

2012

Formation of Public Sphere(s) in the Aftermath of the 1908 Revolution among Armenians, Arabs, and Jews

Bedross Der Matossian

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, bdermatossian2@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/historyfacpub>

 Part of the [European History Commons](#), [Islamic World and Near East History Commons](#), [Jewish Studies Commons](#), [Military History Commons](#), [Political History Commons](#), [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#), and the [Social History Commons](#)

Der Matossian, Bedross, "Formation of Public Sphere(s) in the Aftermath of the 1908 Revolution among Armenians, Arabs, and Jews" (2012). *Faculty Publications, Department of History*. 186.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/historyfacpub/186>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the History, Department of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications, Department of History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Bedross Der MATOSSIAN

FORMATION OF PUBLIC SPHERE(S) IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE 1908 REVOLUTION AMONG ARMENIANS, ARABS, AND JEWS

Revolutionary theories are most useful when they attempt to define and interpret the causes and mechanisms of revolutions. However, when they attempt to forecast the outcomes and the impact of revolutions on their indigenous societies, they are largely unsuccessful. This article deals with the impact of the Young Turk revolution on three non-dominant ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Arabs, and Jews. It will argue that the revolution resulted in the creation of a multiplicity of public spheres among the ethnic groups.¹ This multiplicity of public spheres became the main medium through which these ethnic groups internalized the Young Turk revolution. In the case of the Armenians and the Jews, these public spheres resulted in the occurrence of micro-revolutions, whereas in the Arab case it led to the erosion of social and political stability. Nevertheless, these various subordinate public spheres cannot be viewed in isolation from one another. They were interconnected and influenced each other both directly and indirectly. Moreover, within these interconnected public spheres, new actors emerged, threatening the social and political stability of the existing orders not only to (re)define their identities in the post-revolutionary period by inventing their own *ancien régimes*, victories, and new orders, but more importantly by competing against each other over control of existing positions of power, and in some cases, creating new ones. We will notice that in ethnic groups where power was centralized, the revolution was more successful than

¹ For a theoretical discussion of public sphere(s) after the 1908 revolution see Bedross Der Matossian, "Ethnic Politics in Post-Revolutionary Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Arabs, and Jews during the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1909)," (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2008), pp. 55-65.

those where power was decentralized. Furthermore, this paper will argue that ecclesiastic politics, a subject that is totally marginalized within the Ottoman historiography of the Young Turk revolution, was a crucial factor in defining the intra-ethnic politics in the newly emerging subordinate public spheres.

The Public Sphere and the Ottoman Empire

The history of the notion of the public sphere in the Ottoman Empire has yet to be written, and this article does not undertake that task. The notion of public sphere within the context of the Ottoman Empire, Middle East, and Muslim world still remains in its infancy.² Of course, the public sphere, both in its pre-modern and modern forms, existed in the Ottoman Empire.³ However, it had a different background, and different factors affected it than in the European milieu. Autonomous institutions that did not exist in the European milieu functioned as the ultimate mediums for the creation of a pre-modern public sphere in the Ottoman context. For example, in the 17th and the 18th centuries *waqfs* constituted important elements of the public sphere and of social organization that gave substance to civil society in the Ottoman Empire. Haim Gerber argues that the *waqf* institution was so pervasive in the Ottoman society “that one is almost tempted to view it as a key institution in the way the cockfight was seen by Geertz to be a key institution in Balinese society.”⁴

As a result of modern urban development, the public sphere began to enter into its modern form. Spurred by the development of peripheral capitalism and the opening of urban spaces in the form of public squares, gardens, and wider roads, and accompanied by the proliferation of cafés, associations, theatres, and scientific and literary societies, literary public

² See Miriam Hoexter, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, and Nehemia Levtzion (eds.) *The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies*. (Albany: State University of New York Press; Jerusalem: Van Leer Jerusalem Institution, 2002). See also by Dale F. Eickelman & Armando Salvatore, “The Public Sphere and Muslim identities,”; Srirupa Roy, “Seeing a State: National Commemorations and the Public Sphere in India and Turkey,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, issue I: 48, (2006): 200-232.

³ Harold Mah, “Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 72, No.1, New York on the Old Regime and the French Revolution: A special Issue in Honor of Francois Furet (Mar., 2000), p.165.

⁴ Haim Gerber, “The Public Sphere and Civil Society in the Ottoman Empire,” in Miriam Hoexter, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, and Nehemia Levtzion (eds.), *Public Sphere in Muslims Societies*, p. 75.

spheres were formed in the Empire. However, the main factor that led to their proliferation in the Empire during the 19th century was the press in general, and newspapers in particular.⁵ This was especially evident among Armenians, Jews, and Greeks. The official Ottoman press began to be published in the 19th century and was followed by the emergence of the private press. The transformation of the literary public spheres into political public spheres in the modern sense took place in the second half of the 19th century, reaching its peak with the promulgation of the Ottoman constitution in 1876.⁶ In fact, the creation of private press and the proliferation of the ethnic press in the second half of the 19th century further developed the notion of multiple public spheres as opposed to the public sphere dominated by the Ottoman ruling elite. Hence, public spheres already existed among the ethnic groups in the first half of the 19th century.

In 1878, however, Sultan Abdülhamid dissolved the Ottoman parliament and derailed the constitution, thereby putting an end to the political public sphere. He also established one of the most sophisticated spying systems in the history of the Ottoman Empire. As a result, by the beginning of the 1880s, the journalistic activities of the ethnic groups shifted west, from Lebanon, Syria, and Anatolia, to European cities and Egypt. Here an exilic public sphere was established in which exiles of different ethnic backgrounds expressed their political views, discussed their projects for the Empire, interacted with each other, and attempted to mobilize their host governments by using various means of expression, from exilic media to public gatherings and discussion.⁷

After the Young Turk revolution of 1908, this exilic public sphere was transformed into a homeland public sphere. The revolution allowed for an immediate boom in serial publications of different ethnic groups in the Empire.⁸ It is worth recalling that in the span of three decades, the

⁵ See Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁶ Notice that for different ethnic groups the emergence of the political public sphere took place in different periods of the 19th century.

⁷ The periodicals *Pro-Armenia*, *Meşveret*, *Şura-yi Ümmet*, and *al-Muqattam* could be regarded as the best example of such a tool.

⁸ The best study on the post-revolutionary press is that of Palmira Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000). Despite the fact that it concentrates more on the satirical press during the post-revolutionary period, mainly in the Ottoman press, it still provides important information on political discourse in the Ottoman press from the Turkish perspective. The same kind of work needs to be undertaken on the ethnic press.

educational institutions within the Ottoman Empire advanced tremendously.⁹ Thus, when the revolution took place, a whole new educated class was ready to elaborate its significance, implications, and reverberations. In the two years after the revolution, censorship was nonexistent. In the first year alone, about two hundred periodicals were published in Istanbul.¹⁰

The Armenian Public Sphere and the Micro-Revolution of 1908

The public sphere that was developed among Armenians of the Empire after the 1908 revolution caused major changes in the dynamics of power of the Armenian *millet* of the Empire. It resulted in the change of the leadership and the transfer of the center of power from the Armenian Patriarchate to the Armenian National Assembly (ANA). The downfall of Patriarch Maghakia Ormanian represented the downfall of the Armenian *ancien régime* and the beginning of a new era. Armenians, more than the Jews and Greeks of the Empire, internalized the Young Turk revolution by creating their own *ancien régime* and their own victory.

The Young Turk revolution became a milestone in defining intra-ethnic relationships in the Armenian *millet* of the Empire. It resulted in a micro-revolution, culminating in the reinstatement of the Armenian National Constitution, the (re)opening of the Armenian National Assembly, and the election of Madteos III Izmirliyan as Patriarch. I refer to this as a micro-revolution because of its resemblance to the changes taking place within the Empire. However, the Armenian micro-revolution eliminated competing centers of power more successfully than did the Young Turk revolution. It was able to get rid of Patriarch Ormanian, whose “regime was nothing else except a miniature of the Ottoman *ancien régime* in the national arena.”¹¹ This is because whereas the *ancien*

⁹ See Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire: 1839-1908 Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001) and Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, Education and the State in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹⁰ For example, during the first two years after the revolution about 79 new Armenian newspapers were published in the Ottoman Empire: 49 in Istanbul, 8 in Van, 6 in Izmir and the rest in Diyarbakir, Erzinjan, Trebizond, Erzerum and Sivas. Amalya Kirakosian, *Hay Barperagan Mamuli Madenakruitun (1794-1967)* [The Literature of the Armenian Periodical Press] (Yerevan, 1970), pp. 488-489.

¹¹ Dikran Aslanian, “Hosank’ner ew Nerhosank’ner,” [Currents and Undercurrents] *Puzantion*, August 22, 1908, #3610, p. 1.

régime of the Ottoman Empire during the post-revolutionary period was embodied in the Yıldız clique, which managed “to deceive the Sultan for 30 years,” the Armenian *ancien régime* was embodied in one person: Patriarch Ormanian. Immediately after the Young Turk revolution, Patriarch Ormanian resigned.

