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The (third) world of yesterday: Global anti-colonial struggles, Palestinian consciousness, and Zionist-colonial alliances

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Abstract

This article discusses the ways the Palestinian struggle was perceived as part of regional and global networks that crystallised following the First World War, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, and the rise of mandatory authorities in the Middle East. It examines Palestinian disillusionment with the expectation that the principle of self-determination would serve as a basis for the creation of a new world political order and, in turn, in the dissolution of the world of the colonial authorities. It focuses, on one hand, on the ways in which the Rif War in Morocco (1921–6) and the great Syrian rebellion, which broke out in 1925, affected Palestinian national consciousness, and on the other hand, how these crises revealed the explicit identification of the Zionist movement with colonial forces. In the article I examine the representations of the uprisings in the contemporary Palestinian and Hebrew press as a basis for seeing the uprising as an important turning point, in terms of creating the Zionist separatist space and the strengthening of the alliance between the Zionist movement and the mandatory colonial rule and its identification with global colonial forces.

Keywords: third world; anti-colonialism; Zionism; Palestinian nationalism; the Great Syrian Revolt; the Rif War

On 18 November 1925, an article entitled ‘To the Hebrew Press’ was published in the Palestinian newspaper, *Mir'at al-Sharq* (*Mirror of the East*). The author, the newspaper's editor Bulus Shehadeh (1882–1943), addressed the Hebrew press in Palestine while criticising its support for the suppression of the anti-colonial struggles in the Rif, Morocco, and Syria. While he was aware of Zionist settler-colonial interests in Palestine, which relied on the power of the British colonial authorities, it was what he considered to be a strange case of Zionist-Jewish support for the Spanish colonial authorities that he sought to emphasise. It was the memory of the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula that he assumed had the potential to push the Zionist movement in a different direction.

Shehadeh's call reflected a broader phenomenon that took place during the second half of 1925. A public debate emerged in Palestinian Arab and Hebrew newspapers about the two prominent anti-colonial revolts taking place in the Middle East and North Africa that year: the Rif War, which entered a new stage after the French intervened to support Spain's efforts to suppress the revolt, and the outbreak of the Great Syrian Revolt in *Jabal al-Duruz* (The Mountain of the Druze) against French colonial rule. Through an examination of the articles and correspondence published in the local press, this article seeks to analyse the ways in which they reflected a broader Palestinian identification with, and awareness of, anti-colonial transregional and global networks, on one hand, and growing Zionist identification with a global colonial political order, on the other.

The emergence of the right to self-determination as the basic principle of the global political order following the First World War was perceived by colonised peoples as an opportunity to conduct their anti-imperial struggle within a global framework, on its own terms and logic. As Erez Manela has claimed, the political language articulated by the American president Woodrow Wilson was used as a basis for the political demands and campaigns that various groups led, demanding the recognition of their own right to self-determination.¹ It was, however, the painful understanding that this new political order would not bring about the end of an overpowering global colonial logic that promoted resistance movements throughout East and Central Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa.

Although these movements developed independently, rooted in local political conditions, and acted against different colonial authorities, they saw themselves as sharing a broader, transregional framework that turned against the foundations of the worldwide colonial order. This shared global consciousness deepened a common understanding that connected different events and saw them as a manifestation of a shared 'Eastern' struggle against the 'West'.² Various scholars have pointed to the importance of the social contexts, contact zones, and networks of communication that created opportunities for the emergence of this shared global anti-colonial consciousness during the 1920s.³ Michael Goebel has noted the need to move beyond the common tendency to analyse bilateral relationships between the metropole and one distinct colony or colonised group and instead engage in a broader analysis of the relationships between various colonised groups and the different sites of interaction that enabled them.⁴ The connections between groups that had experienced colonisation differently served as a basis for better awareness of broader patterns of colonial authority—and therefore for the articulation of different patterns of resistance.

Mandatory Palestine, and the ways in which the Rif War and the Great Syrian Revolt were discussed in this space, can be considered a unique site of such interactions. While Palestinian Arabs were subjected to a different colonial authority than the French Syrian one, they still understood themselves as belonging to the same post-Ottoman regional framework, *Bilad al-Sham* (Lands of the Levant). Therefore, in a similar way to Goebel's understanding of Paris as a site where social interactions between people from different colonised or subjected groups informed their growing awareness of the fact that they experienced similar structural injustices, Bilad al-Sham is considered here as a similar contact zone. While Paris became a site of interaction due to its status as a metropolis to which various colonised groups migrated, it was the historical ties connecting different areas within what became an administratively bisected region that made Bilad al-Sham a site of interaction. Apart from the shared imperial history and direct regional connections between Palestine and Syria, the transregional connections that had been forged through Pan-Islamist discourse since the late nineteenth century—manifested in the identification of the Rif Republic's leader, 'Abd al-Karim, with Salafi Islam as influenced by Rashid Rida, one of the prominent figures in the Syrian-Palestinian Congress—also played a major role in the

¹Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 3–14.

²As Cemil Aydin argued, these discourses, articulated mainly as Pan-Islamism or Pan-Asianism, evolved during the last decades of the nineteenth century, and were directed against the consolidation of orientalist and racialised European discourse, that pictured Islam and the 'East' as obstacles for progress. This coping was reflected in a growing articulation of Muslim identity as sharing similar experiences with East Asian societies and was expressed in the identification with the Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. Cemil Aydin, 'Beyond Civilization: Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism and the Revolt against the West', *Journal of Modern European History* 4, no. 2 (2006): 204–23.

³Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperialist Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2015); Masha Kirasirova, 'The 'Domestic' East and the 'Foreign East' in Soviet-Arab Relations. 1917–68' (PhD diss., New York University, 2014); Burak Sayim, 'Transregional by Design: The Early Communist Press in the Middle East and Global Revolutionary Networks', *Journal of Global History* 18, no. 2 (2023): 216–35.

⁴Goebel, *Anti-Imperialist Metropolis*, 1–20. On sites of interaction see also: Tim Harper and Sunil S. Amrith, 'Sites of Asian Interaction: An Introduction', *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 2 (2012): 249–57.

articulation of Palestinian sympathies with the Riffians. These geographical and intellectual connections contributed to a sense that these struggles were part of an increasingly broad and global anti-colonial resistance: a struggle frequently framed as the ‘weak peoples’ (*al-shu‘ub al-ḍa‘ifa*) against the strong or, as mentioned, ‘East’ against ‘West’.⁵ As Ilham Khuri-Makdisi has shown, since the late nineteenth century, intellectuals and workers throughout the Ottoman Eastern Mediterranean had shared a growing awareness of the asymmetries ‘inherent in the international economic system’, which inspired various political radicalisms, discussed in the Arab press and in the urban arena.⁶ Burak Sayim has pointed to the role played by the circulation of communist publications and journals and Comintern-sponsored events in forging the global anti-colonial (communist and non-communist) networks and rearticulating radical tendencies during the interwar period.⁷ The 1920s, therefore, should be understood as a transitional period when post-Ottoman notions of space, geography, and social identification intersected with interwar global anti-colonial networks.

Nevertheless, it was not only Bilad al-Sham as a regional site of interaction, but also mandatory Palestine as a *local* site of interaction that served as a basis for understanding colonial regimes’ patterns of control. While the revolts in Syria and the Rif Mountains were against European colonial administrations, the Palestinians confronted the British colonial regime *and* Zionist settlers. As Rashid Khalidi has argued, Palestinians constituted the only new polity in the colonial Arab Middle East that was not ‘being allowed any of the attributes of stateness’.⁸ This aspect was reflected in the ongoing attempts of the Palestinian press to examine Zionist attitudes regarding the revolts. Contributors to the press demanded Zionists take an explicit side regarding these global issues, as they regarded them as having direct implications for local relations between Palestine’s Arabs and Jews. The debates in the press were an attempt to gauge where the Zionist movement would position itself within the new global political order. Would Zionists stand with the weak in their struggle against the colonial authorities, given their own experiences as Jews in Europe, or would their reliance on the colonial forces to fulfil their settler aspirations lead to broader identification with global imperialism?

The intersection of local and global debates around events in 1925 contributes to the history of Palestine, and specifically Zionism as a settler-colonial movement, in another way as well. While the existing scholarship focuses mainly on local settlement policy, the expulsion of Palestinians from their lands, and the Zionist aspiration to create an ethnically pure Jewish space and economy, examining Zionist approaches to the broader colonial world clarifies not only its status as a movement of settlers, but also its coloniality—its global attitudes, as well as its internal contradictions.⁹ Tracing the dialogues and controversies between Palestinians and Zionists during

⁵See, for example, ‘Faransa wa-‘abd al-karim (France and ‘Abd al-Karim)’, *al-Karmil*, 22 July 1925, p. 1. See also William L. Cleveland, *Islam against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (University of Texas Press, 1985), 53. On Palestinian attempts to conceptualise their situation as part of a global colonial oppression, and its racialised foundations, see Nimrod Ben Zeev, ‘Palestine along the Colour Line: Race, Colonialism and Construction Labor, 1918–1948’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44, no. 12 (2021): 2190–212. Following the suppression of the revolt ‘Abd al-Karim was interviewed in Rida’s newspaper, *al-Manar*, where he expressed his Salafi Muslim perceptions (C. R. Pennel, ‘How and Why to Remember the Rif War (1921–2021)’, *The Journal of North African Studies* 22, no. 5 (2017): 810–14). On Rida’s connection to this stream in the Syrian national movement that emphasised the joint regional framework, see Phillip S. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism* (Princeton University Press, 1987), 219–42.

