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Bedross Der Matossian

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, bdermatossian2@unl.edu

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The Young Turk Revolution Its Impact on Religious Politics of Jerusalem (1908-1912)¹

Bedross Der Matossian

Armenian Patriarch circa 1910, Library of Congress, photo by American Colony.

The Young Turk revolution of 1908 was a milestone in defining the struggles in the intra-ethnic power relations in the Ottoman Empire. The most dominant of these struggles took place in the realm of ecclesiastic politics in Jerusalem. With its Armenian and Greek Patriarchates and the Chief Rabbinate, Jerusalem became a focal point of the power struggle among the Jews, Armenians, and Greeks in the Ottoman Empire. The importance that the ethno-religious and secular leadership in Istanbul gave to the crisis in Jerusalem demonstrates the centrality of Jerusalem in ethnic politics in the Empire. Furthermore, it shows how the Question of Jerusalem became a source of struggle between the different political forces that emerged in the Empire after the revolution. The revolution gave the dissatisfied elements within these communities an opportunity to reclaim what they thought was usurped from them during the period of the *ancien régime*. Hence, in all three cases these communities

internalized the Young Turk revolution by initiating their own micro-revolutions and constructing their own *ancien régimes*, new orders, and victories.

After the revolution the Chief Rabbinate of the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian Patriarchate and the Armenian National Assembly (ANA)² initiated policies of centralization bringing the provincial religious orders under their control. In most cases they were successful. However, in the case of Jerusalem this centralization policy met with much resistance and caused serious difficulties for the leadership in Istanbul.

This essay is a comparative study of the impact of the Young Turk revolution on intra-ethnic politics in Jerusalem. It will demonstrate the commonalities and the differences between the three cases. The intra-ethnic struggles in all three cases were similar in that the local, central, and ecclesiastical authorities were very much involved. Furthermore, in these intra-ethnic struggles the local communities played an important role. In the Greek case these tensions led to severe deterioration in the relation between the local Orthodox Arab community and the Greek Patriarch Damianos. Thus, compared to the two other cases the Greek case is unique in that more than being a struggle within the ecclesiastic hierarchy it was more a struggle between clergy and laity something that still persists today.

The essay will contend that post-revolutionary ethnic politics in the Ottoman Empire should not be viewed from the prism of political parties only, but also through ecclesiastic politics, which was a key factor in defining inter and intra-ethnic politics. While the revolution aimed at the creation of a new Ottoman identity which entailed that all the ethnic groups be brothers and equal citizens, it also required that all the groups abandon their religious privileges. This caused much anxiety among the ethnic groups whose communities enjoyed the religious privileges that were bestowed on them by the previous regimes. Hence, despite the fact that the revolution attempted to undo ethno-religious representations it nevertheless reinforced religious politics as it was attested in Istanbul and Jerusalem.

The Question of Jerusalem

There are those who say that Jerusalem is free and independent from the Patriarchate of Istanbul. I perceive that freedom when the issue deals with the spiritual jurisdictions of the Patriarch of Jerusalem if he ordains or expels a priest, but I cannot perceive that Jerusalem with all its goods and properties, which are the result of the people's donations, belongs to the Brotherhood.³

In the Armenian case, the Jerusalem Question (*Erusaghēmi khntirē*) became one of the most important subjects debated in the Armenian National Assembly (ANA) in Istanbul and demonstrates an important dimension of ANA's policy, which aimed at the centralization of the administration. However, the Armenian Patriarchate was

not the only body that was going through internal struggles. The constitution also paved the way in defining the intra-ethnic relationship between the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem and the lay Arab-Orthodox community on the one hand and among the Jewish communities of Jerusalem on the other hand. In the pre-revolution period, during Patriarch Haroutiun Vehabedian's reign [1889-1910], the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem was found in a chaotic situation. Some members of the Patriarchate's Brotherhood⁴, taking advantage of the old age of the Patriarch, were running the affairs of the Patriarchate by appropriating huge sums of money.⁵ The situation of disorder and chaos continued until the Young Turk revolution. On August 25, 1908 the Brotherhood succeeded in convening a Synod and decided to call back all the exiled priests of the Patriarchate in order to find a remedy for the situation.⁶ After a couple of failed attempts to convince the Patriarch, the Brotherhood sent another letter to the Patriarch, this time with the signatures of 23 priests from the Synod informing him that the Synod has decided the return of the exiled priests. The letter begins:

The declaration of the constitution filled all the people of Turkey with unspeakable happiness. The Brotherhood of the Holy Seat also took part in that happiness. However, in order for the happiness of the brotherhood to be complete an important thing was missing, and that is while we are happy, the members of the brotherhood, who in the past years have been banished, expelled and defrocked, in exile are worn out. The issue of the return of the exiled brothers became a serious subject in the Synod meeting on the 25th of August and it was decided almost unanimously that they should return, ending the rupture and antagonism that has prevailed for a while.⁷

However, when the third letter of the Synod also went unanswered by the Patriarch, the Synod drafted a request for the dismissal of the Grand Sacristan father Tavit who according to them was unqualified to fulfill his duties. Members of the Synod argued in this letter that in addition to losing some important Armenian rights in the Holy Places, he was the main reason for the banishment of many members of the Brotherhood.⁸ When all these efforts yielded no result the Synod appealed to the Armenian National Assembly (ANA) of the Ottoman Empire.⁹ Meanwhile the tensions between the local lay community and the Patriarchate intensified. This led Avedis, the servant of the Patriarch, to complain to the local government that members of the lay community were going to attack the Patriarchate. The local community appealed to the *mutesserif* of Jerusalem and requested the removal of Avedis.¹⁰ As a result, the deputy of the Patriarch, father Yeghia sent a letter to the *locum tenens*¹¹ in Istanbul, Yeghishe Tourian, the president of the Armenian National Assembly, in which he explained the mischievous acts of Avedis and the Grand Sacristan Tavit. However, for some reason the letter was not included in the agenda of the ANA meeting. The *mutesserif* (governor) of Jerusalem investigated the situation and, in order to satisfy the local population, ordered the Patriarch to remove Avedis from his position.¹² As a reaction to this the Patriarch ordered the banishment of two priests to Damascus.

