ports—

[419] İlhan Unat, *Türk Vatandaşlık Hukuku*, (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1966), 23-24, cited in İbahim Serbestoğlu, Ottoman Nationality Law…,208.
[420] BOA, A. MKT.MHM, 545_11, 10.C.1317, 16.10.1899.
[421] İlhan Unat, *Türk Vatandaşlık Hukuku*, (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1966), 25 cited in Serbestoğlu, Ottoman Nationality Law…,208.
[422] BOA, Y.EE. 152_8, 10.S.1312, 13.08.1894.

though the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would remain the sole authority to officially issue passports.[423]

After issues surrounding people's national affiliation were clarified, a new sort of measurement was taken to stop emigration from Lebanese and Syrian ports. At the same time, the bail-bond application was modified and enhanced such that emigrant candidates in Egypt had to sign a bill for a certain amount of money—usually fifty gold Ottoman lira—that would be reimbursed upon their arrival home.[424] In cases where people were stranded in a European port, this money would (theoretically) cover the cost of their trip home.[425] These bail bonds were to be paid directly to the Ministry of the Interior—not to local governorships—because İstanbul considered its local administrators susceptible to corruption and bribery.[426]

In addition to paying a deposit, emigrant candidates were obliged to engage bondsmen.[427] The Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the Ottoman consulate in New York to provide it with a list of people turned away from US ports of entry so that their bondsmen could be sought and their bail-bond bills processed.[428] Control of Ottomans' movement to Cyprus and Egypt was tightened, and, by Porte order, investigations against *simsar*s were more seriously pursued and disincentive punishments introduced.[429] The Beirut governorship proposed that it was not enough to send captured *simsar*s home; instead, it recommended that they be severely penalised.[430]

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[423] BOA, DH.MKT, 111_22, 01.S.1311, 14.06.1893.
[424] BOA, DH.MKT, 321_7, nu.3, 16.B.1312, 13.01.1895.
[425] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.103, 29.Ra.1312, 08.10.1894.
[426] BOA, DH.MKT, 321_7, nu.3, 16.B.1312, 13.01.1895.
[427] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu121, 05.L.1312, 01.04.1895.
[428] BOA, DH.MKT, 321_7, nu.3, 16.B.1312, 13.01.1895.
[429] BOA, DH.MKT, 85_35, 08.S.1311, 13.08.1893.
[430] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.104, 14.C.1312, 13.12.1894 also BOA, DH.MKT, 325_61, nu.3, 03.B.1312, 31.12.1894.

Meanwhile, in this period, the Porte also planned a new approach to the problem of Ottomans stranded in Europe, namely, subsidising these people's return to the empire. The Porte asked for feedback from consulates in Brussels, Vienna, and Berlin, among others, about funding the project. Though all the consulates supported the idea, each added that its own finances were too depleted to take on the expense. Without sufficient financial resources, the empire abandoned the idea except in very urgent cases.[431] Instead, as already mentioned, the empire opted to collect funds from stranded Ottomans' bondsmen and sought instead to stop the source of emigration and thus avoid extraordinary costs.

From cases in the Ottoman Archives, it can be understood that the Department of Police in İstanbul sought to strictly implement this new legislation. [432] One Krikor Manon, a former Ottoman citizen who had adopted US citizenship, appealed to be exempt from the extraordinary taxes levied on Ottoman traders. But since he was a former Ottoman, his request for discounted taxes was rejected.[433] By contrast, some Ottoman citizens living in the United States were allowed to move their families there as long as they annulled their Ottoman citizenship.

Even during this period, however, antagonism between the various governorships in Greater Syria had not ended, obstructing the effective implementation of the new rules. For instance, in January 1894, Beirut declared that it had done its best to curb emigration by imprisoning boatmen who facilitated emigration from there. But those most responsible for the problem, according to this dispatch, were the police officers in Mount Lebanon[434]; in

[431] BOA, BEO, 735_55099, 13.Ş.1313, 29.01.1896.
[432] Here is one example, three people who went to the USA with passport did not allowed to enter the Ottoman Empire. BOA, ZB. 407_78, 28.Ts.1318, 11.12.1902.
[433] BOA, DH.MKT. 170_16,02.Za.1311, 07.05.1894.
[434] BOA, DH.MKT, 177_28, 25.Ca.1311, 04.12.1893.

1895, the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem joined in accusing Mount Lebanon of facilitating illegal emigration.[435]

Despite all the new measures, then, numerous Ottomans still considered emigration their sole option for survival, and *simsar*s still saw it as a profitable enterprise; the new legislation made little impact.[436] In fact, the number of Ottomans who annulled their citizenship grew to alarming heights: impressive lists of these names were sent to the Porte from various provinces.[437]

Furthermore, the new legislation had not solved the problem of border control, particularly because French companies backed by French representatives still held sway. An Ottoman record from October 1894 shows that police stopped a French ship for investigation, having received intelligence that the ship was carrying Lebanese immigrants. When the ship's crew resisted, the police officers appealed to the French consulate to intervene. But the ship simply left the area before the investigation could be completed[438], leading the İstanbul government to seek to bar French-flagged ships altogether from docking in Mount Lebanon. [439]

In time, it became clear that this extensive new legislation would likely never work. To add to the problems already outlined, new political difficulties emerged as the population of Ottomans in the United States increased. Instead of subsiding, anti-Ottoman propaganda issued by Ottoman-Arab immigrants in that country gained momentum. Immediately after the new legislation was announced, the anti-Ottoman-Arab lobby in the

[435] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.119, 04.05.1895.
[436] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu.63 27.06.1894.
[437] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 272_93, 07.B.1326, 05.08.1905.
[438] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 1_37, nu. 86-108, no date.
[439] BOA, DH.MKT, 321_7, nu.4, 16.B.1312, 13.01.1895.

United States responded to the Porte's challenge regarding citizenship. The opposition Arab journal *Kevkeb-i America* (American moon) was one of numerous Arab American journals that encouraged members of the Ottoman community in the United States to voluntarily annul their Ottoman citizenship. One writer for this journal, Necip Erbili, explicitly called on Arabs residing in the States to obtain American citizenship because of the advantages it provided. Predictably, the empire was not pleased by this counterchallenge from the US Arab community, for it had aimed to use Ottoman citizenship as leverage to slow emigration and the misuse of alternative citizenships.[440]

By the second half of the 1890s, İstanbul had received word that the 'harmful activities' of enemies to the empire in the United States were not limited to propaganda but had transformed into separatist activity. Some agencies learned that American Lebanese had hidden weapons in their cabins aboard ships and smuggled them into Ottoman territory to support terrorist activities and separatist uprisings. In April 1896, a Lebanese man named Bahos was arrested for having a revolver in his cabin upon re-entering Lebanon.[441] The same year, police recorded that another revolver had been hidden in a large piece of bread in a presumed attempt to smuggle the weapon into imperial territory. Both cases alarmed local police officers, who considered such smuggling an indication that separatist Arab groups were arming themselves.[442]

According to reports, anti-Ottoman activities emerged among Ottoman Muslims living in the United States, as well. One report mentions that Muslim factory workers in that country had received jobs from an Armenian named Naçkiyan, who, according to

[440] BOA, BEO, 189_14119, 10.L.1310, 27.04.1893.
[441] BOA, BEO, 768_57569, 07.Za.1313, 20.04.1896.
[442] BOA, I.HUS.. 46_82, 02.Za.1313, 15.04.1896, and M.V., 87_23, 02.Za.1313, 15.04.1896.

intelligence, had attempted to recruit Muslims to support anti-Ottoman propaganda, if not also to act against the empire. Reports of such activity prompted Porte agents to request that the Ottoman embassy in New York conduct a survey of Muslim immigrants already in the country to determine whether they posed any threat to imperial interests.[443]

To facilitate illegal returns to Ottoman territory, new methods of circumventing the law emerged. Identification documents were of particular interest to Ottoman consulates in the United States, since Ottoman-Arab immigrants to America often adopted new names there or changed their names to approximate Western versions.[444] These individuals would be harder to recognise if they attempted to re-enter the empire, so the Ottoman government ordered that consular officials report these people. Forged passports were also common in Ottoman migration cases. In June 1895, the Ottoman consul in Marseille reported that the number of emigrants to Europe recorded by Ottoman officers significantly exceeded that of arrivals. To explain the discrepancy, he proposed that emigrants had used fake passports.[445] To cope with shifting and even false identities, In 15 July 1905, the Ottoman government established the General Population Bureau to confirm that passengers from abroad with new names were the people they claimed to be.[446] Also in response to this development, new techniques were introduced to control emigration, such as the empire's 1905 declaration that photographs be taken of all emigrants who cancelled their citizenship by leaving so that they could be easily recognised should they attempt to re-enter Ottoman territory. [447]

[443] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, nu.5, 22.01.1896.
[444] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.01.1896. Here Badros to Petros, Yunus to John or James, Mustafa Mahmut to Maison.
[445] BOA, DH.MKT, 398_69, nu.1, 23.M.1313, 16.07.1895.
[446] BOA, A.MTZ.CL, 3_24, 5.4.1902.
[447] BOA. DH.TMIK.M.. 201_55, 12.Ca.1323, 15.07.1905.

Though the main purpose of curbing emigration—avoiding shortages in military conscripts and foodstuffs—still appeared on the agenda during this new phase, the commander in chief of the Ottoman army (*serasker*) pointed out that the initial measures seemed to be proving insufficient, if not useless. He also stated that the number of young army recruits had fallen below the predicted level because young Ottomans were, despite everything, departing for countries across the Atlantic. To respond to the situation, he suggested arresting these young people, repatriating them, and sending them to military camp as soon as they arrived in their home villages. The commander's report was considered, and ultimately, it was understood that the venality of local officers was a central problem. To stop bribery, two inspectors—not from the bureaucracy but from the military—were appointed to investigate bribery in Syria, as well as the implementation of the new rules governing emigration in the region. In this case, the central administration again advised that local authorities 'do whatever is required.'[448]

But the problem with conscription numbers was not limited to Ottoman 'escapees' and emigrants remaining in the United States. Ottoman legal proceedings could not be brought regarding the conscription of Ottoman youth in that country because many of these young people were not registered in their home countries' censuses. Moreover, Ottoman officials in İstanbul suspected that the age of some immigrants in the United States had been recorded incorrectly because the two countries used different calendar systems. When the Porte ordered the Mutasarrifate of Mount Lebanon to solve the problem, [449] the latter argued that there were no problems of registration and that these people had signed a bail-

[448] BOA, DH.MKT, 398_69, nu.3, 23.M.1313, 16.07.1895 and BOA, BEO, 854_64024, 13.Ca.1314, 19.11.1896.
[449] BOA, Ş.D, 2292_19, nu.1, 05.S.1319, 24.05.1901.

bond bill and a note indicating that they would not adopt US citizenship. If they did become US citizens and thereby shirked military service, then their bills would be invalidated by the government.[450]

The Ottoman administration also continued its struggle with travel agencies and *simsar*s. In December 1896 the sultanate sent a dispatch to local governors stating that an agency had published a brochure in Arabic encouraging the emigration of Lebanese citizens from the Mount, even though the sultanate had explicitly prohibited this. In response, officers were ordered to redouble their efforts to prevent such activity.[451] In July 1896, the empire re-emphasized with a declaration that anyone who facilitated the emigration movement would be punished severely.[452]

Preserving the rights of Ottomans abroad was another issue on the agenda that, for Ottoman bureaucrats, was becoming increasingly problematic. If their problems remained unresolved, there was a risk that these 'desperate Ottomans' stranded abroad would appeal to the French government, as one piece of intelligence from Beirut illustrates. According to Beirut officials, the governor of the Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate had written French authorities requesting help for Lebanese people in the United States. The Porte wanted to investigate and verify this intelligence; if this was indeed the case, the Ottoman administration would allow (perhaps even ask) France to help these Lebanese.[453]

The empire also recommended that more-significant measures be taken to stop Ottomans from circumventing the rules on the books. The Ottoman government had noted that some emigrants attempting to reach the United States left Ottoman territory as workers

[450] BOA, Ş.D, 2292_19, nu.3, 05.S.1319, 24.05.1901.
[451] BOA, DH.MKT, 2078_43, 29.B.1314, 03.01.1897.
[452] BOA, Ş.D., 2286_9, 24.C.1314, 30.11.1896.
[453] BOA, I.MTZ.CL, 5_264, 25.L.1320, 25.01.1903.

bound for Russia, Greece, or other neighbouring countries to which emigration was allowed. The Porte declared that before these people were issued a passport, they must sign a declaration stating that they would return to the empire after finishing their work in the country specified and not continue on to North America.[454] In enforcing this measure, the Ministry of the Interior collected photographs of emigrants bound for Russia and the United States who had cancelled their Ottoman citizenship so that they could be recognised should they attempt to return.[455]

Overall, new legislation and İstanbul's redoubled endeavours to regulate emigration were ineffectual. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman sultanate was no longer able to produce new policies to address emigration, for its regime was threatened by international political affairs and by domestic opposition alike. The central administration ultimately collapsed during the Young Turk Revolution, in 1908.

IV

The Liberalisation of Emigration, 1908–1912

Until 1908, the Ottoman approach towards emigration varied only in terms of methodology and the specific regulation of movement; the empire's primary stance did not change fundamentally. The real shift in migration policy emerged directly after the Constitutional Revolution: the changed politics surrounding the issue represented just one part of an overall restructuring of every aspect of the empire prompted by the Young Turk Revolution. Inspired by the French Revolution, this revolution promised equality, liberty,

[454] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 258_33, 01.Za.1321, 19.01.1904.
[455] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 272_18, 04.C.1326, 04.07.1908.

and fraternity to all ethnic and religious groups in the empire and aimed to sweep away the autocratic attitudes of the Ottomans' *ancien régime*.

The liberal political atmosphere created by the leading Union and Progress Party (UPP) and its sympathisers developed more-liberal migration policies that provided expanded freedom of movement. Upon coming into power, the UPP declared that all constraints on obtaining passports and passage receipts had been repealed. From then on, showing one's Ottoman identification card (*tezkire-i Osmani*) was sufficient documentation for crossing borders.[456]

Despite its liberal stance towards emigration, the revolutionary government still considered population loss a problem. At this point, the new regime opted to blame the previous one's despotic attitudes, which had failed to offer certain liberties to Ottomans. According to the revolutionaries, along with suffocating political conditions and continuously poor economic conditions, these emigration policies had actually discouraged Ottomans from staying in the empire. From the revolutionaries' perspective, the new liberal regime could call upon the economic well-being of immigrants in the United States and elsewhere, summoning these expatriates to return, now that the old regime had been toppled. In light of this aim, the new government attempted to develop policies that would draw Ottomans in the Americas back to their homeland.

The first concrete plan put forward by emigrants sympathetic to the revolutionaries was created by Y. Antony, an early immigrant to the United States. In 18 July 1911, He sent a dispatch to the Young Turk government that proposed the return of four hundred thousand Ottoman citizens of various backgrounds to the empire. According to his

[456] BOA, DH.MKT, 2871_78, 21.C.1327, 10.07.1909.

observations, if the new Ottoman government could subsidise travel expenses, most of these Ottomans would be keen to return. Antony's report argued that the empire would benefit from returnees who had gained skills and money abroad that they could implement and invest upon moving back home.[457]

Interestingly enough, a very similar proposal was voiced the same year by another Ottoman volunteer observer in the United States, one A. Akuni. Like Anthony, Akuni estimated that four hundred thousand Ottomans in the United States could not or would not return home because of the cost. He, too, argued that the empire would greatly benefit from returnees in terms of both political and economic contributions. For this reason, Akuni wrote, 'the Empire should re-open its doors to its non-Muslim subjects.' [458]

In contrast to the discourse common in the pre-revolutionary period, in articulating the causes of Ottoman emigrations, Akuni's writing underlined the political oppression of the despotic regime and pointed out that the UPP should prove that theirs had been a worthwhile revolution by enabling former citizens of the empire to return home. His report also indicated the great political expectations held by potential returnees. While observing Ottoman communities in the United States, Akuni had noticed that Kurdish and Armenian people often coexisted peacefully; accordingly, he contended, Ottomans living abroad had been trained well by American liberal and democratic thought in residing with people of different religious and ethnic origins. These expatriate Ottomans' experiences 'living together peacefully' within religiously and ethnically diverse Ottoman communities in the

[457] BOA, BEO, 3916_293698, 21.B.1329, 18.07.1911.
[458] BOA, HR.SYS., 70_30, 17.08.1911, No information about his occupation and position in the USA can be derived about this person.

United States might therefore prove beneficial to the political unity of the new empire, as long as its leaders could successfully cultivate such thinking.

At home, some UPP members considered it a prudent undertaking to cover the expenditures of returning Ottoman Christians with funds from the imperial budget. The logic was that the contributions returning Ottoman-Arab immigrants would make to the peaceful coexistence of different religious and ethnic groups would more than repay the cost of transporting them *en masse* back to the empire. According to UPP members, the contemporary political conditions of the empire created by the old regime were so unstable that many different ethnic and religious groups were keen to split from the imperial umbrella. To obviate the risk of a revival among such separatist movements, these UPP members suggested making use of the Ottoman American experience.

Therefore, the new administration considered that contracts could be extended to travel agencies, licensing the company that could charge the least to bring the most Ottomans home. In support, the Ottoman government could recommend that these emigrants be encouraged to return and that embassies in the United States be delegated the responsibility of persuading them to do so. At the same time, the government could allocate settlements for returnees and find for them either good jobs or arable land. For these tasks, an immigration commission could be established and charged with the responsibility of receiving and resettling returnees in the safest way possible. Underlying these schemes was the hope that the economic contributions of returnees would be significant as significant as their cultural ones. Akuni had underlined that owing to the emigration of young Ottoman men, in some villages the male population had dropped significantly. The remaining

women and elderly were struggling and often failing to produce enough to meet their needs.[459]

However, the government's response to these suggestions was realistic and unsurprising. Although the UPP acknowledged that the requests and proposals were not unreasonable, it declared that the state budget simply could not cover the costs of transporting emigrant Ottomans, much less provide them with housing in imperial territory. In fact, the prime minister of the empire (*sadrazam*) himself accused Akuni of spinning yarns without having sufficient information about the empire's economic conditions to justifiably recommend that it subsidise the return of four to five hundred thousand Ottomans to their villages and provide them with shelter, jobs, and land.[460] Still, Ottoman governors promised to aid Ottomans abroad who wanted to return home, despite limits to their budgets. In effect, response of the new Ottoman government underscores that even though the imperial mentality had been transformed with the revolution, since structural problems in the empire persisted, thereby nothing could be done about the immigration question.[461]

Nevertheless, success stories about Ottomans in the United States, which had become more or less legends in many parts of the empire, whetted the appetites of the new authorities and played an important role in changing their stance on facilitating emigrants' return. Another Ottoman observer in the United States named Luis Sabuncuyan recorded that an Ottoman charwomen in that country had quickly improved her position, moving into the foodstuffs market. Despite humble beginnings cooking filo pastry in her home on

[459] BOA, HR.SYS., 70_30, 17.08.1911.
[460] BOA, HR. SYS., 70_30, 17.08.1911, nu.2.
[461] BOA, BEO, 3916_293698, 21.B.1329, 18.07.1911.

her days off and selling it to neighbours, she soon advanced by establishing a small workshop. In time, this Lebanese entrepreneur appealed for privileges from her county of residence. Sabuncuyan ultimately noted that on the day of his writing, 22 January 1909, this woman was currently a wealthy filo-pastry producer and the owner of multiple pastry outlets.

Sabuncuyan went on to report the success of other Lebanese who had immigrated to the United States to work as unskilled labourers and then profited as they relocated from county to county. After a few years, these workers returned to their villages in Ottoman lands, where they constructed buildings, earned substantial revenue, and could hire many workers. Specifically, he wrote about four men from the small village of Bechara, Lebanon, who worked in the United States for four years, made the equivalent of four thousand Ottoman lira, and then returned home to erect sizable houses in the villages where their old homes had stood. With such buildings, Sabuncuyan writes, these Ottomans had contributed not only to the development of once-backward villages but also to the state budget by paying taxes on their construction and hiring. The account therefore proposes that the revolutionary government bring similar people back to Ottoman territory whether they had become American citizens or not. To this end, Sabuncuyan advised, the Ottoman government should immediately appoint a representative familiar with Arabic whose specific job would be to facilitate the return of people like.[462]

Yet in short, the expectations held by revolutionaries were not met during this period. On the contrary—and ironically enough—emigration out of the empire during this period reached unprecedented heights. The failure of the UPP regime to bring Ottomans

[462] BOA, Y.PRK.TKM, 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909.

back home stemmed from the fact that even though political stability and relative peace were achieved, the new regime still could not provide the promised economic well-being that would bring Ottoman-Arab immigrants back or even stop further emigration from occurring. This picture itself fortifies the main argument this thesis has emphasised from the beginning: Ottoman emigrants left for and remained in the Americas not for political but for their economic reasons.

V

The Nationalistic Backlash and the War, 1912–1918

During the Balkan Wars, the defeat of Ottoman troops ushered in the end of Ottoman liberalism in terms of both political action and emigration policy. With this unexpected military failure, the empire's borders in the West receded to Anatolia and, in a certain sense, no longer delineated an empire at all. The former liberal members of the UPP became increasingly nationalist and thus hostile to non-Turks residing in Turkey.

The changing political landscape was echoed in the UPP's revised migration policies. After the revolution and amidst the relief of having removed the tyrannical sultan, revolutionaries embraced a brand of Ottomanism that defended the rights of each Ottoman regardless of ethnic or religious identity, endorsing unions of different groups within an empire. The liberal attitude towards emigration was the product of this idealism. However, by the end of the wars and facing significant loss of territory, such ideology-based optimism vanished. Not only did the administration walk back the universalist liberal approach the revolutionary government had taken to emigration, but it also implemented even more-restrictive, nationalist policies that sought to control the movement of people by

force. Ironically, wartime conditions once again produced an urgent need for military manpower—a need that realised precisely those fears the old regime had struggled with all along. This was the prime factor motivating the shift towards policy that resembled something from the era of Sultan Abdülhamid II.

The old agenda therefore once again came to the fore, as did the struggle against 'harmful' immigrant publications originating in the United States. A report from the Ottoman consul general in Boston, Avram Ferhim, is a good example of the concern Ottoman bureaucrats expressed at 14 November 1914. After supplying nearly panoramic information about the Ottoman community in the United States—especially regarding their political and philanthropic foundations and other institutions—Ferhim pointed out that during the Balkan Wars, the Albanian community in New York had propagated the idea of an independent Albania. Moreover, the Panhellenic Union in Boston had sent volunteer soldiers to fight against the Turks, as well as arms and cash to be used in the wars.[463] Ferhim's report also reveals that Muslim and Turkish communities, in contrast, were not stable enough to form unions or any other institutions to support their place in American society. In fact, Ferhim asserted, these groups' contribution to their homeland did not extend beyond the cash endowments they sent via the Red Crescent. To reverse this trend and to mobilise the Muslim Turkish community, Ferhim ultimately requested more funding for the consulate in Boston from the central governement.

In light of intelligence from various sources, the Porte recognised the threat posed by journals and magazines that were produced by Ottoman-Arab immigrants in the United States and imported to Syria and Lebanon. In response, the revolutionary government

[463] BOA, HR.SYS.2799_42, 14.11.1914.

reintroduced the censorship of these publications, prohibited their import, and even decided to collect unwanted issues of various magazines published in the States before they could reach Ottoman consumers at home.[464]

Local governors were still accusing each other of irresponsibility even when World War I broke out, in 1914. One accusation came from the Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate, which specifically reported that residents who could not leave the Mount had tried to escape by crossing into Beirut.[465] Ottoman local governments, still could not provide detailed numbers for out-migration each year during the warfare; instead, they could only estimate that roughly four thousand to five thousand people had reached the United States alone, by ways legal or illegal.[466] In fact, the annual estimations the central government did provide (for a limited number of years) were the estimations of the Ottoman consuls general in the Americas, that is, generally merely quoted estimates made by the destination country.

The Young Turk Revolution had precipitated unprecedented emigration from the Ottoman realm, but World War I defined the period during which policies restricting people's mobility reached their peak. Immediately after the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of Germany, Ottomans' movements to foreign countries stopped altogether. In addition, the capitulation rights of foreigners in Ottoman territories were unilaterally lifted, and the empire declared that existing international laws would be enforced in cases of questionable citizenship.[467]

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[464] For the prohibition of the entrance of American-Arab journals see Chapter 6 and 7.
[465] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 30.05.1903.
[466] BOA, BEO, 2073_155418, nu.1, 22.S.1321, 30.05.1903.
[467] BOA, DH.HMŞ, 30_131, 22.Ş.1333, 05.07.1915.

By abolishing economic privileges for the foreigners in the Ottoman territory, the Empire completely eliminated an important effect of out-migration: no returnees would be able to misuse their new nationality. However, under wartime conditions, the Ottoman government also had to be more attentive to stopping the emigration of youth, given the sharp need for military recruits—especially because avoiding service and military desertion, as can be expected, only increased in times of conflict. One Ottoman administrator was right to worry about emigration from Lebanon; while World War I raged, 7,000 young men who would soon turn eighteen years old were expected to be recruited by the military, but reports reveal that only 1,500 actually were; the rest deserted before they could be enlisted.[468]

The Ottoman Archives show that during wartime, some Ottoman youth claimed to be citizens of a foreign country in order to avoid military service; others fabricated fake identities and documentation for the same purpose.[469] Those caught committing these acts were subject to the Ottoman government's newly heightened punishment and sentenced to three years in prison.[470] After this law was enacted, claims to foreign citizenship were not considered unless they could be clearly proven.[471] If escaping military conscription on legal grounds was not possible, some Ottoman men tried to flee to Mount Lebanon, where compulsory military service had not been implemented owing to the Mutasarrifate's semi-independent status. The minister of Interior indicated that because the houses in Mount Lebanon were so close to those in Beirut, it was nearly impossible to control crossings.

[468] BOA, A.MTZ.CL 7_286, POST 1904 file.
[469] BOA, DH.EUM.ECB, 14_12, 14.M.1336, 31.10.1917, cited in İbahim Serbestoğlu, Osmanlı Kimdir?...,.82.
[470] BOA, DH.EUM.ECB, 12_54, 29.L.1335, 18.08.1917 and BOA, DH.UMVM, 124_148, 08.N.1336, 09.06.1918.
[471] BOA, DH.EUM.ECB, 16_51, 29.B.1336, 10.05.1918 cited in İbrahim Serbestoğlu, Osmanlı Kimdir?...,82-83.