⁶Ilham Khouri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (University of California Press, 2010).

⁷Sayim, ‘Transregional by Design’.

⁸Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Oneworld, 2006), 38.

⁹Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, ‘Tracing Settler Colonialism: A Genealogy of a Paradigm in the Sociology of Knowledge Production in Israel’, *Politics and Society* 50, no. 1 (2022): 63. In this context, see also Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1989); Omar Jabary Salamanca *et al.*, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): 1–8; Rana Barakat, ‘Writing/Righting Palestine Studies: Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Sovereignty and Resisting the Ghost(s) of History’, *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 3 (2018): 349–63;

this period helps reveal the ways in which these identifications developed and diverged. By examining the ways in which Arab and Zionist newspapers addressed each other, as well as their own communities and the colonial authorities, this article writes a ‘relational history’ that points to the parallel, global perspectives of each group.¹⁰

These publications, however, also reveal the Palestinian belief that Zionist settler-colonial practices should not necessarily mean a global identification with the colonial forces. In the calls addressed by Palestinian journalists to the Hebrew press, demanding Zionists to clearly support the rebels, we learn that they saw the Jewish historical experience as a kind of archetype that might prevent Zionist support for the colonial regimes. While most of them acknowledged they were not surprised by Zionist sympathies with French and Spanish colonisers, as the global colonial order had enabled the fulfilment of Zionist aspirations in Palestine, they suggested Zionism could be reconfigured outside a colonial scope.

The Palestinian press debates further reflected the continuations and ruptures within post-Ottoman society and politics. Particularly notable was the change in the approach of Sephardi Jewish intellectuals. While Sephardi Jews had enjoyed the status of Ottoman citizens, and therefore a certain degree of power compared to the dominant circles in the Zionist movement, the emergence of the mandate changed the power balance significantly. The Zionists gained status as the main representatives of the Jews in Palestine. While their status as Ottoman citizens served as a basis for the articulation of an oppositional indigenous Jewish approach against the dominant Zionist separatist tendencies, the loss of this status and the emergence of the British authorities led many Sephardi figures to detach themselves from this position.¹¹ British recognition of the Zionist movement as the main representative of the Jews in mandatory Palestine forced Sephardi Jews to accommodate Zionist institutions. Their earlier notion of an alternative Jewish collective existence in Palestine was replaced with attempts to position themselves within Zionist structures, reframing Sephardi Jews as ‘mediators’ between the Zionist movement and the Arabs.¹² This shift is revealed in the various correspondences that will be discussed later. Some of the clearest phrasings of the global Zionist-colonial alliance were coined by indigenous Sephardi Jews—who, during the Ottoman period, had led the opposition to the separatist Zionist policies. Therefore, this article reflects on the ways in which the moment of 1925 expressed the continuation and rupture of the post-Ottoman alliances and identifications during the mandatory period. While regional alliances played a prominent role in the anti-colonial struggle that criticised the French

Zachary Lockman, ‘Land, Labor and the Logic of Zionism: A Critical Engagement with Gershon Shafir’, *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): 9–38.

¹⁰On the aspect of addressivity see: Emma Hunter and Leslie James, ‘Introduction: Colonial Public Spheres and the World of Print’, *Itinerario* 44, no. 2 (2020): 231–2. In this context, see also Arthur Asseraf’s concept of ‘news ecosystem’ in the context of the colonial society in Algeria: Arthur Asseraf, *Electric News in Colonial Algeria* (Oxford University Press, 2019). On relational history of Palestine/Israel see: Tamir Sorek and Honaida Ghanim, ‘Palestine\ Israel Review: Carving Out a New Intellectual Space’, *Palestine\Israel Review* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1–20.

¹¹Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Early Twentieth-century Palestine* (Stanford University Press, 2011); Abigail Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire: Jerusalem between Ottoman and British Rule* (Syracuse University Press, 2011), 82–116; Moshe Behar, ‘1911: The Birth of Mizrahi-Ashkenazi Controversy’, *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 16, no. 2 (2017): 312–31; Yuval Evri, *The Return to Al-Andalus: Disputes over Sephardic Culture and Identity between Arabic and Hebrew* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2020), 41–9, 82–103. On the limitations of this approach see: Louis A. Fishman, *Jews and Palestinians in the Late Ottoman Era, 1908–1914: Claiming the Homeland* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

¹²Abigail Jacobson and Moshe Naor, *Oriental Neighbors: Middle Eastern Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine* (Brandeis University Press, 2016), 86–120; Evri, *The Return to Al-Andalus*, 194–265; Yuval Evri and Hagar Kotef, ‘When does a Native Become a Settler? (with Apologies to Zreik and Mamdani)’, *Constellations* (2020): 1–16; Hillel Cohen, ‘The Life and Death of the Arab-Jew in Palestine and Outside’, in *Homelands in Exile*, ed. Ofer Schiff (Sde Boker: Ben-Gurion Institute, 2015), 171–200; Yuval Evri and Hillel Cohen, ‘Between Shared Homeland to National Home: The Balfour Declaration from a Native Sephardic Perspective’, in *The Arab and Jewish Questions: Geographies of Engagement in Palestine and Beyond*, eds. Bashir Bashir and Leila Farsakh (Columbia University Press, 2021), 148–72.

divide-and-rule policy, the alliances' rupture contributed to the co-option of indigenous Jews within a hegemonic Zionist framework.¹³

While existing literature concentrates on Palestine as a distinct geographical unit, this article joins a different historical approach that seeks to analyse post-Ottoman collective articulations as ones that were 'in the making' rather than coherent and peremptory national and spatial units. A common historiographic tendency characterises the 1920s in Palestine as years of 'general stability' and 'calmness' and even of 'decline' in Palestinian national activity. Scholars justify this by pointing to relatively limited Jewish immigration during this period (that is despite the wave of Jewish immigration known in Zionist historiography as the fourth Aliyah, which occurred during the years 1924–6).¹⁴ The violent events of 1929, and the increase in Zionist immigration during the 1930s, are cited as central historical moments in the development of Jewish-Arab relations in Palestine.¹⁵ In contrast, Hasan Kayali and Jonathan Wrytzen have turned against the tendency to adopt the European periodisation of the Great War as one that was ended in 1918 and reflected in the emergence of new nation-states, and have argued that it was rather the continuity of the war experience during the 1920s that shaped the post-Ottoman Middle East.¹⁶ Likewise, in his study of what he terms the 'transpatialisation' of Bilad al-Sham, Cyrus Schayegh argues that although the new colonial British and French administrations 'quartered the region', the region 'proceeded to uphold its integration'.¹⁷ It was 'the long Great War' in the post-Ottoman region, the struggle between local and colonial actors over spatial and collective frameworks (the Rif War and the Great Syrian Revolt among them), and the violent suppression of these attempts—against the backdrop of new colonial state structures that enhanced ethnoreligious classifications—that created the current political entities.¹⁸

Examining Palestine as a unique contact zone between settlers and indigenous peoples under colonial authority, while also pointing to the way in which the mandate's place within the broader region influenced the global orientations of the different actors within it, stands at the heart of this article. Looking spatially beyond the colonial boundaries of mandatory Palestine, to the regional events during 1925, and embracing the temporal framework of the Long Great War—and focusing on the ways discussions of each played out in the Palestinian press—reveals this was a critical moment for debating the nature of colonial and global power relations. In turn, such debates informed shifts in indigenous Jews' and Arabs' sense of identity and intersocial relations.

The Rif War and the Great Syrian Revolt

Spain's attempt to assert direct military control over the Rif region of Northern Morocco following the First World War lay at the root of Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Karim al-Khattabi's (1882–1963) movement. A coalition of tribes led by the Banu Waryaghal, the biggest tribe in the Central Rif,

¹³Dotan Halevy, 'The Post-Ottoman Period: A New Framing for the History of Palestine Under British Rule', *Israel* 27–28 (2021): 13–50.

¹⁴See for example, Mustafa Kabha, *The Palestinian People: Seeking Sovereignty and State* (Lynne Rienner, 2013), 5; Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement 1918–1929* (Frank Cass, 1974), 241–57. Rashid Khalidi also pointed to the shift in the Jewish migration patterns during the 1930s as a crucial moment for the intensification of the power relations between Palestinians and Zionist, a shift that 'was impossible to foresee when the Jewish population of Palestine as a proportion of the total population actually declined in the late 1920s and early 1930s' (Khalidi, *The Iron Cage*, 12).

¹⁵Hillel Cohen, *1929: Year Zero of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Brandeis University Press, 2015).

¹⁶Hasan Kayali, *Imperial Resilience: The Great War's End, Ottoman Longevity, and Incidental Nations* (University of California Press, 2021); Jonathan Wrytzen, *Worldmaking in the Long Great War: How Local and Colonial Struggles Shaped the Modern Middle East* (Columbia University Press, 2022).

¹⁷Cyrus Schayegh, *The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World* (Harvard University Press, 2017), 9, 132–91.