This action led the members of the brotherhood to send a letter to the Armenian National Assembly in Istanbul protesting the banishment of the two priests and demanding the expulsion of Father Sarkis, Tavit, and Bedros who had exploited the maladministration of Patriarch Haroutiun.¹³ When the letter was read in the Assembly, a heated debate began among the deputies as to what needed to be done. Archbishop Madteos Izmirilyan proposed that a letter be sent to Patriarch Haroutiun indicating that the ANA would deal with the issue of Jerusalem.¹⁴ After much debate¹⁵, the Assembly elected the Jerusalem Investigation Commission on the 5th of December.¹⁶ The commission that left for Jerusalem was composed of three members [one priest and two lay people]. However, the members of the Jerusalem Brotherhood opposed the orders brought by the commission. When the members of the commission felt that their life was under threat they returned to Jaffa. On December 1, 1908, Haroutiun Patriarch sent a letter to the Assembly saying that the Synod has agreed on the return of all exiled priests.¹⁷ In February 1909, the ANA received two letters from Jerusalem's Patriarchate. The first indicated that the Investigation Commission had not yet presented their orders to the Synod and had left for Jaffa. The second argued that there was no need for an investigative commission when peace and order prevailed in the cathedral.¹⁸ These contradicting statements from Jerusalem caused much agitation in the Assembly debates.¹⁹

On May 22, the Report of the Investigation Commission was read in the Armenian National Assembly after which Patriarch Izmirilyan gave his farewell speech.²⁰ The Commission reproached the Brotherhood, the Synod and Father Ghevont who was regarded responsible for the appropriation of huge sums of money.²¹ In addition, the report found Archbishop Kevork Yeritsian, the previous representative of Jerusalem in Istanbul, responsible for the deteriorating situation in Jerusalem, and considered him an agent of Father Ghevont. On July 5th, the Political Council of the Assembly decided to depose the Patriarch of Jerusalem Archbishop Haroutiun Vehabedian according to the 19th Article of the Armenian National Constitution and elect a *locum tenens* from the General Assembly.²² A commission was formed which decided to remove the Patriarch from his position and put in his place a *locum tenens*.²³ The General Assembly supported the decision of the Political Council and decided to appoint Father Daniel Hagopian as a *locum tenens*. The position of the Patriarch in Jerusalem remained vacant from 1910-1921. In 1921 Yeghishe Tourian²⁴ was elected Patriarch under the procedures of the constitution of 1888, except that the confirmation was given by the British crown, not by the Sultan.²⁵

The Young Turk revolution caused serious changes in the dynamics of power within the Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem. Both the Armenian laity and the majority of Armenian clergy found the revolution an important opportunity to get rid of those who have been unjustly controlling the affairs of the Armenian Patriarchate. When the efforts of the clergy yielded no results they appealed to the Armenian National Assembly of Istanbul demanding its intervention in the crises. However, when the ANA decided to take the matter into its hands by sending an investigation commission to Jerusalem, the Jerusalem Patriarchate with its brotherhood, feeling that their

autonomous status was endangered, immediately resolved their differences and opposed any such encroachments.

Struggles in Jerusalem over the Chief Rabbinate: A microcosm of the intra-ethnic struggles in the Jewish Community of the Empire

“The Paşa has Decreed, Paingel is Dead!”²⁶

The Jewish case differed from that of the Armenian in that the Jewish community was itself divided into two main sections as a result of the crisis in the Chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem. In order to understand crisis it is important to examine the developments in Istanbul. After the Young Turk revolution Haim Nahum was appointed the *locum tenens* of the Chief Rabbinate in Istanbul. Immediately after his accession letters began to pour into the office of the Hahambashi from the provinces demanding the dismissal of their spiritual heads.²⁷ “It is to be noted,” argued *The Jewish Chronicle*, “with regret that, with the exception of Salonica, which has a worthy spiritual chief at its head in the person of Rabbi Jacob Meir, all the Jewish communities in Turkey are administered by Rabbis who are not cultured, and are imbued with ideas of the past.”²⁸ Rabbi Nahum mentions this in a letter addressed to J. Bigart the secretary general of the *Alliance Universelle Israelite*:

Feelings are still running very, high, and I receive telegrams every day from the different communities in the Empire asking me for the immediate dismissals of their respective chief rabbis. Jerusalem, Damascus, and Saida are the towns that most complain about their spiritual leaders. I am sending Rabbi Habib of Bursa to hold new elections in these places.²⁹

Demonstrations against their respective rabbis were held in the Jewish communities of Jerusalem, Damascus and Sidon.³⁰ In Jerusalem, letters were sent to the grand Vezirate and the Ministry of Interior demanding the removal of Rabbi Panigel who was only appointed provisionally.³¹ The governors of these locals also telegraphed the Sublime Port arguing in support of the demonstrators. Following these acts, the Minister of Justice wrote to the *locum tenens* demanding that he take action without delay. On September 3, the Secular Council convened under the presidency of the Kaymakam Rabbi Haim Nahum and decided to dismiss these three Rabbis.³² Of these dismissals, the question of the Chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem was the most important.