People escaping from Beirut to Lebanon at night could not be caught given the proximity of the two areas. As an antidote, the minister suggested to the government to ask the Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate for the extradition of these fugitives, adding that it was the Mount's responsibility to grant it, according to Article 13 of the 1864 *Règlement Organique*.[472]

Gossip about the applications some Christian youth submitted for voluntary enlistment in the French army gave the empire reason to tighten precautions even more severely. The Mutasarrifate in Lebanon reported on 1 August 1914 the trend of Christians being recruited by the French.[473] After a long investigation, it became apparent that applications to the French military had not occurred in significant numbers but were limited to a few boys who had suggested that the French consulate would recruit soldiers in exchange for money.[474] Not long afterwards, emigration from Mount Lebanon and other Syrian ports became completely impossible, as the Allied Forces soon blockaded these ports with their navies.

VI

Conclusion

Ottoman policies towards emigrations were directly shaped by political and social agendas at any given time, though all told, the empire could not develop well-defined policies to govern the phenomenon. The Ottoman government began by attempting to stop emigration by force, but when authorities realised that this method was ineffectual, they tried to regularise emigration through legislative means. For only a brief period, from 1909 to

[472] BOA, A.MTZ.CL 7_286, 4.Z.1332, 24.10.1914, nu.5.
[473] BOA, A.MTZ.CL 7_286, 4.Z.1332, 24.10.1914, nu.6,7.
[474] BOA, A.MTZ.CL 7_286, 4.Z.1332, 24.10.1914, nu.12 and 15.

1912, did the empire hope to end emigration by granting its subjects freedom of movement. Though short in terms of the long history of Ottoman immigration to the Americas (and particularly to the USA), this period saw the largest flow of out-migration yet; hence the importance of analysing it in detail. When liberalism failed just a few years after the Young Turk Revolution because of the Balkan Wars, the empire reverted to coercion in an attempt to halt emigration.

Dramatically different policies were implemented over time, all with the aim of stopping emigration and benefitting the empire, but these endeavours consistently failed—for several reasons. First, since the empire had been preoccupied with what it considered more pressing matters in the late nineteenth century, it was unprepared and unequipped to develop a well-designed, internally consistent migration and population policy. Laws and regulations and their local enforcement were too weak to meet the expectations set out by the Porte, while stopgap orders and decrees issued to solve immediate problems were never able to cure the epidemic of Ottoman out-migration occurring before the empire's eyes. Representative of this dynamic are the dispatches sent to local governors ordering officials to 'do whatever is required' but providing no specific directions for curbing emigration, either in the moment or in the future.

Second, the empire was not strong enough to control emigration either economically or politically. It could neither finance local police forces to cope with illegal emigration nor provide the technical equipment (including ships and security tools) and officers needed to enforce its policies. For this reason, 'illegality' existed only in official records: in reality—that is, when it came to enforcement—this widespread emigration was not generally considered to be criminal. At the same time, the Porte failed to motivate local

governors in Lebanon and Syria to take significant measures against the outflow of people from those areas. Instead of taking responsibility for conditions in their regions, the local administrators blamed one another, right up to the eve of the First World War. Furthermore, the Porte—again weak in terms of enforcement—could not stop the opportunistic broker activity that was stimulating emigration, nor could it curb the bribery and corruption even among its own local officials that fostered clandestine migration.

It seems, however, that the most important reason behind the empire's failure was the Ottoman government's general outlook on emigration, which conflicted with the reality of the global world order described in chapter 1, the zeitgeist of globalisation in the nineteenth century enabled people to learn more about work opportunities in the New World that had theretofore been unknown and inaccessible to them. This new world order allowed people to enter the Americas with limited restrictions, if not altogether freely. Passports and visas were rarely required, and the shipping industry was accessible and competitive. In sum, the conditions favouring globalisation were strong enough to outpace the empire's efforts to sustain itself and retain its population.

CHAPTER 6

Ottoman Arabs in Argentina: The Oscillation between Remaining Peddler and Becoming Peasant

The first Ottoman Arabs arrived in the late nineteenth the century in Argentina, a country whose history and society had been shaped by immigrations, just as can be said of many other American countries. This chapter analyses the process of the Ottoman arrival in Argentina and the social and economic integration of the Ottoman immigrants into the host society in four sections. The first section presents a general overview of the nineteenth-century population history of Argentina and its migration policies. Section II scrutinises the social and economic integration of Ottoman Arabs into Argentinean society, while the following section analyses the outcome of the confrontation between Ottoman immigrants and Argentinean society and politics. Here, the challenges between the expectations liberal elites had of immigrants, on one hand, and the actual outcome of Ottoman immigration, on the other, constitute the central point of analysis. The last two sections are devoted to Ottoman-Argentina relations at state levels. This section also presents the endeavour of the Ottoman Empire to facilitate economic integration into the host society based on Ottoman archival sources.

I

An Overview of Argentinean Immigration History: Great Expectations: Development and Race

In the very early history of Argentina, population always had a central place in terms of the country's economy, policy, and sociology. The mass population movements to this country

from the Old World started after the Spanish invasion. The flow of emigration in terms of numbers was great, but apart from slave transmission from Africa, there was almost no immigration because the Spanish Empire prohibited it for non-Spaniards. Even natives of Spain had to acquire a special licence to go to America.

Argentina opened its gates to foreigners only after the declaration of its independence. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Argentina—just like all the other Latin American countries except Cuba and Puerto Rico—proclaimed its independence from Spain through a national struggle led by General José de San Martin, often known as *El Liberator*.[475] The new époque opened for the country with rapid economic and social improvement, mostly conducted by the liberal ruling elites.[476]

Just as the other Latin American governments established following independence, Argentinean successor ruling elites demonstrated radically different attitudes from that of Spain towards non-Iberian immigration.[477] In 1816, the year of independence, and afterwards, numerous laws and decrees were enacted by governments that granted to the foreign-born rights equal to those of the natives. By encouraging the immigration of foreign people, the new ruling elites planned to overcome the problem of labour shortage, which had appeared as a significant problem especially after the abrogation of slavery in 1854.[478]

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[475] For the proclamation processes of Argentina see Arthur Preston Whitaker, *Argentina*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), chapter II.
[476] Robert Harney, *Liberators: Latin America's Struggle for Independence, 181 0–1830*(New York: Overlook Press, 2000), 211.
[477] Magnus Mörner and Harold Sims, *Adventurers and Proletarians: The Story of Migrants in Latin America*, (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), 20.
[478] In fact, in the colonial period, the need for labour was mostly met through the slavery system, however, by beginning from the mid-nineteenth century, the slavery system could no longer provide sufficient manpower since the number of slaves coming from Africa began to decrease gradually. Looking at the short life

The declaration of a constitution in 1853 opened a new era for foreign immigration to Argentina. It was inspired by the ideas of Argentinean liberal philosophers of the time, especially Juan Alberdi, who declared the necessity of populating Argentina, with his famous dictum "to govern is to populate." This slogan was taken up by the liberal rulers who followed.[479] The preamble of the constitution stated some goals—namely, justice, peace, welfare, and liberty—that were promised to all people in the world who wish to dwell on Argentinean territory. Article 25 of the constitution makes the aim of the state clearer:

> The Federal Government will promote European immigration; and it will not restrict, limit or burden with some tax the entry of foreigners into the Argentine territory who intend to work the land, to improve the industries, and to introduce and teach the arts and sciences.[480]

Despite these crucial attempts at legislation, however, and despite the rulers' great motivation to welcome productive immigrants, immigration to Argentina did not reach appreciable levels until the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[481] From the proclamation of independence in 1816 until 1853, immigration to Argentina was sporadic and involved

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expectancy of slaves and their low rate of reproduction, it was not hard for rulers to foresee that slavery, as an institution, would doomed in the long run. What is more, the existence of the slavery system constituted a great challenge to the ideological standpoints of the new liberal ruling elites in Argentina. For *liberator*s who were inspired by the philosophy of French revolution, it was not easy to legitimize the existence of slavery. Thus the authorities hastened to abrogate slavery and introduce a new system in its place. At this point, the immigration issue became the most convenient remedy to overcome the problem of shortage of manpower, and therefore it moved to the top of the Argentinean political agenda. Ibid., 26.

[479] Samuel L. Baily *The Italians and the Development of Organized Labor in Argentina, Brazil, and the United States, 1880–1914*, (New Brunswick, N.J: Latin American Institute, Rutgers University, 1971), 58

[480] Argentine Constitution of 1853, Article:25 cited in Jorge Bestene "Discurso y Política Migratoria en la Argentina de la Gran Inmigración. Juan E. Alsina y los Inmigrantes "turcos,"" *Temas de África y Asia*, no.2, (February, 1993), 179.

[481] Maurice R. Davie, *World Immigration: With Special Reference to the United States*, (New York: Macmillan, 1936), 448.

relatively small numbers of people. Between 1853 and 1870 immigration slightly increased, but it did not reach the level desired by the government.

The reason behind this failure can be traced to political disturbances in Argentina at that time. As a matter of fact, the independence from Spain declared in July 1816 did not introduce unity to Argentina. Political tensions among various provinces gave birth to civil war between 1828 and 1829. After the war, Juan Manuel de Rosas[482] took control of the entire country, and his dictatorship lasted until 1851. Still, even during his dictatorship political and social unity and consolidation were not achieved.[483] Between 1852 and 1861, occasional outbreaks of hostilities between Buenos Aires and neighbouring provinces occurred. According to Alejandro E. Bunge and Carlos Mata, it was this political instability in these decades that deterred many potential Europeans from immigrating to Argentina.[484] In fact, the massive flow of immigration to Argentina could begin only in the early 1870s, with the establishment of sustainable internal peace. By that decade, Argentinean governments, just like other governments of the New World, were making the immigration issue a high national priority again.

The economic achievement of Argentina and its success in attracting population reached their zenith during the 1880s, when an elite group called the "Generation of '80" (Generación del '80) dominated Argentinean political life until 1912. A distinguished Latin American historian, Gino Germani, has described this oligarchy as "a conservative liberal group, which generated political stability and encouraged immigration, cultural

[482] Juan Manuel de Rosas (born in 1793, died in 1877): An Argentinean politician and military leader who governed Buenos Aires between 1835 and 1852 with dictatorship.
[483] Aaron V. Cicourel, *Theory and Method in a Study of Argentine Fertility* (New York: Wiley, 1974), 29.
[484] Alejandro E. Bunge and Carlos Garcia Mata, "Argentina," In, *International Migrations II*, ed. by Walter F. Wilcox and Imre Ferenczi, (New York: International Bureau of Economic Research, 1929), 148.

development, industrialisation, public work—in short, oligarchy fostered many of the process for which the label *modernization* has been used."[485] The rulers of the Generation of '80 devoted themselves to transforming Argentina from what they considered to be a backward Hispanic country into a modern European one,[486] and to a large extent they achieved this. Taking into consideration the significant economic and social development that took place in the three decades before the First World War, Argentinean historians dubbed the period *la belle époque*.[487]

In this period, in implementing liberal immigration policies, the Argentinean governments had two important objectives: the first was to fulfil the great need for labour in agriculture, and the second was to "whiten" the race of Argentinean society through mixture with "superior" European blood.[488]

From the ruling elite's point of view, economic development needed to be achieved via prosperity in agriculture above all else. In the first place, Argentina promoted immigration to populate its empty grassland and to provide a labour force, which was considered essential for agricultural development.[489] In the eyes of the rulers, the most important effort in agricultural development had to be devoted to the Pampas,[490] long thought of as Argentina's most important natural resource. But

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[485] Gino Germani, *Política Y Sociedad En Una Época De Transición: De La Sociedad Tradicional a La Sociedad De Masas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Paidos, 1962), cited in Aaron V. Cicourel, *Theory and Method…*, 30.
[486] Samuel L. Baily, *The Italians and the Development …,*57.
[487] Arthur Preston Whitaker, *Argentina…*, 42.
[488] Both objectives were also adopted by many other Latin American countries particularly by Brazil and Chile. For Brazil see Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).
[489] Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies ...,132.
[490] The Pampas (in *Quechua* language it means plain) is the name of the vast and fertile territory which is very much suitable for agricultural production, and extends towards the lowlands and include the Argentinean provinces of Buenos Aires, La Pampa, Santa Fe, and Cordova, most of Uruguay and some parts of Brazil.

However, it was not easy to populate the agricultural regions because the federal government was unable to control the vast region of Pampas politically. Indeed, the Pampas was mostly associated with a sort of cowboy culture, a nomadic lifestyle that was called *gaucho*. The people of this culture, themselves called *gauchos*, were the main inhabitants of Pampas, and they mostly sustained themselves by slaughtering wild cattle. In the late nineteenth century, because the gauchos feared the elimination of their traditional lifestyle, they resisted the federal government's policy of populating the Pampas with Europeans.[491] Many of early Italian and Spanish immigrants were killed by gauchos.[492]

In combination with a concern for meeting the labour shortage, the "whitening" project also prompted Argentinean governments to pursue liberal immigration policies. In the late nineteenth century, Argentinean intellectuals such as José Ramos Mejia, Victor Mercente, and Carlos Bunge, who were very much inspired by social Darwinism and contemporary race theories, believed the world's races existed in a natural hierarchy. From their point of view, the project of making Argentina a modern Western state could be achieved only when society's ethnic composition was made superior. In other words, according to them, Argentina could not be developed unless its ethnicity became white.[493]

At this point, it is worth mentioning that the liberal group governing Argentina in this period consisted mostly of *criollos* (or *creoles*), individuals of Spanish parentage who had been born in Argentina. *Criollos* were said to occupy the second stratum of Argentina's multi-ethnic society at the time and were ordered under a strict hierarchy based

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Until the late nineteenth century, the Pampas was not used efficiently and remained a fertile but dormant region.

[491] Arthur Preston Whitaker, *Argentina…*, 51–52.

[492] Carl E. Solberg, Peopling the Prairies ...,146.

[493] Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies ...,133.

what was essentially a caste system. At the top of this hierarchy was a group of people called *peninsulares*, who had been born in Spain and come to Argentina. Although *criollos* were of the same ethnic group as *peninsulares*, they had very limited rights and power in comparison. It was this inequality that incited the Argentine independence war, during which the *criollos* overcame the *peninsulares*.[494]

Interestingly enough, the *criollos* who struggled against discrimination at the beginning of the nineteenth century themselves applied racist policies in the last quarter of the century against other racial groups in Argentina, which constituted the majority of Argentinean society—namely, *mestizos* (people of mixed Spanish and Amerindian ancestry), *mullatos* (those of mixed Spanish and black ancestry), Amerindians, *zambos* (of mixed Amerindian and black ancestry), and descendants of black Africans (*negros*).[495] The *criollo* positivist intellectuals and policy makers planned to import white people of "superior" race and to elevate the racial quality of Argentinean society through the miscegenation of the imported white races with the native ones.

To achieve its principal goals, the federal government of Argentina attempted to make more radical and long-lasting legislative arrangements and to spend more money from the state budget on improving the immigration flow to Argentina.[496] The first law in this era dealing with immigration policies was *Ley de 817* (also known as *Ley Avellaneda*) concerning immigration and colonisation, enacted in 1876. This law particularly favoured

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[494] Benedict Anderson very successfully explain the psychology behind the struggle of creoles against peninsulas for independence saying that "born in the Americas, he could not be a true Spaniard; ergo born in Spain the peninsular could not be a true American" see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* (London: Verso, 2006), 58.
[495] Aline Helg, "Race in Argentina and Cuba 1880–1930: Theory, Policies and Popular Reaction" In *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870–1940*, ed. Richard Graham, Thomas E. Skidmore, Aline Helg, and Alan Knight. *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870–1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 1–4
[496] Magnus Mörner and Harold Sims, *Adventurers and Proletarians…*, 40

the white immigration movement but did not close the doors to people in other regions of the world. The legislation also provided for the establishment of employment immigration bureaus, at which immigrants could receive guidance from advisers in terms of how to act and how to find a job.[497]

Based on the Ley de 817, the federal government of Argentina provided immigrants with free housing, medical care, and food after they arrived in Argentinian territory. Accordingly, the Immigrants' Hostel was established in Buenos Aires. After disembarking in Argentina, immigrants had the right to stay at this hostel for a maximum of five days, to be counted from the landing date. The Immigrants' Hostel was also a suitable place for landholders to come and choose labourers, contracting them to work in their fields. If the immigrants were under contract, they could stay at the hostel more than five days—until they departed for their final destination and new place of employment—at no cost. The government largely financed train tickets for immigrants who were to travel elsewhere to begin employment.[498]

Furthermore, in order to attract immigrants, the Argentinean government collaborated with travel agencies and supported them through direct financial or by providing economic facilities. It also actively subsidised immigrants' travel costs. By the 1880s, the government had developed an assistance programme for immigrants whereby money was advanced to them to cover the cost of their passage.[499] But this was not a grant:

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[497] Maurice R. Davie, *World Immigration…,*452

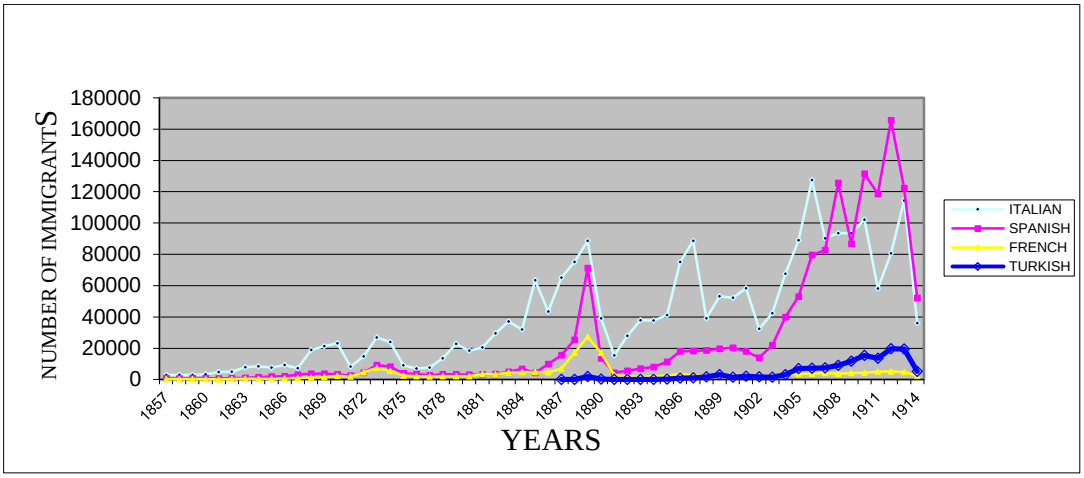
[498]Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies ..., 134–135. An important difference should be considered at this point. Unlike the rest of the American countries, in United States most of the American immigration promotion was financed by private sources. See Norman Macdonald, *Canada, Immigration and Colonization, 1841–1903* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen U.P, 1966), 116.

[499] Alan M. Taylor, "Mass migrations to Distant Southern Shores Argentina and Australia, 1870–1939" In *Historical Foundations of Globalization*, ed. James ForemanPeck (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar,1998), 506

immigrants were expected to repay the cost of the voyage by working for their patrons in Argentina for two weeks[500] at a fixed minimal salary. After a worker had repaid the cost of his voyage, he could earn money for himself.

Mark Jefferson notes that in one particularly feverish period, between 1888 and 1890, the Argentinean government bought ocean passage for 132,000 immigrants,[501] but the economic crisis of 1890 forced the state to suspend this subsidising practice temporarily.[502] Not surprisingly, as Figure 7 shows, the number of immigrants to Argentina suddenly rose in 1888 and declined after 1890.

Figure 7: Annual Number of European Immigration to Argentina, 1857-1914



Source: Wilcox and Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, edited on behalf of the National Bureau of Economic Research **(**New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929), 2:509–553.

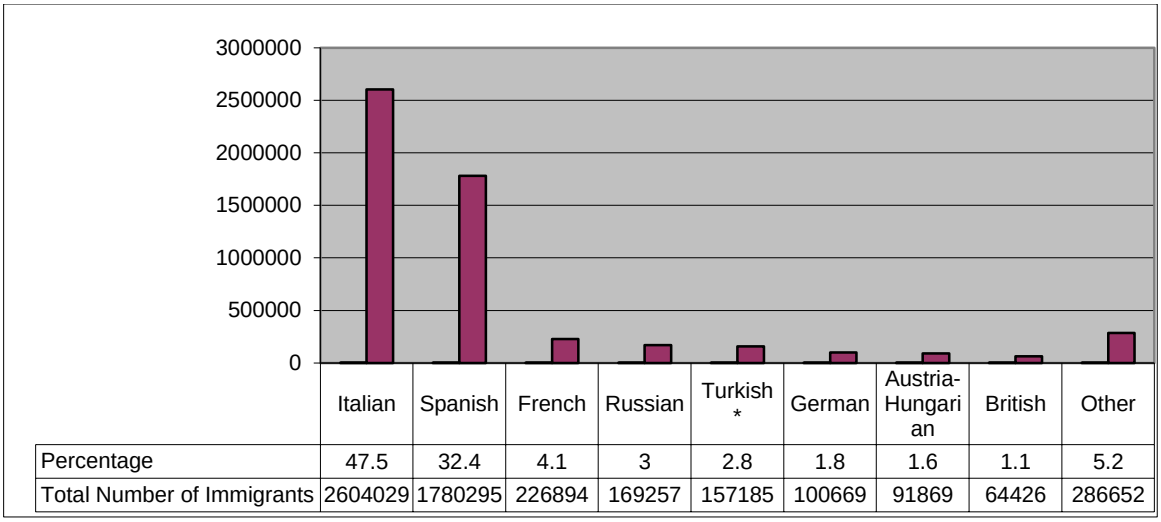
As a consequence of all these immigration policies, the immigration influx grew to unprecedented levels. Between 1870 and 1914, Argentina became the second-most important destination country for immigrants after the United States, receiving 4.7 million

[500] Magnus Mörner and Harold Sims. *Adventurers and Proletarians*…, 41.
[501] Mark Jefferson, *Peopling the Argentine Pampa*, (New York: American Geographical Society, 1926),180. See also, J.R. Scobie, *Revolution on the Pampas: A Social History of Argentine Wheat, 1860–1910* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 123.
[502] Magnus Mörner and Harold Sims. *Adventurers and Proletarians*…, 41.

people.[503] The key to Argentina's success in attracting such huge numbers was the government's liberal policies. Until the late 1910s, Argentina admitted all immigrant groups regardless of ethnic or socio-economic background.[504]

It seems that the liberal party implemented racist policies only against the indigenous races, not against various immigrant groups. No restriction or exclusion acts were proclaimed by the Argentinean governments against Chinese, Asian, or African immigrants. Indeed, Argentina did not need to implement such restrictions because as Figure 8 indicates, more than 90 percent of the immigrants to the country belonged to the favoured European races that the liberals were keen to import.

Figure 8: Argentina Immigrant Flow, by Nationality, 1857-1924* (numbers and percentages are indicated separately).



	Italian	Spanish	French	Russian	Turkish *	German	Austria-Hungarian	British	Other
Percentage	47.5	32.4	4.1	3	2.8	1.8	1.6	1.1	5.2
Total Number of Immigrants	2604029	1780295	226894	169257	157185	100669	91869	64426	286652

Source: Bunge and Garcia Mata (1931:153) cited in Alan M. Taylor, "Mass Migrations to Distant Southern Shores. Argentina and Australia, 1870–1939," In James Foreman-Peck, *Historical foundations of globalization* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 1998), 509.

*In this table the Turkish category refers to all Ottoman immigrants coming from the Greater Syrian region and Anatolia until 1920. After that year, only immigrants from the New Turkish Republic are included.

[503] A. G. Kenwood, and A. L. Lougheed, *The Growth of the International Economy, 1820–1960: An Introductory Text* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1971), chapter III.
[504] Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies ...,135.

Restrictions against immigrants were developed after the 1900s, but these did not target a specific race or groups; rather, they were meant to exclude those who were perceived to create unrest in society and to violate the social order. As a matter of fact, in 1902, a Law of Residence (*Ley de Residencia*) was passed by the parliament mandating the expulsion of foreigners who "compromise the national security and disturb public order." Eight years later, the Law of Social Defence *(Ley de Defensa Social*) was enacted; it explicitly named ideologies deemed to have such harmful effects on society. At first glance, these laws seem to target ideals like labour unionism, anarchism, and other ideologies that tend to trigger popular movements.[505]

Yet significant opposition to the entrance of particularly Syrians, Lebanese, and Jews was spelled out loudly by some in the Argentinean press, by intellectuals, and by some governors (especially Juan Alsina, who was the powerful director of the Department of Immigration from 1891 to 1910) .[506] Still, the Argentinean government never closed the doors to these people until 1929. On the contrary, they kept Argentina's borders wide open precisely as the migration movements reached their zenith, shortly before the outbreak of the First World War.[507]

II

Ottoman Arab Arrivals: Social and Economic Mobility in the Host Country

The Ottoman immigrants who arrived in Argentina from Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine were called *los turcos* (the Turks), both in official documents and in popular parlance,

[505] Samuel L. Baily *The Italians and the Development …,*62.
[506] Juan Alsina, *La Inmigración En El Primer Siglo De La Independencia* (Buenos Aires: F.S. Alsina, 1910), 205–206.
[507] Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies ...,136.

regardless of their ethnic religious and sectarian origins.[508] Not surprisingly, the officials of Argentina were not able to see distinctions among Lebanese and Syrians because all these immigrants bore Turkish passports that had been issued by the Ottoman Empire. Nor could ordinary people distinguish, for example, Lebanese Maronites from Anatolian Turks or Syrian Arabs from Armenians.[509] Thus, broader Argentinean society for a long time continued to apply the label *los turcos* to all Middle Eastern immigrants, whether they were Muslims, Jews, Armenians, or Maronites.[510]

Unlike the majority of European immigrants (particularly Italians, Spanish, and Eastern Europeans) who entered the Latin American countries as rural agricultural labourers, most of the Ottoman Lebanese and Syrian immigrants became involved in urban-based jobs, like petty commerce, itinerant peddling (*comercio ambulante*), and to a lesser extent artisanship.[511] Most of those who arrived in Argentina from Ottoman territory at the dawn of the twentieth century began as itinerant salesmen of cloth, housewares, religious icons, amulets, and small textile products.[512] The General Immigration Office of

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[508] Likewise in Brazil the Portuguese word "Os Turcos," referring to the Ottoman immigrants, were widely used in official documents and popular sphere.

