

‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zahrāwī and His Thought Reconsidered: An Intellectual Portrait of the Arab Nationalist as an Ottoman Politician

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Abdülhamit Zehravi ve Düşüncesini Yeniden Düşünmek: Bir Arap Milliyetçisinin Osmanlı Siyasetçisi Olarak Entelektüel Portresi

Öz ■ Bir Osmanlı-Arap milletvekili olan Abdülhamid Zehravi, genellikle yalnızca Arap milliyetçiliği bakış açısından araştırılmıştır. Ancak Zehravi Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun getirdiği emperyal yapıyı takdir ediyor ve Batı istilasına karşı durabilmenin yegane yolunun ‘güç olmak’tan geçtiğini düşünüyordu. Zehravi bireye değil milletlere dayanan Osmanlı politik birliğini (*ittihad-ı anasır*) destekledi. Bu arzulanan politik birlik hedefine ulaşmak için etnik-dini çatışmalara yol açmadan politika eğitimi-ne olan ihtiyaca dikkat çekmiştir.

Zehravi'nin elitist mentalitesi gerektiğinde disiplinizasyon yöntemlerini kullanmaya ve “cahil” halklar ya da “barbar” Arap göçmenlerini aydınlatmaya itmiştir. Teorik alanda Zehravi'nin her ne kadar katkısı varsa da siyaset alanında pek de gerçekçi ve pragmatik bir çözüm sunamamıştır; cemaatlerden oluşan Osmanlı milleti düşüncesi, birey üzerine kurulmuş olan o zamanki Osmanlı anayasacılık sistemiyle uyusmamaktadır. Osmanlı entelektüel tarihi açısından bakıldığında Zehravi ile döneminin Arap olmayan diğer Osmanlı entelektüelleri arasında pek çok ortak yön bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, İkinci Meşrutiyet, Jön Türkler, Arap Milliyetçiliği, Terbiye-i Siyasiye

Introduction

‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zahrāwī (Abdülhamid Zehravi), an Ottoman-Arab politician, and his ideas have been studied almost exclusively from the perspective of

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Arab nationalism. His death as the Arab “martyr” *par excellence* during World War I due to his alleged treason in the Ottoman state confirmed his fame as “one of the most active proponents of the Arab movement.”¹ At the same time, many scholars have recognized the fact that Zahrāwī remained an Ottoman until the last days of his life. Nevertheless, Arabist students generally observe that Zahrāwī’s Arabism did not contradict Ottomanism. According to Tarabein, “Al-Zahrawi thought that his being an Arab nationalist was not incompatible with being committed to Ottomanism.”² Herzog, who most profoundly analyzed Zahrāwī’s political ideas, argued that, “The Arabism of Zahrāwī expressed itself as ‘rightly understood’ Ottomanism, which, however, consciously or not, robs the Ottoman Empire of its substantial political functions and legitimacies.”³ In other words, “Zahrāwī introduced and claimed a kind of Ottomanism that reduced the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire to the fact that it just existed.”⁴ It is apparent that Ottomanism is considered a key term in understanding Zahrāwī’s thought. Few scholars, however, define this word satisfactorily.

Ottomanism is a misleading word. In conventional Arab historiography, those who supported the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, hereafter CUP) in the 1912 general election and did not participate in the “Arab revolt” after 1916 are defined as Ottomanists.⁵ In Turkish historiography, however, those who did *not* support the CUP in 1912 are often called

1 Ahmed Tarabein, “‘Abd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi: The Career and Thought of an Arab Nationalist,” in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, Rashid Khalidi et al. (eds.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 97.

2 Tarabein, “‘Abd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi,” p. 114. See also the similar observation of Duri. Abd al-Aziz Duri, *The Historical Formation of the Arab Nation: A Study in Identity and Consciousness*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 194-98.

3 “Der Arabismus Zahrāwī’s artikulierte sich als ‘richtigverstandener’ Osmanismus, der jedoch bewußt oder unbewußt das Osmanische Reich seiner substantiellen politischen Funktionen und Legitimitäten beraubte.” Christoph Herzog, “‘Abd al-Ḥamīd az-Zahrāwī und das Problem des Osmanismus, 1908-1916,” Magisterarbeit zur Erlangung der Würde des Magister Artium des Philosophischen Fakultäten der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität zu Freiburg i.Br., n.d., p. 6.

4 “Zahrāwī eine Art des Osmanismus vorbrachte und vertrat, welche die Legitimität des Osmanischen Reiches darauf beschränkte, daß es nun einmal existierte.” Herzog, p. 108.

5 Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus 1860-1920* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 64, 67-74 and Rashid Khalidi, “Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria Before 1914: A Reassessment,” in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, pp. 59-62.

Ottomanists.⁶ No less confusing is the pioneering definition of Dawn, who observed that, “the dominant ideology, Ottomanism, defended the continuation of the Ottoman Empire” while “the challenging ideology, Arabism, proclaimed that the Arabs were a special people who possessed peculiar virtues and rights.”⁷ It is obvious that, by definition, an Ottomanist could be an Arabist simultaneously. Therefore, Dawn’s conclusion that “most Arabs remained Ottomanists until 1918”⁸ is not surprising. Kayalı’s definition was no clearer. Besides his description of “Tanzimat Ottomanism” as “a common allegiance of all subjects in equal status to the Ottoman dynasty,”⁹ Kayalı argued that “Abdülhamid’s Islamism was Ottomanism equipped with ideological embellishment deriving from Islam,”¹⁰ while “in the Unionist view of Ottomanism, ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences were of no import.”¹¹ Similarly, Herzog’s explanation of the term Ottomanism, as a concept of political loyalty with many variations, raises more questions than it answers.¹² For Dawn, Kayalı, Herzog, and many others, the word Ottomanism has little more meaning than to just acknowledge the existence of the Empire; hence, there could be so many different variations and interpretations of this single word.¹³

6 Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiyede Siyasal Partiler*, c. 1, (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1984), p. 268; Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1998), p. 272; Ali Birinci, *Hürriyet ve İtilâf Fırkası: II. Meşrutiyet Devrinde İttihat ve Terakki’ye Karşı Çıkanlar*, (İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1990), pp. 55-57, 63-64 and Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlılık Düşüncesi (1839-1913),” in *Cumhuriyet’e Devreden Düşünce Mirası: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet’in Birikimi*, *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce*, c. 1, Mehmet Ö. Alkan (ed.) (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), pp. 109-15.

