

## CHAPTER TWO

### **THE ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT: THE FORMATIVE YEARS**

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, up to World War I, were characterized by an intellectual and political evolution of substantial significance to subsequent developments in the modern Arab East. The old Arab nationalism was modernized, allowing it to meet the emerging needs of the Arab community and its vanguard, the intellectuals belonging to the old social classes. In this respect, one can also suggest that the era under study witnessed the continued formation of Arab political statehood in its embryonic stages. In other words, one could see an Arab awakening and a search for identity.

The development of Arabism passed through different stages, ending with final maturity in the form of a political movement. In all its various stages, it was politically oriented, striving to translate itself into statehood and identity. Arabism, which was one of the major struggling 'isms' in the Middle East, was influenced by existing trends in the Arab movement, especially those favored by the two major factions, one of which was pro-total 'Arab independence,' and the other, pro-Ottoman decentralized rule.

Palestinians as part of the Arab *umma* found themselves in an awkward situation since they were obliged to deal with the threat of Zionist immigration to and settlement in Palestine while being active within the Arab movement. The peculiar position in which they found themselves undoubtedly burdened the Palestinian nationals in certain respects. On the other hand, it helped them in dealing with the struggle with Zionism, as it provided them with the momentum needed for long-lasting resistance to foreign threats and challenges.

#### **INITIAL FORMATION**

The Arab and Palestinian nationalist struggle for independence was characterized by self-awareness and class-consciousness, whose embryonic form could be traced back to 1845. James Fenn, the British Consul in Jerusalem, reported to the British Ambassador in Constantinople between 1846 and 1862. He pointed to the fact that the Palestinian Arabs were displaying political consciousness in its early stages. In a letter Fenn

wrote to British Ambassador David Clarendon, dated 3 August 1854, he stated that some of the Arabs did not respect the Ottomans and considered them invaders and robbers of the Caliphate. In another letter, this time written to British Ambassador Malisbury, dated 13 September 1858, Fenn indicated that the Palestinian Arabs were familiar with the word 'independence', which, in this period, they associated with their sought after independence from the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1</sup>

The Arab consciousness began to express itself in the Palestinians' active role in the formation of literary societies that focused on the revival of Arab literature, language, and heritage. Although the societies defined themselves as 'literary' in their declared purposes, they were primarily politically oriented. Indeed, their formation could be viewed as a preparatory step in the process of political activism.

Al-Jam'iyyah Al-'Ilmiyyah As-Suriyyah (the Syrian Scientific Society) was formed in 1847. Born as a literary society, its main activities involved the holding of symposia and the giving of speeches by its members, whose lectures concentrated on the Arabic language and heritage. Both Arabs and foreigners participated in the formation of this society, including Nassif Al-Yazigi, Nofal Nofal and Butrus Al-Bustani among the Arabs, and Churchill and Wandeik among the foreigners. After it was reestablished in 1868, its membership included people from outside Beirut, especially those who resided in Constantinople and Damascus. It was then that it became an expression of nationalist consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to point out that Nassif Al-Yazigi was a Lebanese Christian intellectual who descended from the old social classes that were influential in the period that preceded the Ottoman reformation. While young, he had the advantage of living in a literary and scientific environment. He was an outspoken advocate of Arab nationalism and worked diligently at compiling an Arabic encyclopedia dealing with the vocabulary of the Arab language and Arabic literature. Al-Yazigi was to become one of the leaders of Arab nationalism after 1866.

Butrus Al-Bustani could also be considered one of the active Arab leaders in the national movement following the Lebanese civil war of 1860. A

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<sup>1</sup> Ali Mahafzah, *Al-Fikr As-Siyasi fi Filistin* (Political Thoughts in Palestine). Jordan: Markaz Al-Kutub Al-Urduni, 1989, p.9.

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Jabbar Hassan Jabburi, *Al-Ahزاب w-Al-Jam'iyyat As-Siyasiyyah fi Al-Qutur As-Suri fi Awakhir Al-Qarn At-Tasi' Ashar Ila Sanat 1958* (Parties and Political Societies in Syria from the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to 1958). Baghdad: Dar Al-Hurriyah Lit-Tiba'ah, 1980, p. 7.

Christian Arab, he was a philologist specializing in Hebrew and Latin, and he displayed great scientific knowledge. As a nationalist, he showed a great interest in national education and the prevalence of civil and religious liberty throughout his life. In his journal, *Al-Jinan*, for example, the indivisibility of faith and love of the motherland serves as the core of its topics.<sup>3</sup>

The formation of the Syrian Scientific Society could be viewed as a manifestation of the liberal atmosphere and tolerance that marked the Egyptian rule in Greater Syria. One should not forget that it came in the midst of rising tension between the people of the Arab East and the Ottoman Empire, which was actively attempting to reestablish its strong central authority in the Arab East region. Consequently, the formation could be considered an important pillar of the Arab nationalist movement, especially as other Arab nationalists were to follow the footsteps of *Al-Yazigi* and *Al-Bustani* and establish literary societies of their own.

In 1875, the graduates of the American University of Beirut formed the Beirut Secret Society, whose founders included, among others, Fayez Nimr Pasha, Ibrahim Al-Hurani, Ya'qoub Al-Yaziji and Shahin Makaryus. In attempting to promote national consciousness among Arabs, the Society emphasized, in its program, the necessity of obtaining Ottoman recognition of Arabic as an official language, and demanded that Syria be politically independent and united with Lebanon. The freedom of the press was also underlined, as was the call for an Arab boycott of the Ottoman military conscription.

Through the formation of secret societies, Arab activism was to reach a point where it would involve the holding of conventions, something that was recognized as an advanced step in the Arabs' struggle for independence from the Turks. Among the attendees and active participants in the Damascus Congress of 1877 were the loyal A'yan leaders of Beirut, Sayda and Damascus, who acted in consultation with Shiites in 'Amil Hill. Among those were the Shi'ite leader and clergyman Mohammed Al-Amin Ali Siran, Shabib Pasha Al-As'ad Al-Wa'ili, Ahmad Abbas Thari Az-Zahari, Al-Haj Ibrahim Agha Al-Juhari, Al-Haj Hussein Bayham and the Beirut A'yan leader Ahmad As-Sulih. It was decided to declare the independence of Syria, but while recognizing the Ottoman Caliphate, and Prince Abdul Qader Al-Jaza'iri was chosen as the ruler of Greater Syria.

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<sup>3</sup> Mohammed Abdul Rahman Burj, *Tarikh Al-Watan Al-Arabi fi Al-Qarnayn At-Tasi' 'Ashar w-Al-'Ishrin: Diraseh fi At-Tarikh Al-Arabi Al-Hadith w-Al-Mu'asir* (The History of the Arab World in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries). Cairo: Maktabat Al-Anglu Misriyyah, 1974, p. 91.

In response, the Ottoman authority rejected their demands and put the leaders of the Congress under house arrest.

This action on the part of the Ottomans did not deter other Arab leaders from moving forward in their bid for Arab independence. In 1881, a number of young Arabs formed the Jam'iyat Hafez Haqouq Al-Millah Al-Arabiyyah (the Society for Preserving the Rights of the Arab Millah), whose leaders emphasized the need for Christian-Muslim cooperation in the struggle to achieve Arab independence from the Turks.<sup>4</sup>

## THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RESISTANCE

The rising Arab political consciousness did not delay the Palestinians' struggle for independence or their efforts to cope with a situation that had greatly deteriorated as a result of Zionist immigration and settlement, which they considered the core of the Arab struggle with the Ottomans. Their peculiar situation required, without any doubt, some form of action capable of putting an end to the drastically worsening conditions of the Palestinian people. Consequently, although of a gradual nature, their actions were steady and effective.

The Palestinians responded to the armed struggle against the Zionist settlers as early as 1886, when a group of peasants, pushed into a corner by the loss of their land, attacked the settlers in Al-Khdirah and Petah Tiqva 'mlabis'. Further decisions to attack other Jewish settlements were born of the same anger and resentment. In addition to deporting peasants from their land and threatening the sources of their livelihood, the Jewish immigration and settlement also represented a threat to Palestinian shopkeepers and artisans, the majority of whom were Christian. Faced with threat of being unable to compete with their Jewish counterparts, the shopkeepers and artisans expressed their reservations concerning the Jewish settlers to Najib Al-Haj, the editor-in-chief Abu Al-Hul, a journal in Cairo, during his visit to Palestine in 1895. In response, Al-Haj, in his writing, accused the Zionists of depriving the Palestinian Arabs of their means of living. The fears of Palestinian Christians also had an impact on the members of the editorial board of the journal *Al-Muqtasaf*, who expressed their anxiety concerning the economic impact of the Jewish immigration on the Palestinian people.

When the Jewish Agency bought land from the Sursuk family near Tiberias, enraged local villagers attacked the engineers and assistants that the

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<sup>4</sup> Jabburi, op. cit. pp. 9-13.