The question of the Chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem is a good example demonstrating how after the 1908 revolution, the different trends within the Jewish community in the Empire competed and struggled against each other.³³ The Question of Jerusalem was high on the agenda of the Chief Rabbinate of Istanbul. This was not only because of its strategic position, but also because of the competition there between those

who supported the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AUI) and those who supported conservatives. The struggle over the position of the Chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem began after the death of Chief Rabbi Yaacov Sheul Elyashar.³⁴ Two groups emerged in Jerusalem that competed for the position. One group supported the candidacy of Haim Moshe Elyashar,³⁵ the son of Sheul Elyashar, and the second group backed the candidacy of Yaacov Meir, a graduate of the Alliance.³⁶ The latter group was composed of liberals such as Albert Antebi (the representative of AUI)³⁷ and Avraham Alimelekh,³⁸ while the former group was headed by conservatives who wanted to maintain the status quo. In 1907 Elyahu Panigel³⁹ was appointed as the *locum tenens* of the Hahambashi of Jerusalem. The *locum tenens* of the Istanbul Chief Rabbinate, Rabbi Moshe Halevi, along with the conservatives backed Rabbi Panigel. Panigel backed the Zionist Ezra society that opposed the AUI.⁴⁰ In addition, most of the other Sephardic groups (Yemenites, Bukharites, Persians) supported Rabbi Yaacov Meir in the hopes that through his election their status would be improved. Competition between local Jewish newspapers began over the issue. While *Havazelet* supported Elyashar, *Hashkafa* supported the candidacy of Yaacov Meir. In 1906, the governor of Jerusalem, Raşid Paşa, appointed Rabbi Suleiman Meni as *locum tenens* and ordered him to organize elections for Hahambashi. The elections were held and Rabbi Yaacov Meir was chosen. The Ashkenazi community did not participate in the elections, probably in order not to pay the Askeriya, burial, and the meat taxes.⁴¹ The Ashkenazi community complained to the *locum tenens* in Istanbul, Rabbi Moshe Halevi, who in turn cancelled the elections and removed Rabbi Yaacov Meir from his position. However, because Rabbi Meir was on good terms with the governor of Jerusalem he did not leave his post until the arrival of the new governor Ali Ekrem Bey after which he left for Salonica.⁴² Rabbi Moshe Halevi then assigned Rabbi Moshe Panigel to be the *locum tenens* of Jerusalem and oversee the elections for the new Chief Rabbi. With the appointment of Rabbi Panigel the struggles once more began between the two camps. The Ashkenazi community of Jerusalem supported Rabbi Panigel and the supporters of Rabbi Yaacov Meir opposed him. Those who supported him presented his reign as a period of flourishing for the community and for its institutions. However, Rakhel Shar'avi argues that according to the newspaper *Havazelet* he mismanaged the affairs of the community.⁴³ He raised the taxes of his opponents and persecuted the Yemenite Jews who were supporters of Rabbi Yaacov Meir. Panigel became close to Ezra in order to counteract the efforts of AUI in Jerusalem.⁴⁴ Rabbi Panigel did not organize any elections for the chief Rabbinate, rather he wrote a letter to Moshe Halevi asking him to appoint him as the chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem on the assumption that he was very popular. However, the situation changed with the Young Turk revolution and the election of Haim Nahum as the *locum tenens* of Chief Rabbinate of Turkey and the appointment of a new governor of Jerusalem. This was a great boost for the opposition camp in Jerusalem, the supporters of Rabbi Yaacov Meir. In addition, Rabbi Haim Nahum implemented the demand of Albert Antebi and his movement to dismiss Rabbi Panigel. On the 4th of November, Rabbi Haim Nahum sent a Telegram to the *locum tenens* of Jerusalem Rabbi Panigel ordering him

to resign his post and to appoint a new *locum tenens* who would oversee the election of the Chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem.⁴⁵ This caused much excitement in the Jewish community of Jerusalem.

Haim Nahum appointed the Chief Rabbi of Aleppo as the *locum tenens* of Jerusalem and ordered him to hold elections.⁴⁶ However, he failed to do so because the Panigel camp refused to participate in the elections.⁴⁷ The Ashkenazi community refused to take any part in this struggle, partly because of their disappointment with Panigel. Unable to hold elections, he returned to Aleppo and appointed his friend Rabbi Nahman Batito as the *locum tenens*.⁴⁸ However, Batito did not succeed in implementing the elections either, despite the fact that five candidates were nominated. Once more, the whole issue failed because of the pro-Panigel and the anti-Panigel movements. This led Rabbi Haim Nahum to pay a special visit to Jerusalem to force a compromise. Rabbi Yaacov Meir would be appointed Chief Rabbi and Rabbi Panigel would be his deputy. However, the Jewish community of Salonica made sure that Rabbi Meir did not leave his position there. The situation continued until Rabbi Haim Nahum removed Batito from his position and appointed the Rabbi of Rhodes, Moshe Yossef Franco, as chief Rabbi.⁴⁹

The revolution caused serious crisis within the Jewish community of Jerusalem. It resulted in the escalation of inter-communal tensions over the elections of the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem. Unlike the Armenian case, the struggle within the Jewish community of Jerusalem was not only one taking place in the realm of religion; rather it involved in it major political trends surfacing after the revolution; namely the AIU and the Zionists. Hence, the struggles over the Chief Rabbinate should be understood as a microcosm of the ideological battle taking place within the Empire between the AIU, supporters of Haim Nahum the newly elected Chief Rabbi of Istanbul, and the Zionists, supporters of the idea of a creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