[509] Roberto Khatlab and Oswaldo Truzzi. *Lebanese Migrants to Brazil: An Annotated Bibliography*. (Lebanon: Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC), Notre Dame University, Louaize (NDU), 2005), 45

[510] Sergio Macias, "Presencia Árabe en la literatura Latín Americana," *Temas Árabes* no.2, (December 1986):71. Also see Abdelwahed Akmir, "La inserción de los inmigrantes árabes en Argentina (1880–1980*)", Anaquel de Estudios Arabes,* no.2, (1991):238 In fact such incorrect denomination was not limited to Ottoman immigrants. The Latin American people used the nickname *gallegos* for all Spanish people regardless of whether they came from Galicia or not. By the same token, the Italians used to be called as *tanos* and all Byelorussians, Volga Germans, Eastern Jews were grouped under the heading of *Rusos. See* Clark S. Knowlton, *Spatial and Social Mobility of the Syrians and Lebanese in the City of São Paulo, Brazil,* (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1955), 268. According to Hebe Clementi, such satiric denominations in a sense reflect the nationalistic reactions of the native people against the newcomers. See Hebe Clementi, *El Miedo a La Inmigración* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Leviatan, 1984),13

[511] Clark S. Knowlton., "Spatial and social mobility…,209.

[512] Jorge Bestene, Lilia Ana Bertoni and Jozami Gladys "La inmigración sirio-libanesa en América Latina," *Estudios Migratorios latinoamericanos,* no. 26, (1994):256. Within the Arab community in Argentina these peddlers were called as *bayi'-mutecevvil*. See Abdulwahed Akmir, *El-Arab fî'l-Arjantin En-Nüşuu ve't-Tatavvur,* (Beyrut : Merkezu Dirasati'l-Vahdeti'l-Arabiyye, 2000), 56. In fact, the Ottoman immigrants were

Argentina (*La Dirección General de Inmigración*) estimates that between 1876 and 1895, some 86.3 percent of Ottoman immigrants were dedicated to itinerant vending. For that reason, very few of them were registered in Argentina's official state records.[513]

Table 5: Estimated Number of the Ottoman Arab Population in Argentina and Their Occupational Distribution (both in number and in percentages)

OCCUPATION	1910	1917
Commerce	28500 (53.3%)	37000 (35.3%)
Peddlers	15000 (28.1%)	15000 (14.3%)
Established Merchants	13500 (25.2%)	22000 (21.0)
Agriculture, Cattle Ranching & Industry	5300 (9.9%)	19200 (18.3%)
Agriculture,		12000 (11.4%)
Cattle Ranching		200 (0.2%)
Industry		7000 (6.7%)
Worker & Employers	8800 (16.5%)	28000 (26.7%)
Workers	8800(16.5%)	18000 (17.2)
Employees	N.A	10000 (9.5%)
Active Syrio-Lebanese	46600 (79.7%)	84200 (80.3%)
Elderly Women & Children*	10873 (20.3%)	20675 (19.7%)
Total	53473 (100%)	104875 (100%)

Source: Alejandro Shamun, *La Syria Nueva: Guía del Comercio Syrio-Ottomano* (Buenos Aires: As-Salam, 1917), 112; cited in Ignacio Klich, "Criollos and Arabic Speakers in Argentina: An Uneasy Pas de Deux, 1888–1914," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I. B. Tauris, 1994), 273.

*Includes 5,600 Argentine born in 1910 and 5,175 in 1917.

Although in the following decades, the proportion of itinerant peddlers gradually decreased (as the Table 5 shows), this remained the main profession among Ottoman immigrants in Argentina until the early 1917s, by which time Ottoman Arabs had elevated their economic position and no longer needed to peddle in order to survive. The following lines, penned by

engaged in itinerant sales ship in other part of Latin America as well. They were known as *"mascates"* in Brazil or *"mercaderes ambulantes"* in Chile and other former Spanish colonies. (Both words means "peddler") see Jeffry Lesser "From Peddlers to Proprietors: Lebanese, Syrian and Jewish Immigrants in Brazil" In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed.Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1994), 400.

[513] *Dirección General de Inmigración. Memorias de los años: 1887, 1888, 1889.* cited in Abdelwahed Akmir, La inserción…, 238.

Eduardo Jozami, a famous Argentinean novelist of Arab origin, illustrate some of the economic factors in the decision-making process of Ottoman immigrants considering emigrating:

> A recipient society which did not offer them its undivided support; great difficulties to acquire land as well as the devaluation of agricultural work … in their home countries … the desire to achieve rapid socio-economic ascent, given the news of massive and swiftly made fortunes … through commerce, as well as the centuries-old place occupied by trade among the values of the eastern Mediterranean, appear to have been some of the factors that pushed Syrians and Lebanese to devote themselves to this economic activity.[514]

Peddling was not something Arabs invented in the Americas; it had first been practised by Italian and Spanish immigrants in earlier decades. As the number of Ottoman immigrants increased, however, and as more Arabs engaged in peddling, this ethnic group began to dominate the sector, displacing Italian and Spanish counterparts. In Buenos Aires in 1883, the number of Italian peddlers was 1,869, while the number of Arabs was just 98. It is telling that just six years later, Italian peddlers had almost disappeared: their number had decreased to 500, whereas the number of Arab peddlers had skyrocketed.[515]

Arabs' success in gaining the control of the sector can be explained by the strong ties within the Arab community, based on family and regional bounds. Indeed, the individual itinerant peddlers were merely cogs in a very functional system that was also based on kinship relations between the Arab wholesaler and newly arriving immigrants.

Abdulwahid Akmir's and Jeffrey Lesser's studies best illustrate this closed-circuit system. At its apex were rich Arab wholesalers (*mumevvin*) who had come to Latin America in the early decades—that is, in the 1860s and 1870s. They established themselves

[514] Ignacio Klich, "Criollos and Arabic Speakers…, 274.
[515] Registro de Patentes de la Cuidad de Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires, 1895.

in the host country and gained appreciable wealth. *Mumevvin*s attempted to establish links with poor youth coming from home by directly corresponding with the newcomer's relatives or with *simsar*s (the brokers that were analysed in chapter4) at home, or via advertisement in Arabic newspapers.[516] They used to give some merchandise to these young Arabs (a newcomer was often called *ibnu'l-beled*, "son of the village")[517] to sell in the streets. In return, *mumevvins* provided accommodation, food, and a small amount of money.[518]

In 1889, according to news from a respectable Argentinean journal of the time, *El Diario*, the number of *mumevvins* in Buenos Aires was between thirty and thirty-five.[519] For these wholesalers, the number of youth they recruited was important because in the Arab community, the wealth of the wholesalers was measured according to the number of peddlers they recruited and ran. Thus, *mumevvins* competed among themselves to bring youth from the home country. For that purpose, they undertook to arrange all the official requirements and to cover the travelling expenditures of young immigrants coming from Syria or Lebanon.[520]

When a young Ottoman arrived in Argentina, he was welcomed by another Arab who already lived there. Experienced peddlers helped the newcomers earn some income while teaching them Spanish (or one of the other local languages spoken in different parts of Argentina) and a sales pitch. This system worked well: one observer noted that "little by

[516] Jeffry Lesser "From Peddlers to Proprietors…,400.
[517] It means "boy from the same village." In Spanish it they were called "*los paisanos*"
[518] Abdelwahed Akmir, *El-Arab fi'l-Arjantin…,* 55.
[519] El Diario, 4.9.1889, the data was given in the news under the title of "Respecto a los mendigos Turcos" (in respect to Arab beggar)
[520] Abdelwahed Akmir, El-*Arab fi'l-Arjantin…*,56.

little the neophyte acquired a rudimentary knowledge of the language, the money, and the ways, along with how often to frequent the street."[521] When a wholesaler decided to open a branch in some other region that was considered profitable, he appointed one of his most trusted peddlers and made him shareholder (unofficially, of course). These people were called *müstahdem*. In 1916, the number of *müstahdem* in Argentina was around ten thousand, and as a group they possessed about 182,000 pesos in capital.[522]

The Argentinian Foreign Ministry's official archives show that sometimes Ottoman peddlers were deceived by people who supplied goods to them because of the lack of any official contract. Liliana Bertoni, whose research is based on the official criminal records of Buenos Aires, has reported an interesting anecdote that constitutes a good example of this issue. In December 1911, the Ottoman immigrant to Argentina José Ali decided to return to his home country after having worked four years as peddler. He sent a petition to the Ottoman consul general in Argentina, Emin Arslan, to establish contact with the Argentinean authorities on his behalf, claiming that his boss, Pablo Abusar, owed him for work completed. After an inquest, it emerged that Abusar had paid Ali in counterfeit bills.[523]

As Ottoman immigrants accumulated enough capital, they opened shops in partnerships; many later severed ties with their partners and became sole proprietors of their own shops. With the money they obtained from peddling, many Arab peddlers were

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[521] Evaristo De Moraes, "Judeus sem dinheiro taes como eu vejo" In *Os Judeus na Historia do Brasil,* ed. Afranio Peixoto (Rio de Jenairo: Uri Zwelling, 1936), 28 cited in Jeffrey Lesser, "Elites images of Arabs and Jews in Brazil", In *Arab and Jewish immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities*, ed. Ignacio Klich and Jeffrey Lesser (London ; Portland, OR : F. Cass, 1998), 42.
[522] Alejandro Shamun, *La Colectividad Siria en La República Argentina*, (Buenos Aires: Ed. Assalam, 1910), 42
[523] Ana Lilia Bertoni, ""De Turquía a Buenos Aires". Una colectividad nueva a fines del siglo XIX." *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos*, no.26 (April,1994):10.

able to stop their itinerant sales and begin renting stalls in urban markets.[524] In their newly established shops, these Ottomans sold various items such as beverages, cheese, brads, shoes, and dresses in the same place. An Argentinean saying that is used even today—*Hay de todo como en la merceria del Turco* (There's a bit of everything here, just like in the Turkish shop)—indicates the assortment of goods in a typical immigrant-owned shop.[525]

The shops of the Ottoman Arabs in Argentina were located in the one of the side streets off Reconquista Avenue, which was known as the Turkish district (*barrio de los turcos*). The location of the Turkish street was strategically chosen and was near the district through which most Italian newcomers passed. [526] George Assaf illustrates the interests of the Arabs in Reconquista Avenue with the attempt of two entrepreneurs from Lebanon, Antuan Ariza and Habib Munase, who set up two shops in 1883 and 1885, respectively. In 1886, two more Arabs opened shops in the same area. The success story of these businesses spread within the Arab community, and it prompted more people to open up shops in this district. Each new person set up his shop next to the last. In this way, a sort of Turkish district came into existence.[527] Moreover, the Ottoman Arab shopkeepers sold their goods at modest prices compared to the other shops in the city centre, and thus attracted many Italians, Spaniards, and other immigrant groups, as well as indigenous people, who had limited income for shopping in this market.[528]

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[524] Jeffrey Lesser, "From Peddlers to Proprietors: Lebanese, Syrian and Jewish Immigrants in Brazil." In *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shedhadi (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1992), 395.
[525] Abdelwahed Akmir, *El-Arab fi'l-Arjantin…,*68.
[527] Ibid., 62.
[527] Ibid., 62.
[528] Abdelwahed Akmir, *La inserción…,*242.

According to *El Diario*, the number of Arab shops in Reconquista rose and reached thirty-five in 1894.[529] The journal *Caras y Caretas* depicts the Turkish quarter as follows:

> "Among the all streets of our Capital (city), the one which exist in Reconquista Avenue has special case. There are almost no people other than the Turkish shopkeepers in this street. The avenue is full of shops where rosary, saint images, fabrics and some sort of books are sold."[530]

The social integration of Ottoman Arabs into the Argentinian host society was not as easy as that of immigrant groups from Italy and Spain. For one thing, most of the Italians and Spanish settled in rural areas, in Pampas, where they did not much need to integrate into the new environment. The only tension they faced was the resistance of the *gauchos*, who feared that their traditional lifestyle would be wiped out if European peasants came to dominate Pampas.[531] Even in that case, both local and central governments sided with the European immigrants. In addition, the Spanish and Italian immigrants shared similar if not identical languages, religions, and to some extent culture with people in the urban areas. These common features facilitated their integration into the host society in the New World.

Unlike their Italian and Spanish counterparts, Ottoman immigrants had almost nothing in common with Argentineans. In addition, the strong ties within the Ottoman Arab community based on family relations or on shared village origins made the integration process even more difficult. In the cities, Ottoman Arab immigrants often lived in the vicinity of marketplaces, train stations, or (especially in later periods) churches, mosques,

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[529] Abdelwahed Akmir, *El-Arab fi'l-Arjantin..*, 61.
[530] Caras y Caretas, Buenos Aires, 2 March 1902.
[531] The tension between European immigrants and *Gauchos* were held by the following works; Carl E. Solberg, "Peopling the Prairies ...,144. Also see Jeane Delaney, "Making Sense of Modernity: Changing Attitudes Toward the Immigrant and the Gaucho in Turn-of-the Century Argentina," *Comparative Studies in Society and History: an International Quarterly*, no.38 (1996): 434–459.

schools, and the institutions they established. Most of the immigrants and their children lived on the upper floors of the buildings they owned or rented as shops or factories.[532] Many Arabs lived close to other members of the community, and they tended to settle in neighbourhoods that were among the city's least expensive, where the transport of merchandise was easiest, and in areas known for both wholesale and retail sales.[533]

The work of Abdulwahid Akmir shows that only a very limited number of Ottoman immigrants married into the host society. According to his research, between 1870 and 1914, only one-fourth of the Ottoman immigrants married *criollos* or *mestizos*; this proportion was even lower among the Muslim community. As the same study also shows, the members of each religious sect tended to marry within that sect or, less frequently, to choose partners from another sect of the same religion.[534]

The difficulty they faced integrating into the host society naturally led immigrants to establish strong ties within their own communities. Daily Arabic-language newspapers were among the first initiatives undertaken with the aim of creating a communal allegiance. Beginning in the 1890s, numerous daily newspapers were founded in many of Argentina's states. The first newspaper of the Arab community, *Eco del Sur*, was founded in 1890.[535] In addition, communal associations began appearing. By 1920, seventeen newspapers and

[532] Eva Alterman Blay, "As duas memorias: Pequena historia da migraçao judaica", *Shalom*19, no.223 (August 1984):7-11 cited in Jeffrey Lesser, "Jews are Turks who Sell on Credit': Elite Images of Arabs and Jews in Brazil." In *Arab and Jewish immigrants in Latin America:Images and Realities*, ed. Ignacio Klich and Jeffrey Lesser (London ; Portland, OR : F. Cass, 1998), 45.
[533] Luis Assís: "Los árabes de origen sirio o libanés en Santiago del Estero," *El Liberal*, 3 November 1968, 27.
[534] Abdelwahed Akmir, *La inserción…,*249.
[535] Liliana Cazorla, *La Inmigración Sirio y Libanesa En La Provincia De Buenos Aires: A Través De Sus Instituciones Étnicas*, (Buenos Aires: Fundación Los Cedros, 1995), 23.

fourteen journals were being published, and over one hundred associations had been established in Argentina.[536]

The most influential newspaper of the immigrant community in Argentina was *As-Salam*, which was founded in 1902 by Vadi Shamun. *As-Salam* was a bilingual daily (Spanish and Arabic) printed with several objectives. On one hand, the paper attempted to guide newcomers in acquiring jobs or accommodation and in establishing links with other members of the community. On the other hand, it tried to negotiate with both the Ottoman and Argentinean governments to preserve the rights of immigrants and to improve their economic conditions.[537]

Communal associations were important structures that played a crucial role in consolidating the immigrant community. The first such institutions functioned as simple charitable foundations that provided services covering the vital needs of community members in terms of sanitation and nourishment. As the number of Ottoman immigrants rose in Argentina, in addition to addressing such urgent and vital issues, additional institutions with religious, cultural, and social objectives began appearing—for instance, *La Sociedad de Ortodoxa de Beneficencia Balia Blanca*, *La Sociedad Unión Islámica de Beneficencia Berisso,* and *La Sociedad Siria Otomana Tandil*.[538]

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[536] Michael Humphrey, "Ethnic History Nationalism and Transnaitonalism in Argentina Arab and Jewish Cultures," In *Arab and Jewish immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities*, edited by Ignacio Klich, Jeffrey Lesser (London: Portland, OR : F. Cass, 1998), 171; Cristina Civantos, "Custom Building the fictions of the nation: Arab Argentine re-writings of the gaucho," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 4, no.69 (2001):72 Also see BOA, Y.PRK. AZJ, 13/68 *"Kırk seneden beri Suriye ve diğer memalik-i Osmaniyeden Müslümanlar….. Buenos Aires şehirlerinde tab've neşr ettikleri gazeteler ile asardan tebeyyün eder."*

[537] Liliana Cazorla, *La Inmigración Sirio…, y Libanesa en la Provincia de Buenos Aires, a Través de sus Instituciones Étnicas* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Los Cedros 1995), 24.

[538] Liliana Cazorla, *La Inmigración Sirio y Libanesa en la Provincia de Buenos Aires, a Través de sus Instituciones Étnicas* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Los Cedros 1995).

Some institutions were established to carry out the financial transactions of immigrants in Argentina. The Buenos Aires Ottoman Bank was established in 1917 to serve a clientele of Ottoman Arab immigrants by processing their deposits.[539] Likewise, *Banco Syrio-Libanés del Rio de la Plata*, which advertised itself as the world's first Arab bank, sought to take care of the credit needs of those who had progressed since their modest beginnings as hawkers, and it set out to do so better than other financial institutions. These economic institutions especially for Ottomans played a crucial role in the economic well-being of the Ottoman subjects in Argentina. As Klich indicates, "Long before the number of Syrio-Lebanese in general had reached the levels of the mid-1920s, there had been calls to establish such a bank: indeed the first calls in this direction were already voiced early in this century."[540]

It is worth noting that the Ottoman immigrants in Argentina—no matter their religion—gave names to the institutions they established that referred to the Ottoman Empire. *Sociedad Otomana*, established in the Buenos Aires provincial town of Balcarce by Argentinean Muslims, constitutes a good example. Likewise, many Syrian Orthodox shops were called *La Otomana*. What is interesting here is that as Liliana Cazorla indicates, all these developments took place when the Ottomans no longer ruled in their home country.[541]

In their initial years, these institutions recruited only members of community. For a long time, even women could not join these clubs. Later, the increasing number of

[539] Alejandro Schamún, *La Siria Nueva: Guía del Comercio Sirio-Ottomano* (Buenos Aires: Assalam, 1917) cited in Ignacio Klich, "Arab-jewish Coexistence…, 27.
[540] Ibid., 4–5.
[541] Liliana Cazorla, *La Inmigracion Syria…,*65.

intermarriages between immigrants and Argentineans obliged the administrators of the institutions to be more flexible in choosing their new members. By the 1920s, having one Arab grandparent was considered sufficient enough to be a member of Arab community.[542]

In the case of immigrant institutions, research done by Cazorla sheds light on associations founded by Ottoman women. For her, the institutions founded and run by Arab women are important in that they constitute a great challenge to the stereotype of the "oriental woman" who is confined to her home and bound by her husband's orders. *Asociación Femenina Sirio-Ortodoxa*, founded in the city Buenos Aires in 1915, and *La Asociación Damas de la Misericordia*, founded in 1916, were the major women's associations. In the post-war period, the numbers of Arab institutions—whether for women or for men—increased sharply.[543]

Generally speaking, in the eyes of immigrants, such associations were critical. On one hand, they provided a suitable shelter to escape xenophobic and anti-immigrant attacks; on the other, they helped to integrate newcomers into the host society and provided a suitable base for self-expression therein. The foundation act of one Arab institution in Buenos Aires, *La Asociación Pro Hospital Sirio Libanés*, manifests the significant objectives its immigrant founders had in mind:

> After a deep investigation and scrupulous research, our Association has reached to the general conclusion that the existence of "Hospital Sirio Libaneses in the Capital Federal" is a necessity, more than being a stair, (it is important in the sense that) it can lead the collectivity to get a place which correspond between other collectivities of foreign residents in the country.

[542] Liliana Cazorla, *La Inmigracion Syria…,*62.
[543] ibid.,3.

In conclusion, social and economic integration was more difficult for Ottoman Arab immigrants in Argentina than it was for those who came from Europe. The Ottomans' social and economic background, as well as their principal expectations about immigration and life in the host country, led them to engage in peddling and petty commerce. For a long time, they pursued a communal lifestyle, and their marriages and social relations were limited to within the community itself. Of course, the extraordinary case of Ottoman Arabs in Argentina bore some implications for Argentinean policymakers and intellectuals.

III

Ottoman Immigrants in the Eyes of Argentinean Society, Policy Makers, and Intellectuals

As mentioned, among all the Latin American countries that received huge number of Ottoman immigrants, Argentina was one of the most liberal in terms of accepting immigrants until 1929.[544] However, during the late nineteenth century and up to the outbreak of World War I, Ottoman immigration was not necessarily welcomed by policy makers or positivist intellectuals, nor by the society as a whole, because Ottoman immigrants did not fit the two major expectations Argentinian society had for "ideal" immigrants, which were "compensating the shortage of labour for agriculture" and "achieving the whitening the race project".[545]

[544] Lito Senkman, "La Política Migratorio Argentina durante la década del treinta," In *Primeras Jordanas Nacionales de Estudios sobre inmigración en Argentina, (*Buenos Aires: Ministro de Educación y Justica, 1985), 600–603.

[545] As early as 1899, He said the following in the 1899 Annual Report: '..… These Immigrants (the Syrians) belong to their country's lower classes. They lack flexibility and most of the social and physical aptitudes that would facilitate their incorporation into and adaptation to a society which differs from their own……' cited in María Elena Vela Ríos y Roberto Caimi, "The Arabs in Tucumán, Argentina," (paper presented in International Congress of Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa, D.F.: Colegio de México, 1981), 129–130

In a country where the shortage of agricultural labour was the most important factor shaping immigration policy, Ottoman Arabs devoted their energies to "tertiary" activities, such as peddling and trade.[546] This lack of enthusiasm of Ottoman Arabs for agriculture appeared to be the major reason behind the prejudicial characterisation of Ottoman immigrants in the eyes of the rulers. For instance, Argentina's Ministry of Agriculture in 1903 explicitly presented the Ottoman immigration as unnecessary:

> The exotic immigration of Syrian Arabs has very limited benefit for our aims because the majority of them are engaged in itinerant peddling. At this moment, their numbers reached to 1671 individuals.[547]

The Ottoman Arabs in Argentina were exempted by the government from several advantages granted to other immigrant groups who came to Argentina to work in agriculture. Lodging at the Immigrant's Hotel for five days after landing was the most important of these. Even though Ley de 817 did not exclude Syrians and Lebanese from this facility, government officials often did not allow them into the hotel because some Ottoman immigrants had not gone on to work in Pampas after staying at there but instead had joined relatives in Buenos Aires.[548]

Likewise, in 1900, the Department of Migration indicated that it did not favour the Ottoman immigrants, accusing them of not behaving like other European immigrants. The department noted aspects of chain migration among Syrians and Lebanese:

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[546] Ignacio Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers…, 272.
[547] Wenceslao Escalante, *Memoria presentada al Honorable Congreso por el Ministro de Agricultura,* (Buenos Aires: Archivo de la Dirección Nacional de Migraciones 1903), cited in Alberto Tasso *Aventura, Trabajo y Poder: Sirios y Libaneses en Santiago del Estero 1880–1980*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Indice,1989), 55–56.
[548] M. Saleh de Canuto and S. Budeguer, *"El Aporte de los Sirios y Libaneses a Tucumán*, (San Miguel de: Editorial America, 1979), 13–15. The same restrictions of such benefits implemented to the Jewish immigrants as well see Haim Avni, *Argentina y la Historia de la Inmigración Judía* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Hebrea de Jerusalén, 1983), 112–117.

> [They] do not intend to remain at the Hotel [i.e., the Immigrants' Hotel], they look for work and arrange for necessary passage in order to move to the interior of Republic.[549]

Obviously, the ruling elites and politicians did not believe that itinerant Ottoman peddlers fit the needs of the Argentinean urban economy. Moreover, they complained that the "*turcos*," by engaging in peddling and small-scale jobs, might drive established shops out of business. Since they neither paid taxes nor spent money, they might economically devastate native Argentinian shopkeepers and traders.[550]

Government immigration reports of 1899 and 1900 touch upon the dangers of itinerant "Turkish" peddlers, referring to these salesmen with derision as "dirty and ragged."[551] Presumably because of this concern, by the early 1890s, in many provinces the local authorities obliged the peddlers and hawkers to obtain licences. In this way, the governors sought to gain control over peddlers and to compensate for their loss of tax revenue received from shops.

The ethnic composition of the Ottoman immigrants also did not fit the expectations of Argentinean elites, who wished to "whiten" the country's population through immigration. As mentioned earlier, the discussion of immigration generally came to fore in the wake of independence as the elites simultaneously began encouraging the entry of white Europeans in order to "augment the quality of the ethnic composition of Argentina." [552] In that era, when people were classified by race, it was particularly very difficult for Latin American states to rank Arabs and Turks in the hierarchy of races. Nevertheless, for

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[549] Jorge Bestene, "La inmigración …,242.
[550] Christina Civantos, *Between Argentines and Arabs…,*8.
[551] Ibid., 9.
[552] Aline Helg "Race in Argentina and Cuba 1880–1930: Theory, Policies and Popular Reaction" In *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870–1940,* ed.Richard Graham, (Austin: Texas, 1990), 39.

the majority of intellectuals and politicians (presumably because of their already acquired stereotype of oriental people), Ottoman Arab immigrants were considered inferior to the Europeans.

These shortcomings of Ottoman Arab immigrants, then, in the eyes of the Argentinean government were significant. Though Ottoman Arabs fell outside of the desirable ethnic category, however, they were not banned from entering Argentina until the 1920s. As Klich and Lesser emphasise, what placed the Arabs in such a contradictory and perplexing role is that they were never officially designated "non-white" because they were not from the Far East or Africa and bore some physical resemblance to other Mediterranean peoples and Southern Europeans.[553]

But since Ottomans met neither of the two expectations, they became victims of anti-Ottoman sentiment among the ruling elites,[554] and this encouraged journalists and positivist intellectuals to describe the *turcos* as undesirable immigrants. For instance, the famous director of immigration, Juan Alsina, declared that Western European immigrants were preferred above all others and that the *turcos* were incompatible.[555] Lastly, even the Saenz Pena laws in 1912, which embraced the idea of "America for All Humanity,"[556] did not appreciate Ottoman Arabs—indeed, the legislation almost totally rejected them.