7 C. Ernest Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism: Essays on the Origins of Arab Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), p. 148.

8 Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism*, pp. 146-47. See also Dawn, “The Origins of Arab Nationalism,” in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, pp. 12-17.

9 Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 24.

10 Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 31.

11 Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 85.

12 Herzog, “Abd al-Ḥamīd az-Zahrāwī,” pp. 13-15.

13 Strauss also introduced many variations of “Ottomanism” and therefore did little to clarify the meaning of this word. Johann Strauss, «Ottomanisme et activité littéraire chez les non-musulmans à Istanbul après la révolution jeune-turque», in *Penser, agir et vivre dans l’Empire ottoman et en Turquie: Études réunies pour François Georgeon*, Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar (eds.) (Paris: Peeters, 2013), pp. 171-97.

If used in this manner, the term Ottomanism has little, if any, value as an analytical concept in examining the Ottomans’ ideas *within* the Empire. Oddly, although scholars are almost unanimous in suggesting that Arabists remained in minority before World War I, few dare to analyze what the Arab majority thought and, instead, just label them Ottomanists.¹⁴ This entire phenomenon, I suspect, must be a product of the erroneous assumption that ethnically conscious non-Turks (or Turks too, for that matter) could not remain loyal to the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵ This is why the standard references of the late Ottoman intellectual history rarely refer to non-Turks. Likewise, in most monographs on the Ottoman nation-building project, only Muslim Turks are examined. Accordingly, many scholars presuppose that Ottoman Arabs, in general, and Zahrāwī’s ideas, in particular, could best be analyzed in the context of *Arab* nationalism while *Ottoman* aspects of their thought are considered merely as a sideshow or a prehistory of the subsequent “awakening” of Arab identity.¹⁶

However, to be an Arab in the Ottoman Empire was more natural than exceptional. Recent studies have demonstrated that there were many non-Turks who took the existence of the multi-ethnic Empire for granted and constructed their own version of historiography as well as a nation-building project within this framework.¹⁷ I would like to place Zahrāwī in this context; taking Herzog’s

14 Typical are the articles in the otherwise seminal book *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*. See also the standard works of Arab nationalism such as Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: the Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Muhammad Y. Muslih, *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) and Mahmoud Haddad, “The Rise of Arab Nationalism Reconsidered,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 26(2) (1994), pp. 201-22.

15 See Fatma Müge Göçek, “The Decline of the Ottoman Empire and the Emergence of Greek, Armenian, Turkish, and Arab Nationalisms,” in *Social Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East*, Fatma Müge Göçek (ed.) (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 15-83. It is characteristic that Hanioglu does not take the *Ottoman* aspects of Young Turkish thought seriously because of their Turkish ethnic consciousness. M. Şükrü Hanioglu, “The Young Turks and Arabs before the Revolution of 1908,” in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, pp. 31-49 and *idem*, “Turkish Nationalism and the Young Turks, 1889-1908,” in *Social Constructions of Nationalism*, pp. 85-97.

16 Therefore, Commins analyzed the Islamic aspects of Zahrāwī’s thought before 1908 without placing it in the context of *Ottoman* intellectual development. David Dean Commins, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 55-59.

17 Works on the Ottoman Greeks may be the most illustrating case. See, for example, Johann Strauss, “The *Millet*s and the Ottoman Language: The Contribution of Ottoman Greeks

conclusion as the starting point, I address Zahrāwī's case as one element of *Ottoman* intellectual history, liberating him from the myth of *Arab* nationalist historiography. How did Zahrāwī contemplate the *Ottoman* (i.e., not so much *Arab*) questions of his time? I hope this research question would help situate him, in particular, and the Arabs, in general, more properly in the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman intellectual history.

After a brief description of Zahrāwī's career, I will inquire into the two key concepts of his thought, namely, the unity of Ottoman elements and political education, and examine their Ottoman backgrounds. In so doing, I will address the question of fundamental differences, if any, between Zahrāwī and his non-Arab compatriots in their ways of discussing the Ottoman nation-building project.

Zahrāwī in the Second Ottoman Constitutional Politics

During the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, or the Hamidian era (1876-1908), the Syrian "politics of notables" proved to be one of the most effective tools of autocracy to rule this part of the Empire. While on one hand, many young Arabs of notable origin studied at the School of Civil Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*) and/or the Law School (*Mekteb-i Hukuk*) to become bureaucrats, on the other, several infamous figures such as Ebulhuda el-Sayyadi, İzzet Paşa el-Abid, and the Melhame brothers, all members of the Syrian notables, became the Sultan's personal servants. These two channels, in one way or another, linked this Arab province to the Ottoman center.¹⁸ The Young Turk Revolution of 1908

to Ottoman Letters (19th-20th Centuries)," *Die Welt des Islams* 35(2) (1995), pp. 189-249, and Vangelis Kechriotis, "Greek-Orthodox, Ottoman Greeks or just Greeks? Theories of Coexistence in the Aftermath of the Young Turk Revolution," *Études Balkaniques* 41(1) (2005), pp. 51-71. Also consult Fujinami Nobuyoshi, "Hellenizing the Empire through Historiography: Pavlos Karolidis and the Greek Historical Writing in the Late Ottoman Empire," in *Balkan Empires: Imperial Imagined Communities in Southeastern Europe (19th-20th c.)*, Dimitris Stamatopoulos (ed.) (Budapest: Central European University Press, forthcoming). Arab view during the Great War in support of the Ottoman imperial framework is examined in Salim Tamari, "Muhammad Kurd Ali and the Syrian-Palestinian Intelligentsia in the Ottoman Campaign against Arab Separatism," in *Syria in World War I: Politics, Economy, and Society*, Talha Çiçek (ed.) (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 37-60. On the Jewish case, see Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

18 Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, William R. Polk and Richard

changed the entire atmosphere and created new opportunities with new legitimacies. A new generation of Arab intellectuals, whose career had been checked and obstructed by the older generation, now found a chance to engage politically. They began to publish periodicals, organize rallies and meetings, and participate in the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies (*Meclis-i Mebusan*).¹⁹

Zahrāwī was one such figure who started anew his political career as an Ottoman politician after the Revolution. Born in 1871 in Syria,²⁰ in the Hamidian era, he devoted himself to journalistic activities, becoming increasingly antagonistic to the autocratic rule of the Sultan. Zahrāwī was closely connected to the circle of Rashīd Riḍā and other Islamic modernists, while at the same time allying with the Young Turks against the common enemy of despotism.²¹ In 1908, Zahrāwī was elected as deputy from Hama. In 1911, he joined the Entente Libérale (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*) and pursued anti-Unionist activities in the 1912 general election. After losing, Zahrāwī founded a new “Arab” party, the Decentralization Party (*Ḥizb al-Lāmarkaziyya al-Idāriyya al-‘Uthmānī*), in Cairo. In June 1913, in Paris, he presided over the Arab Congress and put pressure on the Unionists by utilizing the French support to fulfill his aim.