The Downfall of Ormanian: The Armenian ancien régime as a spectacle of humiliation

While his opponents protested outside, Ormanian appeared before the mixed council of the ANA chaired by Kapriel Effendi Noradounghian to submit his resignation.¹² After long deliberations, it was accepted and Archbishop Yeghishe Tourian was chosen as the *locum tenens* of the Armenian Patriarch. Part of Ormanian’s resignation letter read:

National affairs, after so many years of difficulties, are now in such a condition, that they need to be ordered according to the national constitution, which contrary to different difficulties, I am happy to remit today to my beloved nation. Hence, with a willing heart I come to declare that from this moment on consider me free from the obligation of my duty, let us move to choose a *locum tenens*, and take all of that in a proper way to the General Assembly tribunal.¹³

However, things did not end there. Immediately after the resignation, rumors spread in the capital that ex-Patriarch Ormanian had appropriated 30,000 gold pieces from the Patriarchate finances and was planning to abscond. The rumor caused much agitation among the population of the capital. On the 7th of August, 1908, people gathered in the streets of Eter and Valideçeşme near Ormanian’s residence and demanded that he go to the Patriarchate in order to account for his actions. The demonstrators threatened that if he refused, they would take him by force. Ormanian left his residence in a carriage surrounded by policemen and headed towards the Ministry of Police. The crowd followed shouting and cursing Ormanian and demanding that he be taken to the Patriarchate. In the end, the masses succeeded in taking over his carriage and taking him to the Patriarchate. Ormanian became the ultimate spectacle of humiliation.¹⁴ More-

¹² “Örmanean Herazharet’s‘uts‘wadz,” [Ormanian forced to resign] *Arevelk*, July 29, 1908, #6850, p.1.

¹³ Maghakia Arkebisgobos Ormanean, *Hishatakagir Erkotasnamya Patriark‘ut‘ean* [Memoir of the twelve years in the post of Patriarch] Part II, (Istanbul: V and H. Der Nersissian Press, 1910), p. 171.

¹⁴ Puzant Kecheyan vehemently criticized the humiliation of Ormanian which was the

over, this procession of public humiliation represented the humiliation of the *ancien régime*. The *ancien régime* had to be dragged in the streets, humiliated and scolded, in order to fulfill the aim of the revolution. The *Levant Herald* reported that at Kum-Kapu “the mob was unmanageable and the ex-Patriarch would probably have been lynched but for the timely intervention of the police.”¹⁵

In many parts of the provinces, local prelates were dismissed by the local Armenian population. For example, in Harput the Armenian population succeeded in dismissing the Armenian Bishop.¹⁶ In Diyarbakir the local prelate, Father Yezegel, escaped along with his mother, uncle, servant and four soldiers leaving behind “the anger and the dismay of the community.”¹⁷ The downfall of Ormanian’s regime was finalized by the (re)election of Archbishop Madteos Izmirliyan on November 4, as Patriarch of Istanbul.¹⁸

The Reinstatement of the Armenian National Constitution and the Armenian National Assembly

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. Scholars tend to reconstruct the history of the Armenians in the post-revolutionary period through the prism of Armenian political parties, whose role in the political process has been over-emphasized. The Armenian National Assembly contained most of the prominent Armenian clerical and lay figures in the Empire.

“result of an erroneous understanding of freedom.” Puzant Kecheyan, “Azat Azgin P’ark’n ir Ōrinapahu’tiwnn ē,” [The glory of a free nation is in its preserving the law], *Puzantion*, August 11, 1908, #3600, p. 1.

¹⁵ “The ex-Armenian Patriarch,” August 8th, 1908, *The Levant Herald and Eastern Express*, p. 2; See also “Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey- (Received August 17), Therapia, August 11, 1908” in “Correspondence respecting the Constitutional Movement in Turkey, 1908,” *Parliamentary Papers*, 1909, p. 53.

¹⁶ “Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey- (Received September 26), Therapia, September 20, 1908” in “Correspondence respecting the Constitutional Movement in Turkey, 1908,” *Parliamentary Papers*, 1909, p. 88; “Kharberdi aṛaḥ’nort’ē” [The Prelate of Harput] *Puzantion*, September 26, 1908, #3639, p. 3.

¹⁷ “Tigranakert,” *Arevelk*, October 7, 1908, #6907, p. 3.

¹⁸ “Amen T.T. Matt’ēos Izmirliyan Verēntṛwadz Patriark’ T’urk’yo Hayots’,” [His Beatitute Madteos Izmirliyan re-elected as Patriarch of Armenians of Turkey] *Arevelk*, November 5, 1908, #, p. 6932, p. 1; *Azgayin Ėndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist E [Session V], October 22, 1908.

This included members of the Armenian political parties,¹⁹ Armenian members of Ottoman parliament,²⁰ and representatives of different Armenian societies. The Assembly should therefore be regarded as the center for the Armenian policy making. An examination of the debates in the Assembly sheds new light on the position of the Armenian leadership from the post-revolutionary period until the counter-revolution. In fact, when one examines the 25 sessions of the Armenian National Assembly from 1908-1909, one notices that utmost importance was given to the Armenian constitution. Constitutionalism became a key factor upon which the affairs of the community were administered. The Armenian National Constitution was even above the highest Armenian cleric, i.e., the Patriarch. The National Assembly became a mini-parliament which discouraged partisanship (at least in its earlier stages) and advocated loyalty to the Empire. When chosen as the President of the Parliament, Minas Cheraz made the following statement:

Delegate Reverends and Gentlemen, thanks to the reinstatement of the Ottoman constitution, the Armenian constitution, which has been paralyzed by despotism for years, was also reinstated. The rebirth of both constitutions is equally happy occasion for us, because, if it is the call of the Ottoman constitution to administer the affairs of the country according to the principles of justice, it is also the call of the Armenian constitution to administer its national affairs according to the principles of justice-principles whose anchor is the popular right [*zhjoghovrdayin iravunkē*] or, according to an old expression “the voice of many, the voice of God,” [*tsayn bazmats’ tsayn astutzoy*].²¹

Three main issues characterized the debates in the Armenian National Assembly during this period: the formation of an investigation commission to investigate ex-Patriarch Ormanian, the issue of the provinces, and the question of Jerusalem. Among these three, the issue of the Eastern provinces occupied a central place in the Armenian public sphere after the revolution until World War I.²²

¹⁹ This included members of the Dashnak party (Shahrigian, Vartkes, Khagam, Veramian, Dr. Paşayan), Ramgavar party (Hayg Hojasarian, Vahan Tekeyan) and the Hunchak party (H. Cihangulian, Murad, Zakarian, Hemayag Aramians (ed. Of Gohag).

²⁰ This included Bedros Haladjian, Krikor Zohrab, Haroutiun Shahrigian, Nazaret DagHAVarian, Hampartsum Boyadjian.

²¹ See *Azgayin Ėndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist B[Session II], October 10, 1908, p. 15.

²² For the commission to investigate ex-Patriarch Ormanian and the question of Jerusalem see Bedross Der Matossian, “Ethnic Politics in Post-Revolutionary Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Arabs, and Jews during the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1909),” pp. 209-210; 215-223.

The Issue of the Eastern Provinces

One of the major issues that the developing Armenian public sphere had to deal with was the issue of the Eastern provinces. The issue was very dominant both within the Armenian press and the Armenian National Assembly. This despite the fact that in some places in the Eastern provinces the constitution prevailed two to three months after its proclamation, in other areas the *ancien régime* continued to rule. For example, the declaration of the constitution did not bring about reform in Mush. On the contrary, the Hamidiye Regiments and the Kurdish *Ashirets* oppressed the population there. Kassim Bey tyrannized the Armenians and collected taxes from them using oppressive methods.²³ The case of Mush attracted much attention in the Armenian press.²⁴ Another case that covered the pages of the Armenian press was the situation in Khenus, where the *Zabtiye* and the local Kurdish tribes harassed and oppressed the Armenians.²⁵

The condition of the provinces was discussed in depth in the Armenian National Assembly. In one of the sessions the Armenian deputy, Krikor Zohrab, proposed that a government investigation commission be sent to the provinces to examine the situation. It was decided that the task of preparing a bill for the investigation commission to be presented to the National Assembly would be given to the Assembly's Political Council. On October 17, the bill was submitted to the Armenian National Assembly, and Zohrab read it on behalf of the Political council. The bill recommended that the government send an investigation commission to the provinces, and, to this end, an official delegation headed by the *locum tenens* was to pay an official visit to the Grand Vezir Kâmil

²³ "Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey- (Received September 7), Therapia, September 1, 1908" in "Correspondence respecting the Constitutional Movement in Turkey, 1908," *Parliamentary Papers*, 1909, p. 80.

²⁴ In his newspaper *Arvelk*, Yervant Sermakeshkanlian wrote a long editorial entitled "Come and Help Us!: The Mush Plain is Ending." The subtitle of the article was "hunger as a food and nakedness as a shirt." Yervant Sermakeshkanlian, "Öğnut'ean hasêk': Mushi Dashtë gë lmenay," ["Come and Help Us!: The Mush Plain is Ending"] *Arvelk*, September 30, 1908, #6901, p. 1. See also Dickran Varjabedian, "Mushê Sovamah" [Mush starved] *Arvelk*, October 20, 1908, #6918, p. 3; Kevork Marzbeduni, "Tanjank'i Vayrên," [From the Place of Torment] *Arvelk*, November 5, 1908, #6932, p. 2.

²⁵ "Bats' Namak," [An open letter] *Arvelk*, September 17, 1908, #6891, p. 1; "Harstaharut'iants' Lurer Gavarên: Khenus," [News of Oppression from the Provinces: Khenus] *Arvelk*, October 2, 1908, #6903, p. 3; "Gavarakan K'ronik: Aghekêz Koch' Mē," *Arvelk*, October 7, 1908, #6907, pp. 2-3; "Bats' Namag Khenusi Gavarên," [An open letter from the province of Khenus] *Arvelk*, October 22, 1908, #6920, pp. 1-2.