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[553] Ignacio Klich, Jeffrey Lesser, Introduction: "Turco" Immigrants in Latin America, *The Americas* 53, no.1, (1996):6

[554] Ignacio Klich, "Arab Jewish coexistence…,13.

[555] Juan Alsina, *La inmigración en el primer siglo de la independencia*, (Buenos Aires: F. S. Alsina, 1910), 208 cited in Michael Murphey, "Ethnic History Nationalism and Trans Nationalism in Argentine Arab and Jewish Societies." In *Arab and Jewish immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities*, ed. Ignacio Klich and Jeffrey Lesser (London ; Portland, OR : F. Cass, 1998), 169.

[556] This was a very well-known slogan used by contemporary Argentinean politicians to indicate the contrast between the liberal and open policies of Argentina and selective and restrictive policies of the USA. This discourse was first spelled out in the First Pan American conference held in 1890, by the president of Argentina Roque Sáenz Peña, who made a widely acclaimed speech against James G. Blain, the Secretary of State of U.S.A, and countered the secretary's slogan "America for Americans".

Just as in politics, in the intellectual sphere anti-Ottoman Arab feelings could be witnessed: the group was regarded by Argentinean intellectuals as incompetent biologically to such a degree that they could contribute nothing to the improvement of the Argentinian bloodlines of the time.[557] As a greater number of Ottoman Arab peddlers become visible in Argentinean streets, the bitter news items and xenophobic articles decrying them intensified in the country's press. Some newspapers condemned Syrians, Jews, and "Orientals" as inherently disease-ridden, immoral, and lazy.[558] Another article in the English-language daily *Herald Buenos Aires* called attention to the fact that Russian Jews had become the third-largest group among all the immigrants, noting that Ottoman Arabs were also flocking to this shore, under the headline "Are We Becoming Semitic?" Presenting the numbers of Syrians and Jews as having reached an alarming level, the *Herald* called for policy makers and population specialists to develop new emigration policies in accordance with modernist and Europeanist theories of race.[559]

Journalists revealed their hostility towards Ottoman Arabs mostly by blaming them as the source of various social ills, such as pauperism, crime, labour unrest, and anarchism. Inspired by contemporary biological theories of crime, they developed a new point of view

[557] Carl Solberg, *Immigration and Nationalism Argentina and Chile 189–1914*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 20.
[558] Ironically, the xenophobic attitudes of Argentinean positivist intellectuals and policymakers did not impose only Arab immigrants (although they were one of the most injured groups). The illegal and immoral behaves of Spanish, Italians and Eastern European immigrants in the cities ultimately changed the mind of Argentinean intellectual who in the early time desired to welcome the Whiteman who is considered to be ethnically superior and who are expected to clean the race. However when they notice that the newcomers do not necessarily fit their expectation, they uphold *criollos* as racially superior to several immigrants groups even the Spaniards and Italians. For an early statements of Argentinean biological theories for crime see Miguel Lancelotti, "La herencia en la Criminalidad" *Revista Nacional,* no.25 (June 1898):396-402.
[559] Raanan Rein, "Los inmigrantes Semitas en la Argentina: entre el crisol de razas y el multi-cultirismo," *Revista de Historiographia Argentina,* no.2 (2007).

holding that since the immigrants belonged to an inferior race, these immigrant groups possessed a propensity to commit crime by nature.[560]

The well-being of the Ottoman Arabs gained from peddling and running groceries created a crescendo of rude oppositions from the local native (mostly small-scale) merchants, craftsmen, and the other immigrant groups who opted to work in Pampas.[561] One of the oral interviews in Selim Abou's work on Lebanese immigrants in Argentina illustrates their position:

> One understands the secret envy of older established business owners who saw Arabs and Jews monopolise commerce and build immense fortunes while they were incapable of holding their own. Immigrants of other origins who had chosen agriculture and various other activities also watched with resentment the rapid enrichment of Arab and Jewish shopkeepers.[562]

Many in the host society, then, felt that the newcomers threatened their position. Thus, they constantly appealed to the government to limit Ottomans' arrivals and, if they could not achieve this end, to make life more difficult for the newcomers.[563]

Such xenophobia appeared in popular literature, as well. Glimpses of such feeling can be seen, for instance, in the novel *La Pobre Gente* (The poor people) where, the writer, Florencio Sanchez, equates begging with immigration. In the novel, an Argentinean woman asks her friend, "Do you remember the *turca* who used to live upstairs? … Well now she is rich, earning all she wants by sending all her children out to beg."[564]

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[560] For an early statements of Argentinean biological theories for crime see Miguel Lancelotti "La herencia en la Criminalidad" *Revista Nacional* 25, (June 1898): 396-402.
[561] David Nicholls, "No Hawkers or Peddlers," *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* (October, 1981):451.
[562] Selim Abou, *Immigres dans L'autre Amérique: Autobiographies de Quatre Argentins d'Origine Libanaise, Terre Humaine, Civilisations et Societes,* (Paris: Plon, 1972), 351.
[563] Ignacio Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers…,271
[564] Florencia Sanchez, "La Pobre Gente" in *Dardo Cuneo, Teatro Completo de Florencia Sanchez,* (Buenos Aires: 1964), 215 cited in Carl Solberg, "Immigration and Urban Social Problems in Argentina and Chile, 1890–1914," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 49, no.2 (May, 1969):219.

In response to the racist interpretation of Argentinean intellectuals, the famous *mohajir*[565] writer İbrahim Hallar, in his book *"El Gaucho"* presents the immigration and whitening project in a very particular way. He points out that the concept of "whiteness" was not clear enough even in the minds of Argentina's policy makers. He argues that although the majority group in the Argentinean population had shifted in the mid-1880s from non-whites (blacks, natives, *mestizos*) to whites because of these immigrant waves, these whites were not all blonds; neither were they all Europeans. The interesting point in this particular example is that Arabs in Argentina used to engage in the contemporary racist discourse in order to defend their right to be there.

Needless to say, by the end of the nineteenth century, the rising number of Ottoman Arab immigrants in Argentina, their legal status, and the problems they faced stemming from living in a country far from home, as well as the unfavourable conditions created by a xenophobic host society, would attract the attention of the Ottoman Foreign Office.

IV

The Ottoman Empire and Argentina

The archival resources on Ottoman emigration makes it clear that as early as the 1870s, the Ottoman migrations to Argentina had caught the attention of bureaucrats and other policy makers. However, it was during and after the 1890s that the issue of immigration took central place in diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and Argentina.

Diplomatic relations between Argentina and the Ottoman Empire started with the signing of a Treaty of Commerce in 1873. This was done to facilitate the jobs of merchants

[565] Mohajir is the literature created by the Ottoman immigrants in Latin America.

who conducted exchanges between the two countries. But this commercial treaty should not be overvalued because it was not implemented for a long time. The reason for this lies in the fact that immigrants' numbers remained low during those years,[566] so the treaty remained symbolic and actually benefited very few individuals.

Apart from this treaty, in terms of diplomatic and commercial relations with Argentina, the Ottoman Archives are silent until about 1890. Until that year, relations did not move beyond mutual state decorations, messages of goodwill, and greetings. The relationship between Argentina and the Ottoman Empire became more serious during the 1890s, when the number of Ottoman immigrants rose considerably. This increase in the number of Ottoman subjects living in Argentina created new and difficult legislative problems. The legal status of Ottoman subjects, their personal rights in the host country, the issue of taxes, and the personal status of children born outside the empire appeared to be some of the biggest problems with which the immigrants had to deal. The challenges faced in legislative issues led many Ottoman community members to send petitions asking for the appointment of a consul general from İstanbul in Buenos Aires who would be expected to help manage the official affairs of immigrants there and to protect their rights in Argentina.

The first petition of this sort was sent by Selim Ajar, who was one of the respectable traders living in Buenos Aires. The document, sent 12 October 1876, describes the need Ottoman merchants in Buenos Aires had for a consul who could deal with their problems, and he presented himself as the ideal candidate to be appointed to this

[566] Mehmet Temel, *XIX. ve XX. Yüzyılda Osmanlı-Latin Amerika Ilişkileri*, (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: Nehir Yayınları, 2004), 20.

position.[567] In 1889, another petition arrived at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the former Ottoman honorary head consul in Sidney, Halil Mansur Efendi. In that letter, Halil Efendi wrote that he would live in Buenos Aires for several years in order to engage in some commercial activities. Just like Selim Ajar, in the last paragraph of the letter, he stated that he wanted to obtain the title of honorary head consul of the empire in Buenos Aires in order to conduct his personal business more quickly and more efficiently.[568]

The applications of Ajar and Mansur Efendis were the first but not the only attempts to set up an Ottoman representative in Argentina. In fact, by the 1900s, the demand for Ottoman representatives was being expressed more loudly by immigrants on an individual level. Again, on 2 October 1908, one sub-district governor (the place is not indicated in the document), Habibullah Efendi sent a petition letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs calling attention to the fact that the number of Ottomans in Argentina had reached sixty thousand persons. He asked to be appointed as honorary consul to Buenos Aires in order to protect the rights and interests of Ottoman subjects living in that country.[569] Likewise, one year later, some of the Ottoman inhabitants in Buenos Aires appealed to the Ottoman government to appoint El Mehadi, an Ottoman subject, as consul to Argentina.[570]

Despite intense correspondence between Argentina and Turkey, however, an Ottoman consul was not appointed until 1 June 1910, when the Ottoman consul in Rome Huseyin Kazım and the representative of Argentina in Rome, Roque Saenz Pena,[571] signed

[567] BOA, HR.TO, 534_44, 12.10.1876.
[568] BOA, HR. MTV. 138_9.
[569] BOA, HR MTV, 138_13.
[570] BOA, HR MTV, 138_14 cited in Mehmet Temel, *XIX. ve XX. Yüzyılda…,* 22.
[571] He was the very well-known figure in Argentinean politics of the early 20th century. During his mission Rome he declared his candidateship for presidential poll. Just after 5 month of signing this Treaty with Turkey, he would be elected as the President of Argentina. During his presidential term, he declared the

a *protocole consulaire*.[572] Forty days after signing this agreement, Emin Arslan was appointed to Buenos Aires, and the issues related to Ottoman subjects were entrusted to him.[573] One, the object of the signed protocol, was declared in the Ottoman Cabinet as follows:

> [R]egarding the gradual increase in the number of the Ottoman subjects in the Argentine Republic, for the purpose of preserving the rights of Ottoman immigrants, as well as for augmenting the trade relationships between the Sublime Porte and Argentina, both countries decided to set up consulates in the counterpart country due to the mutuality principle.[574]

Until World War I, a substantial part of the Ottoman diplomatic correspondence concerning Ottoman immigrants in Argentina revolved around two important issues. The first was the Sublime Porte's preservation of the rights of Ottoman subjects in Argentina[575] and thereby its protecting the image of the sultanate. The second was its endeavour to cope with the negative propaganda distributed by "enemies of the empire" in that state.

The phrase *preserving the rights of Ottomans* referred to the unfavourable conditions that Ottoman Arabs faced in Argentina.[576] For instance, on 5 October 1912, some of the Ottomans who did not know the local languages and the customs were swindled by some profiteers (*muhtekir*). Following that incident, the Foreign Ministry

famous Saenz Pena Laws which introduced reforms in immigration policies, electoral system and compulsory military servicing.

[572] BOA, HR.SYS, 75_4, 28.02.1914, nu.4 see also BOA, İ.HR 420_1327-Za-10, 23.09.1909Actually until then, there was not direct diplomatic link between the Ottoman Empire and Argentina. The diplomatic affairs were handled via the Ottoman representatives in Spain, Italy or France.

[573] BOA, I. HR. 423_1328-B-23. 31,07.1910.

[574] BOA, M.V., 140_83, 24.Ca.1328, 03.06.1910.

[575] For example see the documents; BOA, DH.MB.HPS.M., 7_12, 08.Ş.1332, 24.06.1914.

[576] For Argentina see BOA, DH.İD 11_9 it was also used in the related documents of the other Latin American countries namely for Uruguay Paraguay Bolivia see BOA, HR.SYS, 75_3 for Chile and Peru see BOA, HR SYS, 53_713 and BOA, HR.TO, 206_105 for Brazil see BOA, HR.SYS, 75_12; BOA, HR.SYS., 75_14, 09.06.1909 and BOA, HR.TO, 405_20.

ordered the consul general of Buenos Aires to prepare a pamphlet in French, Arabic, and Turkish that would include some advice to Ottoman subjects on where to go, how to behave, where to appeal, and so on.[577] The ministry also ordered the consul general to publish fifty copies of the pamphlet and to send it to steamship agencies and foreign consulates, asking them to display them publicly.[578]

Preserving the rights of Ottoman subjects appears to have been an important issue for the empire after 1900, especially, when the number of immigrants rose dramatically. It seems that the new situation led bureaucrats to reassert the diplomatic treaties signed several decades earlier but apparently forgotten by both parties. In time, it was understood that the Protocol of 1873 was useless, and new supplementary agreements were required to fill the gaps in it. For this purpose, on 18 March 1911, Argentina and the Ottoman Empire signed a protocol in which the Argentinean government agreed to send the personal property of Ottomans (*metrukat*) who had died in Argentina to Turkey, and vice versa, based on the reciprocity principle.[579]

The Ottoman documents include some cases about property transmission after death in Argentina. For instance, on 7 March 1912, a man named Şaban from Elazığ (a city in Anatolia) sent a petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to obtain the property left by his son Bekir, who had been living in Buenos Aires and had died there. The ministry sent the case to the consul general of the Ottoman Empire in Buenos Aires. After a deep investigation, in response the consul general informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that

[577] BOA, DH.MB.HPS.M., 7_12, 08.Ş.1332, 24.06.1914 also see BOA, D.H.İD. 11_9, nu.5 and 6.
[578] BOA, DH.MB.HPS.M., 7_12, 08.Ş.1332, 24.06.1914.
[579] BOA, HR.SYS, 75_4 see also HR. HMŞ.İŞO. 8_2 nu.1.

if Şaban gave proxy powers to the consul general Emin Arslan, it would be possible to send the assets to Turkey.[580]

From another perspective, in essence the great concern of the Ottoman statesmen regarding Ottoman subjects in Argentina was a product of their concern for the empire's image—this was the second important issue shaping Ottoman policy. In other words, sometimes in saying "preserving the rights of subjects," Ottoman bureaucrats implicitly meant "preserving the image of the empire." Ottoman bureaucratic correspondence as a whole indicates that the attitudes of ignorant and poor Ottomans disturbed not only local society and politicians but also the Sublime Porte.[581] Ottoman consuls in Argentina and in other Latin American countries were constantly reporting on the bad behaviour (including crime) of Ottoman subjects in the host countries and called the centre to deal with issues that caused significant damage to the prestige of the empire.

Related to this issue, a letter sent from the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior is very illustrative. In the letter, the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs reports on Ottoman immigrants in Argentina, whose number was nearing one hundred thousand and who were earning a living mostly through peddling. These peddlers were obtaining some merchandise from wholesalers on credit; in return, they were sharing the profits they earned with them. But some of these peddlers sold the goods they borrowed at a loss in order to sell them quickly and encash the goods. These people did not pay their debts to the wholesaler; instead, they remitted the money to their home country. The ministry's letter underlines that such dishonourable acts motivated many other young and

[580] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO, 98_8 Also the case of Merhumi Bey constitutes another good example see BOA, HR.HMŞ. İŞO. 8_2 nu.2.
[581] BOA, HR. SYS, 77_9 08.11.1916, *"……bazı teb'ay-ı Osmaniyenin harekat-ı bedhanelerine dair….."*.

jobless Lebanese and Syrian youth seeking a quick way to earn substantial amounts of money to go to Argentina and pursue the same underhanded practices. Moreover, such profiteering harmed local economies as well as the reputation of Ottoman Arabs in Argentina. Thus, to prevent such undesirable acts, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested that the best thing to do was to make public that (via consul general) the names of such offenders and their acts would be printed in local Lebanese newspapers and that, particularly, their families would be informed of their dishonest behaviour unless they paid their debts to wholesalers within six months.[582]

The Ottoman documents concerning immigrants in Argentina frequently address the problem of damaging propaganda produced by so-called enemies of the empire in Argentina. Some Ottoman immigrants were not happy with the policies and the regime in their home country; others were uncomfortable with their new lives in Argentina and accused the Ottoman administration of not dealing with their problems seriously. Such individuals and groups in some cases produced negative propaganda documents decrying the Ottoman Empire.

It can be understood from many of archival documents that the Porte struggled to stop the penetration of what it called "anti-Ottoman propaganda" into imperial lands by prohibiting the dissemination of some magazines that were published in the Americas and contained such "maleficent" news items.[583] For example, on 7 July 1914, the government

[582] BOA, D.H. İD. 11_9, nu.20 and 21.
[583] Similar prohibitions were imposed over the newspapers and journals, published in Brazil which includes "harmful propaganda" against the Ottoman Empire. For instance in 6 May 1912 the Arabic language journal *"Al- Istiklal"* (see MV 144_20), in 22 January 1913 *"Al Efkar"* published in Sao Paolo (see BOA, MV, 179_24), in 17 April 1915 *"Al Ahram"* (see BOA, M.V. 179_60), in 29 May 1988 *"Al Manzur"* were prohibited to be entered into Ottoman territory by the central government.

prohibited the import of the journals *Ez Zaman* (published in Buenos Aires) and *Hüsnü'l-Fetat* (published in Tucumán) because of their "harmful articles" inciting Ottoman Arabs against Turks.[584] On the other hand, the Porte explicitly supported publications that favoured the Ottoman Empire. On 1 June 1916, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to send some publications as gift to the administration of the journal *La Bandera Ottomana* (The Ottoman Flag), thanking them for their "patriotic services and activities."[585]

In this context, anti-Ottoman propaganda considering the Armenian issue appears to be one of the problems the Ottoman state considered to be most damaging to imperial prestige abroad. On 1 July 1917, the Ottoman Consulate in Barcelona reported that Armenians from Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay had appealed to the Spanish monarch with the aim of persuading him to negotiate with the Ottoman administration to stop the massacre of Armenians in Anatolia. The Ottoman state entered into a diplomatic struggle to counter Armenian propaganda by corresponding with counterparts abroad, sometimes achieving its aim. In Spain, the Ottoman lobby persuaded the newspaper *Iberia de Madrid* to publish official Ottoman reports that (from the state's perspective) "revealed lies of the Armenians' assertion of massacre."[586]

In addition to periodicals, the Ottoman government banned from its territory some books and other publications that questioned its sovereignty in Greater Syria.[587] It seems, however, that this ban did not ultimately solve the problem: propaganda was being

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[584] BOA, M.V. 136_3 04.M.1328, 16.01.1910 and BOA, M.V. 194_18, 08.Z.1332, 20.10.1914, *"….anasır-ı müslümey-i hükümet ve anasır-ı saire-i müslimeyi Türkler aleyhine sevk ve tahrik edecek surette neşriyat-ı muzırrada bulunmalarına binaen matbuat-ı kanuninin 35 inci maddesi mucebince memalik-i Osmaniye'ye men-i idhalleri….."*

[585] BOA, HR.SYS, 2421_85, 10.06.1916, nu.1.

[586] BOA, HR.SYS, 2885_58, 01.07.1918.

[587] *Al Akd fi'd din"* was one of the name of the books that are prohibited see BOA, DH.MKT, 986_38, 12.Ca.1323, 15.07.1905.

imported to Greater Syria through thousands of private letters sent by Ottoman subjects living in Argentina and Brazil to their relatives in the homeland. The Ottoman head consul in Brazil in one correspondence wrote:

> It is possible to ban the entrance of such newspapers to the provinces of our country. But it is not possible to restrain the thousands of letters, sent each week to their relatives in Syria and Lebanon that are written by the Ottoman immigrants in Argentina, who are poisoned by these newspapers.[588]

The head consul argued that the empire could cope with this problem only by developing a definite policy for Latin America. He stated that the anti-Ottoman immigrants—who were also Ottoman subjects—in Latin America were mostly rich (most engaged in trade) and had the potential to use their money to harm the empire's prestige abroad. What is more, they were so malevolent that using their power and influence, they could manipulate the political thought of their ignorant relatives in Syria and Lebanon. For this reason, and in order to control and gain the trust of its subjects in these far-off places, the Porte should send more representatives to the region to work on behalf of the empire.[589]

In response to what it considered a great threat to its position and reputation developing in the Americas, the Ottoman central government at the turn of the century began appointing representatives to be posted abroad; these men were mostly of Arab origin and many were familiar with several foreign languages.[590] Obviously, the reason behind opting for Arabs as representative was a response to the fact that the great majority of Ottoman emigrants in Latin America were Arabs. Moreover, considering the negative

[588] BOA, HR SYS 76_4 nu.10 cited in Mehmet Temel, XIX. ve XX. yüzyılda …,.116.
[589] BOA, HR.SYS 76_4 cited in ibid,112–118.
[590] BOA, DH.ID., 85_37, 22.Za.1330, 02.11.1912.

propaganda decrying the Ottoman Empire, the Porte probably surmised that an Arab representative who was loyal to the empire could draw Ottoman subjects abroad closer to the empire.

V

The Attempts of Shamuns and Emin Arslan to Lead Ottoman Immigrants to Agriculture

Until the appointment of the first Ottoman consul to Argentina, "preserving the rights of Ottoman immigrants" in that country was the primary concern of Arab dignitaries there. The precarious situation of Arab immigrants in Argentina prompted Arab traders, religious figures, and intellectuals to seek remedies for the immigrants' deteriorating social and economic position, as well as to boost the prestige of the Ottoman Arab community in Argentina.

The owners of the daily Arabic-language newspaper *As-Salam*, Wadi Shamun and İskender (Alejandro) Shamun, were the leaders of this campaign. *As-Salam* was a highly influential journal and the chief mouthpiece denouncing xenophobic attacks against Ottoman Arabs in Argentina. During the years before the Ottomans appointed an official diplomatic representative, İskender Shamun, as a representative of the community, tried to establish de facto bridges between the policy makers of the homeland and of Argentina. On the Argentinean side, they had close ties with Victorino de Plaza, who was the foreign minister; while on the Ottoman side, they worked closely with foreign minister Ali Rıza Bey through Suleyman el-Bustani, the Beirut representative in the Ottoman parliament. Having observed the enthusiasm of the Shamun brothers and other Ottoman immigrants, in 1908 the governors of both countries agreed on the appointment of İskender Shamun as

temporary consul of the Ottoman Empire in Argentina. He, would be responsible for handling official matters of the Ottoman community in Argentina.

The principal endeavour of the Shamun brothers was to repair the damaged imperial reputation, which had resulted almost entirely from the negative attitudes of peddlers in Buenos Aires. For this purpose, İskender Shamun planned to lead the Ottoman subjects in Argentina away from "inferior" jobs like hawking in city centres.[591] He first tried to prevent newcomers from joining the ranks of peddlers, seeking to persuade them to take up jobs in the agricultural sector. Even if this was unappealing to them, at the very least it attempted to settle numerous immigrants in areas outside the large cities.[592]

In order to implement this project, in 1901, the Shamun brothers appealed to the director of immigration in Argentina, Juan Alsina, to grant new rights and opportunities to Ottoman newcomers that would place them on equal footing with all the other European immigrants. As a result of negotiations with the director, Iskender obtained the right to host Ottoman newcomers in the Immigrants' Hotel, from where they would be sent to the agricultural fields. But it was not so easy to lead Arab newcomers towards the rural regions because they were often recruited ahead of time by relatives or the *mumevvin*s who covered their travelling expenses before they even arrived in Argentina. The situation began to change in December 1905, however, when the Shamuns' journal managed to secure loans from the government to help four thousand Ottomans settle in *chacras* (agricultural estates

[591] Hugo L. *Ponsati, Sirios y Libaneses en el Noreste Argentina: Presencis y Aporte*, unpublished paper, Tucuman, 1987,31 cited in Michael Murphey, "Ethnic History Nationalism and Trans Nationalism in Argentine Arab and Jewish Societies." In *Arab and Jewish immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities*, ed. Ignacio Klich, Jeffrey Lesser (London: Portland, OR : F. Cass, 1998), 48.
[592] Ignacio Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers …,276.

of twenty-five to one hundred hectares).[593] Even so, even this number affected only a small proportion of the vast numbers of immigrants arriving from imperial lands. Within twelve years, the campaign of the Shamuns persuaded only one thousand people to settle in rural regions and to take up agriculture.[594]

It is not difficult to guess the reasons why this project failed. Simply put, people who worked as itinerant peddlers in Buenos Aires were able to earn two to four times more money than those who worked in agriculture. *As-Salam*, naturally, could not persuade the newcomers to become permanent agricultural labourers when their main goal was to obtain a certain sum of money and to return home as soon as possible.[595] Ultimately, as Juan Alsina points out, efforts to channel Ottoman Arabs towards agriculture did not produce the desired result. Many of them soon abandoned the fields they had been assigned and returned to the cities to peddle.[596]

Ultimately, the imperial authorities determined that having a representative in Argentina was the surest way to influence the situation there. The appointment of Emin Arslan Bey as consul general in 1910 opened a new chapter for Arabs in Argentina. This appointment was meaningful for the Ottoman community there because it meant that the government of the homeland had finally responded positively to the expectations of its subjects abroad. In addition, from the beginning of his tenure, Emin Arslan's great anxiety to improve social and economic conditions for the Arab community in Argentina led many

[593] Ibid. 277.
[594] Alberto Tasso Aventura, *Trabajo y Poder: Sirios y Libaneses en Santiago del Estero 1880–1980*, (Buenos Aires, Ediciones Indice, 1989), 327.
[595] Ignacio Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers…, 277.
[596] Juan Alsina, *Sketch of the Argentine Republic as a country for Immigration,* (Buenos Aires: *Ministerio de Agricultura,* 1904), cited in Ignacio Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers…,88.

