

to the emerging Arab state system, including Lebanon, and by latching on to Britain's coattails. In the end, by turning to Britain, the veteran nationalists did not have to make any further concessions to France. For the time being, their political credibility was intact. And that was all they had bargained for.

CONCLUSION

THIS STUDY HAS EMPHASIZED the remarkable degree of continuity in the exercise of local political power in Syria from late Ottoman times through the period of French rule under the Mandate. The landowning, scholarly, and mercantile families in the towns, which blended into a fairly cohesive social class in the second half of the nineteenth century, were able to retain their monopoly over politics during the interwar period despite the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the imposition of French rule. This class survived the structural changes of the age—the loosening of family ties, the spread of modern education and new ideologies, the establishment of modern institutions, and the reorientation of the Syrian economy.

The continuity of political life grew out of a certain similarity of form. Paris, like Istanbul, was a distant overlord. In order to govern, the French, like the Ottomans before them, had to depend on locally influential notables who could act as intermediaries between government and society. By virtue of their traditional status in society, their education, and previous administrative experience, notables normally hailed from upper-class families in the towns. This similarity of form was reinforced by the French failure to develop a consistent imperial policy in Syria, a failure that had to do not only with the internal weaknesses of the interwar French economy and the climate of political thought in France about how to administer overseas possessions, but also with the international restrictions imposed on French rule by that new, peculiar version of colonialism, the Mandate system. That France governed Syria with one eye always fixed on North Africa certainly contributed to this failure. However, despite outward similarities, the French, unlike the Ottomans, were perceived as illegitimate. Hence, France's position in Syria was from the outset inherently unstable. French illegitimacy, in turn, obliged urban notables to try to shift the balance of power away from the French. Those notables who emerged with the greatest political leverage in Syria were identified most closely with the ascendant idea of nationalism.

Nationalism was at the very center of the changing intellectual and political climate in the Middle East and owed its existence to the widening of the region's links with the outside world. In fact, two types of nationalism emerged—one territorial and the other ethno-cultural—and both co-existed in all nationalist movements in the Arab world. Although national-

ism had not shed its religious skin, because no interpretation of Arab history and culture could deny the contribution of Islam, it nevertheless had strong secular inclinations. The class that transformed the idea of nationalism into a political movement in the early twentieth century, although by no means politically united, demonstrated a certain discomfort with the ideas of Islamic modernists and activists who argued that Islam could provide the principles necessary to govern a modern nation state. Nationalist leaders believed Islamic law was outmoded. This attitude reflected their upbringing: they were educated in modern professional schools, they had experience in the new branches of the Ottoman administration, they had little attachment to religious institutions, and they shared similar political experiences mainly secular in nature. These experiences were in the political parties and secret societies of Damascus, Beirut, Cairo, and Paris before the First World War, and afterwards in Faysal's short-lived Arab Kingdom.

The brand of nationalism which the urban political leadership sponsored was tailored to its political style and social class. Nationalism, in its hands, was not a revolutionary ideology aiming to overturn existing social hierarchies. Rather, it was restorative; the nationalist elite aimed to establish a more favorable balance of power between France and Syria with the ultimate goal of gradually relaxing French control. Its method was not revolutionary armed struggle but a mixture of intermittent popular protest, diplomacy, and regional and international activity. The popular uprisings of the early twenties which culminated in the Great Syrian Revolt were, in some ways, an aberration. Although the Great Revolt did have revolutionary implications, its eventual collapse allowed the nationalist elite to consolidate its own position with the formation of the National Bloc and to resume a more comfortable, graded path to independence.

The presence of a foreign ruler enabled the National Bloc to direct popular discontent outward, away from the local structure of power. While this obviously contributed to the prolongation of the Bloc's leadership, so too did the inability of interest groups and classes further down the social scale to pose a serious challenge to its leadership until the end of the Mandate. The chaotic struggles and petty rivalries that characterized political life in Syria during the interwar years were rarely expressions of conflict between classes. Rather, they reflected rivalries within the political elite itself, in single towns, or between leaderships in rival towns, or between the urban nationalist elite and the rural-based leaderships of the compact minorities, in particular the Alawites and Druzes.