¹⁸On the importance of the Rif War and the Great Syrian Revolt within the framework of the long Great War, see Wrytzen, *Worldmaking in the Long Great War*, 169–215. On the implementation of colonial state structures, population control and ethnic engineering, see Laura Robson, *States of Separation: Transfer, Partition, and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (University of California Press, 2017).

was organised to confront the Spanish military forces. This coalition enjoyed great military success, which served as the basis for an independent political framework in the Rif.¹⁹ This proto-state was characterised by Wyrzten as an ‘autonomous anti-colonial political field’ rooted in a centralised administrative unit that dealt with tax collection, enacted legal unification, and led educational reforms.²⁰ ‘Abd al-Karim sought to found a ‘republic’ that would reflect the characteristics of a state based on an alliance between independent tribes and unified in aspiring to national and religious independence.²¹

‘Abd al-Karim’s success became an inspiration for anti-colonial resistance, both in the European metropolises and among the colonised.²² The republic expanded following further victories against the Spanish military forces, bringing more territories under the republic’s political responsibility. However, a growing famine due to crop failures in the northern area of the republic and the closure of trade with regions of the French Moroccan protectorate brought ‘Abd al-Karim in to conflict with the French, as well as the Spanish. As the republic expanded into regions under French control, and the Riffians came in to closer proximity to Fez, the two colonial regimes, France and Spain, chose to coordinate a massive military attack in September 1925, including airstrikes against civilians and a French blockade that worsened the famine.²³

The French-Spanish attack against ‘Abd al-Karim’s army took place at the same time as another uprising against the French colonial regime: a rebellion that broke out in the rural area of Jabal al-Duruz in Syria on 18 July 1925. This revolt, led by Sultan al-Atrash, quickly expanded into the urban regions of Hama and later Damascus and became a national anti-colonial struggle, popularly known as the Great Syrian Revolt. The uprising in Jabal al-Duruz that sparked the revolt was a response to French colonial domination, in particular efforts to detach Jabal al-Duruz, and the rural areas more generally, from the urban centres as a means of preventing Syrian national unification and a broader challenge to the French mandate’s legitimacy. Gabriel Cabrillet, appointed the senior officer in the region, pursued a policy that sought to dismantle the traditional social structures of the Druze, while creating and maintaining a distinction between the political leadership and the peasantry, apparently as a basis for the ‘liberation’ of the latter. This mirrored the policies undertaken by the Marshall Louis Hubert Lyautey in Morocco. Cabrillet’s policy, however, was not supported by the peasants themselves, who were forced to work in exchange for tax payment, in order to complete some of his grandiose projects during a short period.²⁴

The roots of the revolt, however, were not entirely local. Collaborations between the Druze and Syrian nationalists played an important role in the uprising and its expansion into the urban regions, and reflected a political imagination that was shared by different groups in Syria that demanded a unified political framework for the various parts of Bilad al-Sham, including regions that were subjected to different (French or British) colonial authorities. Resistance to the colonial act of bisecting the Arab geopolitical whole contributed to the crystallisation of anti-colonial

¹⁹C. R. Pennel, *A Country with a Government and a Flag: The War in Morocco 1921–1926* (MENAS Press, 1986), 62–96; Jonathan Wyrzten, *Making Morocco: Colonial Intervention and the Politics of Identity* (Cornell University Press, 2016), 117–24.

²⁰Wyrzten, *Making Morocco*, 124–32.

²¹Pennel, *A Country with a Government and a Flag*, 257–9.

²²Goebel, *Anti-Imperialist Metropolis*, 158–66; Wyrzten, *Worldmaking in the Long Great War*, 189–94; Alma Rachel Heckman, *Radical Nationalists: Moroccan Jewish Communists 1925–1975* (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2015), 16–33; Pennel, ‘How and Why’, 801–2; Mevliyar Er and Paul B. Rich, ‘Abd El-Krim’s Guerrilla War against Spain and France in North Africa: An Adventure Setting for Screen Melodramas’, *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 26, no. 4 (2015): 597–615; Mevliyar Er, ‘Abd El-Krim al-Khattabi: The Unknown Mentor of Che Guevara’, *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 1 (2017): 137–59; Wyrzten, *Making Morocco*, 128–31.

²³Pennel, *A Country with a Government and a Flag*, 170–226; Wyrzten, *Making Morocco*, 132–5.

²⁴Phillip S. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism* (Princeton University Press, 1987), 152–60.

Syrian and Arab attitudes.²⁵ Michael Provence has pointed to the central place occupied by former Ottoman officers, who shared this regional consciousness, in the revolt. On one hand, these figures adhered to the Ottoman spatial and collective frameworks of identification; on the other, the political order agreed upon by European colonial powers, as well as the leaders of the new Turkish republic, was based on the negation of these structures. As the discussions that took place in Lausanne in 1923 demonstrated, this new political order was based on an aspiration to create ethnically homogenous nation-states. The British and the French sought to divide the former Ottoman Arab lands and to consolidate tiny, protected states that could be governed by populations they considered allies (Armenians, Greeks, Maronites, and Zionist Jews).²⁶

For Palestinians, the clearest symbol of the British colonial authorities' policy of divide and rule was their alliance with the Zionist movement and its colonisation efforts, as manifested in the Balfour Declaration. Eli Osheroff has shown that the date of the declaration became a day of national Palestinian protest during the years of the British mandate, including strikes and demonstrations.²⁷ In April 1925, during Balfour's visit to Palestine for the purpose of inaugurating the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, demonstrations erupted, and the Arab press in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon discussed the ways in which Balfour's declaration manifested the injustice of colonial British and French control in Bilad al-Sham.²⁸ The demonstrations were not limited within the boundaries of mandatory Palestine, and when Balfour approached Damascus, he faced a similar reception from locals who considered Palestine and Syria a singular geopolitical unit and shared the same political-spatial imagination.²⁹

'Abd al-Karim's actions in Morocco occupied the horizons of political discourse and imagination in Palestine as well. The Palestinian press published regular reports about political developments in the Rif, and the republic was considered a fulfilment of the possibility of a successful resistance to the colonial regime and its lackeys. For example, in May 1925, students at Rawdat al-Ma 'arif school in Jerusalem presented a play named after 'Abd al-Karim that dealt with the history of the Rif War. The discussion of his character in the Palestinian press became even larger following the developments in the Rif during 1925.³⁰

The Rif War, the memory of al-Andalus, and the Zionist-colonial alliance

On 16 July 1925, a short essay titled, 'To the help of the Riffians', was published in the Jaffa-based biweekly newspaper, *Al-Jazeera*, edited by Hasan Fahmi al-Dajani and Muhammad Kamel al-Dajani. This newspaper had been founded in 1924 as Palestine's second daily newspaper, though it was soon reduced to publishing weekly. *Al-Jazeera* emphasised a notion of broad, shared Arab identity, reflected in its logo of the Arabian peninsula.³¹ The writer of the essay, seemingly Hasan

²⁵Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, 160–7; Michael Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism* (University of Texas Press, 2005), 1–14.

²⁶Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), 151–4. Kayali and Wyrzten pointed to the fact that people in the Arab former Ottoman provinces identified with the Turkish struggle against the colonial forces and understood themselves as an integral part of an Anatolia-Syria-Mesopotamia nexus, which was marginalized following the Lausanne committee and the foundation of the Turkish Republic (Kayali, *Imperial Resilience*, 116–44; Wyrzten, *Worldmaking in the Long Great War*, 173–8). On the Palestinian identification with the Turkish movement during the war of independence, see Awad Halabi, 'Liminal Loyalties: Ottomanism and the Palestinian Responses to the Turkish War of Independence', *Journal of Palestine Studies* 41, no. 3 (2012): 19–37.

²⁷Eli Osheroff, 'Balfour-Ahad Ha'am Corner: Zionism, Nationalism and Imperialism in Early Palestinian Thought', *Te'oria u-bikoret* 49 (2017): 213.

²⁸Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement*, 243.

²⁹Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation*, 156–60.

³⁰See, for example, 'The presentation of the show ' 'Abd al-Karim', *Do'ar Hayom*, 22 May 1925, p. 9.

³¹See Mustafa Kabha, *Journalism in the Eye of the Storm: The Palestinian Press Shapes Public Opinion 1929–1939* (Yad Ben-Zvi, 2004), 29, 33. See also Yusuf Haikal, *Ayyam al-šibaan: Šur min al-hayyat wa-šafaḥat min al-ta'arikh* (*Days of Juvenility: Pictures of life and Papers of History*) (Dar al-Jalil lil-nashr wa-al-abḥath al-Falastiniyya, 1988), 175–6; Ya'aqov Yehosua,

Fahmi al-Dajani, called on Palestinians to help Riffian rebels, who were advancing into regions in the French protectorate. A month earlier, the French and the Spaniards had met in Madrid to develop a shared strategy for the massive attack against the Rif Republic. Al-Dajani turned sharply against the Europeans who claimed to 'seek for culture and science', yet 'their newspapers and writings do not hesitate to speak loud and clear of their aspiration to subjugate 'Abd al-Karim until Islam will lack any possibility to resist'. The Europeans pictured 'Abd al-Karim as a 'great danger ... since his victory is a victory for the Muslim peoples who are subjugated by the Europeans'.³²

The article framed 'Abd al-Karim as a symbol for national-liberation demands across Muslim North Africa and the Middle East, and explained European anxiety about his potential victory in related terms: a fear that 'the subjugated peoples' might 'throw off the yoke of Western colonialism'. The contrasting use of terms—'Muslims', 'the subjugated peoples', 'the weak people', 'Easterners' versus 'Europeans', 'colonialism', or 'Westerners'—reflected various transregional frameworks of identification. Aiding the Riffians, according to *Al-Jazeera*, was an integral part of fulfilling the 'nationalism to which we aspire'. In this manner, the act of resistance was integral to the identity they sought to promote in mandatory Palestine: an identity rooted in both the Muslim centres of identification and the common consciousness of the peoples of the 'East' against the European colonial regimes. This mode of framing national consciousness challenged the mandatory boundaries that sought to create distinct frameworks and political spaces of control. The framing of the Rif war as a reflection of global, regional, and pan-Islamic struggles to which Palestinians were connected was essential for their understanding of their own anti-colonial struggle.

