

“Our Country’s Prestige”:

The Status of France’s Representation in Jerusalem from the Late Nineteenth Century to the 1930s

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France has long been the most important foreign power in the Holy Land, or so it perceived itself. It indeed enjoyed a specific position, with the largest network of religious institutions, of many kinds, representing many denominations and lay tendencies. But despite its important and historical position, for a long period of time it lacked the proper standing conferred by an official presence on the ground. Proper representative diplomatic buildings only appeared by the middle of the nineteenth century, with diplomatic – and consular – professionalization at this moment, a situation shared by other countries throughout the world.¹ But as rival powers sought France’s position and the local context became, by the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, more and more competitive, it was unthinkable that France should lag behind. Therefore, we note in the period a real preoccupation regarding two points: the status of the French representation in the Holy City, and the building hosting that representation.

The Rank of the French Representation in Jerusalem

Astonishingly, the historiography regarding the history of the French consulate in Jerusalem is limited, particularly when compared with other foreign representations in the Holy City.² Some studies were produced by a vice consul and later consul general of France in Jerusalem, the archaeologist and diplomat René Neuville, but only deal with the ancient history of the post.³ The more recent history of French representation has been explored in Rina Cohen’s as yet unpublished PhD thesis.⁴ I have also written of the consulate, both indirectly through studies on various French institutions based in Jerusalem, and

more directly through the chronicle of one of the French representative in the Holy City, Amédée Outrey (1938–1941).⁵ The consulate also appears in newer articles devoted to its specific status and fields of competences.⁶ And the wife of a former consul general, Stanislas de Laboulaye (1996–1999), dedicated a brochure to the history of the building and of the position, the content of which is now partly the base of what is available on the consulate’s web page.⁷

It is worth returning to this topic to put it into the framework of growing international competition, specifically in the collapsing Ottoman Empire. During this period, which witnessed the general development of international relations and was marked by international conferences and imperialism, diplomacy was given increasing consideration. Diplomacy had to be undertaken by professional diplomats, a position then becoming more seriously considered. In this era of professionalization, diplomats had to be hosted through the official expenses of their respective states, marking an end to centuries of “amateur” diplomacy, when diplomats had to cover their expenses. It became a matter of prestige, within the context of international competition, as France endeavored to return to the Orient in a position of power – a mission that drew on France’s past in the Holy Land and sought to revive the “Latin Kingdoms” and the Crusaders’ spirit in an era of colonialism.⁸

The mid-nineteenth century witnessed the opening or reopening of foreign consulates in Palestine. In 1843, France was one of the first powers to do so, after Great Britain (1839) and Prussia (1842), and before America (1844), Austria (1849), and Russia (1857). In the French case, the 1843 opening was a reopening, after an earlier consulate in the sixteenth century and non-permanent consuls in the meantime. After some decades, the consulates were joined by other foreign institutions and quasi-official representations. In the Palestinian context, we have, of course, religious institutions of various kinds, but also, and more important in terms of prestige, post offices and banks.

Each achievement by a power had to be followed by the others, in an almost automatic way. If this was the case for post offices and banks,⁹ then it had obviously to be the case for the most important representation, the consulates. As respective consulates were upgraded in the rank, each step forward was obviously observed by other actors. As for France, reports pointed early to such moves from traditional rivals in the field. The topic became all the more dangerous when Germany, a growing rival, thought to advance a step ahead in the status of its representation. This was perceived with great sensitivity, since the general context was considered one full of threats to France’s position in Palestine. With the growing competition of rival denominations, Protestant and Orthodox, and behind them rival powers, Great Britain and Russia, respectively, France’s role as protector of the Latins became increasingly called into question. The French consul regularly had to deal with uncomfortable situations, whereby the Latin patriarch was yielding to the other consuls, who were willing to sidestep the mediation of the French consul, disregarding the ancient order of things.¹⁰ The archives of the French foreign ministry are full of correspondence from Jerusalem in which French representatives complain of their own weakened position.¹¹

As a matter of fact, external factors prevailed in the French decision to upgrade the rank of the representation of the protective power in Palestine. The decision to upgrade the consulate to a consulate general was taken quickly, after the Greeks, heavily present in the Orthodox hierarchy, decided to do so, and the Russians contemplated such a change for their own representation. The French ambassador to the Ottoman Sublime Porte, Montebello, wrote on 8 October 1891 that one must insist:

on the favorable impact which would result from the transformation of the Jerusalem consulate into a consulate general, from the point of view of the situation of our agent in Palestine, toward his colleagues as well as toward the Ottoman authorities. . . . it would be particularly regrettable to leave our agent in Jerusalem in a lower situation to his colleagues of an Orthodox denomination.¹²