Upon his agreement with the CUP, in January 1914, Zahrāwī was duly appointed senator. Today’s researchers, as well as his contemporaries, wonder if this

L. Chambers (eds.) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 41-68. Relationship between the Arab notables and the Hamidian palace was also studied in Engin D. Akarlı, “‘Abdülhamid II’s Attempt to Integrate Arabs into the Ottoman System,” in *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period*, David Kushner (ed.) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), pp. 74-89 and Jens Hanssen, “‘Malhamé-Malfamé’: Levantine Elites and Transimperial Networks on the Eve of the Young Turk Revolution,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43(1) (2011), pp. 25-48.

19 Corinne Lee Blake, “Training Arab-Ottoman Bureaucrats: Syrian Graduates of the Mülkiye Mektebi, 1890-1920” (Ph.D. dissertation), Princeton University, 1991 and Sabine Prätör, *Der arabische Faktor in der jungtürkischen Politik: Eine Studie zum osmanischen Parlament der II. Konstitution (1908-1918)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1993). For the later activities of this generation, see Leyla Dakhlī, *Une génération d’intellectuels arabes: Syrie et Liban (1908-1940)* (Paris: Karthala, 2009).

20 His year of birth was not certain. Some say he was born in 1855 or 1863. See Ahmed Fahd Bereket eṣ-Şevābīke, “‘Abdülhamīd ez-Zehrāwī,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi*, 1988, I, pp. 226-27 and W. Ende, “al-Zahrāwī,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, XI, 2002, pp. 397-98.

21 M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 107.

was a result of “treachery” or “compromise” on the part of Zahrāwī. In any case, his Arabist activities notwithstanding, during this period he never denied the framework of the Empire, he just pursued the Arab rights within it. This logic accounts for the simple fact that he chose the Ottoman theater of politics, such as the Parliament, and periodicals published in the Ottoman soil. Seen in this light, his agreement with the Unionists is not surprising.

Under these circumstances, then, what did he think was the ideal type of the Ottoman nation building? What were the differences between his ideas and, say, the Greek or Turkish version of the ideal Ottoman nation? I address these questions by investigating his articles written especially between 1908 and 1913, that is, the time of his active participation in the Ottoman constitutional politics.

Unity of Ottoman Elements

Since the Tanzimat era, Muslim Ottomans adapted themselves to the sovereign nation state system and invented new concepts accordingly. They used words such as *unsur*, *kavim*, *cins*, *millet*, and *ümmet* to express the modern concept of nation.²² Each word had its own nuances. In both Turkish and Arabic, *unsur* (‘*unşur*) was most commonly used to indicate the constitutive elements of the Ottoman nation, which, in turn, was usually expressed by the term *millet* in Turkish and *umma* in Arabic. Of course, in Arabic, the word *umma* never shed its original meaning of Muslim community, nor did the Turkish *millet* lose its meaning of (especially non-Muslim) religious communities. In contrast, *kavim* and *cins* stood for ethnic or racial groups and rarely contained civic connotations.

With these terms and their respective nuances in his mind, Zahrāwī emphasized that the unity of elements (*ittihad-ı anasır*) was the goal every Ottoman should pursue. He clearly distinguished Turkish from Ottoman. As many scholars have indicated, Zahrāwī saw no contradiction between being a loyal Ottoman and belonging to any ethno-religious elements. Zahrāwī argued that after the Gülhane Edict of 1839, Muslims, Christians, Jews, Turks, Arabs, and many other people (*ajnās*) began to be called Ottomans without any exception.²³

22 Ami Ayalon, *Language and Change in the Arab Middle East: the Evolution of Modern Arabic Political Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 16-28 and Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 24-42.

23 ‘Abd al-Ḥamid al-Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3 (Dimashq: Manshūrāt Wizāra al-Thaqāfa, 1996), pp. 199-200, on 3 November 1911.

In his view, unity is possible only when the ethnicities of all the Ottomans (*jinsiyyāt al-‘uthmāniyyīn*) is respected, since the Ottoman nation comprised many elements.²⁴

This is no peculiarity in Zahrāwī’s thought. On 3 June 1911, when the Unionist Minister of Interior Halil [Menteşe] declared that the government’s only wish was to realize the unity of Ottomans, Zahrāwī reminded his colleagues that the unity of elements (*ittihad-ı anasır*) should be the aim of all the Ottoman deputies.²⁵ Significantly, a Unionist Turk and an anti-Unionist Arab agreed on this crucial point. In fact, as Zahrāwī reiterated, the cause of disagreement lay not in the principle of unity itself, but in the way in which they should achieve it.²⁶ He criticized the Unionists, not because of their alleged project of Turkification, as today’s scholars often assume, but because of the CUP’s vain plan, in his view, to transform the various Ottoman elements (*al-‘anāşir al-‘uthmāniyya*) into one (*unşur wāhid*).²⁷ This is not Turkification. When saying this, Zahrāwī meant a policy that “deprives his Turkness (*turkiyyatihi*) from a Turk or his Arabness (*‘arabiyyatihi*) from an Arab for the sake of ‘unity’.”²⁸ This signifies that in Zahrāwī’s view, Turks were likewise the victims of the CUP’s “wrong” policy. Zahrāwī repeatedly declared that he was not an enemy of the Turks; he was just against the CUP.²⁹ He also reminded his readers that many Turks were opposing the Unionists.³⁰ If he dismissed the Unionists’ policy as “wrong,” then, what would be the ideal type of Ottoman unity from Zahrāwī’s point of view?