Paşa.²⁶ It also recommended that the commission consist of honorable, honest, and liberal men of different nationalities under the authority of a *Vezir* or a *Mushir* who had not participated in the previous regime and who enjoyed public trust. After a long debate, a delegation was formed and paid a visit to the Grand Vezir. The Grand Vezir Kâmil Paşa promised that the necessary steps would be taken on the issue of the provinces but also emphasized the fact that the government was currently preoccupied with the issue of Rumeli.

A couple of months later, the issue of the provinces appeared on the agenda of the Armenian National Assembly again when some deputies inquired as to what happened to the report (*takrir*) that was presented to the government. Others argued that a new memorandum should be sent to the government. While Zohrab and Haladjian Effendis argued that the Armenian deputies in the Ottoman Parliament were already working in that direction and there was no need for a new report, others, like DagHAVARIAN Effendi, insisted that it was extremely important to formulate a new one. Boyadjian argued that the government had too many problems to contend with and that there was no need to burden it with a new problem. He continued:

When the proposal of sending an investigation commission was presented [to the government], they [the government] told us that no benefit would come from sending investigators, when the rulers of the country were not good people, and if the governors did not pursue the implementation of basic reforms. Be sure that implementing the means of reform in all the Ottoman provinces and Armenia are being thought of. Taking all of this into consideration, I would ask that the Armenian delegates to the Ottoman parliament stay out of the commission that is going to be formed.²⁷

Indeed, most of the Armenian Ottoman members of parliament in the Armenian National Assembly were very protective of the Ottoman parliament. The Assembly formed a committee to examine the necessity of sending a commission or not. While the debates about the condition of the provinces were taking place, the counter-revolution and the Adana massacres occurred and became a central subject in the post-counter-revolution debates in the Assembly.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44; "Hayots' Patgamavornerë B. Deran Mëch," [The Armenian Delegates in the Sublime Porte] *Jamanag*, October 5, 1908, #7, p. 2.

²⁷ See *Azgayin Ėndhanur Zhoghov*, Nist ZhĖ [Session XVII], February 27, 1909, p. 257.

Armenian Political Parties in the Post-Revolutionary Period

The public sphere created after the Young Turk revolution opened the way for the Armenian political parties who were active in exile to return to the Empire. It is important to mention that some of these political parties had already had branches in the provinces, but all of them were underground and were considered by the government as illegal clandestine revolutionary groups that aimed at “destabilizing the serenity and peace of the Empire.” Their activities in the Empire were characterized as propagating revolutionary propaganda in the provinces, defending Armenian areas from Kurdish encroachments, and initiating sporadic attacks on the Turkish troops. After the revolution these parties became legitimate groups whose focus became politics rather than armed struggle. Most of the political prisoners were released from the prisons, and the revolutionary groups handed in their weapons.²⁸ Thus, the revolution transformed these groups from revolutionary groups to political groups. However, the public sphere in which these groups acted would also contribute to a fierce and sometimes bloody competition between these groups over controlling intra-communal public opinion and the right to represent the Armenian nation. The center of activity of the revolutionary groups became Istanbul, from where orders were given to the provinces.²⁹

Immediately after the revolution, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (A.R.F, Dashnaks) members in exile arrived in Istanbul, including Aknuni (Khachadur Maloumian), H. Shahrigian, Hrachya Tiryanian, H. Kalfayan, poets Siamanto, Daniel Varoujan, R. Zartarian, and Dr. G. Pashayan, among many others. The Dashnaks established their office on Sakız Ağac street # 51, and Aknuni became the president of the Responsible Body [*Pataskhanatu Marmin*] that would oversee its activities in the Empire.³⁰ The Responsible Body began to organize a series of lectures in order to enlighten the public on the political and economic dimensions of the political system that the party was envi-

²⁸ See “Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey- (Received October 19), Therapia, October 9, 1908” in “Correspondence respecting the Constitutional Movement in Turkey, 1908,” *Parliamentary Papers*, 1909, p. 97.

²⁹ On the activities of the A.R.F in the provinces see Dikran Kaligian, “The Armenian Revolutionary Federation under the Ottoman Rule 1908-1914,” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Boston University, 2004).

³⁰ On the structure of the A.R.F see Hrach Dasnabedian, *H.H.Dashnaks'ut'ean Kazmakerpakan Karuyt'i Holovuyt'ē* [The Evolution of the Organizational Structure of the A.R.F] (Beirut: Hamazgayin Vahe Setian Press, 1985).

sioning.³¹ The main policies of the party were to cooperate with the Ittihadists for the preservation and the protection of the constitutional regime, to re-establish all the branches of the party in the provinces,³² to create a powerful bloc in the Parliament, to return confiscated land, and to gradually implement a basic administrative-cultural decentralization. In the first public address of the A.R.F in Galata on the 23rd of August 1908, Aknuni explained the party line to a capacity crowd:

Compatriots, You are not Ottoman subjects anymore, rather you are free Ottoman citizens. You can be sure for the eternity of your freedom, there is not any fear of the reinstatement of the previous regime. The aim of Dashnaksutiun became to create this freedom in despotic Turkey. From now on, its effort will be to preserve and spread this freedom at any cost: with canon, swords, arms, and powder. The different elements which cooperated with the Dashnaksutiun at the Paris Congress agree to this idea. Dashnaksutiun will seek to create for Turkey a free federated state on the basis of the principle of co-existential equality, whose different parts, being autonomous, will be supporters of the Ottoman Fatherland.³³

As part of its activity in the provinces, the party decided to establish new newspapers in Van, Erzurum, and Harput that would be their semi-official organs. It even suggested the creation of a French-language newspaper in Istanbul under the editorship of Pierre Quillard, the editor of *Pro-Armenia*. However, the party postponed establishing its official organ in the Empire until June, 1909, when it established *Azadamard*, which became the official organ of the A.R.F under the editorship of Rupen Zartarian.

The Young Turk revolution presented a major challenge to the Armenian revolutionary groups in the provinces. It created a class of revolutionaries whose existence became an “unnecessary thing, a rusted rifle left in a dark corner,”³⁴ because the revolution had already been achieved.

³¹ On the platform of the A.R.F see “Dzragir H.H. Dashnaks‘ut‘ean,” [Platform of the A.R.F] *Arevelk*, September 18, 1908, #6892, p. 1-2. Part II of which appeared in “Dzragir H.H. Dashnaks‘ut‘ean,” [Platform of the A.R.F] *Arevelk*, September 19, 1908, #6893, pp. 1-2.

³² See Circular of the A.R.F Responsible Body, Istanbul (August 3, 1908) sent to all the provinces regarding the necessity of reorganizing all the committees and branches. “Shrch‘aberkanner H.H. Dashnaks‘ut‘ean III,” [Circular of the A.R. Federation] *Droshak*, August 1908, No. 8 (196), p. 124.

³³ “H.H. Dashnaks‘ut‘ean A. Hraparakhosut‘iwnē,” [The First Public Address of the A.R.F] *Arevelk*, August 24, 1908, #6871, p. 3.

³⁴ Roupen Ter Minassian, *Hay Heghap‘okhakani mē Hishataknerē* [Memoirs of an Armenian Revolutionary] Second Edition. Vol. V (Beirut: Hamazkain Press, 1977), p. 56.

A glimpse of this condition is provided by Rupen, who observed the crisis happening among these revolutionaries after the revolution.³⁵ The Ittihadists argued that now that the constitution had been reinstated and freedom proclaimed there was no need for revolutionary groups. They should either be disarmed or enter into the ranks of the Ottoman army, as did Enver and Niyazi.³⁶ This crisis was also reflected in the relationship between the Responsible Body sitting in Istanbul and the revolutionaries in the provinces. While the leadership in Istanbul, most of whom came from abroad, was positive about the situation, the leaders in the provinces were highly pessimistic about it. On August 8, 1908, representatives of the A.R.F from the six provinces in Anatolia convened a Regional Meeting that took place in Mush to discuss the post-revolutionary situation. The basic issues discussed in the meeting were:

- 1) What will the situation and the role of the *fedayees* be from now on?
- 2) In what way do they need to organize?
- 3) What will the aim of organization be?
- 4) What will their relation to freedom and the constitution be?³⁷

It was decided that the *fedayees* would be turned into regular citizens and would be occupied with their professions. On the issue of internal organization, it was decided that they would widen the inner circle and enlarge the number of the members. The aim of the organization would be to introduce reforms in the Armenian provinces. However, these reforms would be successful only through education and organization of the Kurdish tribes so that they would stop being tools in the hands of the government. The meeting emphasized continuing to pursue the demands and the accomplishing of the decentralization system in the provinces.³⁸ Dajad Melkonian (Karmen) and Kegham Der Garabedian (future deputy in the Ottoman parliament from Mush), representing the Armenian revolutionaries of the Eastern provinces, presented a list of demands that became the political platform of the provinces.³⁹ According to one Armenian revolu-

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-57.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

³⁹ For the 22 demands see Ter Minassian, *Hay Heghap'okhakani mē Hishataknerē*, pp. 97-99. These demands included the return of all confiscated properties, the release of prisoners, the expulsion of the Kurdish or the Turkish refugees who had been positioned in Armenian villages, the abolition of certain taxes, the removal of the Hamidiye

tionary activist who was heavily involved in these developments, the Responsible Body was concerned that pursuing such a policy would harm their relationship with the Ittihadists and found the demands of the Regional Meeting contradictory and unrealistic.⁴⁰ In November, the members of the Regional Committee met with the members of the central committee of the A.R.F in order to ask for clarifications about the situation. Rupen argued that those who participated in the Regional Meeting of the St. Garabed were “the true masters of Dashnaktsutun, previous *fedayees*, people previously sentenced to death, previous committees who have set the foundation to continue permanently to struggle for the sake of revolution.”⁴¹ The A.R.F intensified its propaganda, particularly during the period of the elections. The Dashnaks seemed to have been in a real dilemma, and their cooperation with the Ittihadists appeared inconsistent with their platform.