The French diplomatic upgrade was effective as soon as 1891, and became official in 1893. While the now consulate general remained dependent on the French embassy in Constantinople, Palestine remaining part of the Ottoman Empire, a service of an autonomous *valise diplomatique* was established, in order to ensure the confidentiality of any correspondence between the ministry in Paris and the consulate in Jerusalem.¹³ The elevation did not remain a mere administrative gesture. In a context where every change had to be shown in order to impress rival powers, Ottoman authorities, and local society, the move was noisily saluted. The periodical of one of the French religious communities based in Jerusalem, the Assumptionists, mentioned that the change was welcomed by the French people, and that the population had “squashed into the consulate, before which Saint Anne’s band played the *Marseillaise* many times.”¹⁴

The gesture was not only perceived as a contribution to the prestige of France in the Holy Land; it was also taken as proof of the importance attributed by official France to the activities of Catholic France in the Holy Land.¹⁵ Alternatively, some clerics considered that the upgrade reflected not so much the importance of French commercial activities in the Holy Land (judged “far less considerable”), but the growing presence of French institutions there: numerous institutions which allowed “to give added luster to our so often secular protectorate, to maintain it and increase it.”¹⁶ Indeed, the period was key for France’s position in Palestine as the protector of the Catholics: the following year, the Congrès Eucharistique International of Jerusalem was held, during which French clerics based in Jerusalem, or those coming to Palestine from Rome and Paris, played an important role in connection with the French diplomatic representative.¹⁷ And despite the disregard of the Assumptionists, France’s commercial share was about to become greater, with contemporary construction works and the forthcoming inauguration of the Jaffa–Jerusalem railway, funded with the assistance of French banks. When in 1898 Consul General Charles Ledoulx, the first to hold the new title in 1891, died in Jerusalem, the Dominican Father Le Vigoureux, who delivered a sermon at the funeral at the French church of Saint Anne, did not forget to recall the achievement represented by upgrading the consulate to a consulate general.¹⁸

The establishment of a post office in Jerusalem through France into a similar game of action and reaction to the respective policies of European powers in Palestine. After Kaiser Wilhelm II's famous visit to Palestine in October and November 1898, Germany thought about the creation of such an office, following the Austrian example (1859). As soon as the move was known, France reacted and contemplated its own postal administration.¹⁹ The desk was opened shortly afterward.²⁰ Germany followed France's lead. Since all other great powers had a consul general in Jerusalem, Berlin decided it must also get its spot in the sun and did the same. The German consul in Jerusalem was nominated as a consul general.²¹ And though the German representation in Jerusalem initially remained a mere consulate, France nevertheless perceived this as a further political move.²²

After World War I, the status of the French representation was again questioned. Though France was counted among the victors in the Middle Eastern theater, the prevailing power was the United Kingdom. French people and French officials faced a number of difficulties coming (back) to Palestine, due to British martial law and reluctance to accept any French interference on the ground. After a while, France was represented in Jerusalem in two ways: a military high commissioner and a consul. But this was no peculiar advantage for the French position and French prestige. The position of the French high commissioner was more or less that of an observer, overseeing the transfer from military to civil administration in Palestine. And the consul, officially designated, was not considered a consul as such, but rather a delegate to the French high commissioner. This situation lasted more than three years after the conquest of Jerusalem. In May 1920, the French foreign ministry wrote to the French embassy in London to return to the pre-war situation.²³ It took until spring 1921 to reestablish the French position and prestige: the French foreign ministry instructed Consul General Rais to take on the sole title of consul general and to leave his other function, delegate of the high commissioner, which implied that the French representative in Jerusalem was subordinate to the new French high commissioner in Beirut.²⁴ France had to be France in Palestine and Jerusalem again; the French consul general in Jerusalem had to reestablish his previous prestige.

A Proper Building for the French Consulate in Jerusalem

Regarding prestige, it was important that France be represented by a consul general, and not a mere consul, if only in order to be on the same level than rival powers and to face local authorities. But prestige also meant having a proper consulate, in the sense of a building to host French representation. This matter is a long story of requests, complaints, and confusion. France owned (and still owns) some plots in the Holy Land, the so-called *domaines nationaux*, with high-profile buildings or archaeological remnants over which the French flag waved (and still waves).²⁵ But France did not possess a permanent building for the offices of the consulate or for the residence of the consul.