Roughly a week earlier, the paper had reported on an announcement circulated in Jaffa that sought to collect money to aid 'Abd al-Karim, 'the hero of the Riffians'. The call emphasised the affinity between the Muslim world as a whole, 'and the Arabs in particular', with 'Abd al-Karim's revolt, emphasising that European angst about the revolt's success and the establishment of the republic was connected to the fear it might inspire similar movements in neighbouring colonised countries. Reportedly, a group of Jaffa residents responded to the call and quickly moved to collect donations.³³

This report was further translated in the Hebrew journal, *Do'ar Hayom*, which was published and administered by members of *Ha-solel* group. The group included people such as Itamar Ben-Avi (the newspaper's first editor), Avraham Elmaleh, and Alexander Ahronsohn, and was a central arena for those who turned against the hegemonic circles in the Zionist movement (from within the Zionist movement itself).³⁴ The newspaper was identified with residents of the Jewish settlements that had been founded during the late nineteenth century (a period known in Zionist historiography as the First Aliyah), as well as Sephardi indigenous Jews who objected to the growing domination of labour movements in Zionist institutions, and demanded basing the economy of the *Yishuv* (the term used to identify the Zionist entity in Palestine during the Ottoman and Mandatory periods) on capitalist entrepreneurship.³⁵

Three days following the translated publication, an essay titled 'Anarchy' (*hefquerut*) was published by Avraham Elmaleh (then the 'responsible editor' of the journal), in which he sharply turned against the initiative to collect money for the Riffians. He demanded the mandatory

Ta'arikh al-sihafa al-arabiyya al-falastiniyya fi bidayyat al-intidab al-britani 'ala falastin 1919–1929 (The History of the Palestinian Arab Press from the Beginning of the British Mandate in Palestine 1919–1929) (Haifa: Sharikat al-abhath al-ilmiyya al-'amaliyya – jamiat Haifa, 1981), 364–89.

³²Min huna wa-min hunaka: I 'anat al-rifiyyin (From Here and From There: Helping the Riffians)', *Al-Jazeera*, 16 July 1925, 1.

³³'Nida' ila al-muslimun (A Call for the Muslims)', *Al-Jazeera*, 9 July 1925, 3.

³⁴Qol qore la-muslemim (A Call for the Muslims)', *Do'ar Hayom*, 12 July 1925, 3.

³⁵Yigal Drori, 'The Positions Taken by Do'ar Hayom from its Founding to the End of 1924', *Zionism* 12 (1987): 141–64; Uzi Elyada, 'Yellow Journalism and Journalistic Crusades: Do'ar Hayom and the Rupin Affair', *Israel* 24 (2016): 329–53; Uzi Elyada, 'Fake News in the Hebrew Press in Palestine in the Late Ottoman and Early Mandate Period', *Kesher* 55 (2020): 48–76.

government take action against those who were circulating the call. According to Elmaleh, these calls were an incitement 'to provoke the spirits and create undesirable movements in our own country', and their authors should be punished.³⁶ In a similar logic to al-Dajani's, who saw aid to the Riffians as an act of broader anti-colonial resistance, Elmaleh's criticism rested upon such announcements' local and global meaning, including the ways they could influence the British mandate's relations with other colonial regimes. He pointed to the British need to maintain 'friendly relations with its ally, France, and with Spain', and argued that allowing the publication of such calls as were found in *Al-Jazeera* put the stability of the alliance in danger. He also adopted the French colonial rhetoric of the *mission civilisatrice*, juxtaposing France, the bringer of knowledge and progress to Morocco, against 'Abd al-Karim, whom he identified as a medieval despot who threatened 'to take this beautiful state back to the days before it had been approached by France'. Elmaleh sought to de-legitimise the Moroccan anti-colonial struggle while framing it as a struggle of savages against cultured colonial authorities. This reflected common representations of 'Abd al-Karim's character in the European press, and such arguments also were used to justify military attacks on civilians against any international criticism.³⁷

Elmaleh was also aware of other potential ramifications of *Al-Jazeera's* proclamation. He understood the announcement's emphasis on European fears that the Rif War might inspire further anti-colonial resistance movements as an implicit reference to the British colonial authorities in Palestine (an explicit statement would have risked censorship). As Provence has argued, journalists throughout the Middle East recognised that while they could criticise the foreign mandatory authorities, a direct critique of their own colonial authorities could lead to their imprisonment.³⁸ Elmaleh's call to prevent what he depicted as instigation against British *allies* was actually a call to prevent the development of a local Palestinian anti-colonial movement, influenced by 'Abd al-Karim's success, against the British authorities *themselves*—'in these days when our country needs quiet and serenity', as he termed it. His demands reflected his sympathies with the global colonial powers.

Elmaleh's position had shifted significantly during the preceding decades. During the late Ottoman period, Elmaleh had served as the editor of the daily newspaper, *Ha-herut* (*The Liberty*) and the secretary of *Ha-magen* (*The Shield*) association. *Ha-herut* was a prominent stage for indigenous Sephardi Jews who criticised the dominant Zionist repertoire advocating separatist practices and perceptions. This indigenous attitude saw shared Ottoman citizenship and a local shared homeland as crucial foundations for Jewish national existence in Palestine. This group, however, did not criticise the Zionist colonisation policy itself and its practice of expelling Arabs.³⁹ Indigenous groups that were critical of the Zionist repertoire were gradually marginalised, however, as Sephardi Jews increasingly accepted the status of the Zionist movement as the sole representative of Jews in Palestine.⁴⁰ The clear global pro-colonial attitude Elmaleh voiced against *Al-Jazeera* reflected this shift in orientation, through which Sephardi identity and demands for rights became assimilated into the Zionist framework.⁴¹

³⁶A. E., 'Hefqerut (Anarchy)', *Do'ar Hayom*, 15 July 1925, 2.

³⁷See Pennel, 'How and Why', 801–2; Er and Rich, 'Screen Melodramas'; Elizabeth Bolorinos Allard, *Spanish National Identity, Colonial Power and the Portrayal of Muslims and Jews during the Rif War* (Woodbridge, 2021), 8–9.

³⁸Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation*, 183.

³⁹Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 133–66; Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 82–116; Behar, '1911'; Evri, *The Return to al-Andalus*, 82–103; Abigail Jacobson, 'Jews Writing in Arabic: Shimon Moyal, Nissim Malul and the Mixed Palestinian/Eretz-Israeli Locale', in *Late Ottoman Palestine: The Period of the Young Turks*, eds. Eyal Ginio and Yuval Ben-Bassat (I. B. Tauris, 2011), 165–82. See also Yosef Eliyahu Chelouche, *Reminiscences of My Life [1870–1930]* (Babel, 2005 [1931]), 149–53; Alp Yenen, 'Envisioning Turco-Arab Co-Existence between Empire and Nationalism', *Die Welt des Islams* 61 (2021): 94.

⁴⁰Evri and Cohen, 'Between Shared Homeland to National Home'.

⁴¹On Elmaleh's activities during the mandate period, see Amos Noy, *Experts or Witnesses: Jewish Intelligentsia from Jerusalem and the Levant in the Beginning of the 20th Century* (Resling, 2017), 151–78; Tamir Karkason, 'Shabbateanism and the Ma'aminim in the Writings of Abraham Elmaleh', *El Prezente* 10 (2016): 123–42; Evri, *The Return to al-Andalus*, 252.

Al-Jazeera did not let Elmaleh's accusation go without response. Eight days later, an article entitled '*Do'ar Hayom's nerve*' was published in the paper.⁴² The author, apparently al-Dajani again, began with the statement that one should not be surprised by Elmaleh's perspective, since 'the hopes of the Zionists contradict those of the Arabs, and the meaning of life for Arab nationalism is considered death to Jewish nationalism'. Since the Zionists aspired to create an '(unnatural) national home (*watan qawmi*) in Palestine', the author argued, it could only be established 'under the shadow of European colonialism'. Therefore, he claimed, 'the Zionists put all their efforts in order to resist the aspirations of the Arabs and to strengthen the spirit of colonialism in the East and especially in the Arab lands'. If the Zionists constituted a majority of the Palestinian population, he added, they might have demanded the removal of the colonial regime, but because they did not, they required the backing of the colonial authority, and the land's lack of independence, to fulfil their aspirations.

The essay's tone, however, shifted in its next paragraphs. The author expressed amazement at the Jews' support of the same powers which were responsible for their brethren's oppression in Europe. 'When you are standing in Europe against the European states, they are keeping on oppressing you ... and when you are coming to the East, you become their supporters and protect them!' The author noted a fundamental tension: on one hand, the Zionists were settlers who relied on the protection of the colonial authorities to pursue their national aspirations. On the other, Jews, like colonised peoples, had suffered from European methods of oppression. This aspect made them potential allies. The Rif War, and the role of Spain as the aggressor, clearly exemplified the paradox of the Zionist position:

Have the Jews forgotten the Golden Age in al-Andalus, and the civilization founded there by the Arabs? ... Have the Jews forgotten their oppression by the Spaniards after the end of the Arabs' rule in al-Andalus so much that they are now ready to protect Spanish colonialism in the Rif ... ?⁴³

The memory of al-Andalus, both as a place of cultural harmony and its violent destruction, was perceived by al-Dajani as an example that should encourage Zionists (referred to, not incidentally, as Jews) to take a different attitude. Spain was seen as a place that concomitantly demonstrated that Jewish life could flourish under Muslim rule and had suffered from violent European oppression. In light of this memory, two starkly different choices appeared to confront Zionists: to support their former oppressors—the Spanish colonial government and its violent acts against the Riffians—or to support the aspirations of those who participated in the foundations of the rich Jewish Andalusian culture.