THE CHARACTER, STYLE, and organization of nationalist politics during the Mandate revealed several trends which were to color political life in Syria

after independence. Perhaps the most important trend was a gradual but perceptible change in the organization of political life which resulted from the consolidation of nationalism as the pre-eminent ideology of the times. Even if nationalist objectives were neither new nor particularly revolutionary, nationalist leaders were obliged to employ more sophisticated methods to achieve them. The disruptive effects of French rule required more highly developed and delicate mechanisms for restoring a more favorable balance of power in Syria. Nationalism had to be carefully modulated; it had to possess enough force to have the desired effect on the French, but without upsetting the local status quo.

Nationalist politics, therefore, required more than the mobilization of the traditional active forces in society associated with the popular classes and religious institutions located in the old town quarters; it also required the mobilization of new, emerging forces associated with modern institutions and youth movements which operated outside the old quarters. New forms of political association were encouraged, especially between the towns and the countryside and between different ethno-religious elites. Nationalist leaders adopted new patterns of political organization linked to new secular systems of ideas, and operated on a much larger territorial scale than ever before. They broadened the appeal of nationalism in order to attract moral and material support from neighboring Arab territories and to be heard in Paris and at the League of Nations in Geneva where Syria's fate was being decided. The resulting movements of protest and resistance were of greater intensity and longer duration.

Other trends emerged during the Mandate, however, which hampered Syria's political evolution. Once the National Bloc was given the opportunity to share power with the French, it showed signs of ineffective leadership. The National Bloc as a force of opposition to French rule was one thing; the Bloc at the helm of government was quite another. The calculated simplicity and prudence of the Bloc's brand of nationalism offered little in the way of concrete solutions to the social and economic problems affecting the Syrian people. The debilitating reorientation forced on the Syrian economy by the post-World War I partitions of geographical Syria, the inept and inadequate French financial and commercial policies, the increased sectarianism aided by French activities, and the devastating impact of the world depression of the early thirties produced tensions and conflicts in society which the National Bloc was unable effectively to address.

Factionalism intensified in the late 1930s and the Bloc's administrative incompetence, coupled with its political insensitivity to the aspirations and needs of the compact and religious minorities, damaged its reputation. Some responsibility for the Bloc's shortcomings lay with the French mandatory administration which neglected to train an efficient and dedicated Syrian administrative elite and which quietly aggravated relations

between Syria's Sunni Arab majority and the various minority communities. The numerous divisions and redivisions of Syria over a quarter-century obstructed the development of such a unified administrative elite. In addition, France's refusal to give the recognized nationalist leadership adequate consideration for nearly two decades proved disastrous for Syria's future. Denied the opportunity to acquire and assimilate experience in governing, nationalist leaders carried a certain administrative incompetence with them into the independence era.

Despite the higher forms of political organization which were established during the Mandate, most nationalist leaders had failed to transcend their narrow city bases. They were not national politicians who shared a broad vision of the future. Their horizons had not stretched much beyond the four nationalist towns. And Damascus leaders continued to feel more comfortable in Beirut or Jerusalem than in Aleppo, let alone Latakia, while Aleppo leaders looked to Iraq (and even Turkey) as much as they did to Damascus.

Another trend set in motion during the Mandate which carried over into the independence era was the Syrian nationalist leadership's rejection of Arab unity as its principal political goal. Already by the mid-1930s, the National Bloc faced an awkward contradiction between pan-Arab unity and local self-interest. In 1936, it had dropped Syrian claims to the four *cazas* in Lebanon in order to secure a treaty with Paris which would allow it to form a government. Political and economic ties between Syria and Lebanon remained strong, but Syrian nationalist leaders grudgingly accepted Lebanon's claim to a separate political existence.

This awkward contradiction was also revealed by the way nationalists treated the question of Palestine. During the Arab rebellion of the late 1930s, the National Bloc government lent only cautious support to the Palestinian struggle (a very popular cause in Syria) to avoid upsetting treaty negotiations with France. Later, during the 1948 war in Palestine, the nationalist government failed, owing to political naivety and administrative incompetence, to make proper provisions for the war effort either in terms of pushing for greater pan-Arab coordination or of properly equipping the Syrian Army for battle. Syria's poor military showing in 1948 and the arms and financial scandals associated with Syria's lack of preparedness were blamed on the government. Indeed, the first of Syria's numerous coups d'état occurred in 1949 and can be partly attributed to the army's need to find a scapegoat for the humiliation it suffered in Palestine.¹

¹ See Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria. A Study in Post-War Arab Politics, 1945-1958*. (London, 1965), pp. 33-34, 41-42.