Arab intellectuals to respect this young diplomat. The journals within the community praised the ambassador and his efforts, regarding them as "an efficient contribution to the progress in all respects of numerous Arab communities" and proclaiming that "the awaited prince had exceeded all expectations."[597]

Arslan came from the prominent Lebanese Shuf family, one of the three clans whose male members were entitled to call themselves emirs. Apart from this prestigious social position, Arslan's close ties with the Young Turks must have provided him with extra capital in dealing with Ottoman subjects in Argentina. Although he was of Druze origin, he was not unfamiliar with the Christian Ottoman subjects in Argentina because he had been educated in Christian institutions: a Maronite school and a Beirut Jesuit university.[598]

During the years he worked as consul general of the empire, Emin Arslan's aims were in many ways similar to what the Shamuns had attempted to do. As a prestige conscientious bureaucrat,[599] he was preoccupied with correcting the negative image of Arabs in the perception of politicians, intellectuals, and society. Like Shamuns, he believed that the key to achieving this was putting an end to peddling and encouraging Ottoman immigrants to work in agriculture. But the method Emin Arslan used was quite different than from that of the Shamuns. Aware of the failure of the earlier attempt of *As-Salam*, the

[597] Diario Syrio Libaneses, *Al Jarida AL Suriyya al Lubnanaiyya*, Buenos Aires Jan 10, 1946. cited in Klich, Ignacio. "Argentine-ottoman Relations and Their Impact on Immigrants from the Middle East: a History of Unfulfilled Expectations, 1910–1915," *The Americas* 50, no.2 (1993):186.
[598] See Ignacio Klich, "Argentine-Ottoman Relations…,182–183.
[599] Ibid.,181.

consul general set out to accomplish this goal by eliminating other options, particularly peddling rather than struggling to persuade them for not to work as peddler.[600]

Arslan worked to establish links with local authorities and to persuade the governing elites of Argentina to help move his compatriots into agriculture, arguing that this would be best both for his community and for Argentinean society. He sent official letters to the Argentinian foreign minister at the time, Ernesto Bosch, attesting that

> right after his arrival to Argentina's Capital, he began to work to direct the Ottoman Syrio-Lebanese towards agriculture, which is not only the real work but (comparing to peddling) the work that is more intense and permanent.[601]

For the purpose of ending itinerant peddling altogether, Arslan suggested that the Argentine authorities not issue licences to itinerant vendors except those who possessed a health certificate confirming that they were physically incapable of doing any other kind of work. Arslan also suggested that those who were peddling in the countryside should be tolerated because, he argued, they provided a service to inhabitants of rural areas by providing otherwise inaccessible goods.

The response of interior minister Indeleacio Gomez to these proposals was unexpected. Although he appreciated the ideas, Gomez thought that reducing the number of licences or delaying their issue would not be functional. What is more, he indicated that it was not possible to take official measures "that would deprive certain individuals of the right to exercise activities that are lawful and protected by the Constitution." In Gomez's view, it was better to raise the prices of the licences rather than to abolish them altogether. This position meant the failure of Emin Arslan's plans, at least for a time, but the consul's

[600] Ibid.,195.
[601] Ibid.,196.

campaign yielded one positive result: the informal agreement between Juan Alsina and İskender Shamun provided an opportunity for Ottoman immigrants interested in agricultural production to stay in the government-run Immigrants' Hotel for a three-day period after landing in Argentina. The time limit was extended to two months in October 1912.[602]

After Gomez's reply to his proposal, Arslan sent letters to various provincial governors encouraging them to raise the prices of their peddling licences. The hope was that once prices reached a critical point, peddling would eventually decline and disappear. But none of the provincial authorities took action to increase the cost of a peddler's licence.[603]

Arslan persisted. Still aiming to combat the negative image of Ottoman peddlers, in December 1913, he submitted another proposal to foreign minister Bosch presenting information about abuses of the licence, illustrated with examples. He reported that each year in the province of Buenos Aires, Ottomans who had failed to obtain a licence borrowed or rented licences from others in order to enter into trade. There was no strict control over them. If any official asked one of these men to identify himself, he promptly gave the name of the licensee. If asked to provide the permit, he pretended to have forgotten his document. Apart from these illegal activities, many such people stole and committed other crimes and, by changing their names and addresses, eluded justice. Again aiming to prevent such behaviour, Arslan asked Bosch whether it would be possible to oblige Ottoman peddlers to carry "an identity card with their photograph and signature."

[602] Ibid.,196–197.
[603] Klich points out that interior minister's stalling might have played important role in the decision of provincial powers.

Although at first glance this recommendation seems quite legitimate, it would not have been easy to implement.[604] Ultimately, this plan too was rejected as impractical.

After Arslan realised that it would be difficult if not impossible to drive Ottomans to work in agriculture in Pampas, he tried to persuade the Porte to stop emigration from Syria and Lebanon to Argentina. In 1911, the consul sent a detailed report on the number and some characteristics of the Ottoman immigrants who had arrived in Argentina the previous year. In his report's conclusion, he suggested that halting the emigration movements in Syria and Lebanon would benefit both Argentina and the Ottoman Empire.[605]

During the first three years of his tenure as consul general in Argentina, Arslan worked actively to establish strong ties between Argentinean and Ottoman diplomats, and his political position within the UPP facilitated this aim. Beginning in his third year at the consulate, however, disagreements emerged between Emin Arslan and party leadership in İstanbul, which rejected petitions that Arslan sent on behalf of himself and his consulate. For example, on 12 March 1912, citing the gradual rise in the number of Ottoman subjects in Argentina, Arslan asked the Ottoman government to negotiate with Argentinean counterparts to extend his authority to encompass all Argentinean territory (not only Buenos Aires).[606] Likewise, twelve days later, Arslan sent another petition asking the Ottoman administration to raise his salary. This letter mentioned the high cost of living in

[604] See Ignacio Klich, "Argentine-Ottoman Relations…,197–198.
[605] BOA, DH.SN.THR, 31_109, nu.9–12, 20.R.1330, 08.04.1912.
[606] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO, 10_20 28.Şu.1327, also see HR TO 405_74, 23.02.1912.

Argentina and stated that the salary Arslan received was not sufficient to cover even the rent of the empire's consulate in Argentina.[607] Both requests were denied by İstanbul.

Ultimately, these conflicts brought an end to Arslan's service as consul general in Buenos Aires, which had lasted nearly five years. In those five years, the UPP's perception of Emin Arslan had completely changed; the brilliant young diplomat had become a troublemaker. After the start of World War I, he was recalled to İstanbul and dismissed for violating the law.[608] On 3 March 1915, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that the reason for his dismissal was that he had not sent the consulate's budget report for two years although several warnings had been sent to him.[609]

However, looking at Arslan's writings on Argentina, Klich suggests that some deeper reasons were behind the decision to dismiss the consul—chiefly his severe criticism of the alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Germany. Under the nom de plume "Diplomat" and completely *en clair*, Arslan expressed his opposition to the empire's choice of Germany as an ally in the war. After his deposition, on 8 October 1916 the Porte entrusted Ottoman consular affairs in Argentina to the German representatives in Buenos Aires.[610] The Porte also sentenced Arslan to death for treason. After learning that he had been condemned in absentia, Emin Arslan chose to remain in Argentina, where he remained for the rest of his life; he died in January 1943.[611] The dismissal of Emin Arslan

[607] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO 74_36, 24.Ni.1328.
[608] BOA, HR.SYS, 2266_26, 14.05.1915.
[609] BOA, I.HR, nu. 1 and 2, 17.R.1333, 04.03.1915.
[610] BOA, HR.SYS, 77_9. Actually from that date on the diplomatic correspondences with Argentina would be held in German language.
[611] Emin Arslan was very active in communal activities. He was the president of Druze Beneficent Society. Since 1941 Emin was chosen to lead the First Pan-Arab Congress in America which aimed to bring all Arabs with its all fractions under one umbrella. See Ignacio Klich, "Argentine-Ottoman Relations…,184–185.

from the position of consulate brought an end to the official representation of the Ottoman Empire in Argentina, and it would not be constructed again until the Republican period.

CHAPTER 7

Ottoman Arabs in the United States

Although Ottoman immigrants in the United States remained less numerous than other European immigrant groups there,[612] they nevertheless constituted the largest population of Ottoman Arabs living in the Western Hemisphere. This chapter sketches the overall state of Ottoman Arab immigration to the United States: their social and economic integration into host societies, together with the problems faced and hardships they endured, from the first waves of migration in the 1880s until immigration skidded to halt at the outbreak of World War I.

For this examination, three important sources have proven quite helpful: first, dossiers about the United States in the Ottoman Archives, mostly preserved in files of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry; second, related American news media reports of events in various states; and third private surveys addressing Ottoman Arabs in the United States conducted by private initiatives and publications of the U.S. Commission of Immigration during the relevant period.

I

Archival sources and especially U.S. newspaper archives, along with the personal accounts of Ottomans in the United States, suggest that the first Ottoman arrival to the United States

[612] Actually, the gross total of Ottoman Immigration constituted on the average slightly less than 2 percent of the total immigration to the USA, Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey, 1830–1930: An Economic Interpretation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932), 320.

coincided with the empire's participation in the Chicago World's Fair, also known as the World's Colombian Exposition, held in 1893 to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the New World[613]. The forty-six countries participating in the exposition presented themselves there with the stuff that had made them famous in the eyes of other countries. The Ottoman Empire participated in the fair with strong encouragement from the Sultan, who sought to rectify the negative reputation of the Ottoman as "the sick man of Europe."[614]

The exposition was also taken quite seriously by Ottoman delegates. In 1890, three years before the event, the American press announced that seventy Syrians had arrived on the steamer *Severia*, several of whom planned continue on to California, though their purpose for the time being was to exhibit their work at the Chicago World's Fair.[615] In the American press, the fair was at times reported on with particular attention to the Syrians' position in it, especially regarding their exhibit's reincarnation of an oriental bazaar, replete with Bedouin dresses, dancing girls, traditional fabrics, and lost arts.[616]

According to the general narrative, the Chicago Fair was a critical point for Ottoman immigration to the Americas, in that it persuaded Syrians that the United States could provide them with an alternative living space. Still, this starting point has been romanticised and represents little of the whole history, since most Ottoman immigrants, according to the statistics shown below, were of peasant origin: their legal, social, and economic backgrounds encouraged them to venture to the United States to make money

[613] For Chicago Fair see also Adèle Linda Younis and Philip M. Kayal, *The Coming of the Arabic Speaking Peoples to the United States* (Staten Island, N.Y.: Center for Migration Studies, 1995).
[614] Gülşen Sevinç, Ayşe Fazlıoğlu, "Turkish Participation to 1893 Chicago Exposition," *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no.31 (2000):21–30.
[615] Deseret Evening News, December 03, 1890.
[616] The Wheeling Daily Intelligencer, June 27, 1893, 7

quickly.[617] The typical story in which first-wavers invite others to follow shortly after their own arrival proved true for Ottomans. Ottoman immigrants soon began to establish communities in the United States.

In fact, the idea of establishing a separate, large-scale community in the United States for immigrating Syrians emerged directly prior to the Chicago World's Fair. By the late 1880s, rumours were circulating about wealthy Syrians who intended to establish a community in New York or Pennsylvania—to be called New Damascus; these reports can be traced to the American press. According to the news, the planned community would aim to provide employment to all newcomers from Syria "who have no other plans and who might become public charges unless aided."[618] The first news of the intended community in Washington County, New York, named one proponent, Civil War General J. D. Imboden, in January 1888.[619] Another article named the site of Saint Bernardino County, Louisiana, which was described as a cosmopolitan county that played host to immigrants of various nations.[620] However, both of these projects failed not long after their initiation.

A more serious attempt seems to have been made official on 15 December 1890, when the Syrian community in New York agreed to purchase thousands of acres for the site of a town in either Pennsylvania or Arizona, where a comfortable living for Syrians could be furnished by the cultivation of silk, fruit, and other crops.[621] For this purpose, the Syrian

[617] Other studies have traced the first existence of Syrians in the U.S. to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, where a few Syrian woodworkers participated by exhibiting crafts made from various olive woods. Still, this event generally proved to be of less significance than Chicago's World Fair. See Lucius H. Miller, *Our Syrian Population: A Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates,1969), 5 and Edith M. Stein, Some Near Eastern Immigrant Groups in Chicago, (Master Dissertation, University of Chicago, June, 1922), 64.
[618] Deseret Evening News, December 03, 1890, The Sun., December 02, 1890, 9.
[619] Staunton Spectator, January 11, 1888.
[620] Los Angeles Daily Herald, May 21, 1888, 8.
[621] Pittsburgh Dispatch, December 16, 1890, 1.

community in the United States authorised lawyer Townsend Scudder to locate the desired tract in either the South or Southwest of the country.[622] No any other news items in the American press reported upon the project's future, however, which most likely never materialised.

Population Distribution

Although little is known about the early days of the first Ottoman Arabs in the United States and initial Ottoman attempts to establish communities there, primary sources strongly suggest that Syrian communities had spread across the United States by the end of the nineteenth century. As shown in Figure 9, the distribution of Ottoman immigrants in the United States was highly heterogeneous compared to their Italian, French, and Russian counterparts.

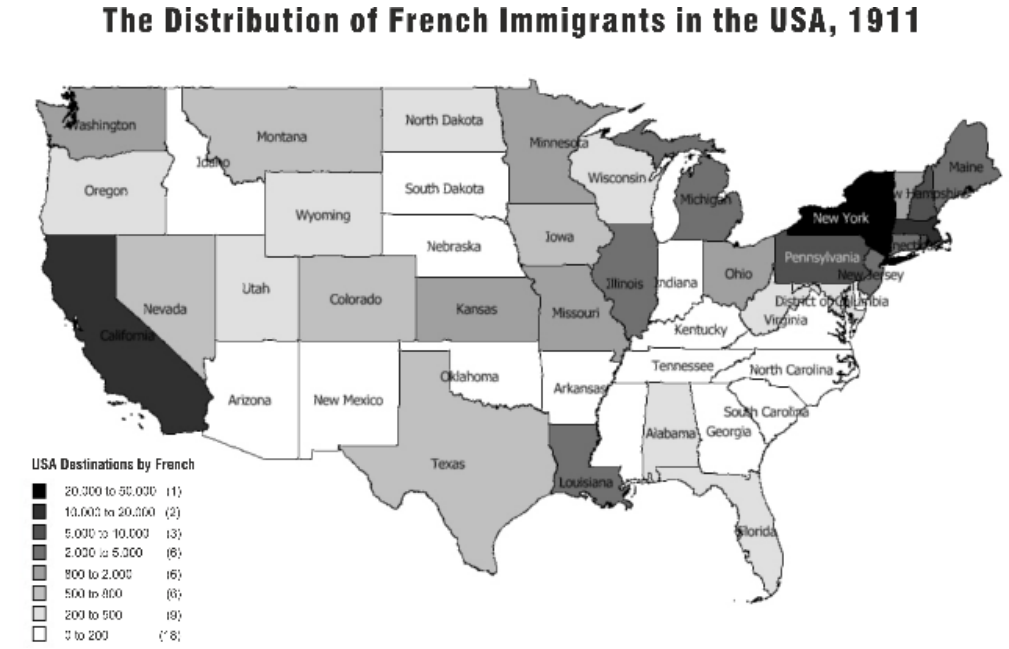
As the maps demonstrate, New York (32.28 percent), Massachusetts (15.20 percent), and Pennsylvania (12.86 percent) had the greatest number of Ottoman immigrants, followed by Ohio, Indiana, and Connecticut. Notably, Texas also received 1.85 percent of the newcomers. Figure 9 suggests that until 1911, at least 60 percent of Ottoman Arab immigrants in the United States had settled in the already densely populated industrial centres on the Atlantic seaboard. As discussed in chapter 6, this reality of Ottoman settlement can be best explained by the primary economic sector in which Ottoman Americans engaged: peddling.

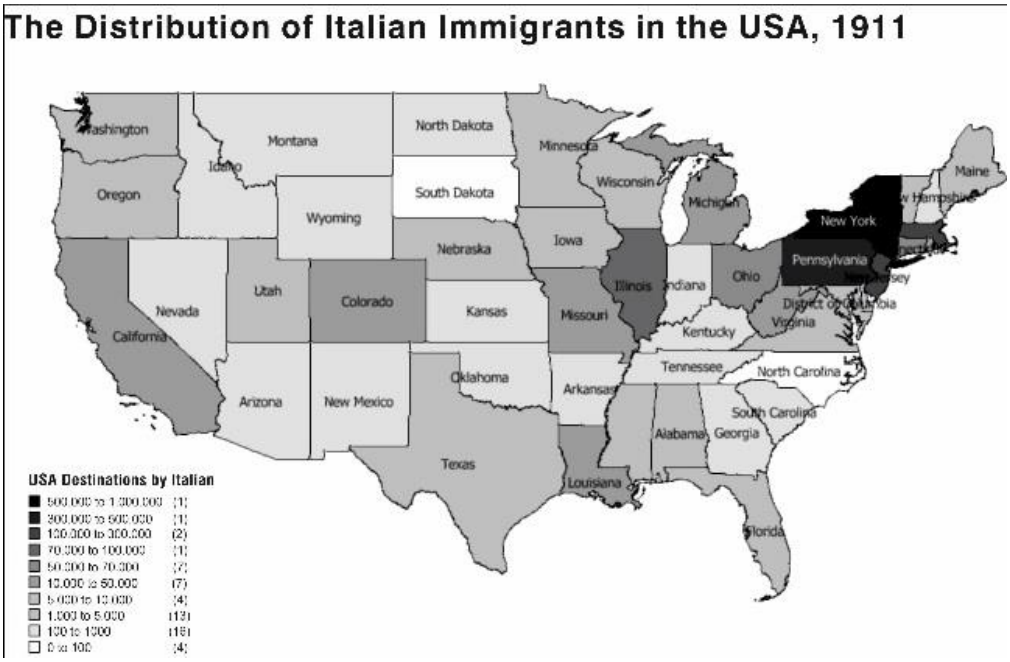
Also in Figure 9, the very dark colours of Texas and California indicate that a significant portion of Ottomans settled in these states. The reason for this less popular trend in settlement may stem from clandestine movements of Ottoman Arabs into the United

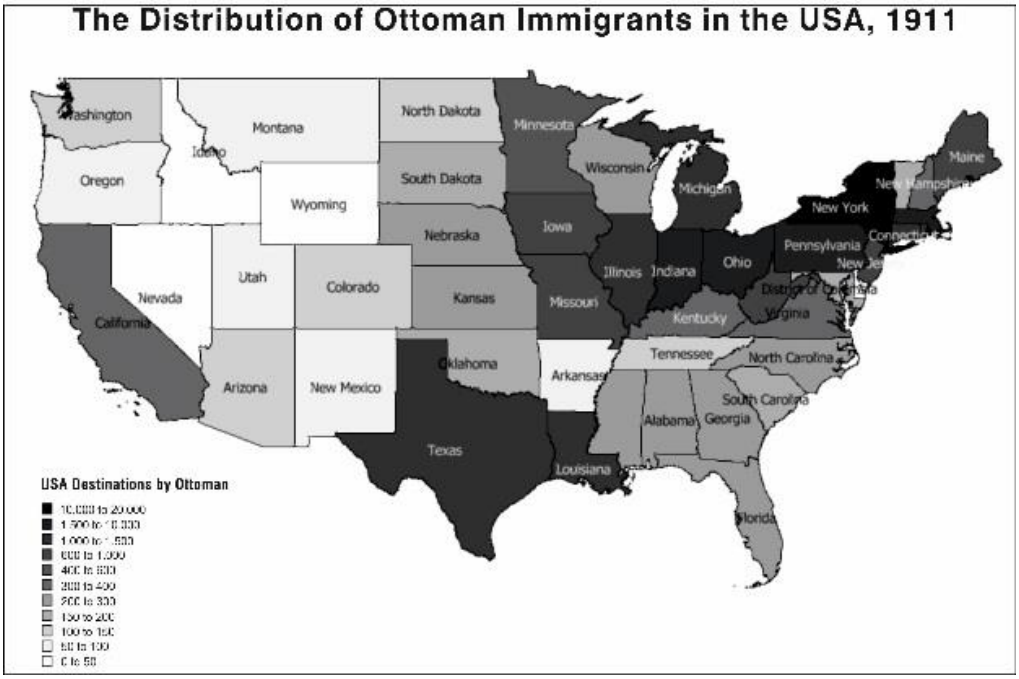
[622] The St. Johns Herald, September 17, 1891.

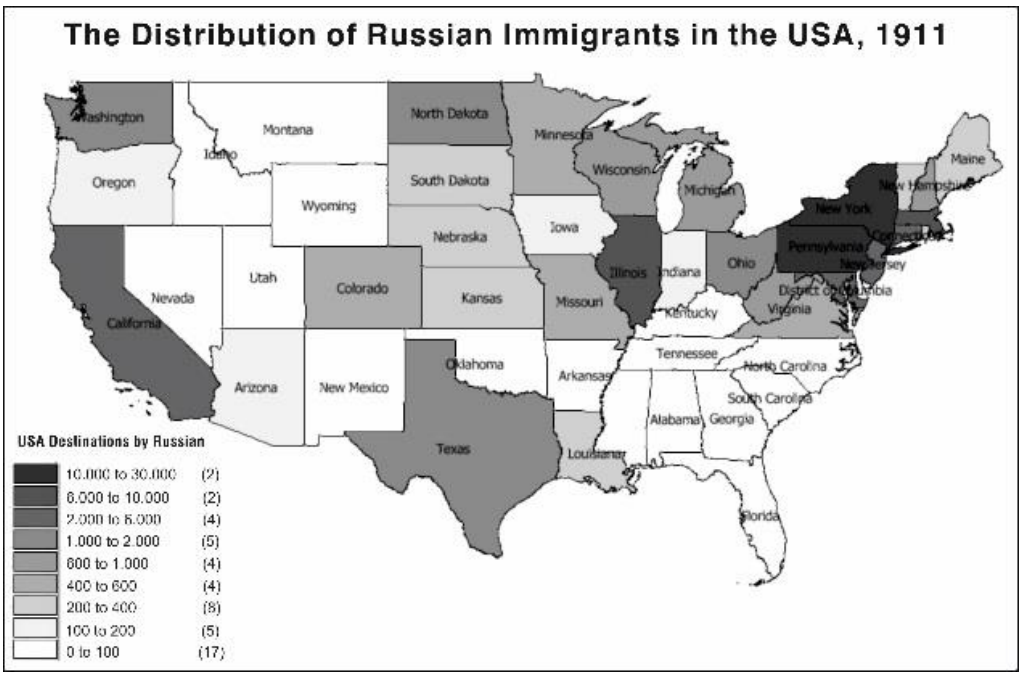
States from the northern border of Mexico, as well as the magnetism of early comers, who rallied followers while settling in their respective states and, once there, established communities.

Figure 9: The Geographic Distribution of European and the Ottoman-Arab Immigrants in the USA in 1911









From 1903 onwards, an illustrative survey conducted by Lucius Hopkins Miller, a student at Union Theological Seminary, provides significant numerical data about Ottoman Arabs

in the Greater New York area.[623] This survey poses significant representative power, for it was undertaken among the largest bloc of the Ottoman Arab population in the United States. It also provides numerical data regarding Ottoman Americans that can be compared with that for other immigrant groups.[624] Though these two types of evidence remain unavailable from official U.S. records, it should nevertheless be noted that the population subset that Miller investigated comprised, as he indicated, the poorest Syrian Americans,[625] which proves to be a drawback compared to official records of the U.S. Immigration Commission.

Schooling and Education

As far as the language skills of Ottoman Americans are concerned, at first glance it appears that they initially intended to improve their English-speaking skills—naturally, because such skills were necessary above all else for improved daily living. Of the Ottoman Americans older than age five, over a quarter could speak, read, and write English in a more or less passable way. Approximately 25 percent of them could speak English but not read or write it well, while another 30 percent could read and write Arabic, their native language.[626]

Education statistics show that Ottoman Americans were keen to obtain education in their new home. According to Miller's survey data, of school-age children aged six to fourteen years old within the Syrian community of New York, 74.7 percent were enrolled in school.

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[623] In Miller's study, Greater New York encompassed Brooklyn, Manhattan, and South Ferry.
[624] Miller's this study took place in American Press. The Sun characterized the survey as "an important scientific study" see The Sun., November 22, 1903, 3.
[625] The Sun., November 22, 1903, 3.
[626] Lucius Miller, *Our Syrian Population: A Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York*. Reprint. (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates, 1969), 9.

Considering the meagre educational background of first-generation Ottoman immigrants, as detailed in chapter 2, this figure marks quite a shift in Ottomans' accessibility to institutional education.

Table 6: Linguistic Capabilities of the Ottoman-Arabs in the Greater New York in 1911 (values are in percentages)

Linguistic capabilities of Ottoman Arabs in Greater New York (% of immigrant population)				
	Speak English	Speak, read, write English	Speak but not read or write English	Read and write Arabic
Males over 5 years old	59.9	32.2	27.7	60.9
Females over 5 years old	41.2	23.6	17.6	27.8
Male adults	47.1	20.1	27	70.2
Female adults	25.8	10.6	15.2	28.4
Male children over 5 Years	87.8	61.6	26.2	39.9
Female children over 5 years	74.8	53.6	21.2	28.5

Source: Lucius Miller, *Our Syrian Population: A Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York*. Reprint. (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates, 1969), 34–35.

By institution, less than half of Ottoman students (45.5 percent) attended public schools, while 20.1 percent were enrolled in Catholic day schools, and another 14.7 percent in Protestant day schools. The choice of secular schools over religious ones may be attributed to the Syrian community's general aspirations to integrate into American society. One interesting point regarding these figures is that 8.2 percent of all students were educated at unusual times of the day, since they worked during the regular school day.[627] The remaining Ottoman children were reportedly home-schooled.[628] Clearly, for Ottomans, immigration to the United States greatly elevated the educational level of both immigrants and their children.

[627] Miller *Our Syrian Population…,* 10.
[628] Miller *Our Syrian Population…*,33. For this topic also see Edith M. Stein, Some Near Eastern ..., 74.

Religion

The religious distribution of the Syrian community in the United States was quite similar to that in the empire. In all three districts of the Greater New York area, Catholics remained dominant. In this respect, it should be noted that Maronites were recorded in a category separate from Catholics, a method that differs from the statistical classification in Argentina.[629] Considering that a significant number of Ottoman immigrants were of Maronite background, it is likely that many Ottoman Arabs converted to another Catholic sect after arriving in the United States, an argument crystallised by the Ottoman records.[630] At the same time, the small number of Muslims among these statistics can be explained by either their general lack of interest in settling in Greater New York or by the investigator's lapse. The latter explanation seems more likely, since official American records-based studies have estimated that Muslims constituted 5 percent of the total Ottoman Arab immigrant population in the United States.[631]

Table 7: Religious Distribution of the Ottoman-Arabs living in the Greater New York in 1911 (number families and individuals)

	Manhattan		South Ferry or Brooklyn		South Brooklyn	
	Families	Individuals	Fam.	Ind.	Fam.	Ind.
Catholic	184	700	56	217	16	82
Maronite	136	500	47	182	14	58
Greek Orthodox	105	385	38	148	6	32
Protestant	25	68	20	78	7	24
Druze and Muslim	3	5				
Jewish		1				
Metawely		2				
Total	453	1661	161	625	43	196

Source: Lucius Miller, *Our Syrian Population: A Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York*, Reprint. (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates, 1969), 11.