The Palestinian turn towards al-Andalus as a history that conjoined Jewish identification with anti-colonial struggles came up against different, even contradicting, understandings of this shared past. In European Jewish context, the turn to the Spanish Golden Age reflected a model of successful Jewish integration within a *European* cultural framework and was used to justify Jewish emancipation in Europe and served as a source of inspiration for German Jewish bourgeoisie enlightenment culture. This interpretation erased its Islamic context. Alternatively, some Middle Eastern Jewish intellectuals demanded its contextualisation as a symbolic memory site of an earlier shared Jewish-Arab existence.⁴⁴

In the context of the Rif War, the turn to al-Andalus should be examined from another angle. Elizabeth Bollorinos Allard has argued that Spanish colonial rule in Northern Morocco was unique, since for Spaniards, the encounter with Moroccan Muslims and Jews was a rejuvenated encounter with the Spanish past. This encounter influenced the ways in which national identity

⁴²'Waqahat jaridat Do'ar Hayom (Do'ar Hayom's Nerve)', *Al-Jazeera*, 23 July 1925, 1.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴Evri, *The Return to al-Andalus*, 32–41, 58–141.

was imagined in Spain. From this perspective, the colony was not seen as an entirely foreign space, but rather one in which history had blurred the geographic and cultural boundaries that allegedly distinguished Spain from North Africa. In this context, the memory of al-Andalus served to justify Spanish colonial rule and underpinned a colonial discourse focusing on 'brotherhood' and a 'common' African-Spanish national identity.⁴⁵

The Palestinian turn to al-Andalus, characterised by emphasising its Arabness rather than its Spanishness, served as the basis for constructing an anti-colonial identification.⁴⁶ This approach acknowledged the complexity of the Zionist population, and pointed to its internal contradictions as representing persecuted European Jews and European colonial interests in the Middle East at the same time. Al-Dajani ended his essay with a call for the Zionist movement, and *Do'ar Hayom* particularly, to understand that the friendship of the Arabs was necessary for the achievement of their collective aspirations. They needed to acknowledge their destiny as a tiny island within a huge Arab ocean and the need for cooperation with their neighbours. Aware of growing hostilities within the Hebrew-speaking community, al-Dajani juxtaposed *Do'ar Hayom* with *Ha'arets* (which was characterised by a more liberal approach), which he depicted as one that understood this clear determination. Uzi Elyada has shown that Moshe Glickson, *Ha'arets*'s editor, was one of the prominent opponents of *Do'ar Hayom*, which he described as a 'tabloid' that 'poisons the wells of the public sphere and fills the land with falsehood'.⁴⁷ The responses to al-Dajani's essay in both Hebrew papers, however, reflected their shared basic attitudes.

In the pages of *Do'ar Hayom*, Elmaleh responded to the critique in *Al-Jazeera* scornfully, framing it as 'curses and abuses'. The Arab newspapers, he said, see 'the shadows of the mountains as mountains', and their words were against not only *Do'ar Hayom*, but against 'the whole people of Yisrael'. As in his first article, Elmaleh continued to adhere to common colonial arguments, framing colonial rule as necessary for those 'masses whose concepts of liberation and independence are only elementary'.⁴⁸ He described the protectorate as a dam preventing Morocco's deterioration into barbarity. Elmaleh's words negated Palestinian resistance to Zionist colonisation—what he described as 'seeing shadows of mountains as mountains'—while illustrating broader identification with global colonial order. The colonised masses' 'elementary concepts' of independence meant they could not grasp the progress brought by order.

Before Elmaleh's response was published, *Ha'arets* published a translation of *Al-Jazeera*'s essay. At the end, it added a comment in which the newspaper sought to dissociate itself from *Al-Jazeera*'s compliments: 'With all his criticism of *Do'ar Hayom*, the writer must acknowledge the fact that *Do'ar Hayom* has no chauvinistic-national desire regarding the Arabs as *Al-Jazeera* and its companions have regarding the Jews'.⁴⁹ The writer of the comment in *Ha'arets* questioned the context in which al-Dajani discussed the Rif War, and the Zionist identification with the colonial authorities, and sought to untangle the issues of relations between Arabs and Jews and the necessity of dismantling colonial structures. Similar to Elmaleh's dismissal of Palestinian arguments as 'intense imagination', *Ha'arets*'s author depicted them as deriving from a 'chauvinistic-national desire'. Despite the bitter hostility between the two papers, *Ha'arets* stood beside *Do'ar Hayom* against *Al-Jazeera*'s arguments. Although al-Dajani attempted to rely on one of the Hebrew newspapers to justify his claims, *Ha'arets*'s author renounced it, reflecting the fact that it shared *Do'ar Hayom*'s colonial sympathies, though perhaps in a more respectable shape.

⁴⁵Allard, *Spanish National Identity*; Evri, *The Return to al-Andalus*, 119–28; Eric Calderwood, *Colonial al-Andalus: Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture* (Harvard University Press, 2018).

⁴⁶See, in this context, Shakib Arslan's concept of al-Andalus and the way it influenced the Moroccan national movement (Calderwood, *Colonial al-Andalus*, 251–66). See also David Stenner, 'Centring the Periphery: Northern Morocco as a Hub of Transnational Anti-colonial Activism, 1930–43', *Journal of Global History* 11 (2016): 435–6.

⁴⁷Elyada, "'Yellow' Journalism".

⁴⁸A. E., 'Al-Jazeera zo'ef (Al-Jazeera is Furious)', *Do'ar Hayom*, 28 July 1925, 2.

⁴⁹Ba-itonut ha-aravit: 'Al-Jazeera' al "Do'ar Hayom" ve-al "Ha'arets" (In the Arab Press: *Al-Jazeera* on *Do'ar Hayom* and *Ha'arets*), *Ha'arets*, 26 July 1925, 2.

Between the Rif and Jabal al-Duruz: Anti-colonialism on the boundaries of Palestine

In the last days of July, when the controversy regarding the Rif War was taking place, the uprising in Jabal al-Duruz also erupted. In this instance, it was the case of an uprising adjacent to the boundaries of mandatory Palestine, in an arena which Palestinians identified as an integral part of their own geopolitical scope. The revolt's relation to the global colonial order was even more tangible. An article published in *Do'ar Hayom*, signed by the pseudonym Avi-'Amar and depicting the events in Jabal al-Duruz, followed the line of supporting the colonial regimes.⁵⁰ The author criticised the French colonial administration for adopting the former Ottoman patterns of governance, which he argued had allowed the Druze to remain largely autonomous and develop their military effectiveness while taking advantage of their familiarity with the region's mountainous terrain. This observation, he argued, was relevant to the British colonial administration in Palestine as well, as they also drew on Ottoman precedents. This policy had led the French into 'a continuous and exhausting war'.⁵¹

Already at this early stage, Avi-'Amar argued that the uprising should not be seen as local and limited in scope, but rather as having the potential to become a regional revolt against colonial rule. For this kind of struggle, the artificial geographic distinctions created by colonial boundaries could divide the shared spatial consciousness of those who stood on both sides of the boundary. 'Palestine and Syria share, beside other interests, a common enemy', he claimed, 'they are both sick in the same illness: the opponents who miss the Turkish meat pot, and any revolt in both mandatory states makes them stand with pride and confidence'. His awareness of Palestinian identification with global anti-colonial movements, and his understanding that the Ottoman spatial frameworks of identification had endured, lay at the foundations of his anxiety regarding the possible expansion of the revolt not only into Syrian urban spheres, but also into mandatory Palestine: 'this land that only now started to enjoy some rest and calm'. Therefore, he argued, he called on the French 'to oppress the revolt before it will expand and cross the boundaries'.⁵² Here, even more forcefully, Zionist reliance on the British mandatory authorities became integrated with a broader sense of identification with the regional colonial order.

Nissim Malul disputed Avi-'Amar's attitude and questioned his fear about the possible expansion of the revolt into mandatory Palestine. Malul, like Elmaleh, was a prominent figure among the circle of Ottoman Sephardi intellectuals who turned against the dominant separatist Zionist policy, and was regarded as one of the most radical among them. In 1913, following controversy regarding the foundation of a Palestinian Jewish newspaper in Arabic, Malul had argued that 'we must ... intermingle with the Arabs ... we must consolidate our Semite nationality and must not blur it with European culture, and through the Arabic we will be able to create a real Hebrew culture'.⁵³ His approach towards the uprising in Jabal al-Duruz reveals the extent to which colonial political logics had become consolidated even amongst these more radical oppositionists.