Agency sent to survey the land and determine its size. Preventing them from preparing the information and papers, the transfer would remain unofficial. The Palestinians also succeeded in stopping several other deals involving the Agency in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

It is worth noting that the resistance against the Zionist immigration and land expropriation for the purpose of agricultural settlement in Palestine increased dramatically following the convening of the First Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897. The fears of the Palestinian people in regard to their motherland and future were rising. The Palestinians saw the Jewish immigration to and settlement in Palestine as posing a major threat to their political and economic existence, as well as to the Arab character of Palestine. Against this background, the Mufti of Jerusalem headed a local, government-authorized committee that was responsible for checking the property transferal files in the Mutasarrifiyah of Jerusalem, and it consequently halted the transfer of land to Jewish hands for several years. The year 1900 witnessed the submission of a large number of petitions, in which the people expressed their strong opposition to the Zionist expropriation of land. They demanded an end to this expropriation.<sup>5</sup>

Political demonstration of Palestinian opposition to Zionism occurred several years before the First Zionist Congress of 1897. In 1891, for example, a representative body of the A'yan and local leaders of Jerusalem was formed, which in itself points to the high level of political awareness and activism that existed at the time. The leaders tried through this political body to express their fear and reservations concerning the Zionist immigration and settlement. Moreover, they asked the Ottoman central authority to enact laws prohibiting Jewish immigration to Palestine and emphasized the need to effectively halt the transfer of Palestinian land to Jewish hands. Although such requests might have helped psychologically in reducing the Palestinian anxiety, they were not expected to bring about serious results.

Amin Arsalan Qa'im Qam, the ruler of Tiberias, was enthusiastic in his opposition to the transfer of land to the Zionists, not so much because of his assessment of the Zionist threat to the Palestinian peasants, but rather because he was concerned that the transfer of Arab land to Jews could potentially change the identity of the country. His motivation implies, therefore, that Arabs at that time fully understood the nature and purposes of Zionism and its potential impact on the country, should it be allowed to

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<sup>5</sup> Abdul Wahhab Kayyali, *Tarikh Filistin Al-Hadith* (Modern History of Palestine). Beirut: Al-Mua'ssasah Al-Arabiyyah Lid-Dirasat w-An-Nashr, 1985, pp. 41-43.

realize its established ends. Arsalan understood that Palestine's fate was not in Arab hands but in those of the Ottoman authority. In this respect, he saw the authority as being influenced and controlled by Zionism, resulting in its implicit approval of the Zionist immigration and settlement.<sup>6</sup>

Regardless of the evaluation of the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Zionism, the Palestinians and Arabs in general in their resistance to Zionism relied heavily on the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans were at that time the rulers of the Arab land, having assumed complete control over the organizational and administrative aspects of the region. Consequently, they were looked upon as the judicial and administrative body that could presumably control the flocks of Jewish immigrants to Palestine and to stem the Zionist expropriation of land. The Palestinians might also have believed that the Ottomans had a vested interest in preventing Zionism from achieving its goals in Palestine. Zionism, through creating an additional nationalist problem in the area for the Ottomans, could have been perceived as threatening not only Palestine but the entire Ottoman Empire.

The Palestinians of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century regarded themselves as Ottoman subjects whose only source of support in their resistance to Zionism was the Empire, which was considered the representative of the Islamic Caliphate. The Palestinians could not at that time rely on the Arab movement, of which they were an important part, since it was not yet strong nor fully mature. It was still in its early stages organizationally, and even the idea of total Arab independence was not yet completely formulated.

More importantly, the Palestinian resistance suffered from a lack of cohesion and concerted effort. The relationship between the leadership and the masses was molded by the elitist approach of the leadership. This approach created and deepened the gap between the leaders and their masses, and it would come to have serious ramifications for the Palestinian national movement. In addition, although the leaders, who descended from A'yan families, showed great interest in political activism and the need to preserve their political status and position, they totally neglected the economic factors at hand. They failed to see the importance of investing time and money in forming companies that would deal with the issue of land and the development of agriculture.

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<sup>6</sup> Samir Seqali, "Al-Awda Al-Ijtimayyah wa Al-Iqtisadyah fi Filistin Athna' Al Harb Al-Alamiyyah Al-Ula" ("The Social and Economic Situation in Palestine During World War I"); *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah w-As-Sira' Al-Arabi As-Sahyuni* (The Question of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist Conflict) Part 1. pp. 327-329.

The above-mentioned leaders were subsequently preoccupied with the issue of Arab nationalism and Arab independence from the Turks; in other words, with redefining the relationship between the two. Not surprisingly, their activism within the sphere of Arabism came at the expense of Palestinian resistance to Zionism.

## THE CRUCIAL FORMATIVE YEARS

The late 19<sup>th</sup> Century constituted a crucially important new era in the history of Arab nationalism, an era that witnessed the transformation of Arab activism from politicized literary and linguistic works to a more politically orientated form. In this respect, it is important to emphasize two major developments that could help in understanding the newly emerging stage of Arab activism. The application of Midhat Pasha's Constitution of 1876 and Sultan Abdul Hamid II's despotic rule – which are often blamed for hindering the Arabs' effort to achieve nationalist goals – diminished the liberal atmosphere that had provided the Arab leaders with a platform of openness and free thinking. The constitutional and parliamentary life of the Ottoman Empire could have created the channels through which Arab leaders might have obtained some gains for the Arab people and region. It could have directed Arab activism toward the means to redefining the Arab-Ottoman relationship. The adoption by Sultan Abdul Hamid II of the idea of the Islamic league must have been looked upon as an additional obstacle in the nationalist struggle with the Turks, as it entailed the creation of a new unifying framework for the different ethnic religious groups in the Empire. This, of course, contradicted the Arabs' adoption of the nationalist ideology. It was frequently regarded as hindering Arab nationalism as a political ideology from gaining legitimacy amongst the masses, the majority of whom adhered to Islam.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> Century witnessed the formation of the Charity Society of Damascus. Although its declared goals were charitable, it was, in fact, a secret society that was originally formed by Tahir Al-Jazairi. Its main political objectives were the reinstatement of the frozen Ottoman Constitution and the reactivating of the *shura* (consultation) rule in the Arab region. The founders of this society had contacts with the leaders of the movement of Young Turks who later led the constitutional coup of 1908.

The members of the Society were from a wide range of professions. Among its ranks were 'ulama, reformers and famous writers; intellectuals like Sheikh Jamal Ad-Din Al-Qasimi, Sheikh Abdul Razeq Al-Bitar, and Sheikh Salim Al-Bukhari. Later, Rafiq Al-Azm, Mohammed Kurd Ali,

Fayez Al-Khoury, Abdul Hamid Az-Zahrawi, Shukri Al-Asali and other intellectuals joined the Society.

Salim Al-Jazairi and Sa'ad Darwish, senior Arab officers in the Ottoman army were active members of the Society, as was Hussein Awni Bek, an intellectual and an officer in the Department of Education.<sup>7</sup>

The program of the Society highlighted an intellectual reform-oriented trend within the Arab nationalist movement, which surfaced in the early stages of the politically oriented movement. It placed, for example, great emphasis on the need to restore the Constitution and to reinstall the parliament in Ottoman political life as a means of coping with the ills of the Empire. In other words, the members of the Society seemed to perceive themselves as integral to the Empire. They did not necessarily demand the fragmentation of the Empire along nationalist lines but rather the preservation of the Empire along with inevitable reform. This early tendency could be viewed as the basis for the eventual development of the idea of decentralized Ottoman rule in the Arab region, where an Arab political entity was to be created and whose relationship with the Ottoman Empire would be based on the issue of the Ottoman decentralized authority, similar to the model of the Hungarian-Austrian confederate monarchy.

This trend, which was very strong at the time of the 1908 constitutional coup and thereafter, acted prior to the coup as an impetus to the concerted efforts of some Arab intellectuals and Young Turks to bring about serious changes in the political life of the Empire. Although these two groups differed in their ideology, despotism and a lack of freedom, in addition to opposition to the rule of Abdul Hamid II, united them in their bid to facilitate change.

In 1906, Jam'iyah Watan, the 'Motherland Society', was formed in Damascus. With branches in Jaffa and Jerusalem, its members came mainly from the officers of the fifth brigade. Among the early founders of the society was Mustafa Kamal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of modern Turkey. Other members included Suleiman Bek and Haj Mustafa.<sup>8</sup>

The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, prior to the 1908 constitutional coup in Turkey, provided the intellectual setting for the emergence of another intellectual trend within the Arab nationalist movement, which was characterized by a well-defined stand on the issue of the Arab-Turkish relationship and the inevitability of Arab independence from the Ottoman Empire. This can be

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<sup>7</sup> Jabburi, *op. cit.* p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*



attributed to Abdul Rahim Al-Kawakibi, a prominent leading figure in the Arab liberation movement.

Al-Kawakibi descended from the Al-Ashraf family in Aleppo and worked as an editor, first of *Al-Furat* and then of *Ash-Shabba*' newspapers. He also held certain official posts and later worked as a lawyer. It is worth noting that Al-Kawakibi wrote two major works in his lifetime, *Taba'a Al-Istibdad* and *Um Al-Kura*. He created an intellectual awakening in the Arab region, emphasizing in his writings the necessity of standing against Turkish despotism. His main theme centered on the importance of the Arabs regaining the Caliphate from the Turks.