24 ‘Abd al-Ḥamid al-Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5 (Dimashq: Manshūrāt Wizāra al-Thaqāfa, 1997), p. 84.

25 MMZC D. 1, Sī. 3, İçt. 114, pp. 3545-46.

26 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, p. 84, on 11 August 1910.

27 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 506-07, on 12 September 1912. He repeatedly advocated this point. See Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 16-17, 134-35, 416, on 20 April, 24 August, and 14 Decembey 1911, respectively.

28 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 18, on 20 April 1911. Interestingly, this is also how the Turkists like Yusuf Akçura criticized the “Tanzimatism” (*Tanzimatçılık*) of Ottoman Turks. See Arai Masami, *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), esp. Chapter 4.

29 See, for example, Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, p. 48, on 23 (30?) June 1910 and Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 481, on 30 November 1911.

30 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 109-14, 124-25, on 27 July and 8 August 1911, respectively.

According to Zahrāwī, there are six kinds of unity: 1) human (*al-ittihād al-insānī*), 2) ethnic (*al-ittihād al-jinsī*), 3) religious (*al-ittihād al-dīnī*), 4) regional (*al-ittihād al-iqlīmī*), 5) urban (*al-ittihād al-baladī*), and 6) corporal (*al-ittihād al-ṣifī*). While the human unity is impossible to realize, the ethnic and religious unities too are difficult to achieve, because of the reason discussed below. Only the latter three were likely to be realized.³¹ More specifically, Zahrāwī categorized the Ottoman unity into four: 1) general (*ittihād ‘uthmānī ‘āmm*), 2) ethnic (*ittihād jinsī ‘uthmānī*), 3) religious (*ittihād dīnī ‘uthmānī*), and 4) political (*ittihād siyāsī ‘uthmānī*).³² Here too, Zahrāwī was skeptical about the ethnic and religious unities. He warned that, given the inadequate political education of today’s Ottomans, these kinds of unity were dangerous as well as impractical since they tended to cause chauvinism. The manner in which Zahrāwī distinguished the *general* and *political* unity is interesting. The former—all the Ottomans (*al-‘uthmāniyyūn kulluhum*) agree upon the same program and unanimously choose those who oversee the administration and politics—might be ideal but was impossible to realize. The latter—the unity of Ottoman communities (*ittihād jamā‘āt min al-‘uthmāniyyīn*) in agreeing with the program and choosing those who oversee the administration and politics—is, in contrast, not only easier but also more practical and appropriate in order for the Ottomans to enhance their political education. The only difference between the two is the subject of unity: “all the Ottomans” for the *general* unity, and the “Ottoman communities” for the *political* unity. Therefore, we can assume that Zahrāwī’s ideal type of Ottoman nation must be a *political* one that is based on communities and not individual citizens, as its constitutive elements.

Communitarian versus Individual Equality

In spite of its seemingly theoretical clarity, this thesis leaves many problems to be solved. What were these communities? Zahrāwī gave two kinds: 1) natural community and 2) community based on human will.³³ The most fundamental among the former is neighborhood (*jamā‘a al-jiwār*). A neighborhood can easily form a community because of the ties (*rābiṭa*) and mutual aid (*ta‘āwun*) it

31 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 266-68, on 25 January 1912.

32 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 269-71, on 25 January 1912.

33 ‘Abd al-Ḥamid al-Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2 (Dimashq: Manshūrāt Wizāra al-Thaqāfa, 1995), pp. 425-35, on 19 November 1910.

provides. Ethnic, linguistic, and religious ties are the byproduct of neighborhood.³⁴ This leads to the idea that, in human society, there are always many types of communities overlapping with each other at multiple levels, because, as long as the ties of mutual aid existed, there emerged a community of some kind.³⁵

Let us return to the unity of the Ottomans. If multiple communities existed and overlapped with each other on many levels of human life, and if the *political* unity of communities was the goal, then what was the nature of the highest community, that is, the Ottoman nation, for its citizens? Given Zahrāwī’s explanations of community, at least two questions arise: 1) what does it mean for an Ottoman to belong to the community and nation simultaneously and what is the relationship between these two belongings? 2) Among many types of communities that overlap with each other, which could and should be the basic unit of the *political* unity of Ottomans? Unfortunately, Zahrāwī did not seem to provide sufficient answers to these mutually connected questions.

For the first question, Zahrāwī left no doubt that Ottomans were equal as citizens. At the same time, he added that every community too must be equal.³⁶ How could the Empire’s citizens be equal in both communal and individual sense, simultaneously? This is easier said than done. Zahrāwī’s own argument testified the difficulties inherent in this thesis. According to him, a crucial problem in Ottoman politics was the religious and linguistic privileges that contradicted equality. While the former is explicitly recognized in the Constitution, the latter, that is, Turkish, as the official language of the State, was not legitimate.³⁷ Interestingly, this is where the Ottoman Turks and Arabs (and, for that matter, Greeks) disagreed most. The Turks addressed the question of official language from the viewpoint of its legality, utility, and tradition; Turkish as the official language was not the privilege of the Turks as an ethnic group (Greeks made an almost identical logic concerning Greek as the liturgical language of the Orthodox Church). The Turks, however, criticized the non-Muslims’ religious privileges (*imtiyazat-ı mezhebiye*) as detrimental to civic egalitarianism (Greeks defended their religious

34 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 19-20, on 27 April 1911. See also Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 433-38, on 16 February 1912.

35 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 268.

36 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 485, on 7 December 1911; Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 505, on 5 September 1912.