[629] In other statistical records, including Argentina, Censo de Cuidad de Buenos Aires, 1936.
[630] BOA, HR.SYS. 54_1, 22.1.1896.
[631] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey…*,322.

Occupation

In the United States, the occupational affiliations of Ottoman Arabs did not greatly differ from those in Latin American countries. As there, in the United States peddling was the dominant occupation filled by Ottomans, though it was not the only means of earning income. Many Arabs, especially those located in states other than New York, worked to construct U.S. rail systems,[632] while numerous others were employed at various coal mines and as both labourers and skilled workmen in factories, mills, and rail-related industries.[633] In New York, the kimono industry was generally dominated by Syrians, who in 1916 operated thirty-five factories there for Syrian exporters and importers.[634]

Arab insistence upon not working on plantations or in any agricultural sector whatsoever was not as strong in the United States as it was in Argentina. Syrians in the States were known to seek out agricultural work, and more than a few Syrian proprietor-farmers reportedly operated in U.S. Midwest and the West.[635] One illustrative example of this case that appeared in Texas's *Shiner Gazette* reported that a group of Syrians had passed through Denison en route to Colorado, where they planned to seek agricultural labour; if unsuccessful, they would continue on to California.[636]

Nevertheless, according to Miller's survey, one-third of immigrant wage workers were engaged in peddling, while more than a quarter were employed in factories. By extension, the vast majority of Syrian businessmen were either store or factory owners. As

[632] The Sun., April 22, 1894, 5.
[633] Syrians in the US, Literary Digest, May,3 1917 61:43 cited in Edith M. Stein, *Some Near Eastern* … 73.
[634] American Review of Reviews, Nov, 1916, 54:333–4 Syrians and Arabians in America cited in Edith M. Stein, *Some Near Eastern* …,73.
[635] Edith M. Stein, Some Near Eastern…, 73.
[636] Shiner Gazette, February 13, 1901.

concerns peddling, with few exceptions and excluding a handful of high-class peddlers, most peddlers in the Syrian American community found work in Manhattan.

Table 8: Occupational Distribution of the Ottoman-Arabs in the Greater New York in 1911, (values are in percentages)

Occupational distribution of the Ottoman Arabs in Greater New York (%)						
	Manhattan	South Ferry	South Brooklyn	Whole Community	Male	Female
Peddling	34,4	18,2	10,9	30,0	63,6	36,4
Factory	28,7	21,8	18,2	26,8	58,0	42,0
Store	18,5	33,6	56,4	23,6	93,1	6,9
Sawing	12,9	12,9	7,3	12,5	2,0	98,0
Clerk	3,9	7,7	7,2	4,8	88,6	11,4
Profession	1,6	5,8		2,3	85,1	14,9
Total	100	100	100	100		

Source: Lucius Miller, *Our Syrian Population: A Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York*, Reprint. (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates, 1969), 28.

Peddling attracted Ottoman Arabs for very clear reasons. Above all, Ottomans took up peddling because they did not intend to stay in the United States but hoped instead to return home as soon as they had earned enough money. The story of wholesalers who recruited young countrymen from their villages also applied in the United States, where recruitment played a pivotal role in sustaining Ottoman Arabs' success with peddling. These young peddlers were urged on by Arab wholesalers who had grown rich by importing eastern goods such as silk, embroidery, rugs, and carpets, as well as by selling cheap goods, dry goods, and other oriental items.[637] These items often came from Syria, Lebanon, or İstanbul, and their importation provided good business opportunities for Syrians, who would sell the items to wholesalers, as well as to peddlers.[638]

[637] The Sun., December 23, 1890, p.3, and The Pacific Commercial Advertiser., July 27, 1903, 3.
[638] New-York Tribune., October 02, 1892 and The Sun., April 22, 1894, 5.

The establishment of peddling networks by and among Ottoman Arabs in the United States seems to have been a major factor in strengthening the Syrian community's solidarity via kinship affiliation. Newcomers did not feel alone because their occupations and accommodations had been prepared in advance. As U.S. Immigration Commission data show, 95 percent of all Ottoman Arab immigrants who arrived in the United States during the fiscal years 1908 and 1909 joined their relatives or friends there.[639]

Table 7 contradicts the common generalisation that peddling was a typically masculine profession, for roughly one-third of Arab peddlers were women. Numerous reports in the American press[640] mention women peddlers, which suggests that peddling was most likely a family business conducted by both husbands and wives and, if applicable, their children. For instance, on 4 December 1894, the *Scranton Tribune* reported the interesting case of a Syrian husband-and-wife peddling duo—by name, Asaph Gobreen and Selma Gobreen—who were arrested for smuggling thousands of dollars' worth of Turkish embroidery and luxury items into Detroit without paying customs. The report added that Selma Gobreen had been arrested in Boston the preceding year.[641]

As in Argentina, the image of the immigrant peddler portrayed not only Syrians but also Italians,[642] though as the American press shows, especially by the 1900s, peddling was mostly associated with Ottoman Arabs. The image of the Arab peddler is summarised well in one article of the New York *Sun* as follows:

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[639] William P. Dillingham and William S. Bennet, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1911), vol.4 Table 38, 59.
[640] The Saint Paul globe., March 22, 1903, 21.
[641] The Scranton Tribune., December 04, 1894, 1.
[642] The Weekly Messenger., February 23, 1907, 1. As in one Newspaper described, When Syrians were asked, most people would reply "Jewish peddler" Some Americans say "only a dago with a hand-organ," Englishmen would undoubtedly say he was a gypsy, while the Scotsmen would swear that he was a "thievin' thinker."
The Pacific Commercial Advertiser, July 27, 1903, 3.

> There are among the capitalists some who bear to their dependents about the same relation that the padrones do to the Italians. The natives who come here very poor, have money advanced to them for passage and when they get here they are supported for a while and trusted with goods to sell until they are able to accumulate a little capital.[643]

Peddling was not always the result of a free choice for young Ottoman Arab immigrants. For many, and in the eyes of many, peddling was a job for desperate people who had sacrificed their futures by coming to the United States or who had already been economically defeated at home. A report from the *New York Tribune* perhaps best illustrates this theme:

> But the others? The rank and file, what of them? Who debt for coming to America? The handicap of debt is seen in feverish anxiety with which the new-comer seeks to master the English language to get into the trade to begin making money.[644]

By the 1900s, the American press began to report that peddling was in decline within Arab society in New York,[645] a trend that some have argued is attributable to the corresponding decline in the personal influence of the Syrian community on Washington Street. At the same time, the increase in Greek immigration to the United States may have prompted the rise of Greek padrones in New York. Nevertheless, the American press kept closer watch over Syrian peddling activity than it did Greek.[646]

II

Syrians' Social Lives in the United States and How They Were Perceived by Americans

The trends characterising Ottomans' beginnings and expansion in the United States highly resemble those in Argentina, except regarding their depiction in popular, public, and

[643] The Sun, December 23, 1890, 3.
[644] New-York Tribune, October 02, 1892.
[645] The Saint Paul Globe., March 22, 1903, 21.
[646] Red River Prospector, June 12, 1902, 3.

political opinion. Unlike those in Argentina, the image of Arab peddlers in the United States did not imply insult or use pejorative language, largely because Arabs themselves were not subject to concerted social and political attack in the United States as they were in Argentina. By contrast, many American newspapers depicted Arabs as "law-abiding,[647] thrifty and generally industrious and honest people. Thereby they were among the most desirable of the foreign elements that maintain strict individuality."[648]

Furthermore, the American press was sensitive enough to differentiate the Arab peddler from the beggar—two characters that were confused in other places. For instance, the *Record Union* reported that Syrians were not beggars of private organisations, citizens, or the municipality and reminded readers that, "during the so-called famine of 1893, no Syrian applied for help to the Charity Commission, though some of almost every other nationality represented in New York were forced to fall back upon the State for succour."[649] Given Arabs' perceived self-reliance and diligence, images and descriptions of Arabs in the American press were not usually crude or offensive. Even a fight between two Syrian peddlers in New York that resulted in one's injury—an event ripe for derogatory comments from upstanding citizens—was reported only to have caused "considerable excitement in the Syrian Colony."[650]

One chief reason for such a positive portrayal of Ottoman Arabs might stem from Arab Americans' enthusiasm in adopting American behaviour. They were commonly depicted as an immigrant group keen to embrace American lifestyles; for example, one

[647] The Sun., July 30, 1905, 15.
[648] The Saint Paul Globe., March 22, 1903, 21.
[649] The Record-Union., April 03, 1899, 8.
[650] The Evening Herald, December 04, 1894, 1.

article stated that "in daily life, the American dress is closely followed by the Syrians."[651] Among all news media, the New York *Sun* perhaps most often stressed the Syrians' positive characteristics and thereby averted prejudice that might have otherwise formed among other Americans. One article stated, "The New Yorker who visits the haunts of the Syrian community in this city expecting to find himself surrounded by odd reminders of Biblical countries and customs, soon learns that he has made a mistake." By contrast, according to the newspaper, it was easy for Americans "to talk with any of the male members of the Syrian community, for they have all come here equipped for business and a knowledge of English. A Frenchmen or a German can do almost as well with them."[652].

The positive portrayals of Ottoman Arabs in the American press in various parts of the United States suggested to the American people that these immigrants, unlike many others, were likely to become true Americans. One report described the Syrian community in New York as having physicians, dentists, lawyers, and other professionals of different sectors, all ready to meet the needs of society, as well as shops, schools, and philanthropic societies to support the community. The writer clearly advocated Syrian adaptability to U.S. society: "No newcomer in New York is more ready to adopt American customs than the young Syrian."[653]

The cleanliness of Ottoman Arabs was another aspect of their character that appealed to Americans. According to Miller's investigation, the rooms of even the lowest classes of Syrians were usually (though not always) cleaner than those of Italians, Poles,

[651] Fort Worth Gazette, August 12, 1894, 11.
[652] The Sun., April 22, 1894, 2, 5.
[653] The Sun., April 22, 1894, 2, 5.

and many of the Irish, while those of more well-to-do Syrians were as clean and well-kept as any in all of New York.[654]

The same view was supported by an investigation headed by sanitary officer James Sell in foreign quarters in Canton, Ohio. Sell came to an interesting conclusion while comparing Arabs with other groups, since most foreigners of the quarters were Romanians living together with Syrians, Turks, Italians, and Hungarians: "the houses of the Syrians and Turks were in better shape than the houses of many American labourers." Compared to other groups, as Sell's investigation showed, Syrians' rooms were cleaner and had both iron beds and walls decorated with sundry images.[655] The investigation characterised Syrians as generally residing in huge tenement houses owned by one member of the community or else by the community in common, indicating as well that "families of this community live, for the most part, in clean, often tasteful, or even luxurious apartments of from five to seven rooms or in rented houses or in homes owned by themselves."[656]

Journalists likewise reported that the Syrians in the community were "singularly quiet and rarely [made any] disturbance." In support of the *Record Union*'s depiction of Syrians during the so-called famine of 1893, the investigation also stated that local Syrians never applied to the relief agent for assistance, explaining that there was no need, since the community was organised on a somewhat communistic basis. Though they did not share their property or earnings, local Syrians always kept one another from need, if not also from want. If one family was without income, others who were more fortunate extended their support.[657] They were reported to be frugal and industrious and to look forward to the

[654] Miller, Lucius H. *Our Syrian Population*…,8.
[655] The Stark County Democrat., June 13, 1902, 1.
[656] The Saint Paul Globe., March 22, 1903, 21.
[657] The Saint Paul Globe., March 22, 1903, 21.

time when they could join the select class of leaders who employed the others. They reportedly settled their difficulties among themselves, were averse to appealing to the court system, and considered the decisions of their accepted leader to be binding and final.[658]

Syrian journals published by both U.S. and Syrian societies in the United States seem to have played an important role in Ottomans' adapting to their new society, giving voice to the needs and rights of other Syrians among them, and sustaining the community's solidarity. Much like Syrian churches in the United States, which were accustomed to taking care of the poor who could not be aided by relatives, most Syrian societies were benevolent and aided poorer, less educated members of the community.[659] Indeed, they were often founded by well-educated Syrian intellectuals or by church organisations. One such group, the Syrian Society of New York, founded by Ameen Haddad—a native of Syria, graduate of Beirut College, and a secretary of the New York University Medical School—enjoyed an especially good reputation. In May 1892, it opened an evening school for students employed during the day and at one point had a class of thirty pupils. These services were offered at no charge.[660]

A number of societies, including New York's Syrian National Society and the New Syria National League, along with the Syrian American Club of Boston, were established not for benevolence but for political reasons.[661] These three powerful organisations were especially fond of discourse promoting Arab independence from the tyranny of the Turkish sultan.

[658] The Sun., December 23, 1890, 3.
[659] Fort Worth Gazette., August 12, 1894, 11.
[660] New-York Tribune., October 02, 1892.
[661] Edith M. Stein, *Some Near Eastern* …,75.

At the same time, journals and daily newspapers produced by the Arab community in the United States were also important in strengthening the population's communal lifestyle, which was a shelter for the destitute among them.[662] The story of *Kevkeb-i America*, or *Star of America*, which was one of the most-read papers among them, can perhaps best illustrate the origins and functions of these publications. This newspaper consisted of four pages, three of which were printed in Arabic and one in English and was edited by the brothers Dr. A. J. Arbeely and Nageeb J. Arbeely, sons of Dr. Joseph A. Arbeely, who was considered the first native Syrian to visit New York.

Dr. Arbeely Sr. was the president of the Patriarchal Syrian College of the Greek Church and enjoyed excellent standing as an educator and scholar. When Dr. Cornelius Van Dyck first translated the Bible into Arabic, Dr. Arbeely was called upon to assist with and verify the translation. A. J. Arbeely, the paper's editor, had graduated from the Presbyterian College in Beirut and had completed postgraduate courses at Imperial College in İstanbul. He was an expert on the subject of cholera, having served as a physician during three epidemics in the empire. His assistant, Nageeb J. Arbeely, had been educated at Marysville University in Tennessee, served the government as U.S. Consul in Jerusalem, and was affiliated with the Bureau of Immigration in New York.

The paper itself had a large circulation, and it was the only publication in the United States that was admitted to the palace of Yıldız[663] and translated for the Turkish sultan. A special copy was printed for him on parchment paper and then gilded. Many other important figures also subscribes to this newspaper, including the shah of Persia and the

[662] BOA, YPRK AZJ, 13_68, no date.
[663] The Palace where sultans resided after Abdülhamid II and which widely appears in literature and popular culture with connotations of political oppression.

emir of Afghanistan. The *New-York Tribune*'s presentation of this newspaper indicated that its list of subscribers "reaches out wherever a Syrian merchant or traveller may have settled, and he perhaps, the only member of the group who can read the printed page will read it aloud for the benefit of those less favoured educationally and then send it on to some friend further away."[664]

The predominately Christian composition of the Syrian American community was a primary factor enabling these immigrants to be welcomed by American society. Contemporary newspapers reported at length on Eastern Christian sects active in the United States and included mention of their belief systems and religious practices. Numerous news pieces addressing the intriguing characteristics of "Eastern Christianity" appeared in the American press, which took the visit of Maronite Father Marron Farah to Chicago especially seriously. Apart from Father Farah's interesting personality, what made his visit remarkable in the eyes of Americans was his reputation for being the first Catholic to perform the divine service in the United States in his own language, not in Latin.[665]

From another angle, on November 1903, the *Omaha Daily* reported on two exceptional groups of people that did not celebrate Thanksgiving Day: the Chinese and the Syrians. Still, while comparing these two national groups, the report indicated that Syrians were more flexible in adopting American customs and would rejoice on Thanksgiving as much as anyone else would.[666]

Published in the *Evening World*, a story titled "Bogus Theological Students Reap Harvest from Clergymen" in fact illustrates Americans' sympathy towards Arab

[664] New-York Tribune., October 02, 1892.
[665] Pittsburg Dispatch., March 17, 1891, 8.
[666] Omaha Daily Bee., November 22, 1903, 15.

immigrants and how that sympathy was exploited. Reportedly, a young Syrian Christian named Howatt from Beirut wanted to study theology in the United States. He carried a letter from the Syrian patriarch of Damascus to Bishop John Williams of Connecticut, primate of the American Episcopal Church. After being cordially received by Bishop Williams, Howatt explained that he wanted to pay his way through college by selling silks and oriental embroidery and requested only that Bishop Williams write him a strong endorsement that would enable him to sell goods to rich Christians.

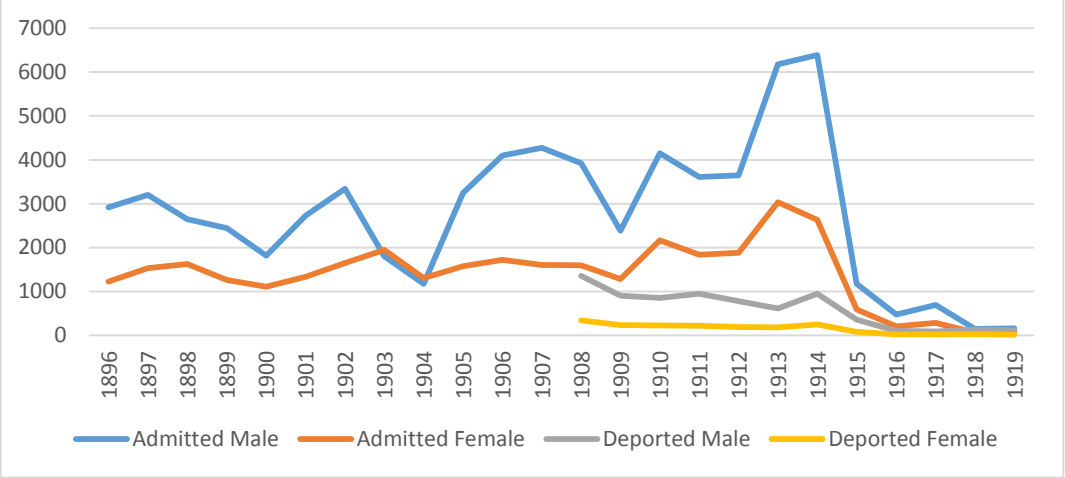
Using the letter, Howatt collected additional recommendation letters from other respectable bishops, from whom he also received lists of wealthy parishioners and friends—people inaccessible to ordinary Syrian peddlers. In a short time, Howatt had accumulated a considerable amount of money to prepare to become a priest. However, in the process, he lost his religious ardour and instead became a "moneygrubber." Moreover, by selling these letters to other Syrian peddlers, he earned even greater profits and eventually became a true businessman. Ultimately, the *Evening World*'s report warns readers of other Howatt-type Ottomans in the United States—namely, those who present letters of endorsement.[667]

The generally positive image of Ottoman Arabs in the United States registered other uncomplimentary accounts, as well. Most often, negative news about Ottoman Arabs recounted their deportation for bearing trachoma[668] or their illegal entry into the United

[667] The Evening World., December 27, 1893, 6.
[668] Here is one case for such incident: on April 1891 the French steamship line Bourgogne which sailed from Havre brought a case of malignant typhus fever to Quarantine. The patient was a Syrian peddler Jacob Couri 23 years old Alexandria- Marseilles stayed in hotel de la Marine in France. The doctor of the ship M. Gervais had the young Syrian isolated in a room in the hospital. He was taken to the hospital together with his brother who accompanied him. After disposing of the Syrians, their clothes and baggage were burned which likely to contain germs of the diseases. Who come contact with them would have a place to themselves at Hoffman Island. The ship was detained in Quarrantine several days for fumigation. The Sun., April 20, 1891 See for

States from Mexico.[669] Yet these two causes for deportation were not unique to Ottoman immigrants. In fact, the deportation of Syrians was not perceived to be as common as that of other immigrant groups. According to U.S. Immigration Commission records, only 26 percent of Ottoman immigrants were deported from Ellis Island, compared to higher proportions of Spaniards (35 percent), Russians (41 percent), and Italians (55 percent).

Figure 10: The Number of Admitted and Deported Ottoman Arabs from and into the USA, 1896-1919



Source: Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929)

Another sort of unflattering depiction of Syrian immigrants, often mentioned alongside the Chinese, appears in publications from Texas[670] and sometimes from Arizona.[671] Given their proximity to the Mexican border, both states—especially Texas—had large populations of Ottoman Arabs, most of whom were quite likely illegal immigrants. Consequently, xenophobic attacks were not rare,[672] and some local newspapers explicitly called for the

the other case: The Brownsville Daily Herald., March 28, 1905, 1 and The Bemidji Daily Pioneer., October 25, 1905.

[669] The Minneapolis Journal., December 16, 1904, 6; Evening Star., September 06, 1906, 10.

[670] The Brownsville Daily Herald., April 17, 1906, p.1, The Brownsville Daily Herald., September 27, 1906, 4.

[671] Bisbee Daily Review., May 22, 1907, 2.

[672] Omaha Daily Bee., July 15, 1901, 5; New-York Tribune., April 28, 1902, 12.

U.S. government to forbid the entrance of Syrian and Turkish beggars, noting that "the Syrians and Turks have entered Mexican ports and gone overland into the United States. This gives Americans the unpleasant sensation that the world is growing smaller when it is found that such pauper emigrants cannot be excluded."[673]

Immigration from Vera Cruz, Mexico, was considered to be a particularly serious problem by state officers, too, since unwanted diseases spread more easily from this region. Immigration through Mexico was for many years a chief concern of U.S. Immigration Services[674] and motivated the following commentary from a supervising inspector of the Mexican border:

> The influx of Syrians by way of the Mexican border is a matter of long-standing, and represents now, as it has for several years past, a constant attempt on the part of members of this race to secure entrance to the U.S. through Mexico, as a result either of being refused passage for Atlantic Ports of the U.S. or through advice given by unscrupulous individuals at the various rendezvous of immigrants in Europe to the effect that the route to the U.S. via Mexico, while longer and more expensive, afforded surer means of ingress into this country.[675]

III

The U.S. Government and Ottoman Arabs in the United States

The overall positive image of Ottoman Arabs in the popular sphere complemented the welcoming approach of U.S. policy makers towards Ottoman Arabs, which was likely shaped in large part by the American press. The following case aptly exemplifies this general statement. On 7 December 1902, the *New York Tribune* printed a photograph of two Syrian children between their mother and president Theodore Roosevelt, holding their

[673] The Daily Morning Astorian., October 02, 1889, 3.
[674] In the annual report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration for 1908, 144.
[675] *Reports of the Immigration Commission...*, vol.4, 105.

hands. The caption under the photograph informed readers that though the mother had been accepted into U.S. territory, her two children had been denied entry and ordered to return on the steamer that had brought them. With the family in grief, Roosevelt and Massachusetts senator George Frisbie Hoar intervened and, after communicating with officials, rescued both children from deportation. As reported in the newspaper, "If the decisive vote for the presidency of the U.S. rested with two little Syrian children now living in Worchester, Mass., President Roosevelt would hold that office for the rest of his natural lifetime."[676]

The welcoming approach of American politicians towards Ottoman Arabs was somewhat justified by the immigrants' reputation and general tendency to obey rules and adhere to the naturalisation process. In fact, Syrian communities seem to have been highly responsive to Uncle Sam's expectations. As newspapers pointed out, Syrian communities were continually growing in number and in wealth: "their members are anxious to learn American ways and manners, and to become citizens as soon as the law will permit; that they are, as a rule, quiet, orderly, sober, and industrious people, who are beginning to see the benefits to be derived from united effort."[677] The press also reported that Syrians were inclined to learn English rapidly.[678]

From the perspective of Ottoman Arabs in the United States, the following case may best reveal how keen Arabs were to adopt U.S. lifestyles and assimilate into U.S. society. A dispute among Arabs in New York was announced by the famous Arab newspaper *Al-Ayam*, whose editor, Issa Koury, stated that for several weeks he had been

[676] New-York Tribune, December 07, 1902, 28.
[677] New-York Tribune, October 02, 1892.
[678] Syrians in the United States, Literary Digest, 1917 61:43 cited in Edith M. Stein, *Some Near Eastern …*, 76.

receiving threatening letters in response to editorials he had printed against Syrians who encouraged the "couchee-couchee" dancing of Syrian women; Koury contended that such activity violated Syrian morals. He was ultimately attacked one day by a mob of Syrians as he was leaving his newspaper office. When the case passed to court, the attackers' lawyers accused Koury of being an anarchist, a charge his lawyers denied, underscoring that the reported dispute was between law-abiding Syrians and the community's lawless elements. Throughout the trial, both parties appealed to fundamentals of U.S. immigration policies—namely, that being law-abiding and not being anarchist were necessary for entry into the United States, even to the point that *anarchist* was added as a category on entry questionnaires.[679] The trial and the arguments of both sides reveal the extent to which Syrians were aware of American values—and how keen they were to adopt them.

Another important indicator of Ottoman Arabs' motivation for naturalisation arrived in 1903, when it was reported that between one-third and one-half of men in the U.S. Syrian community had become eligible for American citizenship.[680] According to Miller's survey, this next generation seemed to be patriotic 'citizens of worth' largely owing to leaders among Ottoman Arabs in the United States, who played a pivotal role in their people's general adoption of American lifestyles and their desire to seek citizenship.[681] Chief among works meant to encourage the Americanisation of their fellow countrymen were the books of two Syrian authors: *A Valuable Present to Learn the English Language*, by Dr. Abraham Breely, and *How to Become a Naturalised Citizen*, by Dr. K. Kalayaat. Both were printed in Arabic and in English in one volume for use by Syrians.

[679] The Sun., March 23, 1898, 9.
[680] The Sun., November 22, 1903, 3.
[681] Lucius H. Miller, *Our Syrian Population: A Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates,1969), 39.