Between 1902-1903, Al-Kawakibi, in his writing in *Al-Manar*, pointed out the means to remedy the ills in the Arab World. Although he called for Muslim unity from Morocco to China through an Islamic league, his main concern was the Arab region and the progress of the idea of Arab nationalism. He emphasized the distinct Arab role in the history of the region, through which he attempted to show how the Arab people had been treated badly and how, based on the Arabs' history, they should be considered a candidate for facilitating the progress of Islam. In short, Al-Kawakibi, although a true Arab nationalist, acknowledged the Islamic union and league. In this respect, it is important to indicate that Al-Kawakibi distinguished between Muslim and Arab. Consequently, he called for the administrative demarcation between the Turks and the Arabs through the adoption of a decentralized rule as a step towards the eventual Arab independence from the Turks.

The installation of an Arab Caliphate in Mecca was a major theme in Al-Kawakibi's thinking. He favored an administrative demarcation among all ethnic minorities within the Empire, which would allow them to enjoy some autonomy on the basis of nationalism through a decentralized Ottoman rule. He was known for having a friendly relationship with people from different ethnic and denominational backgrounds, his nationalism always superseding denominational differences.<sup>9</sup>

Najib Azuri, an Arab nationalist, treated the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in terms of two struggling trends affecting the Arab question, i.e., the tension between the Ottoman ideology of preserving the Empire and Arab nationalism in its battle to gain a political identity and entity. As far as Azuri was concerned, both trends put high priority on the need to modernize the region in keeping with the trend in Europe, but while recognizing the dangers posed by that part of the world. Azuri's acknowledgment of the

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<sup>9</sup> Burj, op. cit., pp. 101-109.

Arab liberation movement with respect to its relations with Europe and European dangers did not deter him from valuing the French intellectual and cultural impact on the region. In fact, he supported the French occupation of Algeria and called upon the French to increase their influence and role in Syria and Palestine.<sup>10</sup>

One might say from Al-Kawakibi and Azuri's thoughts that the Arab nationalist movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century was suffering from a state of confusion, ambiguity and intellectual non-cohesiveness. The two men could easily have defined Arab nationalism, but they were still under the influence of competing Islam under Ottoman rule with Arabism.

The definition of Arab nationalism given by Mohammed Izzat Darwazih, an Arab nationalist, best demonstrates the Arab nationalist's self-perception and consciousness. Darwazih stated that the idea of nationalism aimed at the establishment of a united Arab entity in which the units descended from the same origin or inhabited the same country, spoke a single language, and shared the same interests and ends. In his view, the Arab World that existed then was the motherland of the Arab race. It had also been the land of the Arab Semitic immigration waves that had come from the Arabian Peninsula to various Arab regions. Arab blood is still present in the Arab Peninsula, whose inhabitants always had contact with the people of the different Arab regions in Greater Syria, Iraq, the Nile Valley and North Africa. It had been and still was the supplier to the Arab World of waves of immigration.<sup>11</sup>

The study of the idea of Arab nationalism and its formulation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century is highly significant, especially when one acknowledges the importance of its intellectual formulation in relation to the organizational formation of the Arab movement. The formulation of Arab nationalism was affected by two major factors. First, the Arab movement with respect to the issue of nationalism and the Arab nation came as a response to a threat and a challenge, posed by the Ottoman's attempt to 'Turkify' all the subjects of their empire, which targeted the very existence of the Arabs as a nation and an entity. Second, the Arab leaders dealt with the issue of Arab nationalism from its political angles. However, this approach lacked a comprehensive program or the means to accomplish the objectives assigned to the Arab liberation movement. These factors

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<sup>10</sup> Mohammed Salih Mansi, *Harakat Al-Yaqzah Al-Arabiyyah fi Ash-Sharq Al-Asyawi* (Arab Awakening in the Middle East). Cairo: Dar Al-Ittihad Al-Arabi Lit-Tiba'ah, 1972, p. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Mohammed Izzat Darwazih, *Nasha'at Al-Harakih Al-Arabiyyah Al-Hadithih* (The Beginning of the Modern Arab Movement). Beirut: Al-Maktabah Al-Asriyyah, 1971, pp. 9-20.

may explain why Arab nationalism could be described as being foggy, ambiguous and non-cohesive.

The idea of Arab nationalism and Arab independence from the Turks could be seen as revolutionary. The factors and the conditions as discussed above reduce it to an extremely reformist level. They also made it difficult for the nationalist leaders to define the best way to go about materializing their goals.

In light of this argument, one can easily understand the Arabs' response to the constitutional coup of 1908 in the Ottoman Empire. Their interest in change, which they perceived as a vehicle for carrying the idea of nationalism to fruition, framed their response to this coup. Although Arab nationalists stood against the policy of 'Turkification' and Ottoman despotism, they supported the constitutionalists of 1908, despite the fact that the Arab attitude was divided on this issue.

The confusion and the lack of adequate assessment on the Arab side in 1908 had a serious impact on the Arab nationalist movement. Arab nationalists supported an Ottoman constitutional movement, which later acted vigorously against Arabs and Palestinians. Considering the fact that the constitutionalists were Turkish nationalists, their main concern was to impose the Turkish will and nationality upon others while resolving the financial and economic problems of the Ottoman Empire. The Arab-friendly and supportive relationship with the constitutionalists was short-lived.

First and foremost, Al-Ittihad Wat-Taraqqi (The Society of Union and Progress) included in its ranks both Turks and Arabs. It started with declared literary intentions, but at the same time acted as an underground political organization working against the rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Its membership was composed of Arabs and Turks who descended from upper social classes, among whom were Kamal Bek Diya Pasha, Mustafa Fadil Pasha, Shafiq Isma'il, the Egyptian Khadiv, and Fawzi Bek. Among its members were experts on literature, intellectuals, politicians and military officers, such as Khalil Ghneim, a Christian from Beirut and a representative of Syria in Majlis Al-Mab'uthan (the Ottoman Parliament).

The Arab support of the constitutional coup of 1908 and the desire to improve the Arabs' conditions stimulated Arab enthusiasm for a joint effort with the Turks to reform the socioeconomic, political, administrative and judicial situation. After the constitutional movement had succeeded in dethroning Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the Syrian Turkish Reformation Committee (Lajnit Islah At-Turkiyyah Suriyyah) was formed. Founded

by Amin Arsalan, its main target was to improve conditions in the Ottoman Empire in general and in the Arab region in particular. Furthermore, in 1908 *Jam'iyyat Al-Ikha Al-Arabi Al-Uthmani* (Society of Arab Ottoman Brotherhood) was established. The founders of this society were Arab intellectuals from various Arab *wilayats* and in particular the Syrian Arabs, the most prominent being Sadiq Pasha, Shafiq Al-Mu'ayyad and Shukri Bek Al-Husseini. The main task of the society was to facilitate Arab cooperation with the Turks in order to achieve internal reform.

The completion of the picture can only be achieved by showing the other side of the coin. Although a great number of Arabs supported the constitutional movement of 1908, others stood firmly against the Society of Union and Progress, with whose ideology they disagreed. They might have favored the policy of Sultan Abdul Hamid II over the unionist stand, although it could be viewed as regressive. The society of *Al-Jam'iyyah Al-Islamiyyah* (The Islamic League in Constantinople) is a case in point. With the aim of countering the unionists and their activities, its prominent Arab leaders included Shekib Arslan, Ash-Sheikh Abdul Aziz Jawish, Abdul Rahman Al-Yousef, and Mohammed Al-Azm. In addition to this, a local society, *Jam'iyyat Al-Iha Al-Arabi* (Society of Arab Brotherhood) was formed in Aleppo in 1908 and subsequently adopted a vehement opposition stand to the Unionists and their ideology.<sup>12</sup> The constitutional movement of 1908 shortly after its success faced the threat of the counter revolutionaries, especially among the supporters of the dethroned sultan who, in 1909, launched an unsuccessful counter coup in an attempt to bring Sultan Abdul Hamid II back to the throne.

Although this attempt was short-lived, it attracted the attention of various groups in the Empire, some of whom supported the counter coup and some of whom opposed it. It is worth noting that the conservative sheikhs and local leaders in the Empire received with pleasure the movement carried out by the counterrevolutionaries in the Capital in March 1909. The following example from Nablus best illuminates the picture: At the time of the Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the successful coup, the conservative regressive figures in Nablus became very active, holding meetings in different circles every night and calling on the people to commit themselves to being obedient to the Caliphate and to support the *shari'a* (Islamic jurisdiction). They were also urged to curse infidelity and infidels. It seems that the cabinet that the Unionists imposed after their successful coup against Sultan Abdul Hamid II revealed to the people the state of affairs in the capital. At the same time, the countercoup called upon the people to

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<sup>12</sup> Jabburi, op. cit.

support the Sultan's bid for a return to the Caliphate. It is significant, therefore, to note that this movement in Nablus was not alone in its rise and impact.