37 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 31-36, on 11 May 1911.

privileges for both legal and traditional reasons).³⁸ It is interesting that Zahrāwī's argument, consciously or otherwise, supported the Greeks' cause. On one hand, he did not oppose the religious privileges because the constitutional text assured these privileges (Art. 11). On the other hand, he attacked the Turks because of their linguistic privileges despite its explicit recognition in the Constitution (Art. 18). In other words, while Zahrāwī addressed the question of religious privileges of non-Muslims from a *legal* point of view, he approached the question of language from an *ethnic* point of view. His double standard is obvious. According to Zahrāwī, the state's official language must represent the majority of its citizens. He continues his argument that in the Ottoman Empire, because the Arabs were no fewer than the Turks, Arabic must at least have the same privilege as Turkish.³⁹

There is an inherent contradiction in Zahrāwī's two kinds of equality. Almost by definition, communitarian and individual egalitarianism contradict each other. However, he did not answer the critical question of how the *general* unity of the Ottomans, based on individual equality, could work in harmony with the *political* one, based on communitarian egalitarianism. Since his definition of community is as relative as it is ambiguous, it is not at all clear what kind of community (ethnic, linguistic, or religious) Zahrāwī had in mind when advocating the *political* unity. According to him, there is no essential difference between (ethnic) community and (sovereign) nation. Just as in the case of (ordinal) community, the reason a (sovereign) nation comes into existence is because of mutual aid (*ta'āwun*). There are three types of nation in today's world: 1) ethnic (*al-umma al-jinsiyya*), 2) religious (*al-umma al-dīniyya*), and 3) political (*al-umma al-siyāsiyya*). Nation is not a natural phenomenon because not every ethnic group (*jins*) forms a nation (*umma*), while in many cases several ethnic groups (*ajnās*) form a nation.⁴⁰

With reference to the second question mentioned above, that is, which kind of community should be the basis of Ottoman unity, Zahrāwī, in a similar vein, suggested that there were three types of constitutive elements: 1) ethnic (*'unṣur al-jinsiyya*), 2) religious (*'unṣur al-dīn*), and 3) ideological and social (*'unṣur al-fikr wa al-ijtihād al-ijtimā'ī*).⁴¹ In practice, however, such an enumeration helps us

38 On the privilege question and the Greeks' role in it, see Fujinami Nobuyoshi, "Privileged but Equal: The Privilege Question in the Context of Ottoman Constitutionalism," in *Balkan Nationalism(s) and the Ottoman Empire*, vol. III: *The Young Turk Revolution and Ethnic Groups*, Dimitris Stamatopoulos (ed.) (Istanbul: Isis, 2015), pp. 33-59.

39 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 31-36, on 11 May 1911.

40 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 93-94, on 25 August 1910.

41 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 481, on 30 November 1911.

little in looking into the question of how to achieve the desirable unity *politically*, when all these communities meant different things for different people. Moreover, by his own definition, every community could (and indeed did) contain many smaller sub-communities within it (imagine the case of the Orthodox community that contained many different ethno-linguistic sub-communities within it). Why could not such a sub-community claim the same communitarian equality as its “mother” community (just like the Bulgarians had once done against the Greeks)?

With all these arguments in mind, communitarian egalitarianism did not automatically solve all the difficulties faced by the Ottoman nation-building project, rather, it added to it. Therefore, the question was not whether Zahrāwī’s ideal of community-based *political* unity of Ottomans was right or not. Even if we appreciate Zahrāwī’s view through its ideological value or its theoretical contribution, there remains the question of how to realize it practically or *politically*. Here, we must recall the fact that “community” (*cemaat*) was a heavily loaded technical term in the Ottoman legal discourse that exclusively referred to the non-Muslim religious communities with their particular religious privileges (*imtiyat-ı mezhebiye*). Other types of community could claim no legal personality in this context.⁴² After the Young Turk Revolution, the newly emerging team of constitutional lawyers was also of the opinion that individuals should be the basis of the one and indivisible nation.⁴³ To imagine a regime based on communities is one thing, to introduce a possible alternative based on (what kind of?) communities as a new working unit of administration is another. Did Zahrāwī mean to discard the existing legal frameworks altogether for the sake of his vision of communitarian egalitarianism? It seems less likely. After all, Zahrāwī was a MP and, I think, it is justified for us to expect him to find the solution legally. However, he failed to do it. In any case, there remains the fact that, just like many of his Ottoman compatriots, Zahrāwī came across the ambivalent question of equality between citizen and community, that had been a top agenda ever since the Tanzimat period.⁴⁴

42 İbrahim Hakkı, *Hukuk-ı İdare, Cild-i Evvel*, ikinci tab’ı (İstanbul: Karabet Matbaası, 1312r [1897]), esp. pp. 296-340.

43 Fujinami Nobuyoshi, “The Ideas of Babanzade İsmail Hakkı Regarding the Ottoman Constitution: Sovereignty, Jurisprudence, and the Caliphate,” *Shigaku-Zasshi*, 124(8) (2015), pp. 1-38 (in Japanese).

44 Arai Masami, “Citizen, Liberty and Equality in Late Ottoman Discourse,” in *Penser, agir et vivre dans l’Empire ottoman et en Turquie: Études réunies pour François Georgeon*, eds. Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar (Paris: Peeters, 2013), pp. 3-13.

The contradictions inherent in his thesis notwithstanding, we must not forget that Zahrāwī's definition of community was far from ethnic or religious essentialism. In his view, Arabs were one in their language and ethnicity (*jins*) but not in their regions, ethics, and religions.⁴⁵ He even questioned if there really existed a single Ottoman Arab community when there were "Syrians, Iraqis, Hijazis, Yemenis, Egyptians, Africans, Sunni, Shi'i, Batin, and Wahhabi Muslims, various Christian sects, Jewish groups, conservatives, liberals, freemasons, socialists, and those educated and not."⁴⁶ Zahrāwī also admitted that, "religious ties always lack the power to create political unity."⁴⁷ The religious unity of Muslims was impossible, simply because they were divided among many sovereign states.⁴⁸

Therefore, a crucial factor in the formation of a nation appears to be the need for *political* unity, which provides its members with sufficient power, based on the ties of mutual aid. Power is the key element in Zahrāwī's understanding of the world as well as domestic politics. He argued that all the conflicts, occurring incessantly both inside and outside the Ottoman Empire, are in fact political (*al-ikhṭilāf al-siyāsī*), even if they appear at first sight as religious (*al-ikhṭilāf al-dīnī*) or ethnic (*al-ikhṭilāf al-jinsī*).⁴⁹ The Great European Powers intervened in the Ottoman internal affairs because of politics, not religion.⁵⁰ Might is right in this world of imperialism and the Ottomans needed power if they wanted peace and independence. Notwithstanding the religious rhetoric that might charm the ignorant masses, Ottomans should understand this true nature of *Realpolitik*.⁵¹

This argument explains why the Ottoman nation is necessary for the Arabs. Arab or Muslim unity was impractical because of its internal division and lack of power. To acquire power, all the Ottomans, regardless of their race and creed, should unite. Consequently, he declared that all Arabs within the Empire, for

45 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 154-56, on 21 September 1911.