The confusing situation can be seen in the most important travelers' guides to Jerusalem of various periods. The guidebooks' maps of Jerusalem, over the whole of the period considered, show the difficulty of determining the precise location of French

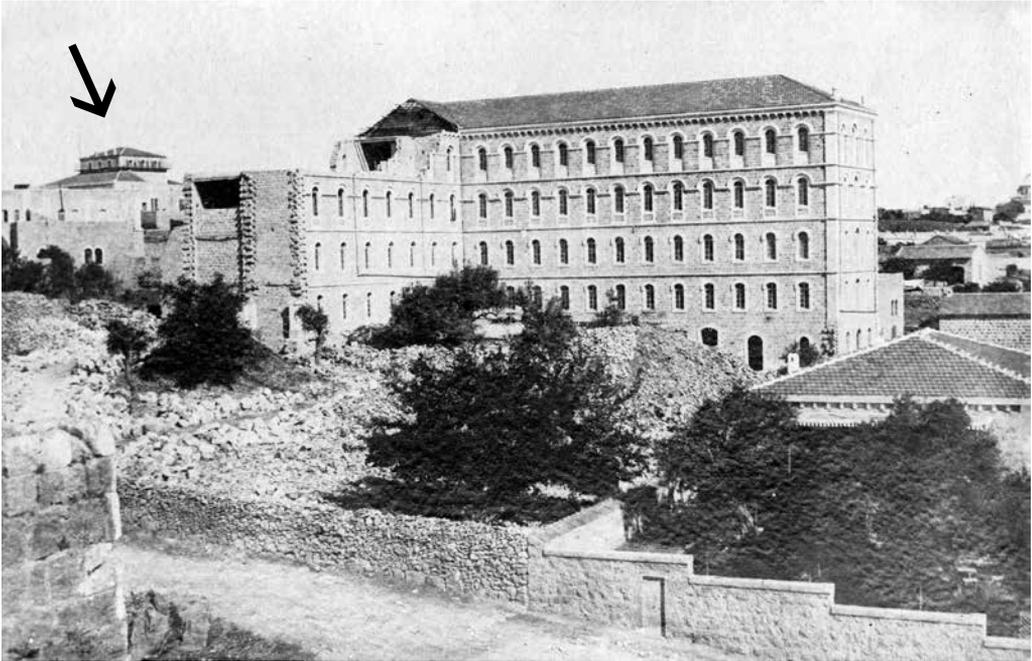


Figure 1. The building of the French consulate general, Berghem House (indicated by the arrow), next to Notre-Dame de France pilgrim house, still under construction at the beginning of the 1890s. © Photographic collection of the French Assumptionists (located at École biblique et archéologique française, Jérusalem).

representation. Five locations can be found, three of them in the Old City. The first to appear – in Baedeker’s 1875 guide – is a house on the Via Dolorosa, at the fourth station.²⁶ The second, found in Liévin de Hamme’s 1876 guide, is at a crossing further west, directly beside the Holy Sepulchre, not far from the seventh station.²⁷ The third, indicated on the maps of Baedeker’s 1912 guide and Meyers’s 1913 guide, is located behind the Latin patriarchate, in the northwestern corner of the Old City, close to the New Gate, and the so-called “French Quarter.”²⁸ The following two locations are outside the walls of the Old City. The fourth location, noted in the 1912 Black’s guidebook and the 1936 Meistermann guide, is located between the walls and the Russian compound, on a plot where today stands the Jerusalem city hall (see figure 1).²⁹ The fifth and final location is the current one, west of the city walls, which appears in the 1932 *Guide Bleu*.³⁰ Part of the confusion comes from the failure of various guides to update the location on maps of Jerusalem from one edition to another.³¹ For example, the 1936 edition of the Franciscan (Meistermann) city guide locates the consulate near the Russian compound, while the *Guide Bleu* launched in 1932 correctly identifies the premises at a freshly built property on Paul-Emile Botta Street.