The movement in Nablus was led by Tawfiq Hammad, who was known for his descent from the upper middle class. He was a pious man, modest in his education and intelligence, and showed a good mastery of Turkish. In the early stages of his career, Hammad worked as a clerk in the Muta-sarrifayah and soon became the popular leader of the clerks group. Together with his colleagues in Nablus he formed jam'iyyah (a society). Among those leaders were Al-Sheikh Umar Zitir, Al-Haj Badawi 'Shur, Al-Haj Abdul Hadi Al-Qasim, Abdul Hadi and Hafez Pasha Al-Mohammed, Abdul Hadi and Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Ibrahim, mayor of Tulkarem. Prior to the constitution, they were part of the struggle within the Al-A'yan circle in the Nablus metropolitan area. This group of men stood mainly against the Al-Qasem family in Jamma' since this family was the most dominant and influential among its peers. The group constantly wrote to the Ottoman Government complaining about the acts of the Al-Qasem family until they succeeded in making the Ottomans restructure the administrative establishment, which led, eventually, to a decline in the influence of the Al-Qasem family.

This group, significantly, sent a telegraph of support and congratulations to the constitutionalists upon the success of their movement in 1908, signing it "Jam'iyyah" (Society). Al-Haj Tawfiq Hammad had the kind of charisma that made people respect him, even if they did not particularly like him. He was known for being loyal, strong, and stubborn, and when he became the Mayor of Nablus, he made a considerable contribution to the organizational efficiency of the municipality. He also became a member of the administrative council of Nablus, and his status greatly enhanced the position of the Jam'iyyah.

The support of Mr. Hammad and his colleagues for the March 1909 counterrevolution provoked the leaders of the Society of Union and Progress, who regained control following the dethronement of the Sultan. Consequently, the unionist government acted against the administration of Beirut and Nablus and oppressed these administrations. Moreover, the Unionists accused the supporters of the counterrevolutionaries of being corrupt and acting in defiance of the law and security needs. Some of those leaders were deported to Beirut and tried there.

The Ottoman authorities in Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarem continued to harass the leaders, working against their interests. In fact, the Ottoman authority tried to undermine the A'yan leaders through supporting local

A`yan families, who would join the Ottoman authority in harassing the disloyal leaders and their families. In the second parliamentary election, the Ottoman authority decided to harass the family of Al-Haj Tawfiq Hammad by promoting Haidar Bek Tuqan's candidacy for the parliament seat. Hammad's opportunity to rid himself of such an awkward situation came with the fall of the unionist government and the formation of the cabinet by the Opposition Party. In so doing, Hammad succeeded in becoming the representative of Nablus, where he stayed until the end of the parliamentary term, which had a great impact on promoting Hammad's role as a political figure and one who would become prominent during the British Mandate. During the British period, Hammad headed the Islamic Christian Society in Nablus where he displayed great hostility towards both the British and the Zionists.<sup>13</sup>

The failure of the March 1909 countercoup brought the Unionists back to power, thereby ending the Arab-Turkish honeymoon. The unionist government outlawed all active Arab societies, including the Society of Arab Ottoman Brotherhood, and prohibited the issuing of several Arab journals and newspapers. In a sense, they attempted to silence all voices calling for independence and liberty and to enthusiastically 'Turkify' all the subjects of the Empire. These measures, not surprisingly, stirred hostility towards the Turks again and elevated the nationalist fervor for achieving independence and freedom.

In 1909, the Unionists' return to power could be considered a crucial turning point in the history of Arab nationalism and Palestinian resistance to Zionist immigration to and settlement in Palestine. The limitations put on political and intellectual liberty and the policy of Turkification must have had a great impact on the active Arab nationalists. The Ottoman need for the Zionists' financial support in balancing the budget inspired negotiation with the Zionist leaders, which led to a loosening of Ottoman regulations prohibiting the influx of Jews to Palestine. Eventually, all such regulations were canceled.

This must have represented a huge setback for the Palestine Question and the resistance to Zionist immigration. Both the Arab nationalist movement and the Palestinian resistance to Zionists between 1909 and 1914 gathered more momentum in an attempt to enhance their bid to accomplish their goals.

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<sup>13</sup> Darwazih, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-181.

The period under focus indeed carried with it the transformation of the Arab nationalist cause into a well-defined political movement, which this time adopted an underground form of activism, due to the seriousness and sensitivity of the period. They had figured out that secrecy under an authoritarian regime and constant surveillance of policy best preserve organizational goals and serve to enhance political activism.

This period witnessed the formation of secret societies through which the Arab and Palestinian activists decided to channel their activism. Although the Unionists' measures should have unified Arab activists, the movement suffered from deeper fragmentation with regard to the level of patriotism, nationalism, and ideology.

For example, in the Lebanese capital of Beirut, a commercial and intellectual center, the political movement was composed of two conflicting political ideologies, both of which, however, were united in the call for a Lebanese political entity. The first group could be seen as regionalist and was composed of Christians from the mountains of Lebanon, who emphasized the need for the establishment of an independent political entity under French protection. The other trend was Arab nationalist and was comprised mainly of Arab nationalists who obtained their education from both *ahliyah* (popular) schools and private schools, namely, Al-Ulliyah Al-Uthmaniyyah Al-Islamiyyah (the Islamic Ottoman College), which was known for its role in supporting and enhancing Arab nationalism. This political group supported the idea of having Lebanon as part of the Arab *ummah*. The call for decentralization could hardly be noticed among the needs of the above-mentioned ideologist groups.<sup>14</sup>

The two major newspapers issued in Palestine prior to World War I and after, namely *Al-Karmel* and *Filistin*, represented the two existing intellectual and political tendencies. Najib Nassar, the owner and editor-in-chief of *Al-Karmel* could be considered a Palestinian national who prompted Palestinian action in resisting Zionism. Issa Al-Issa, the owner and editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Filistin*, meanwhile, could be viewed as an Arab nationalist who looked upon Palestine and the Palestine Question as an issue before the Arab nationalist movement.

Furthermore, Al-Hizb Al-Watani (the National Party) could be seen as a demonstration of the trend of local politics and patriotism that existed in Palestine. Al-Sheikh Suleiman At-Taji Al-Farouqi was the founder of this party, which was formed as a political body whose goals included resis-

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<sup>14</sup> Abdelaziz Ad-Duri, *At-Takwn At-Tarikhi Lil-Ummah Al-Arabiyyah* (The Historical Foundation of the Arab Nation). Markiz Dirasat Al-Wihdh Al-Arabiyyah, 1984, p. 244.

tance to Zionism. It also considered the need for locating resources as a means for developing Palestine. Moreover, it took responsibility for utilizing legal means in encountering the Zionist intrusion into Palestine, always endeavoring to enlighten the *ummah* and raise its awareness of the dangers of Zionism. The leaders constantly reminded the Ottoman Government of its responsibilities toward Palestine as part of the Empire in regard to its responsibility for enacting and enforcing laws prohibiting Zionist immigration.<sup>15</sup>

Localism and patriotism did not hinder the efforts of the Arab nationalists. In the period 1909-1914, the Arab nationalist movement took a serious course. The chauvinistic approach adopted by the Turks from 1909 onward elevated nationalist enthusiasm while pushing the Arab leaders to act more vigorously and in a more organized manner. This period, therefore, witnessed the formation of Arab secret societies that called for Arab independence from the Turks.

Al-Jam'iyah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Fateh (the Young Arab Society) came into being as a result of the effort of its three cofounders, namely, Ahmad Qadri, Awni Abdul Hadi and Rustum Haidar, who agreed to commit themselves diligently to serving the *ummah* and the motherland. The number of members of this society increased rapidly to 20 men, and in 1911, an administrative body for the society was established in Paris. The main goal of the Society was to accomplish an Arab renaissance that could aid the Arab *ummah* in reaching developed and advanced nations. Its leaders did not include the word "independence" in the programs and publications of the Society, though they acted secretly to achieve the goal of Arab independence.

The preconditions for joining the ranks of the Society were confidentiality, faithfulness, adherence to the ideology, Arab nationalism, and accepting decisions taken in accordance with the view of the majority without reservation. Due to these preconditions, the Society was well organized and characterized by secrecy, which succeeded in deterring the Ottoman Government's constant attempts to infiltrate it. The headquarters of the Society, for security reasons, stayed in Paris until 1913 and then moved to Beirut, from where the Society moved to Damascus one year later.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Bayan Nwhid Al-Hut, *Al-Qiyadat w-Al-Mua'ssasat As-Siyasiyyah fi Filistin 1917-1948*. Beirut: Mua'ssasat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1981, p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33



While Al-Fateh was a political society, Al-Ahd represented the Arab military elite. Formed as a secret society in 1913, its membership was composed mainly of Arab military officers in the Ottoman army, which is why it is sometimes referred to as the military wing of the Arab nationalist movement. Among its leaders and founders were Aziz Ali Al-Misri, Awni Al-Qadamani, Salim Al-Jazairi, and Nuri As-Said. Its main objectives could be summarized as the call for Arab independence and total respect for Islamic values and the institution of the Caliphate.<sup>17</sup>

Hizb Al-Lamarkaziyyah Al-Idariyyah Al-Uthmaniyyah (a Party for the Decentralization of Ottoman Administration) was formed in Cairo in 1912 as a non-secret society. Its main objectives were twofold. Firstly, it intended to demonstrate to the Ottomans the need for decentralized rule. Secondly, it took charge of gathering the support of the Arab masses for the idea of a decentralized Ottoman administration. Its main leadership body was composed of 20 men known to possess knowledge, experience, and strong personalities. Although they resided in Egypt, this body was to choose an Executive Committee of six leaders and had branches in all the main cities of Greater Syria, all of which were in constant contact with other Arab societies in the region.