Malul pointed to similarities between the Druze and the Albanians, as two groups whose uprisings against the Ottoman authorities had ended with the acceptance of their political demands for autonomous existence. Against Avi-'Amar's open contempt for the nostalgia for the

⁵⁰My assumption is that Avi-'Amar is another pseudonym that was used by Elmaleh, but I was not able to prove it. That is since the article was published on the front page of the newspaper while Elmaleh served as its responsible editor. In Elmaleh's bibliography there is a jump between the beginning of 1925 to 1928 when no article published in the press is mentioned, apparently since he has mostly used pseudonyms during this period, another fact that strengthens this assumption. I thank Amos Noy for his help he provided me.

⁵¹Avi-'Amar, 'Mered ha-druzim (The Druze Revolt)', *Do'ar Hayom*, 14 August 1925, 1.

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³Nissim Malul, 'Ma'amadenu ba-arets (sof) (Our Status in the land (an end))', *Ha-herut*, 19 June 1913, 2; Jacobson, 'Jews Writing in Arabic'; Evri, *The Return to al-Andalus*, 82–103.

'Turkish meat pot', Malul saw Ottoman diplomacy and the imperial willingness to consent to collective demands by certain groups in the empire as a model that should be adopted by the French colonial administration. Malul, however, dismissed the potential of the uprising to become a broader revolt, and spoke scornfully of a broad regional identity. 'After the dismantling of the Turkish rule', he argued, 'and the existence of Jabal al-Duruz under a totally different regime . . . the Palestinians do not regard this revolt but as an unimportant item'.⁵⁴ In other words, as opposed to Avi-'Amar, Malul saw the new system of colonial boundaries as one that had indeed brought about the dismantling of regional identity frameworks. Therefore, he estimated that the revolt was unlikely to expand beyond the boundaries of French mandatory Syria.

Malul then claimed that the risks of the revolt crossing the border into Palestine were further limited because the Palestinian Druze were 'satisfied with the British authority, until their brethren in Syria are being jealous of them'. Not only that, their numbers were very small, and therefore they could not raise significant political demands in a similar way to their Syrian counterparts. The Druze, he continued, enjoyed British protection even under Ottoman authority, and one should not assume they would turn their backs on their allies. In the end, he added one further argument—'the difference between the Muslims and the Druze is even bigger than that between them and the Jews'.⁵⁵ The Druze uprising, Malul concluded, would not cross its local boundaries, since the Druze could not become part of a broader Arab national movement and were thus unlikely to lead the first significant anti-colonial resistance movement in the former Ottoman Arab Mashriq.

Malul's approach would become prominent in Zionist discourse, according to which the Druze were regarded as non-Arabs, and therefore as a group that were not potential partners of an Arab national movement.⁵⁶ This depiction of the Druze as totally distinct from other indigenous groups and as beneficiaries of British protection—a protection that served as the basis for the crystallisation of politics of sectarianism and violence between the region's various groups—reflected the acceptance of colonial logic.⁵⁷ Malul, who saw himself in the past as part of the common 'ecumenical frame' developed in the Ottoman Arab provinces, expressed in his words the implications of the colonial divide-and-rule policies had for local indigenous actors. In this period, he came to identify the protections guaranteed by the British in the Ottoman Empire—to Jews and Druze alike—as a basis for different frameworks of identification, not for the development of a broad alliance with the other indigenous populations.⁵⁸

Although arriving at a different conclusion than Avi-'Amar and identifying the Ottoman past as a model of calculated politics, Malul's article nevertheless reflected, with greater vigour, acceptance of colonial logics and an attempt to distinguish between colonised groups in order to prevent the crystallisation of a unified national alliance against the colonial authorities. This attitude manifested by relating the Druze uprising as distinct, local, and limited in its scope. Malul ignored developments during the Ottoman period and the role played by the imperial military and education system in developing political and cultural identification with the Ottoman state, and thereby connections between different populations in the Arab provinces.⁵⁹

Malul abstained from supporting the demands raised by the rebels, and dedicated his words mainly to the political choices he thought the French administration needed to undertake in order to avoid a meaningless military operation: 'Since we care about France's honor, we will be satisfied

⁵⁴Nissim Malul, 'Ha-albanim ve-hadruzim (The Albanians and the Druze)', *Do'ar Hayom*, 23 August 1925, 2.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶Kais M. Firro, *The Druzes in the Jewish State: A Brief History* (Brill, 1999), 1–10, 21–32; Eduardo Wassim Aboualatif, 'Revisiting the Druze Politics in Palestine under British Colonial Rule', *Arab Studies Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (2018): 233–53.

⁵⁷Ussama Samir Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (University of California Press, 2000).

⁵⁸Ussama Samir Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (University of California Press, 2019).

⁵⁹Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, 160–7; Provençe, *The Great Syrian Revolt*, 38–47.

if it will follow the ways taken by Turkey before, and it won't be said: the Druze in the east and the Riffians in the west, and France itself is trapped at a critical juncture regarding its internal issues'.⁶⁰ Here, Malul positioned himself in the place of an adviser to a French colonial administration coping with not one but two fronts—in Jabal al-Duruz and in the Rif. Several weeks later, following the eruption of uprisings in Hama and Damascus, the regional and national context of the revolt could not be ignored. The massive French artillery and aerial attacks on Damascus on 18 October turned the revolt into a global interest.

Damascus's bombardment and another Palestinian addressee to the Hebrew press

The bombardment of such an important and historical city as Damascus quickly became a subject of global discussion, and served as a basis for Syrian national demands. The shock that characterised writing in the West on the French colonial military's violent oppression of the revolt had little to do with any support for the rebels. As a matter of fact, at the beginning of al-Atrash's uprising in Jabal al-Duruz, the revolt was framed in the Western press as a manifestation of primitiveness and oriental lust for honour. There was no danger, Western journalists argued, that al-Atrash might become 'a second 'Abd al-Karim'.⁶¹ The uprisings were framed within the well-known pattern of enforcing the authority of the civilised colonial regime against the barbaric rebels. This picture, however, was turned on its head following news of the aerial bombardments, seen as war crimes, which challenged notions of the French mandate as 'civilisation'.⁶²

Criticism in the European and American press obliged the mandates' committee of the League of Nations to take action in order to reinforce the global legitimacy of the mandatory authorities. As Susan Pedersen has shown, the mandates' committee did not limit the French military response, but rather attempted to make French mandatory governance compatible with the global mandatory system. Syrian representatives could have submitted their complaints to the committee, but since they did not enjoy any formal status, the last word was given to the representatives of the French colonial authority.

The British offered limited criticism and expressed discomfort with the French attacks; however, they remained loyal to what they considered their clear interest—the continuation of cooperation with France to maintain their own colonial rule in the Middle East.⁶³ They invited the newly appointed French high commissioner of Syria and Lebanon, Henry de Jouvenel, to a meeting with Leo Amery, the British secretary of state for the colonies, at the beginning of November.⁶⁴ The Palestinian newspaper *Filastin* saw this invitation as the colonial powers confirming a 'unified European front' against the aspirations of the colonised peoples 'for liberty and independence', of which the Syrian revolt was a clear manifestation.⁶⁵ *Filastin* had been founded by the cousins 'Isa al-'Isa and Yusuf al-'Isa in 1911 and was the most circulated and influential Palestinian newspaper. By 1912, it had become a main outlet for Palestinian opposition to Zionist colonisation, while linking this local struggle with regional Arab realities under colonial rule.⁶⁶ The invitation of de Jouvenel, the author (who was, seemingly, 'Isa al-'Isa) claimed, should be understood as part of creating a unified front against anti-colonial resistance sprawling from the Rif in northwestern Africa to East Asia. The close connection between the two revolts in the Rif and Syria emerged as two symbols of the same global phenomenon of anti-colonial resistance.

⁶⁰Malul, 'Ha-albanim ve-hadruzim', 2.

⁶¹'Agitation against General Sarrail', *The Times*, 10 August, 1925. Quoted in Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 147.

⁶²Pedersen, *The Guardians*, 142–52.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 152–68.

⁶⁴Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, 182–5.

⁶⁵Mu'amara Şahayuniyya (Zionist Conspiracy)', *Filastin*, 20 November 1925, 1.

⁶⁶Khalidi, *The Iron Cage*, 90–104; Emanuel Beska, 'Filastin's Changing Attitude toward Zionism before World War I', *Jerusalem Quarterly* 72 (2017): 86–101.

Al-‘Isa discussed the British fear of the possible expansion of the revolt into Palestine. Initially, al-‘Isa rejected these concerns. However, the newspaper’s sympathy for the revolt became clear in a public statement published next to the article, on the front page of the paper, by Sultan al-Atrash, himself, who signed it as the leader of the popular national revolt in Syria.⁶⁷ Al-‘Isa’s main argument, nevertheless, was dedicated to clarifying the connection between the two colonial authorities. While the British invitation might have been considered a part of the broader activities of the League of Nations, to restore French colonial policies to the path of proper, globally acknowledged patterns of governance, al-‘Isa argued to the contrary. According to him, the British interest in de Jouvenel’s future policies derived from their possible impacts on the national aspirations of indigenous Palestinians. He argued the British sought to convince de Jouvenel to impose a very rigid policy against the rebels’ demands, since ‘it might have very undesirable implications on Palestine itself, since its residents might demand to be related to in the same manner as the Syrians, and this will be a twisted thing that cannot be made straight’.⁶⁸

But al-‘Isa did not finish with the global context and returned to the uniqueness of the local Palestinian one, in which indigenous Palestinians confronted not only the colonial administration, but its protected population of Zionist settlers as well. According to al-‘Isa, Zionists and their supporters in the ministry of the colonies were involved in Amery’s initiative. In a similar way to al-Dajani in *Al-Jazeera* several months before, al-‘Isa argued that the existence of Palestine ‘under autocratic government’ was necessary for the fulfilment of Zionist aspirations for a ‘national home’. This understanding was the reason for Zionist hostility to any ‘Arab unity, Eastern alliance or Syrian independence’.⁶⁹ In other words, Zionist settlement aspirations, which relied on colonial rule for their fulfilment, determined the Zionist movement’s attitudes in the global arena, leading it to stand on the side of the colonial powers and take part in the unified European front to break the spirit of resistance among the colonised.