The Greek Patriarchate and the Orthodox Renaissance

The situation with the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem was more complicated than that of the Armenian and the Jewish case. The impact of the revolution on the Greeks should be viewed from two perspectives: one pertains to the internal struggles within the Patriarchate between the Patriarch and the Synod, and the other pertains to the resurfacing of the “Arabophone Question” against the dominance of Hellenism.⁵⁰ To the Orthodox Arabs of Jerusalem the revolution meant a greater share in the affairs of the Patriarchate. This was also the period in which the young educated figures within the Arab Orthodox community such as Khalil al-Sakakini⁵¹ (an important Palestinian educator), Yusuf al-‘Isa and his cousin ‘Isa al-‘Isa (both editors of the influential newspaper *Filastin*), played a dominant role in the formation of *al-Nahdah al-Urthuduxiyyah* (The Orthodox Revival) identifying themselves with the Arab National Movement.

The constitution that was reinstated after the Young Turk revolution had in it a provision, which became the source of all subsequent tensions between the Arab

Orthodox community and the Patriarchate on the one hand, and the Patriarch and the Synod on the other hand. It gave the Arab Orthodox community a chance to have a greater say in the affairs of the Patriarchate and that of the Arab Orthodox Community as attested in the diaries of Khalil al-Sakakini.⁵² The provision found in Article 111 of the constitution indicated that in each Qaza (district) there shall be a council of each community. The task of this council would be:

1. The administration of the revenues of immovable and capital sums subject to waqfs according to the directions of the founders and agreeably to the customs to observed from of old.
2. The use of properties appointed for philanthropic objects agreeably to the conditions prescribed in the testaments relating thereto;
3. The administration of the properties of the Orphans in harmony with the special regulations on this subjects.

On the 15th of September 1908 six priests and fifteen lay notables of Jerusalem announced the election of a council of forty with the aim of carrying the provisions of article 111. On the 25th of September, 1908, the deputation went to the Patriarchate. The request was submitted to Patriarch Damianos⁵³ by Father Khalil. Al-Sakakini who was in deputation explains in his memoirs:

The Patriarch said: "Since four or five generations the Church has followed on a known policy which was necessitated by the conditions and the situations, and it is necessary that this policy should be changed now after the constitution but we do not know how this will be done until the Parliament convenes and because of that I will not be able to give you a positive nor a negative answer. It seems to me that you hurried and it was much better if you waited until the convention of the parliament by then we might be able to start a gradual reform."⁵⁴

Al-Sakakini mentions that the deputation told the Patriarch that it was not in its intention to undermine the rights of the Patriarchate rather to ask for the usurped rights of the community.⁵⁵ The Patriarch explained to the deputation the legal position of the Patriarchate and proposed the appointment of a mixed committee to discuss it.⁵⁶ The committee met a couple of times in order to discuss the implications of the provisions. It was in the third meeting in which the lay members of the committee put forward eighteen demands. On October 22, 1908, the Patriarch rejected these demands but because the aim of the committee was to improve the moral and material condition of the Arab Orthodox community, it was arranged that a mixed committee was going to look into the matter.⁵⁷

On the 1st of November the committee presented a demand to the Patriarch in the form of an ultimatum in which it asked the formation of a Mixed Council to be chosen annually. The Mixed Council was going to be consisted of 6 members of the clergy

and six members of the lay community. This demand which was based on the model that existed in the Patriarchate of Istanbul was rejected. This led to rising tensions within the community.⁵⁸ The patriarch sent letters to the central government in Istanbul asking for their intervention. The church of St. James near the holy Sepulcher which is frequented by the Arab orthodox clergy and community members of Jerusalem, was closed in order to avoid the occurrence of any disturbances during the feast of St. James. On the 24th of November the local Arab Orthodox population convened a demonstration and it was decided to send a deputation to Constantinople.⁵⁹ Soon the tensions between the lay Arab-Orthodox community and the Greek clergy spread to other cities of Palestine such as Jaffa and Bethlehem.⁶⁰ Meanwhile the Patriarch made presentations to the Grand Vezir in which he represented the position of the Patriarchate. He further argued that the local community is already benefiting from the treasury and there is no need to form such a committee.

Crisis in the Patriarchate

Members of the Synod were not happy with the way in which the Patriarch was handling the issue. They thought that he was sympathetic to the demands of the Arab laity and accused him of working without any accordance with the Synod.⁶¹ His position of compromise instead of a clear decision in favor of the Patriarchate was perceived highly dangerous. In an official meeting the Synod decided unanimously that the patriarch should resign and if he refused to do so he will be deposed. However, the Patriarch refused to resign. On the night of the 26th of December, two members of the Fraternity (one of them being the Chief Secretary, Meletios Metaxakes) were sent to the Turkish governor to announce the deposition of the Patriarch. The Synod pronounced him incapable of supporting the burden of his office.⁶² The letter of deposition was drawn up by Meletios Metaxakes⁶³ the Chief Secretary, and delivered to the Patriarch by Archimandrite Keladion. The deposition (*pavsis*) was approved by the general meeting of the Brotherhood next day, and Archbishop Tiberias was elected as the *locum tenens* (*Topoteretes*).⁶⁴

When the brotherhood saw that the depositions (*pavsis*) did not work they resorted to *kathairesis* which implied that it “altogether and permanently extinguishes the clerical character of the person affected.”⁶⁵ The patriarch did not move. It was decided to postpone the *kathairesis* until Christmas finishes. However, the main problem became that the *locum tenens* was not recognized by the Turkish government. The Turkish government on the 2nd of February, 1909, decided to recognize the *locum tenens*. This in itself implied the deposition of Damianos. As a result the local Arab orthodox population reacted against the decision in the cities of Bethlehem (specially during Christmas), Jaffa and Ramleh. Upon hearing the news in Jerusalem the community members occupied the Patriarchate in Jerusalem.⁶⁶