Among the founders and leaders of this party were Rafia Al-Azm, a Muslim from Damascus, Rashid Rida, a Muslim from Trebili, Iskandar Ammun, a Lebanese Christian and Fuad Al-Khatib, a Lebanese Sunni Muslim. Among the Palestinian members were Salim Abdul Hadi, a Muslim from Jenin, Hafiz As-Said, a Muslim from Jaffa, and Ali Al-Nashashibi, a Muslim from Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup>

Al-Muntada Al-Adabi (The Literary Gathering), which was established in Constantinople, was in contact with various Arab societies in Syria. Although it started as a literary society, it was designed to be a political forum with apolitical objectives. In other words, it acted in accordance with opposing groups to the Ottoman establishment. It initially included among its members politicians, officials, parliamentarians, some army officers in the capital, Muslim *ulama*, some Arab members of the Parliament who supported and sympathized with the society, and the leaders of the Arab nationalist movement from Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. Among the members from Palestine were Arif Al-Arif, Rushdi Ash-

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<sup>17</sup> Jabbari, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>18</sup> George Antonius, *Yaqzat Al-Arab* (Arab Awakening), translated by Nasir Ad-Din Al-Assad and Ihsan Abbas. Beirut: Dar Al-Ilm Lil-Malayin, 1966, p. 185.

Shawwa, Bassem Bseiso, Mustafa Al-Husseini and others. This club continued with its activities until the Ottomans closed it down in 1915.<sup>19</sup>

The Arab students from Palestine established a students society in the Ottoman capital in September 1912. The society named Al-Alam Al-Akhdar (The Green Flag) aimed at strengthening the ties between Arab students in different high schools, educating them, and preparing them for developing their society. Among its founders were Bassem Bseiso, Mustafa Al-Husseini, and Shukri Gushih. The society issued the journal *Lisan Al-Arab*.<sup>20</sup>

Thus far, Arab nationalists had practiced political activism secretly or overtly through the formation of societies and parties. The organizations as platforms were also designed to serve as vehicles that allowed for the sharing of views and the gathering and spreading of the idea of Arabism. The fragmentation within the movement resulting from the variety of ideas and organizational forms, however, necessitated the search for a new platform to harmonize the movement. This could only be achieved through extensive discussion and the formulation of a program or scheme to bring about independence from the Turks. It required the formation of a united Arab political entity.

The Arab leaders at that time called for holding an Arab Congress to discuss Arab issues and problems in relation to the Turks. However, this congress could not be convened in the Ottoman Empire. The Arab intellectual and nationalist leaders decided, therefore, to hold the First Arab Congress in Paris in 1913, the idea being that they would meet and discuss and make decisions pertaining to important issues far away from Ottoman harassment.

At the Congress, the Arab nationalist leaders agreed to call on the Ottoman Government to improve the conditions of its Arab subjects and to consider Arabic an official language, as it is the language of the Qur'an. These demands were subsequently submitted by the Congress to the Ottoman Government. In short, one may say that the program and the decisions adopted by the conferees were general and vague. The Palestinian issue, meanwhile, was noticeably marginalized by those leaders in their discussion of topics that were of greater importance to the Arab *ummah*.

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<sup>19</sup> Jabbari, op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Amin Said, *Al-Thawrah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Kubra* (The Great Palestinian Revolt). Cairo: Matba'at Issa Al-Halabi, 1989, Volume I, p. 46.

## THE ARAB MOVEMENT AND THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE

Letters of support were sent by Palestinians to the major participants in the conference, emphasizing the call for Arab support to Palestinians as a way of putting an end to the Zionist danger. Out of 387 letters, 139 came from Palestine. Despite this fact, the conferees ignored the call for encountering Zionism and its dangers, which could explain the Palestinian Arabs' reservations and criticism concerning the Paris conference. In an editorial in *Al-Karmel* newspaper, the writer questions:

“Should we allow the Zionists to revive their nationalism at the expense of our nationalism? Have we agreed upon selling them our land piece by piece until they expel us from our land in groups and on an individual basis?”

In another call by *Al-Karmel* to every person interested in the fate of the country, the newspaper harshly criticized the attitude of both the Arab conferees and the Party of Decentralized Ottoman Administration. This call by *Al-Karmel* stated that the Arab leaders were not expected to favor the Jewish interest:

“You must have occupied yourself with pointing out to the Ottoman officials that the expropriation of land by Zionist agencies and societies would weaken the Arab nationalism and consequently trouble the Ottoman League. Observing this awkward situation and not doing anything to change it could imply that your ties with your Arab and Ottoman brothers in Palestine do not exist. It could also be an indication of a lack of awareness on your part of the fact that losing Palestine would diminish any hope for economic prosperity in the Arab World.”

On 25 July 1913, *Al-Karmel* published a criticism of the leaders of the party of the decentralized Ottoman administration. At the time of the Arab Congress in particular, those leaders endeavored to discuss with the Zionists the prospect of a joint effort against the Ottomans. *Al-Karmel* gave up hope in regard to those champions of reform among the Arab leaders and those of the decentralized Ottoman administration:

“We hoped that they would rid us of Zionist threats and dangers. We comprised a group of people who had hoped the best for their leaders.

This team possessed tremendous power; not to ignore that Palestine, their country, was part of the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>21</sup>

Under the title “Alummi Khiyamak Ya Israel,” Issa Al-Issa wrote in *Filistin* that the Arab Congress in Paris proved, beyond any doubt, its bankruptcy. None among the participants could be questioned by parliament except the Lebanese delegation, because this delegation was chosen by an elected body to represent the people in the Congress. And no one could tell what this delegation would face, since the results of the Congress were contrary to all expectations. The situation of the Arab *ummah*, Al-Issa added, spoke clearly in objection to those decisions adopted by the Congress in a similar manner to the Jewish tribes who spoke about Rahvaam, the son of King Solomon: “We have no luck with the son of David, so pack your tents.”<sup>22</sup>

The harsh criticism of both Nassar and Al-Issa and their disappointment could be understood in terms of their assessment of the existing relationship between Palestine and the Arab *ummah*. Their high expectation of the Arab Congress in Paris and of the Arab national leaders could have caused this disappointment. A regular observer would have been shocked too, especially when he tried to assess Arab nationalist Palestine and its cause in relation to the Arab World. In other words, it is astonishing to find Arab leaders ignoring the Palestinian issue in a conference, when they supposedly placed the Palestinian cause at the core of the Arab problem.

Najib Azuri, for instance, pointed out that there existed two groups of the same nature, which were at the same time contradictory. On one side was the awakening of the Arab *ummah*. On the other was the Jewish effort to rebuild an old Israeli political entity. In the long run, the fate of those two movements was to exist in a constant struggle with each other until one would come to defeat the other. And the fate of the whole world as it was known to them was bound to the results of the struggle between the peoples of two different doctrines.<sup>23</sup>

Khalil As-Sakakini, an Arab nationalist and Palestinian Christian, also pointed to the dangers of Zionism in regard to the Arab World in his diary on 23 February 1914. He stated that his hatred of Zionism had not

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<sup>21</sup> Ibrahim Ibrash, *Al-Bu'd Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah: Filistin Bayn Al-Qawmiyyah Al-Arabiyyah w-Al-Wataniyyah Al-Filistiniyyah* (Dimensions of the Palestinian Question: Palestine between the Arab Nationality and Palestinian Identity). Beirut: Markiz Dirasat Al-Windh Al-Arabiyyah, 1987, pp. 23-24.

<sup>22</sup> Issa Al-Issa, “Alummu Khiymaku Isra'il,” *Filistin*, Jaffa, Wednesday, 3 August 1913.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Hut, “Al-Qadiyyah,” *Filistin*, p. 40.

evolved from a hatred of the Israeli people and their prosperity, but rather from his opposition to the doctrine itself and the Zionist attempts to build a nation at the expense of others. By conquering Palestine, Zionism had conquered the heart of the Arab World, since Palestine is the linking point between the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt and Africa. The Jewish occupation of Palestine would end the Arab contact, especially between the African and Asian Arabs.<sup>24</sup>

Arabs in general, and educated Arabs in particular, were aware of the Zionist danger before the Paris Conference. Mustafa Afandi, a teacher of mathematics at a Jerusalem middle school, displayed a heightened awareness concerning Zionist threats and colonial dangers. In an article he wrote, he stated that Russia, which represented great oppression and torture, presented itself as a supporter of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire whenever the Ottoman Government implemented its laws. The Russian Ambassador in the Empire always attempted to present himself as a champion of Jewish rights, whether the Jews were the aggressors or the victims. Mustafa Afandi added that the Russians were interested in pushing the Jews out of their own country and into the Holy Land. Thereby, they could instigate trouble and disturbances for the Ottomans. The Russians then could use this situation to interfere in Ottoman domestic affairs.

The British, according to Mustafa Afandi, wanted to see a Greater Syria that was separated from Egypt, clearly regarding unity as a source of strength. This separation could only be achieved through the occupation of the Syrian country by a foreign nation. The British, he continued, decided to support the Jews and to help them establish a political entity in Palestine, where the British could preserve their interests and existence in Egypt.<sup>25</sup>

Based on the attitude of major figures in the Arab region, one could grasp the scope of the awkwardness attached to the attitude that was adopted by the Arab nationalists in Paris in 1913. This obviously made the attitude of the leaders of the Decentralization Party more strange and surprising. However, digging deep into the ideology and intellectual platform of the party of decentralization of the Ottoman administration explains the apparent paradox in their attitude.