Two days before al-‘Isa’s article was published, the article that was mentioned at the beginning of this article, ‘To the Hebrew Press’, was published in the Jerusalem-based newspaper, *Mir’at al-Sharq*. As Zachary Foster has argued, *Mir’at al-Sharq* was influenced by national movements across the Arab countries and saw them as models for Palestinian national practices.⁷⁰ This was very much apparent in the newspaper’s intensive publishing on the Syrian revolt. The essay was likely written by Bulus Shehadeh, the newspaper’s editor, who turned against the Hebrew press’s sympathies with the colonial authorities. Like al-Dajani in his response to Elmaleh, Shehadeh claimed that the Zionist-colonial partnership reflected a forgetting of Jewish experience in Europe, on the one hand, and the colonial essence of Zionist practices in Palestine, on the other. While Zionist public figures often spoke of their own aspirations to achieve a reciprocal understanding between Jews and Arabs, emphasising the Semitic connection shared by the two groups, Shehadeh explained that they undercut that very possibility by siding with the Arabs’ oppressors against legitimate aspirations for liberation.⁷¹

Shehadeh’s critique of the pro-colonial attitude of the Hebrew press constructed its coverage in terms of forgetting: forgetting the relations between the European regimes and the Jews throughout history—‘you stood alongside France and Spain . . . and you have forgotten what the latter have done to you’; forgetting the historic identification of Jews with oppressed peoples; and forgetting the way in which Zionism introduced itself to the Arabs—‘you forgot that by doing so

⁶⁷Sultan al-Atrash, ‘Al-qiyadat al-‘ama li-thawrat al-wataniyya al-suriyya (The General Leadership of the Syrian National Revolt)’, *Filastin*, 20 November 1925, 1.

⁶⁸Mu’amara Şahayuniyya’.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰Zachary Foster, ‘Arabness, Turkey and the Palestinian National Imagination in the Eyes of *Mir’at al-Sharq* 1919–1926’, *Jerusalem Quarterly* 42 (2010): 61–79.

⁷¹‘Ila al-şuḥuf al-‘ibraniyya (To the Hebrew Press)’, *Mir’at al-Sharq*, 18 November 1925, 1.

[aligning yourself with France] you undercut the claims you make over and over again'.⁷² The attitude of the Hebrew press toward these struggles reflected, according to Shehadeh, Zionism's attempt to erase Jewish history. This, he argued, should place Jews firmly on the side of the Arabs rebelling against their Western colonial overlords. Similar to al-Dajani, Shehadeh cited the traumatic memory of al-Andalus and the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain as a shared basis for an anti-colonial alliance and condemnation of colonial suppression. Zionist attitudes, however, were determined by their settler-colonial interests, while marginalising their Jewish memories. Shehadeh's figurative articulation of the Zionist Yishuv as 'a small island in the middle of a vast Arab ocean' (again, following al-Dajani), evoked a spatial imagination that refused to reconcile itself to emerging colonial geographies. In allying themselves with the French and the Spanish, Zionists revealed their desire to recreate the Yishuv as a distinctively European space construed in opposition to their Middle Eastern geographical, cultural, and political surroundings.

The following issue of *Mir'at al-Sharq* published excerpts of a rebuttal from the author and essayist Yehoshua Radler-Feldman, also known as R. Binyamin. R. Binyamin was a Zionist oppositionist who criticised the Zionist settler-colonial policies of the 'conquest of land' and 'conquest of labor'.⁷³ Some months before the publication of Shehadeh's article, he had published an essay in *Ha'aretz*, in which he argued that the current situation required the Zionist movement to determine its global attitude regarding anti-colonial struggle: 'The great East is awakening, opening its eyes and looking to us, too ... opinion leaders are about to make their determinations about us. They have but one question: Are you with us or against us?'⁷⁴ This was the same question Shehadeh addressed to the Hebrew press.

In his response, R. Binyamin argued that Shehadeh relied on the editorials of two newspapers—*Do'ar Hayom* and *Palestine Weekly*—that were indeed hostile to the anti-colonial uprisings and were known to stand alongside the colonial powers. R. Binyamin raised *Ha'aretz* and *Davar* as counter-examples of a different attitude, more sympathetic to the struggles and more representative of actual public opinion among Palestine's Jews.⁷⁵ *Ha'aretz* and *Davar* acknowledged the great destruction and numerous casualties caused by French aerial attacks on Damascus in October, even ascribing the revolt to 'the bitter experience the Druze had ... under the despotic rule of Cabrillet'.⁷⁶ R. Binyamin's implication that the majority of the Jewish Yishuv empathised with the Druze cause was exaggerated, however. Except for the publication of essays by Hugo Bergmann and R. Binyamin himself, it is impossible to argue, by looking at its pages, that *Ha'aretz* particularly sympathised with the revolt and its professed objectives. *Ha'aretz*'s attitude can be compared to the one taken by liberal politicians in the League of Nations, whose main concerns were reestablishing the legitimacy of the mandates system.

Shehadeh, for his part, sought to expose R. Binyamin's claims as wishful thinking. He characterised R. Binyamin, who was an observant Jew, as 'one of the orthodox Jews ... whose aspirations are totally different from those of the Zionists'.⁷⁷ By cementing the schematic distinction between Zionists and Orthodox Jews, and ascribing R. Binyamin's views to his belonging to the latter group, Shehadeh communicated to his readers the limited context in which

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Avi-ram Tzoreff, 'An Imagined Desert That is Indeed the Core of the Yishuv': R. Binyamin and the Emergence of Zionist Settler-colonial Policies (1908–1914)', *Jahrbuch des Dubnow Institut* 18 (2019 [2022]): 139–63.

⁷⁴Min, 'Kol Mehatzetzim (Sound of Archers)', *Ha'aretz*, 9 July 1925, 2. On R. Binyamin, see Hanan Harif, *For We are Brethren: The Turn to the East in Zionist Thought* (Zalman Shazar Center, 2019), 95–190; Avi-ram Tzoreff, *Kedma Mizraha: R. Binyamin, Binationalism and Counter-Zionism* (Zalman Shazar Center, 2023).

⁷⁵'Al-'Arab wa-l-yahud: jawab ala kittab (Arabs and Jews: A Response to the Article)', *Mir'at al-Sharq*, 25 November 1925, 2.

⁷⁶'Ba-itonut ha-aravit (In the Arab Press)', *Davar*, 2 August 1925, 2; 'Ha-tzarfatim yatzu mi-damesek (The French Left Damascus)', *Davar*, 21 October 1925, 1.

⁷⁷'Al-'Arab wa-l-yahud'.

they should read his words.⁷⁸ Zionist Jews in Palestine, Shehadeh argued, differed from their Orthodox counterparts theirs was a political programme for ‘Jewish sovereignty [*mamlaka*]’, a goal that could be attained only when they achieved total domination over a region. In Palestine, therefore, Zionists would settle for nothing less than a political reality in which Arabs lacked meaningful political power. That was why, Shehadeh argued, Zionists would ‘be happy with any tragedy [*nakba*] or trouble’ that befell the Arabs and thus supported the colonial powers, who had promised the foundation of a Jewish sovereign state.⁷⁹ As far as Shehadeh was concerned, because R. Binyamin was an observant Jew who did not share Zionist political aspirations for sovereignty, he was able to sympathise with, and perhaps even share, the Eastern understanding of the rebels’ objectives in the Rif and in Syria.

The subsequent issue of *Mir’at al-Sharq* included another letter from R. Binyamin in which he rejected Shehadeh’s notion that Zionists and Orthodox Jews stood in binary opposition in their attitudes toward Arabs. He again cited *Ha’arets* and *Davar*, emphasising they were Zionist newspapers that ‘regard[ed] the Arabs in general and the question of the Rifian and the Druze with respect and sympathy’.⁸⁰ He thus sought to reclaim the term ‘Zionism’ from the pro-imperialist politics with which it had come to be associated. According to R. Binyamin, patriotic sentiment did not come at the expense of solidarity with other national struggles. On the contrary: the ‘true Zionist’ identified ‘especially’ with colonised peoples ‘struggling for their liberation’ and acknowledged the fact that ‘the happiness of the world depends on the liberty of all peoples and their independent development’.⁸¹ This understanding of ‘true Zionism’ as identifying with the Arab anti-colonial struggle was in no way a common Zionist perspective. It, however, reflected R. Binyamin’s criticism of Zionist support for the colonial forces—an attitude to which he continued to remain loyal.