The Arrival of an Investigation Committee from Istanbul

The Patriarch refused to apply to the deposition and ordered the central government to send an investigation commission. The government consented and after some delay they dispatched a committee of three members, under the presidency of Nazim Pasha, the Governor of Syria. On the 8th of February the committee arrived in but in vain tried to bring about a compromise.⁶⁷ This coincided with political changes in Istanbul as Hilmi Pasha became the Grand Vezier. He decided to summon to Istanbul both the Patriarch Damianos and the two Archimandrites who were responsible for the movement against him namely the Chief Secretary, Meletios Metaxakes, and Christomos Papadopoulos, the chief of the Educational Department. The two people agreed to go to Istanbul. However, the Patriarch did not go to Istanbul supposedly due to health problems. Things became worse when the *locum tenens* died. The Synod immediately elected a new *locum tenens* who was never recognized by the government.

On the 1st of March it was said that Nazim Pasha announced that “he would not be responsible for the safety of any one unless the Synod and the Brotherhood on that day recognized Damianos.”⁶⁸ The Synod thereupon capitulated and passed a resolution recognizing Patriarch Damianos. It was only on the 25th of July 1909 that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Istanbul recognized him as Patriarch.⁶⁹

The ‘Arabophone’ Question

On the 8th of March, 1909, the Synod reversed its previous decision to reduce the rental allowances of the Orthodox Community. On July 26, representatives of local lay community visited Istanbul in order to discuss the demands of the community. On October 12th the committee returned back to Jerusalem. In November it became obvious that the Turkish government’s answer was going to be favorable to the Patriarchate. This caused agitations. The substance of the decision was announced in December 1909, but it was not until the 30th May, 1910, that the full text was published.⁷⁰

The principal demands of the laity were six [the decision of the government appears in brackets]:

1. The constitution of communal councils in accordance with article 111 of the Constitution. [Decision of the gov: acceptance was nominal]
2. A mixed council for the Patriarchate on the model of that of Constantinople, to be composed one third of monks and two-thirds of laymen and to supervise (a) schools, (b) churches, (c) waqfs, and to be the competent authority for all other matters. [this demand was inconsistent with the Patriarch’s powers under the Berat and declared that the monasteries and shrines had not a local character but belonged to all Orthodox Ottomans. This demand was declared not justified.

However the government made a concession and that was the establishment of a Mixed Council under the presidency of the Patriarch consisting of six monks and six elected notables whose task would be to deal with the schools, hospitals and poor relief.]

3. The admission of native Arab Palestinians to the monasteries and their promotion to all ecclesiastical ranks. [No monks to be admitted to the Brotherhood without the approval of the Mixed Council. Patriarchate should be made responsible for just fulfillment of this promise, but the control of admissions by the Mixed Council was rejected].
4. a) An increased share to the local inhabitants in the election of patriarchs.
b) The restriction of the sphere of the Synod to spiritual matters.
c) The admission of the parish clergy to the Synod. [All three demands were rejected].
5. a) Bishops to be required to live in their dioceses.
b) Bishops, archimandrites, priests and deacons to be elected by the local inhabitants. [This last one was rejected]
6. a) Monks to be prohibited from engaging in secular occupations.
b) Equality of all Ottoman subjects in all other matters, no one race being preferred above another. [In so far as they were admissible they would be secured by the measures explained above]

In general the government's decision was very favorable to the Brotherhood as most of the demands of the community were rejected. The demands of Arab orthodox community which entailed a greater participation of the laity in the affairs of the Patriarchate was considered a threat to the Hellenic and ecclesiastic character of the Brotherhood. However, one concession was made: the establishment of a Mixed Council for certain purposes and the assignment of one-third of the revenues of the Patriarchate to the Council. The Arabs received the report with desolation and cynicism. Subsequent controversies took place afterwards. It was only until 1913 that all the tension dissolved by a visit of Ajmi Bey, Ottoman Minister of Justice. In 1914 the church of St. James was opened and the Patriarch held the mass in it.

Conclusion

In the era of rising nationalisms, nation state, and increased global communication, ethnic politics in the Empire intensified after the revolution and became one of the major catalysts in the precipitation of inter-ethnic tensions and its culmination in the dissolution of the Empire. Despite the fact that the revolution opened new horizons and new opportunities for the ethnic groups, it also created serious challenges both for the authors of the revolution and the ethnic groups. The post-revolutionary period became the litmus test for the endurance/sustainability of the main principle of the revolution: the creation of an Ottoman identity based on equality, fraternity, and liberty

whose allegiance would be to the Empire. The realization of this goal was extremely difficult in a period when all ethnic groups in the Empire began projecting their own perception of what it meant to be an Ottoman citizen. Many of these ethnic groups viewed the revolution as the beginning of a new era in which the emphasis was going to be more on national identity a byproduct of modernity. In this equation of modernity ethnic groups were going to be represented based on their universal/national identity rather than on their ethno-religious basis. Ottomanism was going to be the title of their book while their particular identities were going to be the subtitle. However, as this essay demonstrated the outcomes of the revolution were contradictory in that it was not able to get rid of religious representation. On the contrary, the open support of the government to all the religious leaders demonstrates the reluctance of the government to emphasize the national character of these communities.