On the international scale, the friendliness of American policies towards Arabs became widespread public knowledge during a crisis in Haiti.[682] In summer 1903, the Syrian Exclusion Act in Haiti had received substantial coverage in the American press, primarily because the Haitian Congress had that year enacted a law prohibiting Syrians from entering the Republic of Haiti. The act was largely thought a response to the overpopulation of Syrians on the island, whose economic success there was challenging local businesses among the people of Toussaint l'Ouverture.[683] However, the campaigns declaring "Down with the Syrians" threatened U.S. and French economic interests, since thousands of Syrian merchants who had been naturalised in either the United States or France had settled in Haiti, where they had astutely absorbed all of the trade formerly controlled by native merchants. Haitian hostility towards Syrians was thus discussed at length in the political sphere. In fact, to show that the United States was liable to exclude immigrants that also threatened its economic well-being, one Haitian newspaper printed the steps that the United States had taken years earlier to reduce and outlaw Chinese immigration.[684]

As the crisis escalated, newspapers reported that more Syrians had been stoned in the streets of Haiti and that many Syrian stores had been destroyed by Haitian soldiers. On 14 June 1903, the *Moniteur Officiel* of Port au Prince publicised a law recently adopted by the Haitian parliament forbidding the entry of all foreigners of Syrian origin. It allowed

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[682] For the history of Arab presence in Haiti see, Brenda Gayle Plummer, "Between Privilege and Opprobrium; The Arabs and Jews in Haiti", In Klich, Ignacio, and Jeff Lesser. *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities*. (London: F. Cass, 1998), 80–92.

[683] *Toussaint l'Ouverture* was the leader of the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804). Nicknamed the Black Napoleon, he generated his patriotic reputation across Latin America by abolishing slavery in Haiti and establishing an independent state. Later in popular and diplomatic parlance this word was used referring to the Haitian people. The Pacific Commercial Advertiser, July 27, 1903, 3.

[684] The Washington Times, July 18, 1904.

Syrians already established in Haiti six months to close their businesses and vacate Haitian territory.[685]

Under these circumstances, William F. Powell, U.S. minister to Haiti, endeavoured to rescue Syrian Americans from the dire situation unfolding against them on the island. After long negotiations, Haitian officials accepted that Syrians who had acquired U.S. citizenship through naturalisation were not subject to expulsion from Haiti. In addition, Minister Powell kept his promise by informing Haitian president Pierre Nord Alexis that all engagements entered into by American citizens must be respected and that the U.S. government would do its utmost to protect its citizens in Haiti.[686]

Though Minister Powell had promised energetic action on Syrian American citizens' behalf to solve the crisis, he also advised them not to open their stores for several days.[687] By the beginning of April 1905, further action by the U.S. government against Haiti on behalf of Syrian Americans there had been reported in the American press.[688] The U.S. government's commitment was so great that it sent the warship *Brookline* to Haiti when Minister Powell suspected action against Syrian Americans by the Haitian government.[689]

Unsurprisingly, these measures were not welcomed by the Haitian government, which complained that Syrians there had been encouraged by Minister Powell's policy to defy Haitian law. As a consequence, Haiti's credit abroad had suffered, prompting the Haitian government to request that Powell be recalled by the U.S. government;[690] he had

[685] The Minneapolis Journal, August 02, 1904, 1.
[686] The Jackson Herald., August 11, 1904, 7.
[687] The San Francisco Call., August 03, 1904,2 and The St. Louis Republic., March 31, 1905, 4.
[688] The Evening Statesman, April 01, 1905, 1.
[689] The Saint Paul Globe., April 02, 1905, 38.
[690] Rock Island Argus, April 08, 1905, 1.

become *persona non grata* in Haiti.[691] Following an unsuccessful assassination attempt against him, Powell was recalled to New York and replaced by Henry W. Furniss.[692] Still, negotiations with Haitian authorities did not end until Arab Americans in Haiti were rescued. In effect, the crisis in Haiti demonstrated to a watching nation that the U.S. government could be pro-Syrian, as long as the Syrians in question were naturalised, obeyed American laws, and shared American ideals.

In general, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, U.S. policy intended to control and channel all immigrant groups in an effort to create the much-touted American melting pot. In the process, the state regularised its immigration regime with immigration legislation that determined who would be allowed to enter the United States, as well as who would not.

As far as immigration policy concerned Syrians, the main dispute in the United States was identical to that in Argentina: whether Syrians were racially white by origin[693]. This potential stumbling block for Syrians first cropped up in American public opinion during the mid-1890s, by which time Americans had recognised the growing number of Syrians within U.S. borders. In discussing the ethnic origins of Syrians, the American press noted that Syrians might have the same ethnic roots as American Indians, given the linguistic similarity of words in the languages spoken by each group.[694] Other newspapers disseminated the idea of the famous veteran missionary and philologist Canon S. J. Good,

[691] The Stark County Democrat, April 11, 1905, 5.
[692] The Seattle Republican, October 27, 1905, 6.
[693] For the disputes on the Syrians' ethnic composition in those times, see Sarah Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian-American Diaspora* (CA: University of California Press, 2009).
[694] The Wichita Daily Eagle, January 16, 1896, 4.

who had proposed that the Fraser River Indians of British Columbia were of Syrian descent.[695]

Until 1909, the U.S. government had not experienced any significant problems with Arab immigrants. In fact, Syrians were not counted among undesirable immigrant groups.[696] However, after 1909, a series of incidents had raised the question whether Syrians were "white" and therefore eligible for citizenship.[697] At roughly the same time, the U.S. government enacted new naturalisation legislation that categorised Syrians as an Asiatic race, defined as an undesired immigrant group. As a result, Syrians were no longer allowed to vote in either state or national elections.[698]

The new regulations sparked an interesting controversy between Syrian Americans and the U.S. Census Bureau, which had concluded that because Syrians were from Asia, they were not white.[699] Syrians disputed such logic by tracing their ethnic history and the etymology of their names through Phoenician, ancient Egyptian, and Greco-Roman history.[700]

Whether Syrians were truly white was discussed widely in the American press.[701] The *East Oregonian* wondered when a white man was no longer white by printing, "The question 'What is a white man?' perplexes government officers." The paper noted that Syrians, Turks, and Hindus had been denied U.S. citizenship and that Armenians and

[695] St. Paul Daily Globe, May 10, 1896, 7 and The San Francisco Call., January 02, 1896, 5.
[696] The Brownsville Daily Herald, September 08, 1906, 1.
[697] For a useful overview of the Syrian racial prerequisite cases, see appendix A of Ian Haney López, White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race, (New York: New York Univ. Press, 2006), cited in, Swati Rana, *The Production of Nativity in Early Syrian Immigrant Literature* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2011), 17.
[698] Los Angeles Herald, October 21, 1909, 8.
[699] East Oregonian : E.O., November 16, 1909, Evening Edition, 4.
[700] East Oregonian : E.O., November 16, 1909, Evening Edition, 4.
[701] Los Angeles Herald, November 05, 1909, 16.

Syrians continued to fight for rights. It indicated some contradictions—what it called "weird anomalies"—including that whereas Turks and Syrians born in the United States were denied citizenship and categorised as Asiatic, Spaniards with swarthy skin and black hair were given citizenship papers.[702]

Opposition to the new naturalisation legislation emerged among Syrian communities across the United States, especially in Minnesota.[703] Opponents were highly offended by the unjustified attitudes of the U.S. government, and some expressed their reactions in open letters to American society in daily papers. One such missive, signed by G. A. Khalil, criticised the decision of a U.S. circuit court declaring that Syrians were Mongolians and, as such, barred from U.S. citizenship. In a few paragraphs, Khalil aimed to prove that Syrians were ethnically and linguistically closer to Europeans than Turks were and concluded with the striking sentence, "Are Syrians Mongolians? If Filipinos are Caucasians, yes."[704]

It was not only in the popular sphere that Syrian communities struggled to be accepted as white citizens, but also in their legal standing. In fact, the Syrian community recruited lawyers to defend them in court, knowing that the final decision would be rendered by the Supreme Court. Ultimately, Syrian Americans succeed in their campaign for naturalisation,[705] and the verdict of the Court favoured Syrians and upheld their right to U.S. naturalisation. Furthermore, Syrians who had formerly adopted U.S. citizenship were recognised as Americans. In December 1909, Dr. Justin Kirrieh, the lawyer of the Syrian

[702] East Oregonian: E.O., November 15, 1909, Evening Edition, 7.
[703] Williston Graphic., October 14, 1909, 9.
[704] New-York Tribune, December 20, 1909.
[705] A case for misunderstanding of court verdict. The Manning Times, April 15, 1914.

community, applied to state authorities for the remuneration of Syrians who had paid for papers indicating their American citizenship.[706]

Following this victory in the campaign for naturalisation, the Syrian category in official records of the U.S. Immigration Commission was reformed. In these records, all tables related to European immigration contain the phrase *including Syrians* in parentheses. At that time, the commission classified Syrian immigrants in the group "New Immigrants," together with Italians, Turks, Russians, and Hebrews, among others (as detailed in chapter 2).[707]

IV

Ottoman Policies towards Ottoman Arabs in the United States.

Despite the largely positive approach of U.S. policy, public opinion, and the press vis-à-vis Syrians, their presence in the country was not controlled solely by the United States. As citizens of the Ottoman Empire, Syrians were highly affected by politics at home. As indicated in previous chapters, the Ottoman government resented Syrians, with or without passports, who had landed on American soil. The Ottoman Archives contain dispatches in which the Ottoman Consulate in Washington asked the Ottoman government to take effective precautions against the illegal movement of Syrians and Lebanese.[708]

Apart from losing manpower for military and agricultural production, the empire had various concerns about emigration related to conditions and activities of Ottomans in

[706] Bismarck Daily Tribune, December 26, 1909, the same news also in Los Angeles Herald, December 26, 1909,11; Omaha Daily Bee, December 26, 1909.
[707] William P. Dillingham and William S. Bennet, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1911), vol. 4, 22. The original footnote reads: "Nearly all Syrian and a considerable number of Turkish immigrants come from Turkey in Asia, but for convenience and because they are so closely allied to the people of Turkey in Europe, they are classed here as a part of the new immigration from Europe."
[708] Here is one example BOA, DH.MKT, 1976_2, 27.Z.1309, 23.07.1892.

the United States that were quite similar to those in the Argentinean case. For one, İstanbul treated propaganda against the empire very seriously. The Ottoman Consulate in the United States reported that some malevolent Ottoman subjects there had engaged in anti-imperial political activity by taking advantage of the liberties afforded by U.S. law.[709]

The propaganda referred to was developed and distributed mostly by Armenians and Christians Ottomans. In one report, the Ottoman consul general in Washington compared Syrian and Armenian immigrants in the United States, noting that Armenians produced more-harmful propaganda against Ottoman interests than did Syrians, who were more inclined to concentrate on financial gain in the United States than on political activity. According to the report, even though Armenians were not thought to be as successful in their anti-Ottoman propaganda at the moment, they had the potential to become more effective in the near future, given their increased access to the press and their blossoming influence in the House of Representatives. The report attributed the failed diplomacy between immigrants and the Ottoman Empire, which could have better regulated the legal status of Ottoman Arab immigrants, to the stance of some American representatives who were misinformed by Armenian lobbyists about affairs in Turkey.[710]

As was the case with New York's Syrian National Society, the New Syria National League, and Boston's Syrian American Club, Arab American societies and periodicals were thought to be the major forces driving anti-Ottomanism in the United States. Occasionally, the empire prohibited these journals from entering Ottoman territory, since they were known to include harmful propaganda; officials often confiscated those publications that had somehow made it through customs. Indeed, many journals and

[709] BOA, Y.PRK. ZB, 23_43, 06.R.1317, 14.08.1899.
[710] BOA, HR.SYS, 71_70, 29.03.1892.

newspapers owned by the Ottoman Arab immigrants in the United States were established in order to help the community assert itself in American society,[711] and some of those publications regularly maligned the Ottoman Empire.[712]

To counter such harmful activity, the Ottoman government ordered local authorities in Syria to mark the passports of people thought to be engaged in propaganda if they ever returned to Ottoman territory.[713] It furthermore ordered Ottoman representatives in the United States to lead counterpropaganda activity against the defamatory reports printed in Ottoman Arab newspapers such as *Kevkep*, *El Islah*, and *El Eyyam*.[714] In response to this demand, Ottoman consul general Ferruh Bey attempted to found a pro-imperial newspaper, though the project ultimately failed for lack of funding.[715]

The central aim of the Ottoman Empire in the United States, and one that was also pursued in Argentina, was to stamp out the negative imagery and descriptions of Ottomans and of the empire in the United States that had injured Ottomans' international reputation. For this reason, the empire targeted claims that Ottoman Arabs were begging in the streets[716] or had engaged in crime and other "unpleasant activities" [717] that were damaging the empire's prestige.[718] Nevertheless, compared to those in Argentina, cases in the United States were few. One such example involved Ottoman solicitors posing as agents of Turkish educational organisations seeking funds to construct schools in Asia Minor.

[711] BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ, 13_68, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888.
[712] BOA, MV 194_18, 194_18, 08.Z.1332, 20.10.1914; DH.ŞFR 442_98 18.E.133001.10.1914; BEO 4332_324850, 27.S.1333, 14.01.1915.
[713] BOA, DH.ID., 63_14, 12.Za.1330, 23.10.1912.
[714] BOA, DH.ŞFR.238_56, 03.T.1315, 15.11.1899.
[715] BOA, Y.PRK.TKM, 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909.
[716] BOA, HR.SYS. 60_14, 1890.06.13.
[717] BOA, DH.MKT, 104_23, 22.B.1311 29.01.1894.
[718] BOA, DH.MKT, 16_4, nu.5, 29.L.1310, 16.05.1893.

Turkish ambassador Yusuf Ziya Pasha warned U.S. authorities that in no way did the empire recognise these people or condone their actions.[719]

Using the reputation of Ottoman subjects in the United States, the imperial government sought to wipe clean the empire's slate abroad. In a more practical sense, Ottomans sought to establish communities in U.S. territory that would favour the sultanate. For this purpose, the Ottoman government sought to improve relations with societies, which it thought might operate as the Ottoman government's lobbies in the United States and combat the spread of anti-Ottoman propaganda by both Americans and Syrian immigrants who opposed the sultanate. Documents related to these attempts include orders from the empire to its representatives in the United States to research the subjects of the Ottoman Empire there and to work to preserve their cultural and ethnic identities.[720]

According to a document dated 28 November 1894, having received intelligence that Armenian Americans had pressured Muslim workers to denounce the oppressive politics of the Ottoman sultanate, the sultanate asked the consulate in Washington to conduct a general survey of Muslims in the United States.[721] In his response, the consul reported that the research had been conducted but that the results did not verify the intelligence claims. For one thing, given the geographical dispersal of the Muslims in the United States and their small number compared to other immigrant groups,[722] general pressure against them by Armenians was nearly impossible. Such instances would have remained exceptional, the consul argued.[723]

[719] The Times Dispatch, February 15, 1914, 11.
[720] BOA, A.MTZ (04), 161_6, 4.L.1325, 10.11.1907.
[721] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.1.1896.
[722] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.1.1896.
[723] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.1.1896.

The Ottoman Consulate noted that Ottomans arriving in the United States adopted European names almost immediately. This fact complicated the task of the consulate, which was responsible for preserving their rights.[724] Some years later, the Washington consul general suggested to the Porte that it appoint more representatives to the United States who were familiar with Arabic languages in order to help the Ottomans retain their native identities and not to be seduced by any Ottoman enemies.[725]

Yet another of the empire's concerns about Ottoman immigrants was preserving the rights of its citizens who had not engaged in hostility against it. The Galep Abdullah affair presented in Ottoman records illustrates how the empire defended the rights of its subjects against unfair attitudes acted upon by U.S. sheriff of Lassen County, near Susanville, California. A report dated 6 July 1891 states that on 13 June that year, Ottoman subject Galep Abdullah was murdered near the Mountain Meadows Reservoir in Lassen County. The report read that "he was robbed of the few belongings he had, save 229.36 dollars and of which there remains (after the expenses of attending to his burial have been paid) a balance of 97.11 dollars." The file's other contents provide details of the murder, while the last three papers comprise U.S. correspondence with the Ottoman Empire.[726]

The Ottoman Consul in San Francisco shed light on the affair and informed the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Galeb Abdullah, together with his friend Yunus Nadir, both of Syrian origin and Ottoman subjects, were killed in U.S. territory by Americans—yet for five years nothing had been done to investigate the murder, though the government was in a position to investigate and punish the murderers. The U.S.

[724] BOA, HR.SYS, 54_1, 22.1.1896.
[725] BOA, Y.PRK.TKM, 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909.
[726] BOA, HR. HMŞ.İŞO, 186_48, nu.1, 6.07.1891.

government had also not compensated the families of the slain. In addition, the report indicated that this was not an exceptional case but that every month the consulate received word of similar cases in different parts of the United States.[727]

The consul recalled that the U.S. government had been continually warned by the Ottoman government in diplomatic language about American missionaries who suffered during the Armenian issue in Eastern Anatolia and suggested, in turn, that a similar response from the U.S. government would be appropriate in this case. Such action would establish the attitude of the United States and confirm that in its eyes, Ottoman subjects abroad were no less valuable than Americans citizens abroad. Put differently, if the Ottoman government was in any way responsible for the suffering of American Christians in Anatolia, then the U.S. government was responsible for injured or killed Ottomans in the United States. Ultimately, the case was closed when attorney of the Ottoman Empire Olgar Nasvine was informed that it had been sent to the U.S. Commission of Compensation.[728]

To make its presence felt in the United States and to preserve the rights of its subjects, the empire attempted to observe Ottoman societies in the United States during diplomatic missions. To this end, the Ottoman government on several occasions ordered a general survey of Ottoman occupations, residential areas—particularly relations between and among different Ottoman groups in the United States—which would be conducted by Ottoman representatives visiting the country.[729]

Regarding relations among different Ottoman groups in the United States, Ottoman observer Akuni's observations present an interesting picture. According to his report,

[727] BOA, HR. HMŞ.İŞO, 186_48, nu.113, 28.11.1891. A very similar case can be seen in BOA, DH. MUI, 15.11.1909.
[728] BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO, 186_48, nu.114, 28.11.1891.
[729] The last attempt was taken place in 1910. See BOA, DH.MUİ, 94–1_17, 04.Ca.1328, 14.05.1910.

tensions between Armenians and Syrians were grievous, as were those between Bulgarians and Albanians, though relations between Kurds and Armenians were quite amiable.[730] Akuni described the intimate relations between Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian immigrants, noting that Armenian clubs had numerous Turkish and Kurdish members and that, in cases of conflict, respectable elders of the two communities would intervene until reconciliation was achieved. Dated 1911, Akuni's report coincided with the fallout of the Turkish revolution, which had promoted fraternity among Turks, Armenians, and other ethnic groups. This example thus illustrates how affairs at home directly affected those in the United States.[731]

Despite all these endeavours, the Ottoman government faced significant challenges in exercising authority over Ottoman immigrants in the United States, given the significant ambiguity of their legal status, which stemmed mostly from unscrutinised legislation concerning the Ottoman and U.S. governments' stances on immigrants.

V

Ottoman Arabs between the Sublime Porte and Uncle Sam

The presence of Ottoman Arabs in the United States was the most important, if not the only, agenda in diplomatic relations between the United States and the Ottoman Empire. It also prompted the interaction between these two powers that shaped the legal status and well-being of Arab immigrants in the United States.

In fact, Ottoman-American diplomatic relations can be traced to as early as 7 May 1830, when the two powers signed the first Turco-American treaty, which addressed

[730] BOA, HR. SYS., 70_30, 17.08.1911, nu.3.
[731] The last attempt was taken place in 1910. See BOA, DH.MUİ, 94–1_17, 04.Ca.1328, 14.05.1910.

mostly commercial concerns. According to the Ottoman sources, the treaty was particularly endorsed by U.S. politicians who sought ways to extend U.S. influence in Mediterranean commerce.[732] Although this treaty did not stipulate much beyond mutual good faith, it nevertheless planted the seeds for long-term U.S. commercial privileges in the region. This treaty declared the United States among "the most favoured nations" (*en ziyade müsaadeye mazhar devlet*) and the friend of the Ottoman Empire.

Not long afterwards, as Ottoman commercial relations with the United States increased, the empire signed another treaty with the United States that gradually decreased tariffs to 1 percent for American citizens engaged in commercial activities in Ottoman territory.[733] This capitulary agreement had not been taken seriously until Ottoman immigration to the United States jumped in volume, and Ottoman immigrants to the United States intended to enjoy the same capitulary privileges upon their return home.

As detailed in chapter 5, Ottoman naturalisation in the United States was considered a vehicle for fraud in the eyes of the Ottoman authorities, whereby expatriate Ottoman returnees claimed they had the right to enjoy the economic privileges provided by the treaty because they were now Americans. The challenges faced by the empire were essentially legal in nature, since the U.S. law of 1868 and the Ottoman law of 1869, both addressing citizenship, included conflicting articles. These two codes created significant ambiguity regarding who was American and who was Ottoman. The two powers' philosophical difference on establishing citizenship also crucially impacted the conflict. While U.S.

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[732] BOA, HH, 41139_1245, cited in Nurdan Şafak, *Osmanlı-Amerikan İlişkileri,* (İstanbul: OSAV, 2003), 34. For the details of this Turco-American treaty see Nimet Kurat Akdes, *Türk American Münasebetlerine Kısa bir Bakış, 1800–1959* (Ankara: Doğuş Matbbası,1959). Also see Yavuz Güler, "Osmanlı Devleti Dönemi Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri," *Gazi Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, no.6 (2005): 233.
[733] Yavuz Güler, *Osmanlı Devleti Dönemi…*, 235.

citizenship was based on *jus soli*, which considers citizenship a right for people born within the state's territory, the Ottoman Empire had adopted the doctrine of *jus sanguinis*, by which citizenship is determined not by place of birth but by blood—that is, having at least one parent who is a citizen of the state.[734]

By the beginning of the 1870s, the empire was noticing the abuse of American citizenship by former Ottomans. As a result of a survey of American citizens in the Ottoman Empire, imperial authorities found that Ottoman immigrants to the United States, after adopting American citizenship, generally returned to Ottoman territories to continue their former jobs. These people neither paid taxes as ordinary Ottomans nor returned to the United States. In some cases, these Ottomans did not set foot in the United States for twenty years.[735]

As problems worsened and the frustrations of the empire were communicated to U.S. authorities, the need for updated regulation came clear. Ultimately, on 11 August 1874, a new treaty was signed to harmonise legal discontinuities and to address the issue of citizenship. According to the treaty, naturalised citizens who returned to their native lands and resided there more than two years were liable to lose their acquired citizenship unless the reason for their prolonged stay was included in an accompanying list of justifiable exceptions.[736] The treaty, which was expected to stand for ten years (according to Article 6), was approved by the sultanate.

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[734] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey…*,328.
[735] Çağrı Erhan, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinin Tarihsel Kökenleri*, (İstanbul: İmge Yayınları, 2001), 229–230
[736] Gabriel Noradounghian, *Recueil D'actes Internationaux De L'empire Ottoman: Traités, Conventions, Arrangements, Déclarations, Protocoles, Procès-Verbaux, Firmans, Bérats, Lettres Patentes Et Autres Documents Relatifs Au Droit Public Extérieur De La Turquie*, (Paris: Cotillon u.a, 1902), vol.3, 368–370.

The U.S. Senate also approved the document but with amendments to two articles. The critical amendment was to replace *shall* with *may* in the phrase "the intention not to return shall be considered established."[737] The sultanate did not accept this amendment, however, because it introduced uncertainty regarding the status of people who returning to imperial territory and lived there for more than two years. The treaty was thereby prevented from going into effect.[738]

The failure of this agreement foreshadowed other abortive attempts at similar agreements in the future. From 1874 until the end of World War I, both the U.S. and Ottoman governments were willing to establish an agreement to standardise the legal and civil status of Ottoman immigrants, and the two states negotiated the matter several times—in 1899, 1903, 1906, and 1911. But for various reasons, negotiations failed to produce a treaty. From the Ottoman perspective, the agreement could not be signed for fear that Americans would be lax in preventing the expatriation of Ottomans who had already gained U.S. citizenship in a way that violated the convention of 1874. On the other hand, U.S. officials sought to preserve the rights of U.S. citizens once they had identified as American, no matter which part of the world they lived in.[739]

As the number of immigrants rose during the 1880s, the Ottoman Empire developed a new policy to stop Ottomans from abusing their U.S. citizenship in the empire. In 1884, it decreed that the expatriation of Ottoman subjects would be accepted only on condition that the applicant agreed to never return.[740] Any Ottoman Americans who adopted U.S.

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[737] The Article follows as; …when the person naturalized in one of the two States shall have resided more than two years on the territory of the other."
[738] İbrahim Serbestoğlu, *Osmanlı Kimdir?...,* 114–115.
[739] BOA, HR.TO 148_51, 16 April 1886 see also İbrahim Serbestoğlu, *Osmanlı Kimdir?...,* 116.
[740] BOA, Y.A.HUS, 314_43, 04.C.1312, 03.12.1894.

citizenship without imperial consent would not be accepted as Americans and could even be arrested upon entry if they had violated the empire's regulations.[741]

After this proclamation was issued, the U.S. State Department prepared a sheet of information for each passport to inform prospective voyagers that a person's right to become a citizen of any country was not recognised by the Ottoman Empire for its citizens unless permission was obtained. The document also stated that obtaining an American passport would not exempt former Ottoman citizens from compulsory military service in the empire or from the law of expatriation.[742] The empire was so serious on this point that photographs of Ottomans who expatriated were gathered and sent to İstanbul by foreign agencies in the United States.[743]

In 1892, another imperial edict was issued that called attention to the Ottoman law of 1869 and requested that American officials notify its consuls and agents that protection would be refused to people who had obtained naturalisation without imperial consent. Minister Hirsch replied that anyone who had satisfied the naturalisation requirements of the United States thereby would become a citizen and that no restrictions could be imposed. In 1898, a similar issue was raised by secretary of state John Hay on behalf of the U.S. government to controvert the edict, but to no avail.[744]

Documents in the Ottoman Archives show that the Ottoman government was well aware of the acts proclaimed by the U.S. government, as well as of their implementation towards some countries.[745] The imperial state also seems to have been aware of the

[741] BOA, Y.A_HUS, 289_9, 17.B.1311, 24.01.1894.
[742] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey…,* 335.
[743] BOA, DH.TMIK.M, 272_18, 4.C.1326, 04.07.1908.
[744] The Indianapolis Journal, January 24, 1901, 8.
[745] One document demonstrates that the Ottoman government followed the act that prohibited the access of immigrants less than 16 years of age and allowed immigrants to enter with their families. See HR.SYS,

bureaucratic problems that Ottoman immigrants in the United States had faced and might face in the future.