Epilogue: The legacy of 1925, Palestine, and the ‘Third World’

During the year 1926, the French and Spaniards overpowered the Rif Republic, and influenced by this success, the French colonial military suppressed the Great Syrian Revolt in 1927 as well. The suppression of these revolts should not be seen, however, as their ending: people’s identification and fascination with the anti-colonial struggles in the Middle East and North Africa had broader political ramifications and helped lay the foundations for a global front against colonialism. As Sana Tannoury-Karam has argued, the events of the Syrian revolt were a major influence on the foundation of the League Against Imperialism and the organisation of the assembly in Brussels in 1927.⁸² The discussion of the question of Palestine during the assembly, Tannoury-Karam notes, reflected the prominence of the Arab delegates in forming a broad global anti-imperialist front, on the one hand, and the boundaries of the League’s ‘global-ness’—it avoided recognising Zionism as a tool in the hands of imperial powers—on the other. Between the League Against Imperialism’s meetings in Brussels in 1927 and in Frankfurt in 1929, the question of Palestine was raised time

⁷⁸This distinction was based on the impressions of the meeting held in ‘Aman between the leadership of the Orthodox movement of Agudas Yisroel in Palestine and Sharif Hussein and Amir Abdullah in the previous year.

⁷⁹‘Al-‘Arab wa-l-yahud’.

⁸⁰Rabi Binyamin, ‘al-‘Arab wa-l-yahud aydan: jawab ‘ala jawab (Arabs and Jews as Well: A Response to the Response)’, *Mir’at al-Sharq*, 28 November 1925, 3.

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²Sana Tannoury-Karam, ‘Long Live the Revolutionary Alliance against Imperialism: Interwar Anti-Imperialism and the Arab Levant’, in *The League against Imperialism: Lives and Afterlives*, eds Michele Loru et al. (Leiden University Press, 2020), 107–33; Jürgen Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement: Genesis, Organization and Politics (1927–1992)*, translated by Alex Skinner (Brill, 2019), 16–41. See also Lior Sternfeld, ‘The Roots of the “Third World” Concept in the Middle East’, *Jama’a* 24 (2019): 75–80. On the influence of the Rif War on later anti-colonial and communist movements in Morocco, see Heckman, *Radical Nationalists*, 16–68; Stenner, ‘Centring the Periphery’, 430–50.

and again in the context of global anti-imperialism, and Palestinian delegates were prominent figures in these discussions.

Within the Zionist movement, at the same time, the issue of a Zionist-colonial alliance also remained a point of debate. Avraham Elmaleh insisted on the same approach he had articulated earlier, favouring the European colonial order and sharply resisting any Arab regional aspirations. R. Binyamin, in contrast, turned against him. Elmaleh's article published in 1928 clearly expressed the opinions al-Dajani, al-'Isa and Shehadeh had identified and criticised in their essays from 1925.⁸³ Elmaleh argued the Zionist aspiration 'to build our own national home within our own tiny corner' based on the Balfour declaration required the creation of a Jewish majority within the limited area of mandatory Palestine. In turn, it necessitated the adoption of the global colonial framework as a whole. Therefore, Elmaleh indicated, Zionists needed to reject anti-colonial approaches and networks, which he argued sought 'to rejuvenate the well-known "Arab unity" ... to unify under one banner the whole regions of Syria and the Hijaz, Iraq and Arabia'. This aspiration he considered 'a poison'. 'We want to build our country on the bases of the Balfour declaration', he argued, 'and they want to build it on this declaration's ruins'.

R. Binyamin turned against Elmaleh, emphasising the shift that occurred in the latter's attitudes between the late Ottoman period and since the emergence of British colonial rule. 'Following the Balfour declaration', he claimed, Elmaleh thought that 'we do not need to restrain our feelings and sentiments ... and we don't need to find a path of compromise and mutual understanding ... this is, in a nutshell, the psychology of a beggar on a horseback (*eved ki yimloch*) ... "the government is on our side, who would dare act like our master"'.⁸⁴ R. Binyamin turned against the Zionist reliance on the colonial power and their neglect of indigenous Palestinians. His article was published in the organ of the *Brith-Shalom* binational association, *She'ifotenu*, of which he was one of the editors. Until his retirement from the association in 1931, many articles that were published in the organ explicitly and critically addressed the issue of the Zionist-colonial alliance. Its writers demanded, as was written in one of the editorials, 'a new charter, a new "Balfour Declaration" that will be granted to the Arab people by its leaders—will be the political goal of renewed Zionism'.⁸⁵ Against the Zionist notion of the colonial declaration of Balfour as a source of legitimisation for Zionist settler-colonial efforts, they offered a counter-approach, which saw the indigenous population's recognition as the source of legitimisation that should be sought by the Zionist movement.

Before the second assembly of the League Against Imperialism, Hamdi al-Husayni—who would become a prominent figure in the Palestinian *Istiqlal* party—was appointed a secretary of the League's branch in the Arab countries.⁸⁶ Husayni was prevented from participating in the assembly, since the Egyptian authorities did not issue him the required visas, but the Palestinian demand to continue and struggle against the Balfour declaration was nevertheless voiced. However, the assembly abstained from taking a clear stand in identifying Zionism as a British imperial tool and accepted the Zionist party of *Po'alei Tziyon Smol* as a legitimate member in the League. This ambivalence reveals the League's struggles to recognise the colonial framework in which Zionist practices were taking place. In turn, they failed to recognise Zionism's own 'global' scope.⁸⁷

Throughout his political activities during the 1920s and 1930s, al-Husayni insisted the Arab national movement was a popular regional movement that challenged colonial policies of geographic division. These perceptions manifested in the Pan-Syrian and Pan-Arab attitudes he

⁸³Avraham Elmaleh, 'Parashat hayom: be-sodam al tavo nafshenu', *Do'ar Hayom*, 17 July 1928, 1.

⁸⁴R. B., 'Misaviv la-nequda (sirtutim) (Around the Dot (Schemes))', *She'ifotenu* 1, no. 2 (1928): 28–9.

⁸⁵'Dvar ha-ma'arekhet (Editorial)', *She'ifotenu* 2, no. 3 (1931): 82–3.

⁸⁶Weldon Matthews, *Confronting an Empire, Constructing a Nation: Arab Nationalists and Popular Politics in Mandate Palestine* (I. B. Tauris, 2006), 57–62.

⁸⁷Tannoury-Karam, 'Long Live the Revolutionary Alliance against Imperialism', 122–7.

voiced and in his clear distinction between Jews and the Zionist movement and its reliance on the Balfour declaration. He saw Jews (Zionist dissidents included) as potential partners in a collaborative, regional Arab struggle, as long as they were willing to establish their (co-)existence on mutual, non-colonial foundations. Al-Husayni therefore manifested one of the key ways in which Palestinian political demands were articulated following the anti-colonial revolts in the Rif and Syria, as well as the crystallisation of an anti-imperial global front in which the question of Palestine occupied a central place.⁸⁸

The crucial role played by Arab figures such as al-Husayni in the League, as Tannoury-Karam has shown, challenges common assumptions in the historiography of the global anti-colonial movement, which have identified Middle Eastern societies as 'separatist' and therefore have underestimated the place occupied by them in the emergence of these opposition movements. The connections that consolidated during and after the Syrian revolt reflected a different picture of contemporary Arab national movement. As this article has shown, both Palestinian Arab and local Zionist writers saw events in the Rif and Syria as critically important for the Arab world and the European imperial order; however, they adopted different interpretive frameworks in how they argued that Palestinians, Jews, and British officials should respond. This series of publications, as well as al-Husayni's later activities, reveal the ways in which Palestinians and Zionist oppositionists sought to articulate a framework in which Zionists could have engaged as allies in a global anti-colonial network: by embracing their shared history of European oppression, supporting struggles against empire, and halting their settler-colonial activities. Nevertheless, it was during this same period that Zionists explicitly allied themselves with the global colonial political order and supported the colonial regimes' violent suppressions of the revolts against them.

The legacy of these notions can be seen in the global visions articulated by Palestinians and counter-Zionist Jewish Israelis following the Palestinian Nakba—the expulsion and prevention of the return of some 770,000 Palestinians—and the establishment of the state of Israel. Palestinian communists and nationalists, as well as Jewish-Israeli communists and others who participated in binational movements such as *Ihud*, considered demands to dismantle Israeli military rule and end discrimination against Palestinian citizens in Israel, the call for the return of Palestinian refugees, and the adoption of a global policy of positive neutralism as interconnected issues. They saw the Afro-Asian Conference of 1955, in Bandung, Indonesia, which symbolised the emergence of non-alignment and the development of a global network of the 'Third World' during the first phase of the Cold War, as an important global venue for discussing the local question of Palestine and regional questions of Arab nationalism.⁸⁹ Rashed Husayn, a Palestinian poet from Musmus, a village under Israeli military rule wrote, following Bandung, the poem '*min 'asia ana* (I am from Asia)'. 'I am from Asia, from the dungeons of the feeble peoples', he wrote. But from these dungeons, he continued, Asia was crystallised as one which 'fills the chapters of the history books with courage and struggle\ and knocks on the morning's gates with its bleeding hand'.⁹⁰ The ways in which Palestinians were inspired by Bandung, however, should not be considered a totally new chapter. It was a rearticulation of networks whose beginnings can be traced back to those debates from the vigorous months of 1925.

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⁸⁸Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 57–62.

⁸⁹Avi-ram Tzoreff, "'Whom did We Liberate?'" *Ihud's* Opposition to Gaza's Conquest and the Emergence of Arab Positive Neutralism', *Palestine/Israel Review* (forthcoming).

⁹⁰Rashed Husayn, *Kitab a-sha 'ir a-thani: ma'a al-fajr wa-al-subh* (*The Second Book of Poems: With Dawn and Morning*) (D. M: Lajnat ahyaa turath rashed husayn, Al-lajna al-adabiyya, 1979), 173–5 (my translation).

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