46 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 49, on 15 June 1911.

47 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2, pp. 416-17.

48 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 161-62, on 1 December 1910; Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 201-02, on 3 November 1911; Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 234, on 23 November 1911.

49 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 55-56, on 22 June 1911.

50 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, p. 161, on 1 December 1910.

51 See his arguments on the Libyan War. Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 184-87, 199, on 19 October and 3 November 1911. The Cretan Question likewise convinced Zahrāwī that the only way to resist invasion is power. Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 12-13, on 12 May 1910.

their own interests, should be true Ottomans so that the Empire becomes powerful enough to end the Eastern Question.⁵² As a realist, Zahrāwī believed that the Ottoman unity was the only way for the Arabs to remain independent. For this reason, all the Ottomans, including the Arabs, had to create the ties of mutual aid to unite them. However, to reiterate, how could this be possible?

Political Education

The panacea that Zahrāwī found for this question was political education (*al-tarbiya al-siyāsiyya*). He emphasized its value for realizing the Ottoman unity by way of controlling ethno-religious chauvinisms.⁵³ The Ottoman unity becomes possible only when all the communities acquire necessary political education.⁵⁴ While Herzog focused on this concept in relation to despotism (*istibdad*),⁵⁵ Zahrāwī thought political education had other aspects as well, especially with concern to the nation-building project.

Remarkably, the topic Zahrāwī chose for his lecture at the Arab Congress in 1913 was not the ethnic Arab ideal, as might be expected, but the civic principle of political education.⁵⁶ In a series of articles titled “Our Political Education” (*tarbiyatunā al-siyāsiyya*) in his journal *al-Ḥadāra*, between April and June 1911, Zahrāwī argued the following: since our Ottoman society comprises various communities, every one of them needs political education so that all of us strengthen the Ottoman nation without inviting internal strife.⁵⁷ We need political education especially because the nation (*umma*) has begun to engage in the new constitutional politics.⁵⁸

It appears that Zahrāwī’s version of political education was a kind of art to administer the Empire without ethno-religious conflicts flaring up. Education (*tarbiya*) is not the same as mere knowledge (*‘ilm*). The latter is a precondition of the former.⁵⁹ Political education does not deny the ethnic or religious

52 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 38-39, on 18 May 1911.

53 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 15, on 20 April 1911.

54 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 19, on 27 April 1911.

55 Herzog, “Abd al-Ḥamīd az-Zahrāwī,” pp. 85-87.

56 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2, pp. 405-14.

57 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 3-13, on 13 April 1911.

58 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 14, on 20 April 1911.

59 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 147-52, on 17 November 1910.

consciousness. Every ethnic group (*ajnās*) has its own identity. Such ethnic identity (*al-anāniyya al-jinsiyya*) cannot be overcome by simply negating it; rather, we have to place a limitation on it. Ethnic identity is not intrinsically dangerous; we could and should make it useful by acknowledging its limits. Cosmopolitanism that claimed to bring all masses (*nās*) into a single brotherhood of humanity, by way of extinguishing all the ethnicities (*jinsiyyāt*), could not escape Zahrāwī's criticism. This is because such superficial cosmopolitanism was nothing but a dogmatic attitude with its peculiar egotistic identity similar to that of other ethnic groups (*jins*).⁶⁰ All these led Zahrāwī to conclude that political education is necessary because, as long as it is impossible to remove every seed of conflict, all we can do is to find a middle ground among such conflicts. That is what we call politics and political education is necessary for its capable administration.⁶¹

In Zahrāwī's view, it was the moral as well as social condition of the nation (*millet*)—that is, the lack of political education, not the ethnic conflict (*ihtilaf-ı anasır*), as some might expect—that afflicted the Empire most.⁶² Due to thirty years of despotism, the Ottoman nation was yet to acquire enough political education.⁶³ The lack of political education was the reason why the nation was still not accustomed to political parties, *sine qua non* for any constitutional regime.⁶⁴ Zahrāwī argued that ethnic (*al-ūṣuriyya*) parties do more harm than good, so do the excessive conservatives (*al-muḥāfaẓa al-mutaṭarrifa*) and excessive liberals (*al-ḥurriyya al-mutaṭarrifa*). The best is the moderate liberal party (*al-ḥurriyya al-mu'tadila*),⁶⁵ hence his participation in the party of this name (*Mutedil Hürriyetperveren Fırkası*). One might be tempted to ask, however, if the constitutional

60 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 228-29, on 9 March 1911.

61 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2, p. 420, in June 1910. See also Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 51-58, on 22 June 1911.

62 MMZC D.1, Sİ.3, İçt.12, pp. 317-19.

63 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 111, on 27 July 1911.

64 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2, p. 431-32, on 19 November 1910.

65 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 167, on 12 October 1911. It is interesting to note that Zahrāwī did not consider the CUP a "Turkish party." According to him, the only ethnic party in the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies was the Greek one (*Rum Meşrutiyet Klübü / Ελληνικός Συνταγματικός Πολιτικός Σύνδεσμος*). See Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 167-70, on 8 December 1910 and MMZC D.1, Sİ.4, İçt. 34, p. 715. On the Greek party and its activities, see Catherine Boura, "The Greek Millet in Turkish Politics: Greeks in the Ottoman Parliament (1908-1918)," in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism*, eds. Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Issawi (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1999), pp. 193-206.

rule was possible for the Ottoman nation whose political education (or, more precisely, the lack thereof) proved unsatisfactory for this task, as Zahrāwī himself admitted. Did not the Western observers of his time ridicule the “barbarous” Muslims’ (vain) endeavor for constitutionalism, which they thought was a monopoly of the “civilized” Europeans? Here Zahrāwī introduced the notion of “mass” (*nās*) to answer this question.