In 1913, the head of the branches of the party on decentralization of Ottoman administration in Syria wrote to the head courtier of the party in

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<sup>24</sup> As-Sakakini, Khalil. *Yawmiyat Khalil As-Sakakini* (Diary of Khalil As-Sakakini). Jerusalem: Al-Matba'ah At-Tijariyyah, 1955, pp. 46-56.

<sup>25</sup> *Filistin*, Wednesday, 26 July 1911.

Cairo. He stated that he and his colleagues had decided to admit to the party membership only those who adhered to Islam. On 25 August 1913, Rafiq Al-Azm, the Secretary of the party replied, emphasizing that he spoke for himself and indicating that Christians were brothers of the Muslims in terms of nationality, language and interest. He made it clear that he cared little for those whose minds and hearts had been blinded by God and who believed that Muslim-Christian brotherhood was a sort of infidelity or a means to hand the region to foreign domination. According to him, those people were either ignorant or hypocrites. Although he did not go so far as to accuse them of treason, he made it clear, instead, that these people considered themselves reformers but did not see clearly the interests of their nation, and that their ignorance and stagnant attitude would lead to the loss of the country. He continued to say that his party was comprised of both Muslims and non-Muslims (Christians and Israelis). By using the word 'motherland,' he asked for admission to the ranks and membership of the party Christians, Muslims and Jews; those who are known for honesty, trustworthiness and good manners. In addition to that, he called for the relationship between Christians, Jews, and Muslims to be strengthened.

Based on this ideological platform, Dr. Nasim Maltuh, a Jew from Jaffa joined the party in 1913. Mohammed Ash-Shanti, one of the active members of the Decentralization Party in Palestine, wrote to the party in Cairo, informing it that he had recruited a number of Jews as members in his party.

The letter sent by Rafiq Al-Azm, the Chairman of Hizb Al-Lamarkaziyyah, to Mahmoud Al-Humusani in Beirut dated 20 June 1914 explained the ideology of the party and the attitude adopted toward the Zionists and the Jews. In this letter, he indicated that when Hizb Al-Lamarkaziyyah was formed as an affiliate body within the Arab nationalist movement, the Zionists had taken the initiative and sent one of their leaders to discern the state of affairs. This leader, who had been sent earlier to Cairo, subsequently took charge of the meeting and negotiating with the leaders of the party in Paris on issues relating to the status of the Jews in Palestine. In response, Al-Azm and his colleagues informed him that

“we are a group whose doctrine is democracy. For us, all people in Syria are equal in terms of their rights and duties. If the Jews were to become genuine citizens of the motherland, they would consequently be similar to other fellow citizens in this land, especially when the Zionist immigration to the country is halted. None of them is allowed then without becoming a true Ottoman citizen. They are supposed to teach Arabic in their schools. They are also supposed to allow chil-

dren in general in this country to obtain an education in these schools.”<sup>26</sup>

It is not surprising then to find harsh criticism of the call for the decentralization of the Ottoman administration in *Filistin* on 19 April 1913 under the title “Hal Tasluh Al-Lamarkaziyyah fi Filistin.” The editor-in-chief expressed his real surprise at the call of the people of Beirut for a reformation through decentralizing the Ottoman administration in various provinces of the Empire. He did not necessarily question their intention, but rather criticized the means of reform. For him, the decentralization did not meet the demands of each and every province in the Empire: for example the success of its application in Beirut, the city of science and trade, would not necessarily be the same as in other parts of the region. He used the example of Palestine, seemingly to criticize the leaders of the Decentralization Party. Palestine, according to his argument, was an agrarian society, the wealth and source of income of its inhabitants being based mainly on land, the greatest portion of which was owned by a small number of wealthy and influential families and local leaders. The peasants, meanwhile, constituted the largest portion of the population. Regardless of the types of relationships in production existing in Palestine, the country, he emphasized, had become subject to Zionist interests, and over 100,000 different forms of adherence and loyalty existed. He posed a rhetorical question: Who would guarantee, upon the implementation of decentralization in Palestine, that the Zionist leaders would not ask their followers in Palestine to acquire Ottoman citizenship? Were they to do this, the Zionists would be able to use their wealth and influence to obtain the power of the majority, going on to become members in the municipalities, the administrations, the general council of the Mutasarrifiyah. Palestine would then become in reality a purely Jewish country.<sup>27</sup>

The assessment by the Palestinians of decentralization in the Ottoman Empire is essentially connected with their generally held views concerning Palestinian citizenship and nationality. Palestinian citizens are primarily composed of Muslims and Christians. According to Rawhi Al-Khalidi, both Muslims and Christians are deeply rooted in Palestine; their history goes back to ancient times and the waves of Semitic immigration from the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Suleiman Musa, *Al-Harakah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Marhali Al-Ula Lin-Nahda Al-Arabiyyah Al-Hadithah* (The Arab Movement: The First Stage of the Modern Arab Awakening), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Beirut: Dar An-Nassar Lin-Nashr, 1977, pp. 2-64.

<sup>27</sup> *Filistin*, 19 April 1913, p.1

<sup>28</sup> Ragib, “Al-Jinsiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah,” *Filistin*, 4 June 1913.

In the period 1909-1914, the Palestinians were forced to argue and present their evaluation and assessment of various matters. The assessment took into account the Palestinians' needs and the intention to raise the efficacy of their resistance to Zionist immigration and settlement. Importantly enough, this period witnessed a number of developments that could explain the Palestinians' interest in accelerating resistance and their self-reliance in the struggle to liberate Palestine from Zionist hegemony. These developments were as follows:

Firstly, if the Ottoman Parliament were reinstalled, they could use their advantage there in order to put an end to Zionist immigration and settlement in Palestine.

Secondly, the Unionists returned to power. Later, Hizb Al-Itilaf Wal-Hurriyyah (the Party on Coalition and Freedom) assumed leadership and formed the government, which shook the Palestinians' reliance on the Ottomans in their resistance to Zionism. These two groups opened negotiations with the Zionist agencies, hoping, among other things, to obtain Zionist financial support in a bid to remedy the Empire's economic and financial ills. In return, they were ready to accept a gradual termination of the Ottoman laws that had been enacted earlier in order to put on hold on Zionist immigration to Palestine.

Thirdly, the vagueness and ambiguity characterizing the ideology of Arab nationalism made the movement unreliable in the struggle with Zionism. The Arab Congress in Paris in 1913 was clearly a case in point.

The Ottoman Parliament (Majlis Al-Mab'uthan), which was installed upon the restoration of the Constitution of 1908, was utilized by the Palestinians as a means to resist the Zionist immigration. In this majlis, Rawhi Al-Khalidi – who was keen to point to the Zionist dangers and ambitions – Said Al-Husseini and Hafiz As-Sa'ad were representatives of the Jerusalem metropolitan area. Ash-Sheikh Ahmad Al-Khammash represented Nablus, while As'ad Ash-Shuqeiri represented Akka.<sup>29</sup> By writing articles for newspapers and giving speeches in the Ottoman Parliament, Al-Khalidi endeavored to present the Palestinian issue and the expedition against Zionism.<sup>30</sup>

Rawhi Al-Khalidi, prior to 1908, was for a long time the dean of the Ottoman diplomatic circle in Bordeaux, France. He was also once elected, after 1908, as vice-chairman of the Ottoman Parliament. He fully understood the objectives and ends of Zionism, and together with Said Al-

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<sup>29</sup> *Al-Hilal*, Cairo, December 1908, part 3, p. 177.

<sup>30</sup> *Al-Mawsu'ah Al-Filistiniyyah* (Palestinian Encyclopedia), Volume 2, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 1989, p. 491.



Husseini and Ragheb An-Nashashibi, called upon the Ottoman parliamentarians to legislate against Zionist immigration to Palestine and the expropriation of land. The Fall of 1912 witnessed a heated parliamentary session during which the Arab representatives complained that the Zionists had expropriated a large area of agricultural land in Marj Ibn Amir.<sup>31</sup>

*Al-Karmel* was the first Palestinian newspaper to shed light on the danger that the Zionists posed to Palestine and the Arab region. The editor-in-chief of this newspaper, which was first issued in Haifa in 1909, launched a severe attack on Zionism. He also published a book entitled *As-Sahyuniyyi, Tarikaha, Wa Garadaha, Wa Ahamiyyataha*, in which he dug deeply into the history of Zionism. He also revealed the basis on which Zionism was structured and pointed to the deceptive means that the Zionists used to achieve their goals. In addition, he accused the Ottoman Empire of failing to live up to its responsibilities toward Palestine and the Palestinians, emphasizing that the Ottomans had not been active in preventing the Zionist drift into Palestine.