The revolution also paved the way for other Armenian political groups to act in the Empire. After the revolution, the leadership of the Hunchak party returned to Istanbul and began organizing its branches in the provinces. Also among those who returned to Istanbul was Hampartsum Boyadjian (Mourad), one of the organizers of the Kum Kapu demonstration and the leader of the Sassoun uprising, and Sabah Gulian, the editor of Hunchak's organ *Henchak*.⁴² The Hunchaks had a clear-cut policy: political autonomy for Armenia within the framework of a constitutional Empire.⁴³ They were reluctant to enter into any cooperation with the Ittihadists. Upon their arrival in Istanbul, they conducted several meetings with representatives of the Ittihadists including Talat, Behaeddin, and Hagop Babigian to discuss issues pertaining to both parties, but these meetings yielded no results.⁴⁴ The two principal aims of the Hunchaks

regiments, complete decentralization of the provinces, protection of all churches properties, etc.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁴² Arsen Gidur (ed.) *Patmut'iwn S. D. Hnch'akean Kusakts'ut'ean (1887-1962)* [History of the Social Democrat Hunchak Party] Vol. I. (Beirut: Shirak Press, 1962), p. 316.

⁴³ The policy of the Hunchaks towards the Young Turks is laid out by Sabah Gulian in Sapah Gulean, *Eritasard T'urk'ia* [Young Turkey] (Paris: Publication of the Hunchakian Party, 1908); See also “Azgayin K'aghak'aganut'iwn: Hnchakean Kusakts'ut'iwnē ew ir tirkē,” [National Politics: The Hunchak Party and Its position], *Puzantion*, September 12, #3627, p. 1. This is the Part I of Sabah Gulian's speech. He was the editor of Hunchak newspaper. For Part II see “Azgayin K'aghak'aganut'iwn: Hnchakean Kusakts'ut'iwnē ew ir tirkē,” [National Politics: The Hunchak Party and Its position], *Puzantion*, September 14, #3628, p. 1.

⁴⁴ Sabah Gulean, *Pataskhanatunerē* [The Responsible (ones)] (Providence: Yeridasart Hayastan Press, 1916), pp. 230-237.

became establishing branches in the Empire and arming the people. Despite their differences, the Hunchaks and the Dashnaks entered into contact prior to the Parliamentary elections of 1908 in order to campaign on the same platform. But these meetings also did not yield any results, as the Hunchaks were very skeptical about the intentions of Dashnaktsutiun because of its close relationship with the Ittihadists. The Hunchaks were ready to cooperate and sign agreements with the Dashnaks on the condition that the latter openly declared that they had cut all their ties to the Ittihadists.⁴⁵

The other important parties that became active in the Empire were the Armenian Constitutional Democratic Party (Ramgavars), found in Alexandria in October 31, 1908 and the Veragazmial Henchak Party.⁴⁶ In its platform, the Ramgavar party propagated the people's sovereignty, affirming that all the nations constituting the Ottoman Empire should preserve their national uniqueness and the extension of responsibility [*tevsi'i mezuniyet*] in the provinces based on administrative decentralization. In addition, it demanded the abolition of the *Hamidiye* regiments and the Ashiret system as well as bringing the Beys and the Aghas under the law.⁴⁷ After the meeting, M. Damadian, K. Bozigian, L. Mgrdchian, and V. Malezian moved to Istanbul in order to establish the party's center there and to establish branches in the provinces.

The public sphere(s) developed after the 1908 revolution led to a fierce and sometimes bloody competition between these political parties, a conflict that was reflected in the partisan press, the Armenian National Assembly,⁴⁸ and in the province of Van. The Hunchaks and the Ramgavars were extremely critical of the Dashnaks' policy. In addition, they were skeptical of their relationship with the Ittihadists. After the massacres of Adana in 1909, the Dashnaks continued their close relationship with the Ittihadists. This caused considerable uproar among the Hunchaks

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

⁴⁶ The party was a conglomeration of a couple of Armenian parties: the *Veragazmial Hnchagian Gusagtsutiwn*, *Kaghaparagtsagan Miwtiwn*, previous *Armenagan* and *Miutnagan* organizations. Ardag Darpinean, *Hay Azatagrakan Sharzhman Örerên: Husher 1890 ên 1940* [From the Days of the Armenian Liberation Movement: From 1890 to 1940] Publication of the Armenian National Fund, #3, (Paris, 1947), p. 195.

⁴⁷ See The Platform of the Armenian Constitutional Democratic Party [Hay Sahmanatragan Ramgavar Gusagtsutiwn] in Darpinean, *Hay Azatagrakan Sharzhman Örerên*.

⁴⁸ This tension began over the issue of Churches being used as spaces for political activities. This was known as the Problem of Open-Closed [*bats'i gots'i khndirê*]. While the Dashnak deputies in the Armenian National Assembly advocated the use of churches as centers of political activities, Hunchaks and the Ramgavars refused to accept this.

and the Ramgavars.⁴⁹ In addition to ideological differences, the real tension among the Armenian political parties was competition over power and leadership. The revolution supported the Dashnaks, the only Armenian participant in the revolution. In addition, the inter-party tensions were nothing but the continuation of already existing tensions that were reflected in the activities of these parties in the exilic public sphere.

Public Sphere and the Jewish *Millet*: Moshe Halevi, the *banda preta* vs. Rabbi Haim Nahum

Thus it may well be said that the whole Turkish revolution is like the triumph of our ideas, ideas that are so moderate yet so liberal and solely inspired by love of the common good.⁵⁰

The impact of the Young Turk revolution on the development of the public sphere among Jews of the Empire should be analyzed from two perspectives. One perspective pertains to the micro-revolution that occurred inside the Jewish *millet*, and the other pertains to the increase in Zionist activities in Istanbul after the revolution. The public sphere(s) created after the revolution paved the way for the Jewish progressive movement in the Empire not only to start reforming its own communities but also to take an active part in the political and economic life of the Empire. However, unlike in the Armenian case in which the transition of power was relatively smooth, in the Jewish case, it was met by some resistance from people loyal to the previous order of Moshe Halevi, the *locum tenens* of the Chief Rabbinate of the Ottoman Empire.

The first task of the Jewish progressive movement was to wrest control from the hands of Moshe Halevi, who occupied the position of *locum tenens* without any formal appointment for more than 35 years and was under the influence of the *banda preta* (the black camarilla in Ladino), a

⁴⁹ Mikael Varantian, *Hay Heghap'okhakan Dashnaks'ut'ean Patmut'iwn* [History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation] (Yerevan: Publication of Yerevan University, 1992), pp. 435-436.

⁵⁰ From J. Begart the secretary-general of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* to Haim Nahum on the occasion of his election to the post of the Chief Rabbi of the Empire. (Paris, 25 January, 1909) AAIU, Register of Correspondence, S 219, 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. 154.

group of Jewish notables who controlled him.⁵¹ Their first task was to organize the secular council (*meclis-i cismani*).⁵² They therefore sent a delegation of four people to the Hahambashi demanding that he convene the General Assembly (*meclis-i umumi*), which had the authority to elect the secular council.⁵³ There were two potential candidates for the position of *locum tenens*, Rabbi Haim Nahum,⁵⁴ a close ally of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*,⁵⁵ and Rabbi Yaacov Meir, the chief Rabbi of Salonica. David Fresco, the editor of *El-Tiempo*, invited Haim Nahum to Istanbul in the name of the committee of four.⁵⁶ Moshe Halevi resigned on the August 12, 1908, and on the 17th, Haim Nahum was chosen as the *locum tenens*.⁵⁷ The government ratified the election on the August 20.⁵⁸ Despite the fact that many telegrams arrived from the provinces congratulating Haim Nahum,⁵⁹ his appointment also caused much anxiety among Jewish circles. This is especially evident in the conflict between the *El-Telegrapho* and *El-Tiempo* newspapers that “produced a painful impression among our coreligionist of the capital and that of the provinces.”⁶⁰

In reaction to these tensions, Seekers of Truth,” (*rodfev emet*) supporters of Haim Nahum organized a huge demonstration in Istanbul on Sunday, October 18, 1908. The demonstration, which was attended by about

⁵¹ Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860-1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 123.

⁵² “El Gran Rabinato de Turquiah,” *El-Tiempo*, July 29, 1908, #89, p. 1033.

⁵³ *Ibid.* The delegation consisted of Nissim El-Nekva, Jack Effend Menashe, David Fresco, and Issac Effendi Taragano.

⁵⁴ Born in Manisa in 1873, Rabbi Haim Nahum became one of the most important figures of the Sephardic Jewish community in the Empire. With the support of AIU he studied at the Rabbanical School in Paris and in the École Pratique des Hautes Études. While in Paris he came into contact with the Young Turks.

⁵⁵ On the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* see Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews*. On the relation of Haim Nahum to AIU see Esther Benbassa, “L’Alliance Israélite Universelle et l’élection de Haim Nahum au Grand Rabbinat de l’Empire ottoman (1908-1909),” in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division B, Vol. III, “The History of the Jewish People” (The Modern Times), Jérusalem, *World Union of Jewish Studies*, 1986, pp. 83-90.

⁵⁶ Nahum to J.Burgat (Constantinople 6 September, 1908) AAIU, Turkey, XXX E, in Benbassa (ed.) *Haim Nahum*, p. 147.

⁵⁷ “Eleksyon del Qaymakam del Hakham Basi,” *El-Tiempo*, August 17, 1908, #96, p. 1117.