According to Zahrāwī, masses were so ignorant that they were always inclined to conspiracy theories. They were the last to understand the meaning of liberty,⁶⁶ they always became fanatical upon hearing about any ethnic or religious tie,⁶⁷ and they could not learn from experience.⁶⁸ The ignorant masses had to be educated and disciplined by the leaders, that is, the politicians and journalists. This was the only path for progress for the community as a whole.⁶⁹ Indeed, Zahrāwī did not shy away from praising the present Ottoman MPs—including himself—who were, according to him, equipped with sufficient qualities, requisite for the task of pursuing national sovereignty.⁷⁰

The concept of political education legitimated Zahrāwī in two directions: on one hand, it allowed him to criticize ethno-nationalistic movements from the viewpoint of civic Ottoman nationalism, and on the other, it secured him the post of enlightener to civilize the masses that embodied all the ills afflicting the nation, such as ignorance, immorality, and barbarism. The distinction between the (civilized) leaders and the (ignorant) masses is an essential trait, at least in Zahrāwī’s view, of constitutional politics. This is because, even under the principle of national sovereignty (*al-ḥākimiyya al-millīyya*), it is impossible for the entire nation to participate in politics directly. When a nation needs its representatives, it chooses them.⁷¹ Consequently, the most important topic of political education is to contemplate the election.⁷² In other words, MPs played the roles

66 ‘Abd al-Ḥamid al-Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4 (Dimashq: Manshūrāt Wizāra al-Thaqāfa, 1997), pp. 281-82, on 2 July 1909.

67 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 55, on 22 June 1911.

68 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 184, on 19 October 1911.

69 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 38-40, on 18 May 1911. See also Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 151-52, on 17 November 1910.

70 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 82-87.

71 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 100-01, on 13 July 1911; Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, p. 167, on 8 December 1910.

72 Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, pp. 42-45, on 25 May 1911; Zahrāwī, *Al-A‘māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 351, on 15 August 1912.

of both the representatives and the educators of the nation. As an MP, Zahrāwī was proud of this duality, hence, he rejected the Senate as an equal counterpart of the Chamber of Deputies because the senators were not elected by the nation but appointed by the Sultan.⁷³ It is ironic that he would become a senator in 1914.

The disciplinary aspects of political education are no less spectacular in Zahrāwī's argument. For example, he positively evaluated the notorious Law on Vagrants (*Serseri ve Mazanne-i Sü' Eşhas Hakkında Kanun*).⁷⁴ He argued that vagrants, as a bad class (*sınıf*) of society, must be cleansed through coercion, if necessary, since they harmed the society. They even had no liberty to commit suicide, according to Zahrāwī, because "we" wanted to increase the population.⁷⁵ Additionally, Zahrāwī criticized the misuse of liberty by the masses.⁷⁶ He asked for the limitation of some civil liberties by way of Press Law, Assembly Law, and Association Law, that he thought would secure the society from anarchism as seen during the 31 Mart Incident.⁷⁷ Apparently, Zahrāwī went much further than some of his liberal Unionist colleagues did.

Moreover, Zahrāwī's version of political education was the willingness to pursue a *mission civilisatrice* over the Ottomans' own "barbarians." He categorized the Arabs into two: 1) those living near the Mediterranean coasts, the Red Sea, and the Gulf, and 2) those living inland. While the former were in close touch with civilization, the latter lacked civilizational qualities.⁷⁸ Because the Arabs in Yemen and Najd (and even some Arabs in Syria) were not adequately tied to the Ottoman ideal (*Osmanlılık*), "we" had to resort to some coercive measures to unite them.⁷⁹ The same holds true for those nomads who lacked civilizational traits.⁸⁰

73 MMZC, D. 1, Sİ. 3, İçt. 44, pp. 1223-24.

74 On this law, see Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 92-114 and Ferdan Ergut, "Policing the Poor in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 38(2) (2002), pp. 149-64.

75 *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 169, p. 10 (MMZC, D.1, Sİ.1, İçt.48). See also Herzog, "Abd al-Ḥamīd az-Zahrāwī," pp. 41-42.

76 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, pp. 281-83, on 2 July 1909.

77 *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 226, p. 14 (MMZC, D.1, Sİ.1, İçt.75); Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, pp. 273-75, on 25 June 1909.

78 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2, pp. 410-11.

79 *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 290, p. 10 (MMZC, D. 1, Sİ. 1, İçt. 115).

80 Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, pp. 113-15, on 27 October 1910; Zahrāwī, *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, p. 41, on 18 May 1911; MMZC, D. 1, Sİ. 3, İçt. 114, p. 3544.

The Arabs, in particular Zahrāwī, never lagged behind the Turks when it came to the disciplinary aspects of political education. Elitist mentality with disciplinary methods was the common feature of modern Ottoman intellectuals. Many politicians and journalists in the Second Constitutional Period regarded the lack of political education among the masses as the principal cause of the Ottoman political instability.⁸¹ Hüseyin Cahid [Yalçın], a fervent opponent of the “Arab party,” underlined the necessity for political education in the Ottomans’ task of constitutional politics.⁸² Ahmed İhsan [Toksöz], a famous journalist, criticizing the “excessive” liberty, advised “our people” (*halkımız*) to understand the meaning of political education, abide the rule of law, and respect bureaucrats.⁸³ Political education was among the declared principles of Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk] when he founded the Peoples’ Party.⁸⁴ Not only the Turks but also a pro-Unionist Armenian called Krikor Zohrab, lamented the Hamidian despotism for the damage it did to “our political education” (*terbiye-i siyasiyemiz*), an indispensable quality for constitutionalism.⁸⁵ After the two years of constitutionalism, Zohrab praised his colleagues, just as Zahrāwī did, because of the endeavor they made for the development of political education.⁸⁶ Many Ottoman modernizers regarded their own “peripheries” through the lens of a colonial civilizer.⁸⁷ “Ottoman Orientalism” was not the monopoly of the Turks as Zahrāwī and others demonstrate.⁸⁸ Arabs, including the later Arabist “martyrs,” shared this mentality with their Turkish compatriots. Arabism had much in common with other ideological trends if we see it in the context of the Second Ottoman Constitutional politics.

81 See, for example, *Yeni Gazete*, “Memleketin Halet-i Ruhiyesi, Milletin Terbiye-i Siyasiyesi,” *Yeni Gazete*, 772, on 19 October 1910. For more about this mentality, see Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908* (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1964) and M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi* (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981), pp. 162-69.

82 Hüseyin Cahid, “Meclis-i Mebusan’ın Tatili,” *Tanin*, 349, on 22 August 1909.

83 Ahmed İhsan, “Terbiye-i Siyasiye,” *Servet-i Fünun*, 173, on 8 December 1908.

84 *Atatürk’ün Bütün Eserleri*, c. 15 (23 Ocak 1923 - 30 Haziran 1923) (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2005), p. 120.

