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LATE OTTOMAN PALESTINE

The Period of Young Turk Rule

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SONRA GELEN DOKÜMAN

EDITED BY

YUVAL BEN-BASSAT
AND
EYAL GINIO

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CHAPTER 5

JERUSALEM AND JAFFA IN THE LATE OTTOMAN PERIOD: THE CONCESSION-HUNTING* STRUGGLE FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

YASEMIN AVCI**

Introduction

'Continuity' is always a key to understanding revolutions, because change, especially if it is imposed from above, has a contradictory and subtle nature. As continuity and change are closely intertwined in any developmental process, it would be probably wrong to see these two concepts as mutually exclusive. The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 is regarded as a crucial turning point in the history of the Ottoman Empire. The immediate aims of the Revolution were the destruction of the authoritarian regime of Abdülhamid II (1876–1909) and the restoration of a constitutional, parliamentary government. For this reason the two periods are usually considered as opposing eras. Evidence suggests that the new regime, however, was in fact a continuation of the long process of reforms that had started with the inauguration of the *Tanzimat* decree of 1839 and continued in the reign of Abdülhamid II.

Generally speaking, in the field of provincial administration the main goal of the *Tanzimat* reforms was to restructure a centralized

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