⁵⁸ “La Konfermasyon Guvermental,” *El-Tiempo*, August 21, 1908, #98, p. 1137.

⁵⁹ “Manifestasiyones de Simpatia: El Reverendi Raveno Haim Nahum Kaymakam del Gran Rabino,” *El-Tiempo*, August 19, 1908, #97, p. 1 and “Rabi Haim Nahum: El Nuevo Kaymakam del Gran Rabino de Turquiah,” *El-Tiempo*, August 21, 1908, #99, p. 1.

⁶⁰ “La kriza de nuestra comunidad,” *El-Tiempo*, October 14, 1908, #3, p. 39.

15,000 participants, took place in Hasköy, a “manifestation that does not have an equal in the annals of the Jewish community of Constantinople.”⁶¹ The government seems to have fully supported the candidacy of Haim Nahum for the *locum tenens* position of the Chief Rabbinate. In his first visit to the Sublime Porte, Rabbi Haim Nahum was received by Grand Vezir Kâmil Paşa, who promised him his support, saying:

I do not doubt that your first efforts will tend to remove any injustice committed by certain heads of the Jewish communities in the Empire. You will no doubt agree with me that we shall no more witness the sad spectacle of rabbis nominated provisionally for two or three months and charged to bring about elections for the nomination of a Chief Rabbi, who arbitrarily seizes power. All the efforts which you will make to improve the condition of the Jewish communities in the Empire will have my entire approbation and you may rely on my support.⁶²

In order to strengthen his position, Rabbi Haim Nahum paid a couple of official visits to important figures. On September 8, he paid a visit to Prince Sabaheddin⁶³ and on the 10th he visited the ex-Patriarch of the Armenians, Archbishop Madteos Izmirliyan who “is a very liberal person, [and] suffered a lot during the *ancien régime*.”⁶⁴

The tensions emanating from the appointment of Haim Nahum as the *locum tenens* should also be viewed as the outcome of the tensions existing between the Zionists and the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*. The public sphere created after the revolution literally intensified this competition among these two organizations. In one letter, while commenting on the maneuvers by the German orthodox during the elections, Nahum clearly states: “In any case, if I am elected, it will really be a victory for the Alliance, because a very strong campaign is being conducted against our society.”⁶⁵ This tension was caused by competition between Germany and France aligned with the Zionists and the Alliance respectively for influence over the Jews of the Empire.

⁶¹ “El Mişing de elhad,” *El-Tiempo*, 21, October, 1908, #7, p. 64; “Turkey,” *The Jewish Chronicle*, October 23, 1908, #2064, p. 11.

⁶² “Turkey: The Acting Chief Rabbi at the Porte,” *The Jewish Chronicle*, September 4, 1908, #2057, p. 9.

⁶³ “El Kaymakam Effendi Haim Nahum: Undi el Prinsipi Sabaheddin,” *El-Tiempo*, September 9, 1908, #106, p. 1217.

⁶⁴ “El Kaymakam Effendi Haim Nahum undi el ex-Patriarka Monsinyor Ismirilyan,” *El-Tiempo*, September 11, 1908, #107, p. 1229.

⁶⁵ Nahum to J. Bigart (11 January, 1909) AAIU, Turkey, XXX E. in Benbassa (ed.) *Haim Nahum*, p. 154.

On January 24, 1909 Haim Nahum was elected Hahambashi with 74 votes.⁶⁶ His opponents protested the election, arguing that only three fourths of the delegates participated in the election.⁶⁷ For its part, *El-Tiempo* announced that the results of the elections were received with joy and happiness in all the provinces of the Empire, as evidenced by the numerous telegrams, letters and articles that the newspaper received.⁶⁸ The government ratified the election on March 2, 1909.⁶⁹ The system that Haim Nahum endorsed was a reorganization of the community of Istanbul and aimed at centralizing power by bringing the provinces under his grip.

After the accession of Haim Nahum as the *locum tenens* of the Chief Rabbinate, letters began to pour into the office of the Hahambashi from the provinces demanding the dismissal of their spiritual heads.⁷⁰ "It is to be noted with regret," argued *The Jewish Chronicle*, "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."⁷¹

Demonstrations against their respective rabbis were held in the Jewish communities of Jerusalem, Damascus, and Sayda.⁷² In Jerusalem, letters were sent to the Grand Vezirate and the Ministry of the Interior demand-

⁶⁶ Raphael Shimon received 9 votes, Moshe Haviv 2, and Avraham Danon 1. For detailed information on the election see "La Eleksyon del Gran Rabani de Turkiyah: La junta del ayer del Mejlis 'Umumi," *El-Tiempo*, January 23, 1908, #48, pp. 461-64. For Haim Nahum's reaction to the election in the ladino press in Palestine see "Rabbi Haim Nahum Gran Rabino de Turkiyah," *El-Liberal* #1, 29 January 1909, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁷ Eighty five delegates out of a hundred and twenty, from the provinces participated in the elections.

⁶⁸ "La Eleksyon del Gran Rabani de Turkiyah: La Impresyon en el payis y en el estranjero," *El-Tiempo*, February 3, 1909, #51, p. 493.

⁶⁹ For the Imperial Firman see *Bulletin Semestriel de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* 34 [1909], 46-49. in Benbassa (ed.) *Haim Nahum*, p. 156-57. "El Nuevo Gran Rabano de Turkiyah: La Sanksyon Imperyal," *El-Tiempo* March 3, 1908, #63, p. 607.

⁷⁰ 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).

⁷¹ "Turkey: The Chief Rabbinate in the Empire," *The Jewish Chronicle*, 4 September, 1908, #2057, p. 9.

⁷² On the struggles in Damasacus before and after the revolution see Yaron Harel, *Ben tekhhakhim 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.

ing the removal of Rabbi Panigel, who had only been appointed provisionally.⁷³ In Damascus, the people demanded the removal of Rabbi Mirkado Alfandari “who has a mentality and an education that is not at all compatible with the new order of things.”⁷⁴ In Sayda, the people demanded the removal of the Chief Rabbi, under “whose administrative tyranny the population suffered for many years.”⁷⁵ 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.⁷⁶ 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 that demonstrates how the public sphere that developed among the Jewish communities of the Empire after the 1908 revolution became the medium through which the different trends within the Jewish community competed and struggled against each other.⁷⁷ Like the Armenian case, the Question of Jerusalem was high on the agenda of the Chief Rabbinate of Istanbul.

An Opportunity that Could not be Missed: Zionist Activities after 1908

The new situation in Turkey has opened in front of us new and wide horizons, but in order to make use of this situation it is necessary that we have energy and tactic, and it is difficult to say what more: tactic or energy.⁷⁸

⁷³ 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 months.

⁷⁴ “Las Komonidhahdis Israeliṭas de la Provinisya: Diṣṭuṣuyon de los grandis rabanos de Yeruṣalayim, de Damasko y de Sayda” *El-Tiempo*, September 2, 1908, #103, p. 1188.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ “Las Komonidhahdis Israeliṭas de la Provinsiya: Yeruṣalayim, Damasko y Sayda” *El-Tiempo*, September 4, 1908, #104, p. 1194.

⁷⁷ On Rabbi Elyashar see Moshe David Gaon, *Yehudei ha-Mizraḥ 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, “Hahaham bashi shel Kushta ve ‘milkhemet ha-rabanut’ be-yerushalayim,” [The Chief Rabbi of Istanbul and the ‘Rabbinical Warfare’ in Jerusalem] *Pe’amim*, 12:1982, pp. 105-113.

⁷⁸ Vladimir Jabotinsky, “Ha-Matzav ha-Ḥadash be-Ṭurkiyah,” [The new situation in Turkey] *Ha-Olam*, February 2, 1909, #3, p. 1.

The 1908 revolution also provided important avenues for Zionist activities in the Empire and for the realization of the Zionist aims.⁷⁹ However, prior to the revolution the Zionists felt that they need a permanent representative in Istanbul. The activities of the Zionists within the Empire began when David Wolffsohn, the president of the Zionist World Organization, established the Anglo-Levantine Banking Co. (ALBC) with the Mitirani Brothers prior to the revolution. The arrangement was that Mitirani would serve as head of the Bank, whereas the second president would be the representative of the Zionists in Istanbul. Dr. Avigdor Jacobson, a Russian Jew, director of the Anglo-Palestine Bank branch in Beirut and also Menahem Ussishkin's brother-in-law, was chosen as the second director of the bank and charged with representing the interests of Zionism in the Empire.⁸⁰ While preparations for opening the bank in Istanbul were under way, the Young Turk revolution took place, opening new horizons for Wolffsohn, who hoped that the Young Turks would not pursue the policies of their predecessors.

Jacobson arrived in the Empire on August 26, 1908. From Istanbul, he communicated with Wolffsohn two to three times a week, updating him about the situation. These correspondences, which are among the Zionist archives, indicate the importance that Wolffsohn attributed to developments in Istanbul.⁸¹ In one of his first letters to Dr. Jacobson, Wolffsohn described the ultimate role that Jacobson needed to play. Jacobson's immediate tasks were to gather information about the political condition and to conduct a couple of important meetings with key figures among the Jewish community and Ottoman political figures without entering into negotiations. These included meeting with the leaders of the Jewish communities of Istanbul, Izmir and Salonica, including Emmanuel Karasso, Rabbi Haim Nahum, Nissim Mazliah, Nissim Russo, Bekhor

⁷⁹ On Zionism after 1908 see Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, Zionism: 1897-1918* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1998), pp.120-153; Yosef Katz, "Paths of Zionist Political Action in Turkey, 1882-1914: The Plan for Jewish Settlement in Turkey in the Young Turks Era", *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 4,1 (1987) 115-135; Esther Benbassa, "Le sionisme dans l'Empire ottoman à l'aube du 20^e siècle," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, no. 24. (Oct.-Déc., 1989), p. 69-80; Robert Olson, "The Young Turks and the Jews," *Turcica*, vol. 18, 1986, p. 219-235; Michelle U. Campos, "Between 'Beloved Ottomania' and 'The Land of Israel': The Struggle over Ottomanism and Zionism Among Palestine's Sephardi Jews, 1908-13," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37:461-483 (2005).