The contested city of Jerusalem provides a good case study of the struggles and complexities of the post-revolutionary period. In the confines of the old city walls the echoes of the revolution brought hope to the dissatisfied elements of these communities. In all the three cases discussed in this essay the revolution caused serious changes in the dynamics of power within these communities. The waves of micro-revolutions taking place within these communities in Istanbul echoed in Jerusalem. What followed was an internal struggle between the different elements of these communities. A struggle that can be best understood as one taking place between secularism/religion on the one hand and between localism/nationalism on the other hand. In the Armenian case when the National Assembly decided to take the matter into its hands and when the Jerusalem Patriarchate with its brotherhood felt that their autonomous status was endangered they immediately resolved their differences and opposed any such encroachments by the Armenian National Assembly of Istanbul. In the Jewish case the struggle between the pro-Panigel and anti-Panigel factions became a microcosm of struggle between the different political and ecclesiastic trends emerging in the Empire. The case of the Greeks was unique in that community was ethnically different from that of the religious hierarchy unlike the Jewish and the Armenian case. The revolution proved to be a defining moment for the Arab-Orthodox communities in Palestine to achieve what they have always wanted to achieve, namely to get rid of Hellenism that ruled the Patriarchate for centuries and to take a dominant role in the affairs of the Patriarchate. The reluctance of the Ottoman government to support the Arab Orthodox Laity and their open support of the religious hierarchy demonstrates the contradictory dimension of the revolution which sought to undermine religious representations and create a secular Ottoman citizen. One explanation to this behavior is that the central government did not want to encourage the Arab-Orthodox community which living in the height of its *Nahdah al-Urthuduxiyyah* (The Orthodox Revival) because of their complicity with the Arab National movement. It is members of this community who in the later years were going to play an important role in Arab nationalism in general and Palestinian one in particular. The rising national sentiments among the Arabs as well as other ethnic groups were considered by the Young Turks as a threat to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire that they envisioned.

In order to undermine the development of these identities the Young Turks were ready to go against the major ideals of the revolution even if that meant the initiation of Turkification policies.

Bedross Der Matossian is a lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Endnotes

- 1 A longer version of this article will appear in the in the proceedings of “Hundred Years of the Young Turk Revolution and its Impact on Eretz Israel/Palestine,” a conference in honor of Prof. Haim Gerber, Organized by the Institute of Asian and African Studies, Forum of Turkish Studies, Hebrew University, The Department of Middle East History, Haifa University, and Yad Itzhak Ben Zvi Institute Jerusalem, 2-3 July, 2008.
- 2 The Armenian National Assembly was the ultimate outcome of the Armenian constitutional movement in the Ottoman Empire which culminated in the promulgation of the Armenian National Constitution in 1863. During the Hamidian Period (1878-1908) the ANA ceased to function and was reinstated after the Young Turk revolution. The reinstatement of the Armenian National Constitution and the Armenian National Assembly, which became the center of Armenian national policy-making in the empire, are important political processes in the post-revolutionary period which have been under emphasized in the historiography of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian National Assembly contained most of the prominent Armenian political, clerical, and intellectual figures in the Empire.
- 3 This is part of Patriarch Madteos II Izmirliyan’s Farwell speech to the Armenian National Assembly before traveling to Etchmiadzin to take up his new post as the Catholics of all Armenians. See *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist IA[Session XXI], May 22, 1909, p.346.
- 4 The Brotherhood is a monastic order of the Armenian Church in Jerusalem.
- 5 This included the steward of the Patriarchate, Father Ghevont, who had appropriated huge sums of money and the servant of the Patriarch, a layman called Avedis Tashjian.
- 6 A synod is a council of a church convened to decide on issues pertaining to doctrine, administration or application.
- 7 The twenty-three members of the Synod to Patriarch Haroutiun Vehabedian, August 28, 1908. A copy of the letter appears in the daily *Arevelk*, October 3, 1908, #6903, p.3.
- 8 Members of the Synod to Patriarch Haroutiun Vehabedian, October 14, 1908. A copy of the letter appears in M.D.S, *Erusaghēmi verjin dēpk’erē*, pp.12-14.
- 9 The Young Turk revolution also reinstated the Armenian National Assembly which was non-existent during the Hamidian period. The reinstatement of the Armenian National Constitution and the Armenian National Assembly, which became the center of Armenian national policy-making in the empire, are important political processes in the post-revolutionary period which have been under emphasized in the historiography of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian National Assembly contained most of the prominent Armenian political, clerical, and intellectual figures in the Empire.
- 10 “Al-quds al-Sharīf,” [Holy Jerusalem] *Al-Muqattam*, October 29, 1908, #5955, p.4.
- 11 Locum tenens is a Latin phrase which means place-holder. In the Church system the Locum tenens is a person who temporarily fulfills the duties of the Patriarch until the election of a new Patriarch.
- 12 “Spasavor Avedis Erusaghēmi Vank’ēn Vedarwats,” [Servant Avedis Expelled from the Monastery] *Jamanag*, November 11, 1908, # 13, p.2. “Be-mahane ha-armeni,” [in the Armenian Camp] *Hazevi*, November 23, 1908, #38, p.2.
- 13 Father Vertanes and Father Karekin to the Chairman of the ANA Torkomian Effendi, November 7, 1908, a copy of the letter appears in the minutes of the ANA. See *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist Ĕ [Session VII], November 7, 1908, p.79.
- 14 See *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist Ĕ [Session VII], November 7, 1908, p.80.
- 15 See *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist T’