Salibi N. Damus, editor of the Arab American journal *Al-Islah*, published a complaint against the sultan's authority over Ottoman Arabs in the United States, which he noted was "more widespread than Americans have any knowledge of." Concerning the citizenship challenges faced by the U.S. government and the empire particularly regarding Syrians, Damus tried to draw the attention of U.S. authorities via the press to Syrians in the United States who were keen to become U.S. citizens, pressuring the nation to protect their rights and to rescue them from the sultan's tyrannical regime.[746]

The insistence of Ottomans on combatting unauthorised expatriation sharpened when Ottoman-affiliated agencies concerned with anti-Ottoman activities noticed increased agitation by Ottoman Arabs in the United States. The empire recognised these people as criminals and asked for their transport back to Ottoman territory.[747]

This request was answered positively by U.S. authorities. The illegal activities of some Ottoman Americans in the United States, some of which were performed by agents in order to foment revolutionary activity, was most notably articulated by U.S. president Grover Cleveland. In his annual message to Congress in 1893, President Cleveland highlighted the Ottomans' complaints about the citizenship of its subjects and concluded that such grievances were "not wholly without foundations."[748] Still, the U.S. government denied the empire's request, indicating that American laws did not require that these people

74_49, 28.12.1896. Another document relates to U.S. politicians disinclined to accept immigration from Turkey anymore. See BOA, DH.MKT, 1500_93, 1.Ş.1305 13.04.1888.
[746] The Record-Union., April 03, 1899, 8.
[747] BOA, MV, 82_10, 08.Ca.1312, 30.10.1894.
[748] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey…,*330.

be returned unless a "convention on the reclamation of criminals" was signed between the two powers. The necessity of such a convention was underscored by U.S. authorities, who were reminded by their Ottoman counterparts that the two powers might disagree about what could be considered criminal and what could not.[749]

The increased number of returnees further exacerbated the situation. The Ottoman Empire claimed returnees as citizens and held them for military service and the payment of taxes. The U.S. government considered such action a significant challenge to its authority and its aim to protect U.S. citizens abroad.[750]

On 19 January 1902, a new decision by the U.S. government was declared to Ottoman authorities whereby, Ottoman American returnees would be denaturalised by the United States if they stayed in Ottoman territory for more than two years without any officially sanctioned excuse.[751] Again, however, this solution did not satisfy Ottoman authorities, since the duration of two years would not prevent the misuse of their U.S. citizenship in Turkey and since the control of U.S. authorities was not convincing. Moreover, Ottoman authorities could not agree with their U.S. counterparts regarding the cut off for the legislation's retroactive enforcement. For this reason, it remained unclear what would happen to Ottoman Americans who had remained more than two years in Ottoman territory before January 1902.

As time passed, the situation surrounding citizenship became more ambiguous, for different approaches began to be applied regarding those who died in the United States, those who were new citizens by birth, and those due inheritance when their parents died in

[749] BOA, MV, 82_10, 08.Ca.1312, 30.10.1894.
[750] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey…,*328.
[751] BOA, Y.PRK. ZB, 23_43, 06.R.1317, 14.08.1899.

the Ottoman territory.[752] To solve all of these problems, an important attempt was made by both states' authorities in July 1906. After receiving feedback from the U.S. consul general, the Ottoman government ordered its Ministry of Foreign Affairs to produce a new draft of the convention. The new draft also failed, however, since neither government's representatives were willing to compromise their stance.[753]

In 1909, when the crisis concerning Ottoman immigrants in the United States arose again, the U.S. State Department's view was that Turkey was responsible for the situation. The department indicated that the "U.S. had sought to negotiate with the Ottoman government" to establish "a naturalisation convention to provide for the recognition by the government of the expatriation of Turkish subjects duly naturalised as American citizens." But as the declaration makes clear, absolutely no change in the policy or the views of the State Department on the subject of the naturalisation of Turkish subjects had occurred, perhaps in an attempt to compel the Ottoman government to sign a convention.[754]

The crisis of naturalisation in the United States coincided with the Young Turk Revolution, which upended all balance. The so-called criminals declared by the Abdülhamid regime were now core supporters of the new UPP (Union and Progress Party) government.[755] Moreover, Syrian societies in various parts of the United States warmly welcomed the declaration of the constitution. Accordingly, an induction meeting was held at the Ottoman Consulate in Washington in which Syrian Ottomans expressed their demand (to be forwarded to İstanbul) for Turkish legislation concerning greater Syrian

[752] İbrahim Serbestoğlu, *Osmanlı Kimdir?...,*135.
[753] BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 550_28, 12.Ca.1324, 04.07.1906.
[754] Omaha Daily Bee., November 04, 1909.
[755] For instance as concerning the harmful activities of the Syrian Unions in the USA, the Ottoman government of the *ancien regime* underlined their relations with the Young Turks. See The Washington Herald, August 12, 1908, 9.

representation in the new Ottoman parliament, given the share of Syrians in the overall population. They also wanted more Arab officers to be appointed to Turkish embassies and consulates in the United States.[756]The Syrian Ottoman Union Society arranged a conference in Washington with the Syrian daily *Al-Hoda* in which participants discussed the future of Arabs in the Ottoman Empire and the new reforms. Arab representatives from different countries, including Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and other South American countries, attended the conference. The society was heartily sympathetic to everything that the Young Turk movement stood for, especially political engagement regarding wars and the abdication of sultans.[757]

Nevertheless, the Young Turk Revolution did not seem to significantly affect the expected treaty convention between the Ottoman Empire and the U.S. government. As mentioned in earlier chapters, the liberal atmosphere created by the revolution was fugitive. No agreement could be achieved in signing with the United States, and old discourses citing "enemies of empire" were revived by revolutionaries.

Correspondence with the United States concerning criminals in its territory began circulating again, with constant requests of the Ottoman government.[758] In response, in 1911, the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the sultanate of the U.S. government's offer to sign an agreement regarding the extradition of Ottoman immigrants who had committed criminal acts. The documents also reported that the same proposal had been offered to a number of countries, including Greece, Portugal, Austria-Hungary, and some Latin American nations. The Ottoman minister added that the United States took

[756] The Washington Herald, August 11, 1908, 2.
[757] The Sun, September 09, 1908, 4.
[758] BOA, HR.HMS.ISO, 7_40 22.Ni.1326, 05.05.1910.

crime committed by immigrants more seriously than it did immigration without a passport. The sultanate thus decided to consider agreements with the aforementioned countries in formulating the empire's stance on the matter.[759]

By 1911, the Ottoman Empire had entered into constant warfare, which nearly stopped negotiations with the U.S. government about Ottoman Arabs in the United States. The only deal struck by the empire was to collaborate with the U.S. government about military deserters. In response, the United States acknowledged that under wartime conditions, it would implement the same policy extended to citizens of other countries: that residents in the United States who were the citizens of another country involved in war would not be returned unless assured that they would be exempt from military service in their home countries. This stance, however, contradicted Ottoman expectations.[760]

The Ottoman Empire emerged from World War I with a completely new regime, and the problem of citizenship with the United States was ultimately solved in the Treaty of Lausanne, the foundational treaty of the Republic of Turkey, signed by the Turkish Republican government, whereby both countries recognised the right of voluntary expatriation.[761]

[759] BOA, BEO, 3928_294527,19.Ş.1329, 15.08.1911.
[760] BOA, HR.SYS, 2126_11, 12.11.1917.
[761] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey…,*336.

Conclusion

Ottoman Migrations among Global Population Movements: Organic Dependence and Structural Parallels

This thesis's empirical study and its results, together with evidence from histories of migration to the New World during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, suggest that the story of Ottoman Arab mass migration to the Americas at the time was highly similar to that behind the contemporary mass migrations of other European and Asian peoples. From this global and comparative perspective, the thesis has argued that Ottoman migration was not a *sui genesis* phenomenon but part of the period's global population movements that saw the displacement of millions of people, mostly towards the Western Hemisphere, that has led historians to name the period "the age of mass migration." In drawing this work to a close, I not only review key points that have emerged from this study but also indicate the similarities of, as well as the differences between, Ottoman emigration to the Americas and other contemporary migrations, based on secondary literature addressing various cases.

For several decades, scholarly literature has spelled out the need for more global perspectives that add non-European experiences to the picture of mass migration. For instance, Rudolph Vecoli, who contributed to the topic's study an edited volume titled *A Century of European Migrations, 1830–1930*, noted that migration studies of the period should venture beyond the familiar framework of transatlantic European migrations.[762] Likewise, Adam McKeown, in explaining Asian migration to the Americas, indicated that

[762] Rudolph Vecoli, "Introduction," In *A Century of European Migrations, 1830–1930,* ed. Rudolph J, Vecoli, and M. Sinke Suzanne, (Ilinois: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 13.

world migrations across the globe were "comparable in size and timing and the similarities are not coincidental."[763]

As chapter 3 has illustrated, the most salient similarity of Ottoman mass emigration between 1870 and 1914 to European migratory movements lies in its economic motivation. Quite simply, people needed to move because they had fewer, poorer economic opportunities and living standards at home. They aspired to attain better work and higher standards of living through migrating abroad. Such a rationale fits the model of Hutton and Williamson, who summarised movements during this period as flows from regions with "abundant labour and low living standards" to countries with "scarce labour and high living standards."[764] As their study suggests, emigrants with the most to gain were those who were most responsive to labour-market conditions. Most emigrants, by migrating when young and single and by establishing opportunities for work prior to their departure, both minimised the cost of their movement and secured a source of income. Based on their evidence, Hatton and Williamson concluded that late nineteenth-century mass migration was driven by primarily economic motives.[765] As the statistics provided in chapter 5 indicate, with few exceptions, the migration of Ottoman Arab youth fits this general picture. In addition, the Ottoman archival documents showed that these people moved in order to find better economic opportunities and higher standards of living.[766]

Overpopulation and the deterioration of rural economies, along with the decrease in per capita land, were the chief determinants of economic well-being motivating Ottoman

[763] Adam McKeown, Global Migration…,155.
[764]T J, Hatton, and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "What Drove the Mass Migrations from Europe in the Late Nineteenth Century?," *Population and Development Review* (Population Council) 20, no.3, (1994):533.
[765] T J, Hatton, and Jeffrey G. Williamson. What Drove the Mass Migrations…, 535–36.
[766] The similar motivation can be seen particularly in Polish immigration see Jerzy Zubrzycki, Emigration from Poland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (London: University Press, 1953), 248.

Arab migration to the Americas. As the thesis has indicated, the Ottoman population jumped in size, rendering the land they lived on insufficient to the task of feeding and employing the Ottoman Empire's people. Similar labour surpluses occurred widely in other parts of the world throughout the nineteenth century. Based on several studies of local emigration, Hatton and Williamson suggested that during the age of mass migration, those who were unable to obtain land via inheritance, marriage tenancy, or smallholdings had little option but to leave. For them, the labour surplus was an important motivator for migration, especially in rural, less industrialised countries.[767] Economic deterioration in rural areas, crop failures, increasing numbers of landless agricultural labourers, and declines in food prices produced peasants who could not pay taxes. This population subset appears time and again in histories of emigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, as well as from Asia, and histories of Ottoman Arab emigration reflect the same reality.[768]

Regarding places other than the Ottoman Empire, studies conducted at the micro level enhance this overall picture. Michael Wintle's and Jerzy Zubrzycki's works, in particular, have shown the critical role of population surplus in transatlantic emigrations from rural areas in the Netherlands and Poland, respectively.[769] Likewise, historians of Asia have demonstrated a similar demographic trend resulting from labour surpluses.[770]

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[767] Timothy Hutton, Jeffrey Williamson, The Age of Mass Migrations…,37.
[768] Ibid., 45–46; Jerzy Zubrzycki, *Emigration from Poland …,*252; Yuzo Murayama, "Information and Emigrants: Interprefectural Differences of Japanese Emigration to the Pacific Northwest, 1880–1915," *The Journal of Economic History* 51, no.1 (1991), 134; Pyau Link, "Causes of Chinese Emigration," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, no. 39, (Jan., 1912):76
[769] See Michael J. Wintle, "Push-factors in Emigration: The Case of the Province of Zeeland in the Nineteenth Century," *Population Studies*, no.46, (1992):523-537. J. Zubrzycki, Emigration from Poland…, 250
[770] Pyau Link, "Causes of Chinese Emigration…, 74 See also Dirk Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 366

Yet attributing emigration only to economic dynamics may not allow one to see the entire big picture. As indicated in chapter 3, no single factor can explain the whole phenomenon of Ottoman migration. Multiple forces became significant push and pull factors in the immigration of Ottoman Arabs to Argentina and the United States. Within this complex, intermingled set of causes, several other non-economic reasons for migration have also come to the fore in this study.

Military conscription, which became compulsory in the Ottoman Empire for both Muslims and non-Muslims in 1911, was another (though perhaps less common) motivation for emigration. But the power of conscription to drive emigration was not unique to the Ottoman case in the nineteenth century. Bernard Weinryb has indicated that conscription was an important motivation for emigration from the Russian Empire—where it became mandatory much earlier than it did in the Ottoman Empire. Interestingly enough, in both cases it was the minority groups that suffered most from conscription. In the Ottoman case, though the imperial government had made military service compulsory for all its male subjects, Christians and Jews were affected most. Until that time, they had not been allowed to carry even very primitive weapons, but here they were suddenly in the position of participating in war. As in Russia, so too in the Ottoman realm conscription appears to have been an important motivation among Jews to emigrate from the western part of the empire.[771]

Understanding how religion, ethnicity, and imperial policies functioned in emigration has been a major focus of this thesis. Given the challenging debate in the literature on the so-called persecution theory, I have concluded that it would be misleading

[771] Bernard D. Weinryb, "East European Immigration to the United States" *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 4, no. 45(1955): 499

to attribute the persecutions of the 1860s to general Ottoman Arab immigration to the New World, since most emigration occurred long after the persecutions, at a time when Lebanon, the most important hub of emigration, had achieved a state of semi-independence backed by European countries and Russia. It was not Christians alone who emigrated; Muslims, Greeks, Protestants, and Jews were also affected by the political turmoil. Moreover, as chapter 3 has shown, the representatives of Maronite Christians did not cite persecution as the reason for emigration but instead emphasised the economic problems facing Lebanese youth.

Of course, religion and politics cannot be entirely disregarded even though they do not explain emigration to the extent that other social and economic factors do. For one thing, the influx of Muslim populations from Caucasia and the Balkans created unrest among the native people of Syria and Lebanon, ultimately contributing to their decisions to emigrate. As I have demonstrated, in some cases, Caucasians apparently did not settle in the lands provided for them by the Ottoman government but instead attacked the native population and appropriated their lands. At the same time, the decision to avoid conscription that was playing a vital role in the emigration of young Syrians and Lebanese by 1911 can also be considered a political motivation. It is crucial to note at this point, however, that population influx to the region and conscription both affected non-Muslims and Muslims' decisions to go to the Americas, even though non-Muslim groups were affected in more dramatic numbers.

Interestingly, religious and ethnic factors explain some cases of eastern European immigration to the United States. In Russian Poland (Congress Kingdom), the persecution of Uniates by the Russian government in 1874 forced them either to convert to Russian

Orthodoxy or to leave the country and immigrate to the Americas.[772] Again in Russia, a series of pogroms against Jews in the spring of 1881 compelled them to flee to the Americas.[773] Zubrzycki has shown that for Prussian-ruled Poland (Poznania), the main motivation for emigration was *Kulturkampf* politics, which was formulated by Bismarck to introduce the German language and culture in Poland so as to eradicate Polish culture.[774] In this context, what differentiates the Ottoman case from these examples is that the Ottoman state did not impose oppression on minority groups, while in other polities the state appeared as the main actor.

This thesis has also underscored the influence of friends and relatives already established in destination countries as a primary factor facilitating subsequent immigration. Hatton and Williamson's econometric model indicates that early waves of emigration contribute significantly to future ones. The networks among pioneer immigrants and future immigrants sustained immigration flows and had long-lasting effects[775] as structures allowing the dependence of new immigrants upon those now residing in destination countries—particularly in the forms of remittances, prepaid tickets, room and board, and employment.[776] Such path dependency clearly existed in the case of emigration from the Ottoman Empire. As seen in Argentina, Ottoman youth were invited, subsidised, and hosted by earlier immigrants—usually Ottoman wholesalers (*mumevvin*s)—for the purpose of becoming employed as peddlers and hawkers in Argentina's city streets.

[772] Jerzy Zubrzycki, Emigration from Poland …,252
[773] Alroey Gur, "Aliya to America?: a Comparative Look at Jewish Mass Migration, 1881–1914" *Modern Judaism,* no.28(2008): 109–133.
[774] Jerzy Zubrzycki, Emigration from Poland …, 265
[775] Timothy Hutton, Jeffrey Williamson, The Age of Mass Migrations…, 38–41
[776] T J, Hatton, and Jeffrey G. Williamson. What Drove the Mass Migrations…,535

Aside from the information network provided by families, propaganda touting work opportunities in America that was created by early immigrants as well as by brokers and travel agencies influenced people's decisions to move from Greater Syria; similar cases occurred in the other parts of the world, too. Yuzo Murayama has shown such influence in the Japanese case,[777] and Weinryb has pointed out that Russians became keener to move to the United States after receiving letters and remittances from their relatives already there.[778]

The emergence of intermediary institutions—that is, travel agencies—that enabled immigration to the Americas occurred in Europe earlier than it did in the Ottoman Empire. As pointed out in chapter 4, European travel agencies that helped move Ottoman emigrants to the other side of the world also provided the same service to European immigrants. In fact, in many cases Ottoman emigrants travelled with European emigrants of the same faith.[779]

It is worth noting that brokers (*simsar*s) who mediated the movement of Ottomans also pervaded European emigration. Daniel Soyer's article concerning Jewish entrepreneur Gustave Eisner, who established himself by mediating the passage of emigrants from Poland to the United States, points out that Eisner used the family networks of his clients with relatives already in the United States.[780] Eisner's story recalls that of Ottoman *simsar*s who relayed Ottoman emigrants to the United States and Argentina also by taking advantage of familial connections in precisely the same way.

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[777] Yuzo Murayama, Information and Emigrants…,125–147
[778] Bernard D. Weinryb, East European Immigration…, 517–518
[779] See Bernard D. Weinryb, East European Immigration…,505
[780] Daniel Soyer, "The Travel Agent as Broker between Old World and New: The Case of Gustave Eisner" *YIVO Annual, no.*21 (1993): 345-368.

Travel agencies and *simsar*s are important in the study of global migration because they show parallels between Ottoman emigration and European emigration, suggesting that the roles did not simultaneously emerge in both places independently. Rather, these similarities reflect the organic dependence of Ottoman Arabs' immigration process on European institutions. As shown in chapters 4 and 5, no Turkish or Arab steamship company carried people to the other side of the continent; therefore, the whole process was run by European travel agencies, steamship companies, and their local partners. Especially with the improvement of transportation technology and the advent of trade trafficking in port cities, European companies expanded their transportation activities throughout Russia and Syria.[781] Thus, even if the need for emigration from the region had appeared earlier among Ottoman youth, these would-be emigrants had to wait until the 1870s, when European companies penetrated the Ottoman market for human cargo.

The organic ties of Christian Ottomans to European countries, particularly France, is another aspect of Ottoman emigration worth considering. From the very beginning of French involvement in the region, the mobility of Christians had been facilitated politically. As chapter 5 has illustrated, despite strict measures taken by the Ottoman government, French consulates played an important role in emigration in order to advantage French steamship companies. In general, the situation suggests that if the French had not become involved in Syria and Lebanon, the emigration of these regions' inhabitants could not have occurred on such a large scale.

Apart from all this, two other interesting points should be noted in comparing Ottoman and European emigration. First, in contrast to early European migration and Asian

[781] Adam McKeown, "Global Migration…,157

(particularly Indian[782]) movements to the Americas during a later period, no system of passenger indenture is evidenced in any primary Ottoman sources. It is possible that when Ottoman emigration began to occur in full force, especially after 1890, indentured labour recruitment had already begun to decline.

The second noteworthy point is that during this period, countries with large emigrant populations also experienced both internal movements of people within their territories and migration to the neighbouring countries. For instance, as Irish workers immigrated to Britain, similar movements from Eastern and Southern Europe to France and Germany occurred. At roughly the same time, poor Russians migrated from agricultural areas to the growing cities.[783] In the Ottoman case, people also moved within imperial territory in search of work before and during transatlantic migration occurred. Most visible in these movements were Armenians, Syrians, and Lebanese Arabs, most of whom migrated to Egypt to find employment in construction[784] and to Anatolia to work on tobacco plantations.[785] In addition, some immigrated to Sierra Leone[786] to work building railroads.

As for the government's stance towards emigration, the Ottoman Empire did not differ greatly in its response from Spain, Japan, or Russia. As I have discussed, passports and passage receipts were introduced to stop emigration and to keep the population within

[782] Adam McKeown, "Global Migration…,169–157
[783] Ibid., 161
[784] For Egypt see Thomas Philipp, *The Syrians in Egypt, 1725–1975* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1985).
[785] Ibid., 11
[786] For Sierra Leone see Laan, H L. *The Lebanese Traders in Sierra Leone* (The Hague: Mouton, 1975); Kaniki, M.H.Y. "Attitudes and Reactions towards the Lebanese in Sierra Leone during the Colonial Period." *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, no.7.1 (1973): 97–113

imperial territory. The emigration of Jews from the Russian Empire, for example, had long been prohibited, thus limiting that minority group's movement.[787]

On the other hand, the Ottoman stance differed considerably from the Italian one, which encouraged emigration for national interests, especially by the beginning of the twentieth century. Interestingly enough, unlike the Ottoman case, in which passport legislation was implemented in order to restrict exodus from imperial territories, in Italy passports were introduced to *facilitate* the emigration of high-quality people to the Americas. Torpey has shown that Italy's Passport Law of 1901 was issued in order to secure the rights of Italians who intended to move[788]—specifically, to protect them from any commercial interests, prevent their rejection in destination countries' ports, and provide supervision to facilitate their emigration.[789]

One primary aim of the Ottoman implementation of restriction policies was meeting the empire's urgent need for military manpower and agricultural labourers. Another was preventing harmful activities by immigrants, including the production and dissemination of separationist propaganda that resonated in the homeland against imperial interests. McKeown has indicated that immigrant communities in diaspora cultivate a sort of nationalism and reification of the homeland, seeking to nurture, fortify, and protect it.[790] In the Ottoman case, such a phenomenon emerged in Syrian and Lebanese communities in the

[787] Bernard D. Weinryb, East European Immigration …,502
[788] In fact those time, big landowners opposed to emigrations because they had a concern that de-population would rise up the wages they should pay, John. Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2000),103
[789] John. Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport*…,103–105.
[790] Adam McKeown, Global Migration…,175. Also see Adam. McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842 to 1949" *Journal of Asian Studies*. (1999):322–326; and Nina Glick Schiller, "Transmigrants and Nation-States: Something Old and Something New in the U.S. Immigrant Experience," In *Handbook of International Migration: American Experience. New York*, ed. Charles Hirschman, et.al. (New York:Russell Sage Foundation, 1999), 94–119.

Americas that worked for Arab independence from Ottoman rule. These communities not only propagandised the movement in their publications, which were often banned from Ottoman territory by imperial authorities, but they also sent military equipment home, directly contributing to revolutionary activities.

The other motivation behind the Ottoman Empire's immigration policy was to preserve its prestige in the eyes of the world and not allow its reputation to be injured by Ottoman immigrants' misbehaviour, illegal entry, and failure of medical inspections—all of which tarnished the Ottoman image, particularly in South America. Yuzo Murayama's study of Japanese migration shows that this prestige-conscious attitude was not limited to the Ottoman case. Just as the Ottoman state did, the Meiji government shaped its restrictive policies governing emigration to the Americas according to recommendations sent via telegrams by the Japanese consul in San Francisco. Especially after the 1900s, the Japanese government became keener to limit the number of emigrations by issuing fewer passports and increasing its selectivity.[791]

Lastly, it is worth comparing two specific Ottoman migration experiences: movement to Argentina and movement to the United States. As discussed in the last two chapters of this thesis, in both these countries Ottomans, unlike most European immigrants, did not choose to work as agricultural labourers or in the construction sector,[792] despite the efforts of host-country governments to direct them there. Instead, they mostly established businesses as itinerant peddlers in city streets. In this independent sphere, Ottoman Arabs created a communal network based on kinship in order to facilitate their survival in host countries.

[791] Yuzo Murayama, "Information and Emigrants…,143
[792] For Italian case see Herbert Klein, "The Integration…, 315

Given the population's small number within overall immigrant groups of the period, any problems attributed to Ottomans were less likely to be perceived as such in the United States; there, Ottomans were easily absorbed into the so-called melting pot. In Argentina, however, Ottoman Arab immigration had the potential to create significant unrest, since Ottoman newcomers were more visible and their influence in the country was greater. Presumably, this difference in the perception of Ottoman Arabs in these two countries explains the divergent attitudes of the two governments and societies towards Ottoman immigrants.

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I. HR.: 423_1328-B-23; nu. 1 and 2, 17.R.1333, 04.03.1915; 333_21439, 22.M.1280, 09.07.1863; 420_1327-Za-10., 23.09.1909.

I.HUS.: 46_82, 02.Za.1313, 15.04.1896; 176_76, 21.Ca.1327, 10.06.1909; 60_37, 18.Ş.1315, 12.01.1888.

I.MTZ.CL: 3_197, 09.Ş.1306, 01.04.1889; 3_198, 13.04.1889; 5_264, 25.L.1320, 25.01.1903.

M.V.: 136_3 04.M.1328, 16.01.1910; 194_18, 08.Z.1332, 20.10.1914; 140_83, 24.Ca.1328, 03.06.1910; 87_23, 02.Za.1313, 15.04.1896; 194_18, 194_18, 08.Z.1332, 20.10.1914; 65_44, 10.Za.1308, 17.06.1891; 82_10, 08.Ca.1312, 30.10.1894; 65_44, 10.Za.1308, 17.06.1891.

Ş.D: 2289_30, nu.5, 12.B.1316, 26.11.1898; 2292_19, nu.1, 05.S.1319, 24.05.1901; 2286_9, 24.C.1314, 30.11.1896

TFR.I.MN: 131_13021, 05.08.1907.

Y.A.HUS: 220_9, 04.R.1306, 08.12.1888; 314_43, 04.C.1312, 03.12.1894; 289_9, 17.B.1311, 24.01.1894.

Y.EE: 152_8, 10.S.1312, 13.08.1894.

Y.PRK. ZB: 23_43, 06.R.1317, 14.08.1899; 13_68, 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888.

Y.PRK.BŞK: 22_89, 29.Z.1308, 5.08.1891.

Y.PRK.TKM: 52_19, 29.Z.1326, 22.01.1909.

Y.PRK.ZB: 23_43, 06.R.1317, 14.08.1899.

YPRK AZJ: 13_68 29.Z.1305, 06.09.1888.

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