⁸⁰ See the Contract of the Central Zionist Bureau with Jacobson, Central Zionist Archives Z2/6.

⁸¹ See the files Z2/7-12 in the Central Zionist Archives hence CZA.

Effendi, Mr. Fernando and Vital Faradji.⁸² However, Jacobson wanted to more actively promote the Zionist approach to the Jews of the Empire and enter into negotiation with the Ottoman authorities. Jacobson believed that such movements should be in accord with the Alliance and Ezra.⁸³ One of the primary achievements of the Zionists in Istanbul was the mobilization of two Jewish parliament members, Nissim Mazliah and Nissim Russo, to represent their interests.

Indeed, one of the major tasks of Jacobson became the founding of a newspaper that would promote the ideas of Zionism. The Zionists understood that the best way to influence public opinion within the developing public sphere(s) in general and the Jewish public sphere in particular was through the medium of the press. The process of establishing a pro-Zionist newspaper in Istanbul began as early as 1909. At the end of 1908, Jacobson was already interested in establishing a newspaper in the Empire. In a letter dated October 21, 1908, he expressed his demands and proposals on this subject to Wolffsohn saying that: "It is the only way we will be able to instill the Zionist ideas in Turkish society." Furthermore, he argued that the newspaper would touch on issues pertaining to the Jewish minority, autonomy, and problems of immigration, and that it is better that such a newspaper appear in French rather than Turkish.⁸⁴ Jacobson proposed that a committee be formed in Istanbul to deal with the press, but it was not formed until after the counter-revolution. The members of the committee included David Jacobson, Zeev Jabotinsky, and Sami Hochberg, and they decided to publish a French newspaper in Turkey that would deal with the general issues of country, including Zionism.⁸⁵ A Hebrew periodical by the name of *Hamevasser* was also founded, and support was given to four other newspapers in which Zionism would be promoted.⁸⁶

The other city in which the Zionists made a special effort to propagate their ideas was Salonica.⁸⁷ The ground there was much more prepared

⁸² Emmanuel Karaso was an important member of the CUP in Salonica, Nissim Mazliah was the deputy of Izmir in the Ottoman Parliament, and Nissim Russo was the secretary of the Interior Ministry and a close friend of Talat Paşa. Issac Fernandez was the head of the Regional Committee of AUI in Istanbul, and Vital Faradji was the Jewish deputy to the Ottoman Empire from Istanbul.

⁸³ Jacobson to Wolffsohn (Constantinople, 10-9-1908) CZA Z2/7.

⁸⁴ Jacobson to Wolffsohn (Constantinople, 21-10-1908) CZA Z2/7.

⁸⁵ The paper was *Jeune Turc*, which Jacobson co-edited with Sami Hochberg.

⁸⁶ These were *Courier d'Orient*, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, *Ittihad*, *Journal de Salonique* and *El-Tiempo*.

⁸⁷ On Salonica after the revolution see David Farhi, "Yehudei Salonika be-Mahpekhat ha-Turkim ha-Tze'irim," [The Jews of Salonica in the Revolution of the Young Turks] *Sefunot*, Vol 15, 1981, pp. 135-152.

than Istanbul. The Chief Rabbi of Salonica, Rabbi Yaacov Meir, who as we saw was the main candidate of the Zionists for the post of Hahambashi of Istanbul, was very sympathetic to Zionism, as were Joseph Naor, the mayor of Salonica, and Saadia Levi, the editor of *La Epocha*, the main Jewish newspaper in Salonica. In fact, when Zeev Jabotinsky was sent to propagate Zionism in Salonica,⁸⁸ *La Epocha* covered his lectures on its front pages.⁸⁹ In addition, *La Epocha* played the role of educating the people about Zionism.⁹⁰ However, among them, Emanuel Karasso, the Jewish deputy of Salonica and a prominent figure of the Young Turk movement, was regarded as the greatest gain for the Zionist efforts in Salonica.⁹¹

The Public Sphere(s) in the Arab Provinces: CUP vs. the Politics of the Notables

The impact of the Young Turk revolution on the Arab provinces should be viewed not only from the Arab provinces themselves, but also from the Imperial Palace, where the Sultan's close confidants from the Arab provinces, who had played the role of intermediaries and kept a fine-tuned balance between the local notables and the Palace, lost their political power in the palace. These included his spiritual advisor Abū'l-Hudā al-Sayyādī from Aleppo, Aḥmad 'Izzat Paşa al-Ābid, his political advisor from Damascus,⁹² Taḥsīn Paşa, and Selīm and Nejīb Malḥama from Lebanon. Indeed, at first sight, the revolution could seem to have caused serious changes in the dynamics of power in the Arab provinces. However, generalizing to the Arab provinces with regard to the impact of the revolution is rather misleading. The euphoric feelings and mass demon-

⁸⁸ On Jabotinsky's perception of the Ottoman Jews, see his "ha-Matzav ha-Ḥadash be-Ṭurkiyah," [The news situation in Turkey] *Ha-'Olam*, February 2, 1909, #3, p. 1. See also "Matsav ha-yehudim be-keysarut ha-'otmanit," [The condition of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire], a speech given to the General Assembly of the Hovevei Tzion committee in Odessa, 5 February, 1912 which appears in *Zeev Jabotinsky: Neumim* [Zeev Jabotinsky: Speeches] (Jerusalem, 1947).

⁸⁹ See for example, "Sionizmo Paṭriarīzmo Nasyonalizmo: Qui es Sionizmo Liṭura de S. Jabotensky," *La Epocha*, October 23, 1908, #1725, p. 1. On Jabotinsky's visit and on Zionism in Salonica, see Letters II and III entitled Salonica that were sent to the Zionist newspaper in Köln, *Ha-'Olam*, January 13, 1909, #2, pp. 12-13.

⁹⁰ "Edukāsyon Nasyonal: El Sionizmo," *La Epocha*, March 8, 1909, #17, p. 1.

⁹¹ On Karasso's view of Zionism see "Opinion de S. Emmanuel Kārasso el Sionizmo," *La Epocha*, January 8, 1909, #34, p. 1.

⁹² Caesar Farah, "Arab Supporters of Sultan Abdulhamid II: 'Izzet al-'Abid," in *Archivum Ottomanicum*, Vol. 15 (1997): 189-219.

strations in the cities of the Arab provinces after the Revolution should not be perceived as the beginning of a mass movement: Each city was influenced in a different way than its counterparts. For example, the politics of the notables in Damascus were not the same as the politics of notables in Beirut, or Mount Lebanon, or Palestine. Hence, though all of them were influenced by the Young Turk revolution, the impact varied from district to district. In addition, examining the changes in the dynamics of power in the Jewish and the Armenian cases is less problematic because the Arab provinces were not subordinate to one political/spiritual center. There, the politics of the notables and the *ulema* were considerably more complex. For this reason, changes in the dynamics of power as an integral part of the development of the public sphere(s) in the Arab provinces should be viewed from the vantage point of this stratum of the society.

When news of the revolution arrived in the Arab provinces, local authorities received it with reservations and were unwilling to declare the constitution.⁹³ Some were skeptical of the news of the *coup d'état*, while others feared that such a step would lead to the erosion of social stability. In addition to the local officials, the notables, and the *ulema* were also stunned by the news; some began to voice opposition to the activities of the junior officers. They were afraid that the revolution and the shift of the center of power away from the notables and the local authority to the CUP would endanger their traditional source of legitimacy. Indeed, after the revolution, CUP branches and clubs mushroomed in Syria. As we will see, these branches or clubs were begun as local initiatives but were subsequently taken over by the Central Committee of the CUP in Salonica. Thus, in the development of the public sphere(s) in the Arab provinces, two diverging forces began competing against each other over controlling the power positions while preoccupying the political scene with varying degrees of intensity from one province to another. The CUP branches threatened the notables and the *ulema* as they temporarily became the *de facto* force in local politics in the Syrian districts during the post revolutionary period. In addition to the CUP branches in Syria, the revolution also resulted in the creation of Arab political movements, the first of which was the Arab-Ottoman Brotherhood, established by the dismissed Arab functionaries of the *ancien régime*.⁹⁴ These functionaries

⁹³ Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 61.

⁹⁴ In order to protect their interests and keep their positions these Arab functionaries

of the local administrations were indeed greatly influenced by the revolution.

Damascus

Among the Arab provinces, Damascus was considered an important center for the activities of the *ulema*. With its Ummayyad Mosque, it was a traditional place of Islamic learning. In addition the notables of Damascus, numbering around 50 families,⁹⁵ composed a powerful stratum running the political mechanism. The constitution became the ultimate threat to these families and to the *ulema* class. With its slogans of constitutionalism, parliamentarism, freedom, and equality, the revolution meant that the existing orders of the *ancien régime* would no longer be the centers of power. However, the transformation of the centers of power in Damascus was less successful than in other areas of the Empire. The traditional networks of the notables and *ulema*, although not unaffected by it, proved stronger than the current of the revolution. The revolution resulted in the emergence of new actors, both military and civilian and mostly members of the newly emerging CUP branches, on the political scene. As in other areas, the young military officers initiated the establishment of constitutional clubs in the name of the CUP. Members of the CUP branch of Damascus included Hussein Bey 'Awnī, who was the director of education (*mudīr al-ma'ārif*) in Damascus, Major Salīm al-Jazā'irī, and As'ad Bey, member of the general staff, who later became the chief of police of Damascus, and a certain Dr. Ḥaydar.