The political rivalry between Aleppo and Damascus during the Mandate was yet another development which proved damaging to Syrian politics after independence. Although Aleppo played a critical role in the struggle for independence, it also played a subordinate role to Damascus in almost every aspect of politics. The Aleppo branch of the National Bloc was in competition with the Damascus branch and, like the Damascus branch, it was internally divided. During the Mandate, Aleppo became a provincial capital cast in the shadow of Damascus and dependent on machinations there for its share of the budgets for education, public works, and the like. It naturally disliked this subordinate position.

Moreover, Aleppo suffered more than Damascus from the arbitrary post-World War I partitions. Its loss of the greater part of its commercial hinterland forced a drastic reorientation and reduction of its economy during the interwar period. It was only during World War II that Aleppo managed to re-adjust and re-emerge as Syria's main economic entrepôt. The difficulties of obtaining manufactured goods from traditional foreign suppliers during the war stimulated local industrial growth. In turn, major new investments by Aleppine entrepreneurs in the Jazira expanded the margins of cultivation and increased the productivity of the region. As a result, Aleppo experienced an economic boom during and after World War II from which its merchant-entrepreneurs derived much benefit. Aleppo wanted to expand its northern and eastern commercial hinterland to take advantage of the agricultural boom in the Jazira. Whereas Turkey remained hostile to this idea, Iraq was encouraging. Indeed, in the early 1940s Iraq sponsored a Fertile Crescent scheme which attracted Aleppine merchants and politicians in ways not appreciated by their counterparts in Damascus.²

The economic boom encouraged Aleppo to challenge the political paramountcy of Damascus. The rivalry between the Aleppo and Damascus branches of the National Bloc was heightened and this in turn produced a political schism in Aleppo. Although political lines of division were not hard and fast, the faction that broke away from the Bloc was linked to the emerging entrepreneurial group which was deeply involved in the opening up of the Jazira and in broadening commercial relations with Iraq. By the late 1940s, the rupture in the ranks of the National Bloc produced a new organization based in Aleppo, the People's Party (*Hizb al-sha'b*), which challenged the old National Bloc guard—reconstituted under Shukri al-Quwwatli's leadership as the Nationalist Party (*al-Hizb al-watani*)—for control of government.³

² Conversation with Jubran Shamiyya (Beirut, 29 July 1975). Shamiyya was one of the entrepreneurs involved in the opening up of the Jazira.

³ One faction in Aleppo was associated with the Jabiri family, and its leader Sa'dallah, who maintained strong ties to the Bloc in Damascus. The other was headed by ex-Bloc chiefs

The intensification of rivalries between Damascus and Aleppo and within Aleppo's urban leadership was itself a reflection of changing power relations and the changing economy in Syria. For a multiplicity of reasons, the Syrian economy had failed to develop either in a balanced or a dynamic way between the wars. World War I had damaged productive forces. The sudden reorientation of the Syrian economy, particularly Aleppo's, reduced Syria's natural commercial hinterland. The European commercial invasion continued unabated, especially in the 1920s, thanks to the Mandate system's open door policy which undermined the remaining handicrafts and industries. The franc-exchange system tied Syria's currency to a shaky French franc. The French occupation produced years of political instability which discouraged both local and foreign capital investment. Although some progress was made in developing Syria's infrastructure—for example, its network of communications improved—industrial growth progressed slowly; it expanded fairly steadily after the Great Revolt but slowed down after 1933 and then grew only modestly until the late 1930s. The world depression of the early 1930s, French taxation, and the slow application of protective measures for infant industries obstructed industrial growth. Moreover, Syrian exports suffered owing to the high etatist barriers in Turkey and Iraq, the growth of Jewish industry in Palestine, and the significant reduction of the large Palestine market, owing to the rebellion of 1936–39. The renewed instability of the French franc at this time drove the cost of living upwards dramatically, leading to workers' strikes and general political unrest which hurt productive forces.

Capital investment in Syria during the Mandate was much larger than ever before, but the long years of instability meant that most investments were made to insure maximum profit with maximum security. Therefore, the bulk of foreign investment went into infrastructure, primarily transport for the movement of Western manufactured goods into the country and raw materials out of it, and into industries devoted to the extraction of raw materials for export such as petrol, asphalt, and cotton and silk; into low-risk public services such as electricity and tramways in the towns; and into banking and insurance.⁴ Apart from these, certain import substitution products such as cement, and other products naturally suited to Syria such as preserves and textiles, were bases for local industrial development. But, because banks charged extremely high interest rates,

including the Ibrahim Pashas, the wealthy Mudarris family, and younger nationalists such as Rushdi al-Kikhya and Nazim al-Qudsi. Seale, *The Struggle for Syria*, pp. 29–31; FO 226/240/9/4/180. Aleppo to Lascelles, 29 April 1943; FO 226/240/9/5/209. Aleppo to Chancery, 13 May 1943; FO 226/241/27/1/47. M.E.I.C. (Syria) to Lascelles, 19 Jan. 1943; MAE, *Guerre 1939–45*. Catroux (Beirut), 21 Dec. 1942, vol. 42, pp. 232–37.