- [Session IX], November 21, 1908, pp.121-127.
- 16 See *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist Zh [Session X], December 5, 1908.
 - 17 From Patriarch Haroutiune to Madteos II Izmirliyan Patriarch of Istanbul, 1 December 1908, # 157. A copy of the letter appears in *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist ZhG [Session XIII], 26 of December, 1908, p.183. This caused confusion in the meeting because, in his previous letters, Patriarch Haroutiun had expressed apprehension about Archbishops Kevork Yeritzian, but was now advocating his return. See also his additional telegram to the Assembly in which he asking to the rapid return of Archbishop Kevork and Father Ghevont. See Patrik Artin to Milleti Meclis Umumiyesi Reisi Minas Ceraz (1 Kanun Sani, 1324) [14 January 1909] A copy of the Telegraph appears in *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist ZhD [Session XVI], 16 of January, 1909, p.201.
 - 18 On the letters see *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist ZhZ [Session XVI], 13 February, 1909, pp.230-31.
 - 19 Ibid., p.231.
 - 20 For the report see *Teghekagir Erusaghēmi Hashuots 'K'nnich' Khorhraranakan Handnazhohovoy, matuts' uats Azgayin Eresp'. Zhoghovin :1909 Mayis 22i IA nistin* (K. Polis : Tpagr. H. Asaturean ew Ordik', 1909).
 - 21 Before the report came out, Father Ghevont sent a series of letters to the Assembly asking them for a copy of the report before it was published in order to make the necessary comments. The ANA refused to give him a copy. Father Ghevont in December 1908 published a booklet in which he refuted the accusations made by the ANA against his conduct in Jerusalem. Father Ghevont Maksoudian, *Erusaghēmi Khndirē* [The Problem of Jerusalem], Vol. I (Istanbul: Z.N.Berberian Press, 1908).
 - 22 *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist IB [Session XXII], June 5, 1909, p.361.
 - 23 See "Teghekagir Erusaghēmi S. Patriark' in dēm Eghadz Ambastanut' iants' K'nnich' Khorhraranakan Hants'nazhohowoy" in *Azgayin Ĕndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist IZ [Session XXVI], July 17, 1909, pp.434-437.
 - 24 For a complete biography of Patriarch Turian see Arch.Torkom Koushagian, *Eghishe Patriark' Durean* [Patriarch Yeghishe Turian] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1932)
 - 25 In the Ottoman Empire it was the Sultan who confirmed the elections of the heads of the millets.
 - 26 "Palestine," *The Jewish Chronicle*, October 16,1908, #2063, p.10.
 - 27 For the letters sent to the Hahambashi see HM2 8639; HM2 8640; HM2 8641 in The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Jerusalem (CAHJP).
 - 28 "Turkey: The Chief Rabbinate in the Empire," *The Jewish Chronicle*, 4 September, 1908, # 2057, p.9.
 - 29 Nahum to J. Bigart, (Constantinople, 6 September 1908) AAIU, Turkey, XXX E in Esther Benbassa (ed.) *Haim Nahum: A Sephardic Chief Rabbi in Politics, 1892-1923*. Translated from French by Miriam Kochan (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995), p.146.
 - 30 On the struggles in Damascus before and after the revolution see Yaron Harel, *Ben tekhakhim le-mahapekhah : minui rabanim rashiyim ve-hadahatam bi-kehilot Bagdad, Damesek ve-Haleb, 1744-1914*, (Between Intrigues and Revolution: The Appointment and Dismissal of Chief Rabbis in Baghdad, Damascus, and Aleppo 1744-1914) (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish Communities in the East, 2007), pp.231-35. On the situation of the Jews in Baghdad after the revolution see Ibid., pp.306-327.
 - 31 Rabbi Panigel was appointed provisionally and charged with convening an assembly of the heads of the community to plan elections in Rishon Le Zion within three month.
 - 32 "Las Komonidhadhis Israelitas de la Proviñsiya: Yeruśalaym, Damasko y Sayda" *El-Tiempo*, September 4, 1908, # 104, p.1194.
 - 33 On Rabbi Elyashar see Moshe David Gaon, *Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el* [The Oriental Jews in Eretz Israel] (Jerusalem: Azriel Press, 1935), pp.61-68. On the struggles over the Jerusalem Rabbinate in general see Rakhel Shar'avi, "Ha-ma'vakim 'al ha-rabbanut ha-sefaradit ve-nose ha-mishra, 1906-1914,"[The struggles over the Sephardic Rabbinate and the subject of the position, 1906-1914] *Katedra*, 37, 1985, pp.106-112; Avraham Haim, "Ha-hakham bashi shel Kushta ve milhemet ha-rabanut' be-yerushalayim," [The Chief Rabbi of Istanbul and the 'Rabbinical Warfare' in Jerusalem] *Pe'amim*, 12:1982, pp. 105-113.
 - 34 On Rabbi Elyashar see Moshe David Gaon,

- Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el* [The Oriental Jews in Eretz Israel] (Jerusalem: Azriel Press, 1935), pp.61-68. On the struggles in general see Shar'avi, "Ha-ma'vakim 'al ha-rabanut ha-sefaradit venose ha-mishra, 1906-1914," pp.106-112; Haim, "Ha-hakham bashi shel Kushta ve milhemet ha-rabanut' be-yerushalayim," pp. 105-113.
- 35 On Haim Moshe Alisher See, Gaon, *Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el*, pp.59-60.
- 36 On Yaacov Meir see Gaon, *Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el*, pp.361-371; idem, "Rabbi Jacob Meir," *Le Judaisme Sepharadi*, VIII (June, 1939), pp.81-83.
- 37 On Antebi and the role of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in Palestine during that period see Lucien Lazare, "L'Alliance Israélite Universelle en Palestine à l'époque de la révolution des "Jeunes Turcs" et sa Mission en Orient du 29 October 1908 au 19 Janvier 1909," in *Revue des Études Juives*, CXXXVIII (3-4), juill.-déc. 1979, pp.307-335.
- 38 Alimelekh was the editor of the Ladino newspaper *El-Liberal*, published in Palestine which had an anti-Panigel policy. See for example, "E't le-davar: La Kestyon del Gran Rabino de Yerušalayim," *El-Liberal*, March 19, 1908, #14, pp.1-3.
- 39 On Elyahu Panigel see Gaon, *Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el*, pp.527-30.
- 40 See Isaiah Friedman, "Hivrat "Ezra", Mesrad ha-huts ha-germani ve-ha-pulmus 'im ha-tzionim 1901-1918," [Ezra Society, the Foreign Ministry of Germany and the Polemics with the Zionists] *Katedra*, 20, July 1981, pp.97-122.
- 41 There is some debate over why the Ashkenazi community did not participate. Some argue that Albert Antebi had influence over the Paşa and prevented them from participating.
- 42 On the 10th of July 1907 Ekrem Bey the governor of Jerusalem sent a letter to the Grand Vezir in Istanbul expressing the opinion that Yaacov Meir "is not worthy to be appointed as Rabbi through general elections and with the aid of seditious activities of the mentioned Antebi." Ekrem Bey to the Grand Vezir, July 13, 1907 document #13 in David Kushner, *Moshel hayiti be-Yerushalayim: ha-'ir yeha-maḥoz be-'enay shel 'Ali Ekrem Bai : 1906-1908* [A governor in Jerusalem: The City and Province in the eyes of Ali Ekrem Bey-1906-1908] (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben Zvi, 1995), p.97. On Ekrem's point of view about the elections of 1907 see in the same document #14, pp.98-100.
- 43 Shar'avi, "Ha-ma'vakim 'al ha-rabbanut ha-sefaradit venose ha-mishra, 1906-1914," p.109.
- 44 On the relationship of Rabbi Panigel with Ezra see "Le-she'elat bekhirat hahambashi leyerushalayim," [on the question of electing a Chief Rabbi for Jerusalem] *Havazelet*, December 28, 1908, #36, p.1.
- 45 See "La Kestyon Rabinika en Yerushalayim," *El-Tiempo*, November 11, 1908, #16, pp.148-149.
- 46 "Hezkiya Shabatai," Hazevi, December 13, 1908, #51, p.2. "Yeushalayim," *Havazelet*, December 9, 1908, #28, p.1.
- 47 "Yeushalayim," *Havazelet*, January 20, 1909, #46, p.1; "Yeushalayim," *Havazelet*, January 25 1909, #48, p.2.
- 48 "Yeushalayim," *Havazelet*, February 17, 1909, #58, p.1; "Yerushalayim," *El-Liberal*, February 19, 1908, # 7, p.2. On his life see *Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el*, pp.141-142.
- 49 On Rabbi Franco see Gaon, *Yehudei ha-Mizrah be-Erets Yiśra'el*, pp.567-568.
- 50 See Sir Anton Bertram and Harry Charles, *Report of the Commission Appointed by the Government of Palestine to Inquire into the Affairs of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem* (Humphrey Milford: Oxford University Press, 1921) Derek Hopwood, *Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine, 1843-1914; Church and Politics in the Near East* (Oxford, Clarendon P., 1969); Itamar Katz and Ruth Kark, 'The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and its congregation: dissent over real estate' in *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 37 (2005), pp. 509–534; Vatikiotis, P. J. (1994) 'The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 30:4, pp.916 – 929; Richard Clogg, "The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols., ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982), 1:185.
- 51 See Khalil al-Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini: Nuyork, Sultanah, al-Quds* [The Diaries of Khalil Sakakini: Volume one: New York, Sultana, Jerusalem, 1907-1912] (Ramallah and Jerusalem: Khalil Sakakini Cultura Center and The Institute of Jerusalem Studies, 2003)
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 291.

- 53 Damianos was the 132nd Patriarch of Jerusalem. He was born and educated in the Island of Samos. He was elected as Patriarch by the Holy Synod in July 1897. Previously he had been the Titular Archbishop of Philadelphia (Rabbath Ammon). Archdeacon Dowling, *The Patriarchate of Jerusalem* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. 1909), p.17.
- 54 al-Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini*, p.298. On these demands see Meletios Metaxakis, *Les Exigences des Orthodoxes Arabophones de Palestine* (Constantinople, Impr. Aristovoulos, Anastassiadès, 1909)
- 55 al-Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini*, p. 291.
- 56 Ibid., p. 304.
- 57 Sir Anton Bertram and Harry Charles Luke, *Report of the Commission Appointed by the Government of Palestine to Inquire into the Affairs of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), p.252; al-Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini*, p. 320.
- 58 Bertram and Young, *Report of the Commission Appointed by the Government of Palestine to Inquire into the Affairs of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem*, p.252.
- 59 al-Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini*, p. 342.
- 60 Bertram and Young, *Report of the Commission Appointed by the Government of Palestine to Inquire into the Affairs of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem*, p.253.
- 61 Ibid., p. 255.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Meletios Metaxakis was born in Crete in 1871 and went to Jerusalem in 1889. He was ordained as a deacon in 1892 under Patriarch Damianos and serves as under-secretary and chief secretary at the Holy Sepulchre.
- 64 Ibid., p.256.
- 65 Ibid., p.257.
- 66 Ibid., p. 258.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Ibid., pp.260-61.
- 69 Ibid., p.264.
- 70 For the full demands and the answer of the government as well as the also supplementary demands. See Ibid., pp. 265-69.