*Filistin*, meanwhile, which was issued in Jaffa in 1911, supported *Al-Karmel* in its endeavor to unveil the Zionist scheme and plans. Its owner and editor-in-chief, Issa Al-Issa, issued several articles that were a translation of a work by Menahem Ostshken, a historian who specialized in Zionism, entitled *The Zionist Political Program*. Al-Issa should be credited for raising, with this translation, people's awareness concerning the dangers posed by the Zionists.<sup>32</sup>

Najib Nassar called for holding a Palestinian Congress as a means to counter the 11th World Zionist Congress and to resist the Zionist invasion of Palestine. The Palestinian leaders of Nablus received this call with enthusiasm and consequently held a Non-Zionist Congress in August 1913. The conferees called upon the Ottomans to put an end to selling the land by an open auction, saying that they should have sold this land to the farmers who cultivated it, allowing them to finance the cost of the land through easy payments. The petition that included these demands was signed by Abdul Fattah Tuqan, Kamil Hashim, Ibrahim Abdul Hadi, Hasan Hammad and Nimr An-Nabulsi.<sup>33</sup>

*Al-Karmel* could also be credited with the call for organizing the national effort to counter Zionism. This role must have contributed to the formation of the Jam'iyyat Mukafahat As-Sahyuniyyah (Zionism Resistance

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<sup>31</sup> Al-Hut, op.cit., p. 43.

<sup>32</sup> Mahafzah op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>33</sup> *Al-Karmel*, Haifa, 12 August 1913.

Society), which had headquarters in Nablus and branches in various Palestinian cities. The Society encouraged the use of mass demonstration as a means to protest against the selling of land by the government in an open auction. It also expressed its opposition by sending telegraphs to Constantinople, in which it conveyed suggestions that the government should give land to the cultivators who, according to the Society, would be able to discharge themselves from their financial obligations to the government through easy payments.

The Society situated its headquarters and carried out its activities in Nablus, because Nablus at that time did not house influential Jews and Zionist figures, meaning it did not face any counter-resistance. Some sources suggest that by 31 August 1913, the Society began to gather strength and accomplish victories. This date also marked the starting point of its serious activities against Zionism.<sup>34</sup>

*Al-Karmel*, *Filistin*, and *Al-Munadi* newspapers in Palestine in addition to *Al-Muqtabas* in Damascus and *Al-Mufid* in Beirut continued their work to unveil the Zionist methods employed in Palestine. They also criticized and resisted the call of some Arab leaders for reaching a mutual understanding with the Zionists which appeared in both *Al-Ahram* and *Al-Muqatam* newspapers.<sup>35</sup>

The Palestinians' strong stand on the issue of Arab independence from the Turks was equal to their vehement opposition to the Zionist plans in Palestine. They therefore diligently defended Arab ambitions and interests regarding independence and the formation of a united Arab state.

The representatives of Palestine in Majlis Al-Mab'uthan played an effective role in forming the 'Arab Representatives Bloc' in March 1911. This bloc, together with the Albanians, Armenians and some Turkish representatives formed Hizb Al-Hurriyah Wal-I'Tilaf (The Freedom and Coalition Party), which was known for its adoption of the idea of offering administrative independence to various nationalities in the Empire. It primarily exported the idea of implementing decentralization of the Ottoman administration in the Empire. Among the Palestinian members of this party were Rawhi Al-Khalidi and Said Al-Husseini.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Kayyali, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>35</sup> Qasimiyah Khayriyyah, "Mawaqif, Arabiyyah Min At-Tafahum Ma As-Sahyuniyya", in Seqali, Samir. *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah w-As-Sira' Al-Arabi As-Sahyuni, Part. 1*.

<sup>36</sup> Assad Dagir, *Ath-Thawrah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Kubra Muqadimatuha, Asbabuha, wa Nata'juha* (The Great Arab Revolt). Cairo: 1916, p. 55.

In the light of this and other developments mentioned, one may understand the Palestinian support of the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution and the reinstatement of the parliament on the anniversary of the constitutional revolution of 1908. The correspondent of *Filistin* in Nablus wrote,

“On a day like this memorable day, the Ottoman *ummah* regained its constitution, which was curtailed for almost one third of a century. During this period, it faced so many complex obstacles, which deterred its reformation and prevented its progress. In those days, the country was targeted by those who had interests. God then provided it with free men (unionists). They themselves rushed to sacrifice the motherland.”<sup>37</sup>

The Palestinian enthusiasm for the constitution and the parliament could be understood in terms of two major themes. Firstly, the constitution and the liberal atmosphere along with the parliament could provide the Palestinians with the channels needed to influence Ottoman policy, meaning it might be possible to effectively resist the Zionist drift into Palestine.

Secondly, the Palestinian activists seemed to find the parliament a reliable tool for accomplishing Arab independence from the Turks. In other words, instead of using violent means and struggle with the Turks to achieve independence, they appeared to opt for peaceful means.

## THE ARABS AND WORLD WAR I

The Arabs in Syria seemed to have lost faith in the call on the Turks to grant the Arab region independence from the Empire. Consequently, they began to search for external support for the endeavor. According to British documents, a group of Druze from Lebanon and Damascus contacted the British Consul in Beirut in 1913 and asked for British aid to the Arabs in the struggle with the Turks. In the same year, a Muslim delegation visited Kitchener in Cairo and proposed that Greater Syria be annexed to Egypt, suggesting that Syria be offered its own self-rule and administration. Kitchener, in response, handled the proposal. By late 1913, the participants in the Arab Congress in Paris had sent delegations composed of active participants in the Congress to the French Foreign Ministry and to the embassies of the great powers, where they were supposed to hand copies of the congressional decision to the European officials.

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<sup>37</sup> *Filistin*, 29 July 1911, p. 2.

On 24 February 1914, the British Ambassador in Constantinople wrote to the British Foreign Minister and indicated that a number of Arab officers had visited the embassy and inquired what the British attitude toward the Arabs would be in case a state of emergency occurred. At the time, Aziz Ali Al-Masri was in prison, waiting for judicial delivery of a verdict, and the Arabs petitioned the foreign ministers in Constantinople presenting his case and calling for support.<sup>38</sup>

Based on the British documents, the Arab leaders seemed to have initiated the establishment of an alliance between the Arabs and the British. Their move made the British pay great attention to the possibility of having an alliance with the Arab nationalist movement in the region. This move possibly had an impact on the eventual results of the Arab region by the end of World War I, as it exposed the Arabs' limited alternative for an alliance in the war.

The British Government favored an alliance with the Arab movement. They attempted to prevent the Ottoman Sultan from declaring a holy war against the allies. The Arabs could also contribute to the British world effort through their internal work against the Ottomans. Furthermore, the alliance could provide the British with a guarantee concerning their interests in the region, at least during the war. Moreover, the Arab leaders showed great enthusiasm for fighting the Ottomans, which would add to the British war effort and the allies' vested interests in winning the global war.

Immediately after the breakout of World War I, Al-Jam'iyyah Ath-Thawriyyah Al-Arabiyyah, (The Arab Revolutionary Society), issued a call to all Arabs, descendants from Qahtan. In its call, it emphasized that Muslims, Christians and Jewish Arabs were related in Arabism and nationalism, demanding that the Arabs take care of their brothers in Yemen, Asir, Najd and Iraq and defend them from the threats of the enemy. Arabs in Greater Syria and Iraq were supposed to work together along with their fellow nationalists. In this call, the Arab Revolutionary Society asserted "The Muslims, Christians and Jews among you must work hand in hand for the interest of the motherland and the *ummah*. You all inhabit and invest in the same land, you speak a single language. Therefore, you must be a united *ummah* and a single hand. You must aid each other, unite and support each other." The Society again called on the Muslims not to discriminate against Christians and Jews since they all worshipped the one

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<sup>38</sup> Musa, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

God and asked Christian and Jewish Arabs to work hand in hand with the Muslims.

This liberal tone in the Arabs' calls during World War I could also be seen in the letter written by Abdul Ghani Al-Arisi after he was arrested in late July 1915. In this letter, he pointed out that religious and racial prejudice had never been contemplated by Arab nationalists. He demanded that the Arabs not be divided into denominational and ethnic groups. According to Al-Arisi, Christians, Muslims, Jews, Druze and atheists were all Arabs and should act in accordance with Arab interests. Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca wholly supported Al-Arisi's premise and called upon the Arabs to consider the Jews who resided in the Arab World to be Arabs.<sup>39</sup>

This liberal and tolerant stand adopted by the Arab nationalist movement could not be seen as an unusual development. Its roots go back to the ideological stand to which the Arab nationalist movement committed itself back in 1913 at the time of the Arab Congress in Paris. This liberalist ideal could have brought about a concerted Arab effort in dealing with the issue of Arab independence and unity. However, it did not take into account the fact that Palestine at that time was the target of Zionist plans and schemes. However, this Arab liberal show probably strengthened the alliance with the British, since Britain would have favored liberalism over Ottoman Islamism during World War I, the time of polarization and alliances in the world.

The British, in their attempts to create an alliance with the Arab movement, continued to contact the Arab leadership. The Arab nationalist movement, however, was divided on the issue of alliance. The first faction, which was led by Prince Abdullah, the son of Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca, was enthusiastic concerning an alliance with the British. The second one led by his brother Faisal, showed reluctance. The meeting held in Damascus upon Prince Faisal's visit to Syria in 1915 resolved the problem by issuing the Damascus Protocol as the basis for any alliance negotiations with the British. This protocol underlined the demand for Arab independence and unity under the leadership of the Caliphate and determined the boundaries of the Arab World. Moreover, it called for the substitution of the capitulation granted to the Europeans according to the Ottoman calls for the treaty of mutual defense with the British, where Arab and Britain would be equal partners.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp. 64-66.