⁴ Al-Nayal, "Industry," pp. 81–85.

borrowing to invest in these industries on a large scale was very difficult. Moreover, the conservatism of Syria's absentee landowning class hindered local investment in modern industry. It preferred to invest in urban real estate or in agricultural lands, but not to develop them; otherwise it was perfectly content to divert its capital into conspicuous consumption or to hoard gold.

Given the constraints on industrial growth and the economic and political upheavals of the interwar years, the landowning-bureaucratic class found itself in a more secure position than Syria's mercantile and industrial classes. Although the French initially set out to break the back of this class through land reforms and increased taxation, they eventually retreated owing to inadequate financial resources for their implementation and a grudging recognition that there was no suitable substitute for this class in its traditional role as intermediary between government and society. As late as 1936, the landowning-bureaucratic class accounted for 15.5 percent of Syria's total population and 57 percent of her national income.⁵

World War II reversed this process. First, conservative landowners suffered a loss of economic power as a class, owing to the exigencies of the war. Because the Allied Powers took measures to control grain and wheat production and kept prices artificially low, landowners who could not skirt these regulations or quickly diversify their agricultural production suffered big losses.

World War II also created a shortage of foreign imports. Industries based on processing local raw materials and semi-manufactured goods prospered while those that were dependent on imports suffered. Industrialists who were not completely dependent on foreign raw materials, or those who could meet local demand for manufactured goods that had previously been imported from abroad, enriched themselves. Textile industrialists were particularly successful during the war. At the same time, a group of entrepreneurs—many from outside the established class of absentee landowners—made vast profits expanding the amount of Syrian land under cultivation, notably in the Jazira. This enabled them to increase the supply of scarce foodstuffs and the raw materials which fed the new modern industries.⁶

How did these wartime economic developments translate politically? By independence, the merchant and landowning entrepreneurs—two groups which could not easily be differentiated from one another—were the most influential economic force in Syria and had already begun to

⁵ Adnan Farra, *L'industrialisation*, pp. 51, 137, 139, 168, citing Ihsan Jabiri, *Le Commerce du Levant*, Beirut (18 Jan. 1938).

⁶ Al-Nayal, "Industry," pp. 86–88.

pose a political challenge to the traditional urban leadership associated with the landowning-bureaucratic class and the National Bloc. Of this group, those nationalist leaders who emerged on top of the political heap at independence were those who forged links with the emerging class of industrialists, either as industrialists themselves or as politicians representing industrial interests in government. Even before the French left Syria, Shukri al-Quwwatli, a landowner turned industrialist, used the Presidency to support the interests of influential textile industrialists and merchants in return for their support against the challenge of more conservative landowning interests that were less inclined to press for full Syrian independence from France. Another prominent Damascene politician with strong links to industry, Khalid al-'Azm, positioned himself in a similar manner. Just after independence, an ascendant group of merchant-entrepreneurs in Aleppo formed the backbone of the new People's Party which supported stronger economic and political ties to Iraq on the one hand, and challenged Quwwatli and his supporters in the Nationalist Party for political leadership in Syria on the other.⁷

DESPITE THE REMARKABLE continuity of Syrian political life from Ottoman times through the French Mandate, the rearrangement of power relations consequent to World War II eventually weakened the established framework of nationalist politics. Equally disruptive were the new forms of political mobilization and the new conduits to political power that had begun to emerge by the end of the Mandate.

During the 1930s, new political movements emerged in Syria in response to the gradual socio-economic and cultural changes occurring beneath the political surface. These movements sought to bridge the widening gap between the nationalism of the upper classes and the nationalism of popular sentiment. More radical than the National Bloc, they expressed and harnessed that popular sentiment in a bid to expand the base of political activity in Syria. While the war years forced them to disband temporarily and sent their leaders underground, into exile, or into prison, the war also accelerated the forces which they embodied.