The temporary political vacuum that was created after the revolution was filled by CUP branches as they began running the affairs of the administration.⁹⁶ The first task of the CUP in Damascus was to get rid of the officials from the *ancien régime* period. To this end, they pressured the Vali to dismiss the head of the Administrative Council of the Province, Muhammad Fawzī Paşa al-'Azm, the Mufti of Damascus, the chief clerk of the Shari'a courts, as well as the kaimakam of Zabadani and

established The Arab-Ottoman Brotherhood in Istanbul on the 5th of August. Among the founding members were Shafiq Bey al-Mu'ayyad al-'Azm, Nadra Bey Muṭrān, Shukrī Bey al-Ḥusaynī, 'Arif Bey al-Mardīnī, Shukrī Paşa al-Ayyūbī, Saḍīq Paşa al-Mu'ayyad al-'Azm, Sharif Ja'far Paşa and Muḥammad Paşa al-Makhzumī.

⁹⁵ G. P. Devey, Damascus to Sir. G. Lowther Constantinople, 4 September 1908, FO195/2277.

⁹⁶ "Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey- (Received September 7), Therapia, August 26, 1908" in "Correspondence respecting the Constitutional Movement in Turkey, 1908," *Parliamentary Papers*, 1909, p. 73.

Busra Eski Sham, among several other district governors.⁹⁷ These actions caused some discontent among the *ulema* class. The British Consul Devey reported on the 12th of August, "There is some discontent on the part of the *ulema* and certain leaders of the town, for the Union and Progress Society is going forward in its own way and removing officials without consulting them."⁹⁸ The discontent continued and resulted in the establishment of an association by the *ulema*.⁹⁹

The tensions in Syria were also reflected by events surrounding Rashīd Riḍā's tour in Syria after the Revolution. The Riḍā incident is an important manifestation of the competition between the two diverging forces that were acting in the newly developing public sphere(s) in the Arab provinces. Riḍā was a fervent supporter of the CUP, and in Autumn, 1908 he visited Syria and gave lectures in Beirut, Tripoli, and Damascus. Towards the end of October, Riḍā arrived in Damascus and began a series of lectures in the Ummayyad Mosque. During one of his sermons, Ṣaliḥ Sharīf al-Tūnisī, one of the teachers of the Mosque, interrupted his talk and accused him of being heretical and of preaching Wahabism.¹⁰⁰ This caused a public uproar against Riḍā, forcing him to leave the Mosque. In his article, Riḍā indicates that al-Tūnisī was a preacher sent by Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī.¹⁰¹ As a result, As'ad Bey, the Damascus deputy police chief and one of the prominent members of the CUP, arrested al-Tūnisī. The tensions in Damascus reached an apex when thousands of people carrying weapons began gathering on the streets and in the markets. Many of them went to the Municipality, while others went to the government building to demand al-Tūnisī's release. Riḍā argued that the real reason for this tension was the elections. The mob demanded the resignation of As'ad Bey and the dismantling of the CUP. Some protestors referred to

⁹⁷ Taj el-Sir Ahmad Harraṇ "Syrian Relations in the Ottoman Constitutional Period, 1908-1914," (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of London, 1969), p. 46; Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 56.

⁹⁸ F.O. 195/2277, file 137, Devey's no. 33, Damascus, 12 August, cited by Elie Kedourie "The Impact of the Young Turk Revolution on the Arabic-Speaking Provinces of the Ottoman Empire," in his *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies* (London: William Clowes & Sons), p. 137.

⁹⁹ "Al-hādath al-khaṭīr fī Dimashq al-Shām," [The Dangerous Incident in Damascus Syria] *al-Muqattam*, October 30, 1908, #5956, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ Rashīd Riḍā, "Riḥlat Ṣāhib al-Manār fī Sūriyya, 3" [The Trip of the Owner of al-Manar in Syria] *Al-Manar*, January 22, 1909, Vol.12 Issue 11, p. 944; Fakhrī Barūdī, *Mudhakkirāt al-Barūdī* [Memoirs of al-Barudi] (Damascus: Dar al-Haya Press, 1951), p. 70.

¹⁰¹ Riḍā, "Riḥlat Ṣāhib al-Manār fī Sūriyya, 3," p. 946.

the CUP as the committee of disunity and decline (*jam'iyyat al-tafrīq wa-al-tadannī*). The mob attacked the building and took out al-Tūnisī, who was imprisoned there. They wanted to kill As'ad Bey, who was the *de facto* ruler of Syria,¹⁰² but he escaped to Beirut.¹⁰³ This was considered a success for the notables, who were thus able to defeat the representative of the new regime. With the transfer of As'ad to Istanbul and Salīm Bey to Adana, the victory of the notables was complete.¹⁰⁴

Beirut

Immediately after the proclamation of the constitution, celebrations began to take place in Beirut in which many of the junior military officers positioned in Beirut took part.¹⁰⁵ The Committee of Union Progress was established in Beirut and the local branch was composed of 100 officers and civilians who elected a committee of 12. The most active members of the committee were Major Jehād Bey, Captain Riḍā Bey, Munīr Bey, President of the Commercial Court, and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Bey Ḥamādī, a resident of Beirut.¹⁰⁶ In his memoirs, Salīm 'Alī Salām mentions that Captain Riḍā Bey took over the committee and assumed all power, becoming the sole authority.¹⁰⁷ The British consul H.A. Cumberbatch informed the British Ambassador in a confidential letter that the CUP of Beirut are in free communication with the Central Committee at Salonica and appear determined to "see things through."¹⁰⁸ The first task of the CUP was to dismiss the Vali, the Chief of Police, and the Commandant of the Gendarmerie, along with many other local officials.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² "Al-hādith al-khaṭīr fī Dimashq al-Shām," p. 4.

¹⁰³ Barūdī, *Mudhakkirāt al-Barūdī*, p. 70.

¹⁰⁴ Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁵ British Consulate General, Beirut, to Sir. G.Lowther, Constantinople, 1 August 1908 FO195/2277.

¹⁰⁶ British Consulate General, Beirut, to Sir. G.Lowther, Constantinople, 8th August 1908 FO195/2277.

¹⁰⁷ Salīm 'Alī Salām, *Mudhakkirāt Salīm 'Alī Salām (1868-1938)* ed. Ḥassān Hallāq (Bayrūt: Dār al- Jāmi'iyyah, 1982), p. 110. On the importance of the memoirs of Salīm 'Alī Salām to the study of the Young Turk period, see Kamal S. Salibi, "Beirut under the Young Turks: As Depicted in the Political Memoirs of Salim Ali Salam (1868-1938)," in Berque and Chevallier, eds., *Les Arabes par leurs archives* (Paris: CNRS, 1976), 200. The president of the Beirut CUP at the time was Rida al-Maqdisi.

¹⁰⁸ British Consulate General, Beirut, to Sir. G. Lowther, Constantinople, 8th August 1908, Confidential, FO195/2277.

¹⁰⁹ "Bayrūt: Isti'fā' Mudīr al-Būlis," [The resignation of the chief police] *al-Muqattam*, August 12, 1908, #5890, p. 4.

Telegrams arrived ordering the removal of Kamāl Bey, the chief of police, ‘Umar Bey, the commander of the gendarmes, and ‘Alī Riza Bey, the head of the telegraph station.¹¹⁰ Local newspapers began a campaign against the administrative council of Beirut and asked for it to be reformed. The previous Vali of Beirut Muḥammad ‘Alī Bey, upon hearing of his dismissal, escaped to Alay.¹¹¹ He planned to escape to Cyprus, where he would be under the protection of the British. However, the governor was notified of his plan, and Muḥammad ‘Alī was arrested.¹¹² The next day, the Vali along with other dismissed officials, became spectacles of public humiliation. They were moved in a procession towards Haji Dawūd’s boat in the harbor. Thousands were on the streets watching the procession, cursing the Vali and his colleagues, the head of the telegraph agency, the chief of the police, and others. Before boarding the boat, the Vali was searched, and thirty-five Ottoman liras and some paper money were found in his pockets and stolen from him.¹¹³

The Young Turk revolution also led to the emergence of the *za’ims*, or communal bosses, who would dominate national politics in Beirut for the rest of the century.¹¹⁴ Jens Hanssen argues that the *za’āma* differed from the politics of notables of the 18th and the 19th centuries in that the political authority of the *za’ims* was characterized by a property-based electoral system and control over street politics. This helps to explain the rise of the Salāms as one of the dominant *za’ims* of Beirut.¹¹⁵

Mutasarrifiyyah of Mount Lebanon

In Mount Lebanon, news of the reinstatement of the constitution was received with certain reservations, as society became split into two over whether or not the mountain should take part in the Ottoman parliament. The Maronite clerical circles opposed such a move, whereas the Druze,

¹¹⁰ “Bayrūt: ḥaqā’iq Majhūla, Faḍa’ih al-ẓalimīn,” [Beirut: unknown fact, the shames of the oppressors] *al-Muqattam*, August 13, 1908, #5891, p. 4.

¹¹¹ M. Fouques-Duparc, Consul General of France in Beirut, to M. Constans, Ambassador of France in Constantinople, Beirut 21 August, 1908, Annexe n° I à la dépêche n° 65 du 21 août 1908.

¹¹² “Bayrūt: firār wālī Bayrūt al-Sābiq,” [The escape of the previous Vali of Beirut] *al-Muqattam*, August 19, 1908, #5896, p. 4.