<sup>40</sup> Kayyali, op. cit., p. 74.

This protocol constituted the main basis for the Al-Hussein-MacMahon correspondence. In Al-Hussein's letter to MacMahon, dated 10 July 1915, the writer asserted that Britain should recognize Arab independence within these boundaries: Marcin and Adana in the north, from East Birsha up to the Gulf of Al-Basrah and the Indian Ocean in the south, and in the east the Red Sea and the Mediterranean with the exception of Aden on the southern front boundaries, which could maintain its status. England, Al-Hussein added, should recognize an Arab Caliphate.

On 25 October, the British Ambassador in Cairo, in response to Al-Hussein's letter, accepted the Arab demands, mentioning one reservation with regard to the French interests in Lebanon.<sup>41</sup> This acceptance must have been obligatory to the British Government. It was presented very clearly through correspondence between the British Ambassador in Cairo, who was granted total authority over decision making on behalf of the British Government and Sharif Al-Hussein, who was looked upon as an official spokesman of the whole Arab people.

This correspondence could have been an impetus behind Arab participation in the war in accordance with the Arab alliance with the British. The policy of Jamal Pasha greatly elevated the tension between the Arabs and Turks, which must have easily provoked the Arab leadership to start an Arab revolt.

Jamal Pasha repeatedly sentenced Arabs, including many Palestinians, to death. On one occasion, he hanged 12 young men in Jerusalem, in addition to the Mufti of Gaza, Ahmad Arif Al-Husseini, and his son from the well-known Al-Husseini family.<sup>42</sup>

On 6 May 1916, Jamal Pasha hanged a new group of Arab leaders after Prince Faisal made an unsuccessful attempt to get him to grant them a pardon. Upon his return to Damascus from Beirut, Faisal informed his colleagues of his assessment of the Turks' intentions as exposed in Jamal Pasha's acts. They all agreed upon the necessity of Prince Faisal departing immediately for Mecca in preparation for the breakout of an Arab revolt. The Al-Hussein correspondence was not yet completed; in fact, Sharif Al-Hussein and the Arab leaders were under the impression that the British would live up to their promises to the Arabs.

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<sup>41</sup> J.M.N. Jeffries, *Filistin Ilaykum Al-Haqiqah* (The Truth About Palestine), Cairo: Al-Ha'yah Al-Masriyyah Al-'Amah Lil-Talif w-An-Nashr, 1971, pp. 118-133.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

The Arab Revolt started as planned by Arab leaders on 10 June 1916.<sup>43</sup> The Palestinian participation in the secret stages of the Arab Revolt came through the activities of the enrolled Palestinian members of Al-Fateh and Al-Ahd. In the midst of World War I, and in spite of the difficulties and miserable conditions that existed in the country, great numbers of Palestinians volunteered in the army, signing their names with the volunteer registration office that the British established in 1917. The number of Palestinian volunteers was estimated at several thousand, which could seem high in terms of the condition of the country and the divided allegiances of young Palestinians between the two struggling camps. Al-Haj Amin Al-Husseini, who was still a young man at the time, played an active role in recruiting volunteers, for which purpose he was obliged to travel to various parts of the country.<sup>44</sup>

The Palestinians' enthusiasm in regard to participation in the Arab Revolt of 1916 stemmed from the way in which they perceived themselves as part of the Arab *ummah* and the hope that the revolt would result in resolving the Palestinian issue and putting an end to Zionist immigration to Palestine. Contrary to these and the fellow Arab brothers' expectations, the British signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, according to which the Arab region was to be divided into French and British spheres of influence. More importantly, the British issued the Balfour Declaration of November 1917, in which the British Government granted the Jewish people a homeland in Palestine.<sup>45</sup>

The British moves of 1916 and 1917 contradicted the British promises to the Arabs. According to Jeffries, Palestine, in the British agreement with the Arabs, was to be granted independence and self-rule, similar to Al-Hijaz and any other Arab province included in the agreed Arab independence. He added that the British denial of Palestine's independence was a manifestation of the British commitment to political Zionism. He went on to say that the British officials, back in October 1915, had nothing in mind with respect to Palestine and Zionism except for including Palestine within the Arab independent commonwealth. It was never said at that time that Palestine would be totally or partially Jewish, and Palestine had not yet been subjected to political ends for the British and the Zionists. The map drawn for the Arab independence back then also included Palestine as part of the Arab commonwealth.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Al-Hut, *Filistin*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 74 and 83.

<sup>46</sup> Jeffries, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

The promises and agreements that the British offered various parties during World War I could be understood as part of Britain's endeavor to accomplish its vested interest in winning the war. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 seemed to be grounded by two sets of objectives. On the one hand, the British were highly concerned with securing an alliance with Zionism as a means of bringing new parties to the Western alliance – mainly the United States – and improving their chances of winning the war. In addition to that, they tried to make Eastern European Jews support Zionism instead of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Furthermore, this declaration might be viewed as a natural outcome of the formation of the war cabinet of 1916 in which three active Zionists were major figures, namely, Prime Minister Lloyd George, the Minister of the Interior Herbert Samuel, and the person in charge of the Colonial Office, Arthur Balfour.

The British on the other hand could have considered highly the strategic importance of this declaration. In accordance with this theme, the Balfour Declaration could be viewed as the outcome of the British attempts to make use of the Jewish problem dating back to 1841 when the British moved to convince the Ottomans to open Palestine for Jewish immigration. The Jewish homeland in Palestine might have been looked upon by the British as a strategic asset and a reliable ally that could aid them in preserving and enhancing their interests in the Middle East.

While the Zionists' options varied, the Arab nationalist movement had limited choices. The Arabs could hardly participate in the war independently and had no other option than to ally themselves with England and France. Although the British might offer the Arabs promises of independence and freedom, they could easily back away from their commitments.

According to Jeffries, Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca, through the negotiations with the British representative in Cairo and through his clever use of political language, proved to be a stubborn and shrewd politician and negotiator. His orthodoxy was at the same time evident. Jeffries asserts that “we find him greatly interested in allying himself with us along with his great confidence of our promises.”<sup>47</sup>

The above suggested a paradox in the British commitments to implement these promises, which is evident in Jeffries' argument. The British signed the agreement in 1916 and then issued the Balfour Declaration of 1917 while committing themselves to their promises to the Arabs, promises

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 15.



that were specified and clear in letter and spirit. Jeffries stated that “Great Britain was ready to recognize Arab independence within the areas included in the boundaries suggested by Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca and will support this independence.” Palestine was included within these boundaries. The Arabs were free on their land to choose whatever suited their ambitions and needs. Jeffries added that importantly, the British agreed with Sharif Al-Hussein on Arab independence. According to that agreement, the British did not treat him as Sharif of Mecca but rather the sole representative of the entire Arab *ummah*, including the Palestinians. He also spoke on behalf of the Arab secret societies in which the Palestinians were active.<sup>48</sup>

In the final analysis, the period under discussion can be considered a highly critical era in the history of Arabism and Palestinian national resistance, not least of all because it witnessed the birth of both an Arab nationalist and Palestinian national movement. The rise of the two movements was grounded on objective factors. The emergence of Arabism and the Arab nationalist movement, influenced by the Ottoman reformation effort, entailed depriving the old social classes in the Arab East of their influence. Therefore, Arab nationalists were instrumental in the formation of the Palestinian National Resistance, which came as a result of the peculiar status of Palestine in the late nineteenth and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, dictated by the Zionist invasion of Palestine.

The Arab nationalist movement passed through some stages. In the first place, it emerged as a literary movement whose major concern was the revival of Arab literature and the Arabic language and culture. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, this movement could be viewed as part of the Ottoman constitutional movement. In response to Sultan Abdul Hamid II, it stood for the restoration of the Constitution and the reinstatement of the parliament. After 1909, the Arab movement became more active against the Turks. Now with its own societies and organizations, its main concern became the materialization of Arab independence.

It could be said that the Arab nationalist movement lacked organizational or ideological cohesiveness and that it suffered from the absence of clear and well-defined programs and schemes to bring about the desired change. The Arab vanguard raised vague and ambiguous slogans, which did not necessarily serve the movement well during World War I, especially at the time of negotiating the prospect for an alliance with the British in the war.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

The Palestinian National Resistance found itself in an awkward situation. Since it was originally born within the Arab nationalist movement, the Palestinians were to play a significant role within the movement, while at the same time having to single-handedly resist Zionism within Palestine. This is not to neglect the fact that the Arab leaders were mainly concerned with the issue of Arab independence and unity. Although Palestine for them was an important part of the Arab World, it received minimal consideration.

This period could be regarded as highly significant in the history of both the Arab and Palestinian struggle, since it carried with it the basis for both the Arab nationalist movement and Palestinian National Resistance. The foundations and the character of each of these two movements, in addition to their interdependence on each other, would have serious ramifications for both, beginning at the time of the war and more clearly in the post-World War I period, up to 1939 and 1948, the period under study in this work.