These radicalized movements left their mark on the politics of nationalism. They betrayed a strong middle-class component. In their front ranks stood men from merchant backgrounds or from the middle levels of the state bureaucracy. They were composed of members of the liberal professions and of a nascent industrial bourgeoisie, and were armed with European educations and new, sophisticated methods of political organi-

⁷ Conversation with Hani al-Hindi (Beirut, 28 Aug. 1975).

zation acquired abroad. They demanded the right to take a more active part in the political process.

By organizing themselves into political parties based on more systematic and rigorous systems of ideas, radicalized movements posed a challenge to the National Bloc's monopoly on nationalism. They wanted to redefine their relations with the old nationalist elite and with themselves and they wanted a redefinition of nationalism that corresponded to and accommodated the structural changes which had begun to accelerate in Syria during World War II. The language of nationalism itself was refined and altered; these ascendant forces placed more emphasis on social and economic justice for the masses, on pan-Arab unity, and, after independence, on neutralism in international relations than on the old nationalist idioms of constitutionalism, liberal parliamentary forms, and personal freedoms.

In terms of its class and educational background, political style, and ideological orientation, this new generation of nationalists in Syria displayed characteristics that were remarkably similar to those of an emerging second generation of nationalists in Palestine, Iraq, and Egypt. In fact, the politically-active members of this new generation were able to forge a panopoly of ties across the Arab world.

The most important and representative of the radicalized organizations to emerge in Syria in the 1930s was the League of National Action. And although the League did not survive the war—its leadership having already been divided by the National Bloc by the late thirties—it proved to be the ideological parent of the Ba'th Party, the political organization with the most long-lasting influence on Syrian, indeed Arab, political life in the postwar era.

The League helped to lay the intellectual and organizational foundations of radical pan-Arabism which the Ba'th Party (officially established in 1947) was to build upon after independence. Among the Ba'th's founders and early leaders were former members of the League, including Zaki al-Arsuzi, the leader of the Syrian resistance movement to the Turkish takeover of the Sanjak of Alexandretta in the late 1930s, and Jalal al-Sayyid, a landowner from Dayr al-Zur. Similar to the League's leadership, which included a number of European-educated young men, several early Ba'thist leaders were trained in Paris including the Party's moving spirits, Michel 'Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, not to mention Arsuzi himself. Apart from lawyers, professors, and other members of the liberal professions, the League—and the Ba'th after it—attracted large numbers of school teachers, the profession of Arsuzi, 'Aflaq, and Bitar. The League and early Ba'th leaderships also belonged to the same generation of young Syrian men born between 1900 and World War I; however, 'Aflaq, Bitar, and the Hama strongman, Akram Hawrani, who,

by linking up with the Ba'ath in 1952, provided it with its popular following and its ties to junior army officers, were all nearly a decade younger than the founders of the League.⁸

Just as the League bitterly opposed the old nationalist elite for its compromises with the French in the late 1930s and its willingness to stress Syrianism at the expense of pan-Arabism, so too did the Ba'ath during and after World War II. And while both organizations recognized the strengths of communist organization and borrowed from communism, each, in its own way, rejected communist ideology for a milder form of socialism with powerful nationalistic undertones. In fact, 'Aflaq and Bitar had been something akin to fellow travellers in the mid-1930s, until the infant and underground Syrian Communist Party surfaced (through its new leader, Khalid Bakdash, himself of the same generation as the future Ba'athist leaders) in order to exploit the victory of the left-wing Popular Front in France. By supporting the National Bloc in its treaty negotiations and after it took over government,⁹ Bakdash turned the future Ba'athist leaders sharply away from the communists, setting the stage for the bitter struggles for political influence that occurred in the 1950s between the Ba'athists and the communists.

There was little opportunity during the Mandate for these radical forces to break out of the framework of nationalist politics. World War II, however, began to shake the edifice of Syrian political life. Just as a small, untested, but aspiring group of disaffected urban notables and middle-class intellectuals, armed with the new idea of Arabism, was prepared to make its debut on the political stage at the end of World War I, so too was a second generation of Arab nationalists poised to make its bid for power at the end of World War II.

Crucial to this bid for power was the Syrian Army. Least visible during the Mandate but ultimately most disruptive to Syrian politics afterwards was the increasingly politicized military. The most important factor influencing the army's decision to become directly involved in political life was the attitude of urban Sunni leaders to the military. Since the early nineteenth century, notable families in the towns had adopted a hostile attitude to the military which they regarded as a socially inferior institution. They actively discouraged their sons from pursuing military careers and used their wealth and government connections to secure exemptions. This attitude persisted throughout the Mandate and for some time after independence.