In any event, the general impression leads to the feeling that France did not have the place it deserved. This, of course, is the impression resented by France’s diplomats, eager to defend their own position on the spot, vis-à-vis representatives of rival powers, Ottoman authorities, and their own ministry in Paris. The idea of having a devoted building is at least as old as the question of the rank of French representation. As a matter of fact, the purchase of plots in Jerusalem was at the time a significant matter of competition,



Figure 2. The building of the French consulate general, Berghem House, 6 February 1907. © Photographic collection of the French Assumptionists (located at École biblique et archéologique française, Jérusalem).

especially because of the difficulty presented by the Porte's policy limiting foreign appropriation of the holy city. For the French people, the constitution of a French network was important, and had to be visible through the construction of massive buildings within a limited perimeter in order to constitute progressively a "French Quarter."

The objective was to compensate for the growing Russian presence in the holy city, embodied by the Russian Compound.³² The rivalry with Russia was at the time the most important one. In August 1889, when the New Gate was pierced through the northwestern corner of the city walls, the opening was considered a real victory by the French Assumptionists, despite a Russian "plot" aiming to install there "their own consulate in a particular place, which must be reserved, one day, for the consulate of France."³³ Russia went on to build its own consular building.³⁴ Germany appeared as another rival power willing to build visible institutions in Palestine and the holy city. This was shown in connection to the famous visit to Palestine by Emperor William II, with the inauguration and later construction of four impressive German buildings in Jerusalem: the Church of the Redeemer in the Old City, the Dormition Abbey (Mount Zion), the Auguste Victoria building (Mount of Olives), and the Paulus-Hospiz (next to Damascus Gate). The Germans were also active elsewhere in Palestine, for instance in Jaffa.³⁵ Last but not least, Italy, too, was observed with suspicion, all the more since the Italians were eager to better their position vis-à-vis France regarding the protection of Catholics.³⁶

In this situation, every move that could mean an improvement of French housing was

saluted and promoted. But until 1908, the situation remained unchanged: France rented a “rather average” house for its consulate. Once again, the French Assumptionists are a good source in order to observe the evolution. In 1892, shortly after the upgrading of French representation, the Assumptionists celebrated the consulate general’s relocation:

We learn with joy that the consulate general of France in Jerusalem moves from the house it occupied beyond the Russian establishments to another, closer to the city and to Notre Dame de France. The Berghem house, which is going to become the consulate of France, is situated on Jaffa Road, from which it is only separated by the new municipal public garden; it is close to the Saint Louis Hospital, to Notre Dame de France, and to the New Gate. So the French Quarter constitutes itself more and more.³⁷

The optimism was not to last long. Ten years later, the same clerics noted, on the occasion of the arrival of a new French consul general, Daumas (1901–1902): “He lives, these days, at Notre Dame de France, after having stayed some days at Casa Nova [the Franciscan hostel], since, in April, the French consulate will have to relocate.”³⁸ For the clerics, the situation constituted a sweet revenge: hosting the representative of France was a kind of surprise, coming some years after the same congregation was targeted for its role in the Dreyfus affair.³⁹ But if it was in a way bizarre for a Catholic congregation to host the Catholic consul of an anticlerical France (no paradox in the specific situation of Jerusalem), the situation did not serve the prestige of France:

The previous residence of the *mutessarifs* hosts provisionally the representative of France. The premises that have been occupied by our consuls for many years belong to a rich Catholic British lady, Miss Bute. The owner has not renewed her lease to the government of the Republic... All great powers have their own consular building; let’s hope that France will have its own soon.⁴⁰

A solution perceived as satisfactory for the prestige of France had been arranged, but a long-term solution had to be found. Once again, the French representative had to knock at the door of the Assumptionists to find a roof.⁴¹ In a strange and ongoing situation, a pavilion situated on the plot of the French Assumptionists became the place where France had to organize its main annual holiday on 14 July, and where the French consul lived until the beginning of World War I.⁴²

Due to the difficult and humiliating situation, with a consul regularly relegated to the street while the owners of the houses in which he lived took them back, and the stain it constituted on France’s prestige, the consul advised that the best solution was to construct a building. This was finally undertaken by Consul Gueyraud (1908–1914). On his arrival in Jerusalem, he could do nothing but observe and complain of his miserable housing situation. Confronted with the situation, he proposed to have a plot purchased on which France would build a place dedicated to house the consulate.⁴³ Willing to act

quickly, Gueyraud listed the available grounds.⁴⁴ Depicting a difficult and ridiculous situation, he convinced the foreign minister to acknowledge the exceptional status of Jerusalem, writing:

acknowledging the interest that a permanent installation of our consular services in a building belonging to the state may provide for our influence in Palestine, I do not refuse to contemplate the possibility to have a consular house built in Jerusalem.⁴⁵