¹¹³ “Bayrūt,” *al-Muqattam*, August 20, 1908, #5897, p. 4.

¹¹⁴ Jens Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 73-78.

¹¹⁵ For more information about the rise of the *za’ims* in Beirut politics see Michael Johnson, *Class and Client in Beirut: The Sunni Muslim Community and the Lebanese State 1840-1985* (Ithaca Press: London, 1986).

the Greek Orthodox, and other minority sects were in favor of it.¹¹⁶ On the 20th of August the British Consul reported that the prospect of sending representatives to the new parliament grew stronger after the Maronite anti-clerical or liberal party joined the pro-parliamentary group. The Consul further reported that this group belonged to the adverse clerical party but was showing an inclination to associate itself with the liberals, many of whom were freemasons.¹¹⁷ The centrality of the Maronite Patriarchate is a key factor in understanding the impact of the revolution on Mount Lebanon. This indicates that the constitution not only created tension between the different sects on the Mountain, it also opened a new door for the anti-clerical Maronite movement, or, as Dennis Walker calls them, the post-Christian lumpen-bourgeois element, to attempt to rid itself of its own *ancien régime* by including Lebanon in the Ottoman Parliament.¹¹⁸ By doing so, they would avert the authority of the Maronite Patriarch Ilyās Butrus al-Ḥuwayyik (1843-1931; Patriarch from 1899), who was not excited about the constitution. It is important to mention here that Patriarch al-Ḥuwayyik shared a common caution with Abdülhamid, and his group therefore opposed any social or political change. The Hamidian regime, which protected the autonomous status of Mount Lebanon, was crucial in guaranteeing the authority of Patriarch al-Ḥuwayyik in the Mountain. Patriarch al-Ḥuwayyik and his Church also secured their authority through the intercession of two key Maronite figures in the Palace of Abdülhamid, Najīb and Salīm Malḥama. Furthermore, al-Ḥuwayyik and Abdülhamid had shared enemies: radical secularizing elements, parliamentarism, decentralization, and linguistic proto-nationalism.¹¹⁹ For Abdülhamid and for Patriarch al-Ḥuwayyik, the Young Turks and the post-Christian bourgeoisie Maronites both threatened the stability of the existing order. With the Young Turk revolution and the downfall of the Malḥama brothers, the anti-clerical movement on

¹¹⁶ British Consulate General, Beirut, to Sir. G. Lowther, Constantinople, 1 August 1908, FO195/2277.

¹¹⁷ British Consulate General, Beirut, to Sir. G. Lowther, Constantinople, 20th August 1908, FO195/2277.

¹¹⁸ Dennis Walker, "The Relation of Catholic Maronite Patriarch Ilyas Butrus al-Huwayyik with the Ottoman Turks," *Islamochristiana*, 28 (2002), pp. 109-123. For more information about the intra-ethnic relationships in the Maronite community, see Engin Akarlı, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 163-173.

¹¹⁹ Walker, "The Relation of Catholic Maronite Patriarch Ilyas Butrus al-Huwayyik with the Ottoman Turks," p. 114.

the Mountain grew stronger, and their activities increased in order to “curtail the baneful influence of the Maronite Clergy and to introduce greatly needed administrative reforms.”¹²⁰

After much debate in political circles, the administrative council of the Mountain voted against representing Mount Lebanon in the Ottoman parliament.¹²¹ In a lengthy book entitled *Lubnān wa al-Dustūr al-‘Uthmānī* (Lebanon and the Ottoman Constitution), published in 1909, Būlos Mus‘ad argued in depth, from both a legal and historical perspective, that Lebanon should not participate in the Ottoman parliament and should not give up its privileges. He heavily criticized the “radical liberals,” and their arguments.¹²² In the book’s conclusion, Mus‘ad argued that the people of the mountain were faced with two choices with no middle ground possible between them. Either they give up all their rights and join the Ottoman Empire, or they preserve their independence “as the stingy man preserves his dinar,” and support their regime in every possible way. This was indeed a life-or-death issue for Mus‘ad, “especially when we are in one of the gravest turning point (*mun’ataf min al-tārīkh*) that endangers our national life and the slightest error that we commit will be recorded [in history] as disgrace and shame and move us backwards many years.”¹²³

In geographic areas in which intricate politics were characterized by the politics of notables, the revolution threatened to disrupt this finely-tuned balance and transfer power from the notables to the newly emerging actors on the scene, primarily represented by the CUP. It is evident, however, that these same new actors lacked the crucial tool that the notables enjoyed in the provinces, i.e., their traditional roles in their own indigenous societies and religion. To break this tradition, historicity, and religious sentiment was a difficult task. Ruth Roded has rightly argued that the Young Turk revolution did not cause any dramatic change in the power of the Syrian notables and that they maintained their dominance throughout

¹²⁰ British Consulate General, Beirut, to Sir. G.Lowther, Constantinople, 9th September 1908 FO195/2277.

¹²¹ The rejection first began in the second half of September in the Maronite dominated municipality of Dayr al-Qamar.

¹²² Būlos Mus‘ad, *Lubnān wa al-dustūr al-‘uthmānī: baḥṭh siyāsī qānūnī tārīkhī fī mawqif Lubnān al-ḥaḍīr i’zā’a al-dawlah al-‘uthmāniyyah qabla al-dustūr wa-ba’dahu* [Lebanon and the Ottoman Constitution: A Political, Legal, and Historical investigation in the current position of Lebanon towards the Ottoman Empire before and after the revolution] (Cairo: The Ma’ārif Press, 1909).

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Ottoman posts and connections.¹²⁴ They did so by adapting to the changing circumstances and connecting to the Ottoman establishment.¹²⁵ In the case of the *mutassarifiyyah* of Lebanon, the situation was more complex than in Damascus, Latakia, Nablus, or Beirut. For more than half a decade the *Règlement organique* created what Akarlı called “the long lasting peace.” Despite the fact that after the events of 1861 there was a long period of peace, some elements of Lebanese society remained discontented. The Young Turk revolution provided the ultimate chance for these elements to change the balance of power on the Mountain. The Administrative Council of the *mutassarifiyyah*, which was more important than the administrative council in the other regions, became a battle zone between the notable families of the mountain, the Maronite church, and the laity.

Conclusion

The preceding discussion centered on the development of a multiplicity of public spheres among the Armenians, the Jews, and the Arabs of the Empire after the Young Turk revolution of 1908. This multiplicity of public sphere(s) became the main medium through which these ethnic groups internalized the Young Turk revolution. In the case of the Armenians and the Jews, it resulted in the occurrence of micro-revolutions, whereas in the Arab case, it led to the erosion of social and political stability. In addition, this article has contended that post-revolutionary ethnic politics in the Ottoman Empire should not be viewed solely through the prism of political parties, but also through ecclesiastical politics, a key factor in defining inter- and intra-ethnic politics. Interestingly, despite the fact that the revolution aimed at creating the modern secular Ottoman citizen whose loyalty would be to the state, it nevertheless strengthened the ethno-religious political centers of the ethnic groups. It did so by creating a multiplicity of interconnected public spheres over which fierce competition began among the different actors in these ethnic groups for control of power positions.

In the Jewish case, the center of power remained in the Hahambashlik. The election of Haim Nahum as the Chief Rabbi strengthened the Hamam-

¹²⁴ Ruth Roded “Social Patterns Among the Urban Elite of Syria During the Late Ottoman Period, 1876-1918,” *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political and Economic Transformation*, ed. David Kushner (Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, Jerusalem and E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1986), p. 158.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

bashi's role as the ethno-religious representative of Sephardic Jewry, but this became increasingly difficult in a period during which new actors entered the public sphere in the Ottoman Empire. The Zionists, who aimed at winning over the public opinion of the Sephardic Jewry of the Empire for their activities, were considered an undesirable element in the Empire by the Chief Rabbinate and by many other prominent Sephardic figures. This was because the Sephardic Jews feared that the Zionist goal of creating a Jewish state in Palestine could arouse the Turkish and Arab elements of the Empire. However, the Chief Rabbinate's predisposition against the Zionists was also the result of the ongoing competition between Jewish institutions (Zionists vs. *Alliance Israélite Universelle*).

In the Armenian case, the center of the power shifted smoothly from the Patriarchate to the Armenian National Assembly, which became the representative of the Armenian ethnic group in the Empire. Unlike the Jewish case, the ANA included representatives of most of the Armenian political currents. And in the post-Adana period it became a battleground between the different Armenian political groups. The main issue that preoccupied the Armenian public sphere in the post-revolutionary period was the condition of the Eastern Provinces, an issue that was "resolved" by the destruction of the Armenian communities of the Eastern Provinces during the Armenian Genocide of World War I. The revolution also paved the way for the strengthening of Armenian political groups in the Empire, most prominently the Dashnaks, who, by propagating their "grandiose role" in the great revolution, tried to strengthen their status in the Armenian circles. They used their close ties to the CUP to claim to represent the Armenian ethnic group in the Empire.

In the case of the Arab provinces, the revolution caused some erosion in political and social stability by challenging the politics of notables. While in some areas it succeeded in changing the dynamics of power by creating new political actors, such as the *za'ims* of Beirut, in other areas such as Damascus it was unsuccessful, as local notables and the *ulema* remained the most influential elements of society.

In all three cases, the revolution resulted in the re-organization of the local administrations. In the Armenian and the Jewish cases, centralization of the administration became the key factor in the policy of the ethno-religious centers, and it is not surprising that in both cases the question of Jerusalem was given high priority. In the case of the Arab provinces this reorganization, which was initiated by the local CUP branches, was met with fierce resistance by the people of the previous order.