In fact, it was only after the mid-1930s, when the possibility of Syrian

⁸ See Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 722–30.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 582, 726.

independence grew, that nationalist leaders began to think more seriously about Syria's institutional future, including the army. Only then did some nationalists begin to encourage the sons of the urban elites to seek military careers by attending the military academy in Homs. But, although there was an increase in the percentage of urban Sunni Arabs who became commissioned officers between 1936 and 1945 (over the period 1925–1935),¹⁰ relations between the officer corps and the nationalist leadership were poor. For one thing, these officers came from lesser branches of leading urban families or from the rising middle classes and resented the more socially prominent and wealthier civilian leaders. This resentment, moreover, was mutual: Syrian political leaders held the army in contempt, a sentiment which did not disappear with the departure of the French. Apart from the problem of social antagonism, nationalist leaders distrusted the officer corps: they accused it of serving the French outright, or at least of serving French interests by remaining aloof from the nationalist struggle. After the French departed in 1946, one of the very first things the independence government did was to assert its control over the army by bringing it under civilian authority. It actually reduced the size of the army from 7,000 to 2,500 men between 1946 and 1948, ostensibly "because the ruling landed and mercantile families of the day regarded the contingent as too large and too financially burdensome."¹¹ The army's reduction in size at a time when war in Palestine loomed large on the horizon and the scandals associated with the government's inadequate provisioning of the army during that war exacerbated civilian-military relations and contributed directly to the army's entrance into the Syrian political arena with the first military coup in 1949.

Another factor present during the Mandate which contributed heavily to the radicalization of the military after independence was its changing complexion. By French design, the army developed a strong rural and minority complexion, in which the Alawite community featured prominently. This was especially true of the army's rank and file and its non-commissioned officer corps. By the end of the Mandate, several infantry battalions in the *Troupes Spéciales* were composed almost entirely of Alawites. None was entirely Sunni Arab in complexion, and even those few cavalry squadrons with a significant Sunni Arab component were filled largely with elements from rural areas and far off towns. The French preferred minority and rural recruits for the obvious reason that they were remote from Syria's dominant political ideology, Arab nationalism. In addition, the "depressed economic condition" of Syria's rural and minority communities made the army a vehicle for their social mobility. In this

¹⁰ See Van Dusen, "Syrian Army," pp. 378–89.

¹¹ Batatu, "Some Observations," pp. 340–42.

way, the lower ranks of the army, including non-commissioned officers, became the preserve of the Alawites, the Druzes, and Sunnis from rural districts. Because Alawites were the largest and perhaps the poorest minority community in the country, they were most overrepresented in the army. The Alawite impact, however, was not felt for a full generation after independence. Sunni commissioned officers held the levers of power in the army in the years after independence and Alawites only came to dominate the Syrian officer corps in the 1960s, after successive purges had cleared the upper ranks of the army of Sunni officers. The Syrian governments of these years, like the French before them, saw the Alawites as remote from Syrian political struggles and therefore politically neutral.¹²

To express their aims and aspirations, ascendant junior officers from the Alawite and Druze communities and from rural Sunni districts required an ideology. Ba'athism provided a framework of ideas which was sufficiently flexible for their purposes. Its program stressed land reform and other more egalitarian economic measures and it inveighed against religious sectarianism. By the 1950s, these officers began to penetrate the Ba'ath Party through its base in the Syrian Army and each institution reinforced the other's radicalism. Together, they broke apart the economic and social foundations of the old regime's power and replaced the political expertise of the veteran nationalists with a new, and ultimately, more effective way of playing politics.

THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL radicalization in Syria which was initiated during the era of the French Mandate finally obliged the veteran nationalists to sort out their alignments and to clarify their interests as a class on crucial political issues. This old guard may have landed in the driver's seat on independence but it proved unable to consolidate its position either smoothly or completely—an indication that its days were numbered. That elements from the old guard still retained influence over Syrian political life as late as the early 1960s suggests, however, just how tenacious and resilient the veteran nationalists were in the face of the much more powerful force of radical pan-Arabism. But then, after nearly four generations of accumulated experience, who better understood the meaning and the ways of political survival in Syria?

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 341.

APPENDIX

SOURCES FOR TABLES 10-1, 10-2, 10-3, 15-1, 15-2, 15-3

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