85 Krikor Zohrab, *Siyasi Nutuklar* (Dersaadet, 1324r [1908]), pp. 3-6.

86 “Zohrab Efendi’nin Beyanatu,” *Sabah*, 7473, on 10 July 1910.

87 Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *American Historical Review*, 107(2) (2002), pp. 768-96 and Thomas Kuehn, *Empire, Islam, and Politics of Difference: Ottoman Rule in Yemen, 1849-1919* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

88 Selim Deringil, “‘They Lived in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 45(2) (2003), pp. 335-38.

Conclusion

Zahrāwī's ideas, in the context of Ottoman intellectual history, can be summarized as follows: he appreciated the framework of the Ottoman Empire because it provided the Arabs with the only possible way to confront Western invasion, that is, by means of power. It was taken for granted that the Ottoman nation consisted of many elements. There was no Ottomanist-Arabist dichotomy in Zahrāwī's mind. He wanted the unity of Ottoman elements as a common goal for all Ottomans that of course included the Arabs. To answer the question of achieving this goal, Zahrāwī proposed to pursue individual and communitarian egalitarianism simultaneously. This contradiction made his proposal far from perfect. Nonetheless, it is a fact that Ottoman intellectuals, Greeks and Turks, and many others, had to tackle this question of egalitarianism. The Ottoman constitutional politics always evolved around this fundamental question, with different actors oscillating from one ideological option to another, being influenced by personal as well as ethno-religious interests.⁸⁹ Zahrāwī's words and deeds were just one variation of it. Similarly, Zahrāwī's elitist mentality of civilizing disciplines had much in common with his non-Arab colleagues, especially when it came to the need for coercive measures in enlightening the "ignorant" masses. It is clear that Zahrāwī was not a simple "victim" of the Turks; rather, he was one of the strongest advocates of civilizing the "barbarous" Arabs in Yemen or Najd.

Zahrāwī's ideas were greatly conditioned by the legal as well as institutional context of his time in the Empire. These aspects must be taken much more seriously, even if we are to analyze the intellectual development of Zahrāwī, in particular, and the Arabs, in general. To realize any political idea, it was imperative to place it within the existing Ottoman legal system. This is why the Greeks or Armenians whose communal interests had been legally secured by their religious privileges behaved differently from the (Muslim) Arabs. Therefore, Herzog's point that, through his preference of the *political* unity over the *general* one, Zahrāwī "disclosed the legitimacy crisis of the Ottoman State concerning the fundamental weakness of the doctrine of Ottomanism" is, I think, a little bit off the mark.⁹⁰ In any case, it makes little sense to categorize the Ottoman intellectu-

89 For more on this topic, see Fujinami Nobuyoshi, *The Ottomans and Constitutionalism: Politics, Religion, and Communities in the Young Turk Revolution* (Nagoya: The University of Nagoya Press, 2011) (in Japanese).

90 "[L]egt er die Legitimitätskrise des osmanischen Staates und die fundamentale Schwachstelle der Doktorin des Osmanismus offen." Herzog, "Abd al-Ḥamīd az-Zahrāwī," pp. 92-100, esp. p. 95.

als into Ottomanist or Arabist (or Turkist) camps. Instead, the Arab and Turkish (and Greek, too) ideas must be analyzed in the common historical context of *Ottoman* intellectual as well as institutional development. Paradoxically, just like the Ottoman Turks, who were often labeled as Turkists, regardless of their sincere attachment to the Ottomanist ideal,⁹¹ Zahrāwī's ideas was easily considered as Arabist, by both his contemporaries and later historians, despite his commitment to the Ottoman intellectual environment.

In conclusion, it is time to liberate non-Turks from the ethno-nationalistic historiographies. At the same time, we need to liberate the Ottoman intellectual history from the Turks' monopoly. Early modern Ottoman thoughts are now being reexamined from this perspective and display much more nuanced pictures than previously believed.⁹² Turkist reading of modern Ottoman intellectual history must be as anachronistic as that of the early modern one. Nationalist narratives tend to consider the multi-ethnic Ottoman intellectuals to have always been in conflict with each other. In reality, they had much in common and, sometimes, cooperated with each other in their common task of modernizing and civilizing the nation. By illuminating this aspect, I believe, we could truly talk about the multi-ethnic *Ottoman* intellectual history that is not a simple sum of the nationalistic ideological histories of each ethnic group.⁹³

91 Arai, *Turkish Nationalism* remains the best analysis of this phenomenon.

92 See, for example, Gottfried Hagen, "The Order of Knowledge, the Knowledge of Order: Intellectual Life," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Volume 2: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453-1603*, Suraiya N. Faroqhi and Kate Fleet (eds.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 407-56.

93 The ambitious work of Stamatopoulos forms a good example of this enterprise. Δημήτριος Α. Σταματόπουλος, *Το Βυζάντιο μετά το έθνος: Το πρόβλημα της συνέχειας στις βαλκανικές ιστοριογραφίες* (Αθήνα: Αλεξάνδρεια, 2009).

'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zahrāwī and His Thought Reconsidered: An Intellectual Portrait of the Arab Nationalist as an Ottoman Politician

Abstract ■ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zahrāwī, an Ottoman-Arab MP, has been studied exclusively from the perspective of Arab nationalism. In fact, he highly evaluated the imperial framework and deduced that the only possible way of resisting the Western invasion was by means of power. Zahrāwī espoused the political unity of Ottomans, based on communities and not individuals. He advocated the need for political education in order to realize this desirable political unity, without inviting the ethno-religious conflicts. His elitist mentality led him to rely on, if necessary, disciplinary coercion and educate the “ignorant” masses and the “barbarous” nomads. His theoretical contributions notwithstanding, Zahrāwī could not persuasively introduce a pragmatic alternative to realize his ideas in the context of Ottoman constitutional politics. His preference of communitarian over individual egalitarianism contradicted the legal as well as institutional reality of Ottoman constitutionalism. From the viewpoint of Ottoman intellectual history, Zahrāwī had much in common with his non-Arab colleagues.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Second Constitutional Period, Young Turks, Arab Nationalism, Political Education

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