One year later, a possible purchase presented itself: the Greek patriarchate was willing to sell a plot, southwest of the Old City.⁴⁶ The deal had to take place between the patriarchate and France, and everything had to be done in order to avoid interference from the Ottoman local authorities, as if Jerusalem was not in the Ottoman hands at the time. By the end of 1909, however, nothing had been achieved and Gueyraud was confronted by the possibility of living in a place other than his offices. He described his dissatisfaction with this situation, since any incident disrupting the status quo necessitated speedy intervention based on the historical documents contained in the consulate archives.⁴⁷ The context became even more disturbing with the approach of the official visit of the German prince Eitel Friedrich to Jerusalem to inaugurate the Dormition Abbey and the Auguste Victoria building. What would be the impact on the prestige of France if its consul general had at this moment no permanent housing? To save face, Gueyraud chose not to be present in Jerusalem during the stay of the Prussian prince.

Nevertheless, the matter of purchasing a plot for the consulate proceeded, and France eventually came into some luck. At the request of Gueyraud, a rich Frenchman, Count Michel de Pierredon, heir of a wealthy Levantine family and member of the Order of Malta, offered the 200,000 francs to purchase the plot.⁴⁸ Such a gift made things easier, since the French foreign ministry was reluctant to have the matter discussed at the Chambre des Députés: in the anticlerical context of these years, the topic of the French protectorate in the Orient was subject to internal dissent, and the whole matter could have been endangered by such an official discussion.⁴⁹ A French Assumptionist, Father Etienne Boubet, famous for the buildings he designed and built for several French Catholic institutions in Jerusalem, offered his services to design the building that would host the consulate.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, the consul and the ministry continued consultations on the purchase in coordination with the French embassy in Constantinople: everything had to be prepared, every partner had to agree before the purchase was made official.⁵¹ France was not willing to experience a renewed humiliation if the local Ottoman governor should ultimately refuse the transfer of a plot from the Greek patriarchate to the French government.⁵² Things also had to be done quickly to prevent the Ottoman authorities, themselves contemplating the construction of a building dedicated to hosting the civil administration (*serail*), from requisitioning the property.⁵³ Immediate action was required to get a plot large enough to correspond to France's status in Jerusalem!⁵⁴ In a traditional game of influences, things were arranged not on the spot, in Jerusalem, but in the Ottoman capital, where the French

ambassador Bompard sought to pressure Jerusalem's governor through his superiors.⁵⁵ In the meantime, Gueyraud still had to deal with a precarious situation and urged the French government to send an architect, writing that he "had to find a room in a hotel, and was only able to find for the offices a precarious rented location, not entirely without some serious inconveniences."⁵⁶

The situation became all the more urgent since the Jerusalem municipality was also trying to get its share and a plot on the very same ground, threatening the French objective.⁵⁷ Wishing to get the authorization to buy from the ministry, Gueyraud expressed an ambition to have the new consulate opened by 1911.⁵⁸ Aided by local circumstances (the Muslim population preferred to have the *serail* next to the city, rather than in a "far" neighborhood), France continued to contemplate the option of a large plot on the spot called Nikophoria.⁵⁹ After new talks with both the Greek patriarchate and local Ottoman authorities,⁶⁰ Gueyraud agreed on a plot directly in front of Jaffa Gate, considered "the center of all business."⁶¹ In November 1910, the purchase of 5,000 square meters for 90,000 francs was authorized.⁶² The official purchase is dated 10 January 1911.⁶³ The acquisition took place and became official, even if the money provided by Count Michel de Pierredon had in the meantime been misappropriated by the same civil servant of the French foreign ministry in charge of accountability.⁶⁴ All in all, after decades, or even centuries, France finally had a plot on which a proper consular building could be built. On 13 July 1911, the French parliament approved a credit of 100,000 francs to finance the construction (covering part of the funds that had been misappropriated).⁶⁵

The hopes to finally reestablish France's prestige were great,⁶⁶ and the jealousy of the other powers was obvious.⁶⁷ Maps were drawn, but an initial architectural study by M. Joanny-Bernard was considered inadequate and rejected; a later estimate brought the costs to the huge amount of 495,000 francs. A request for new credit to that amount was produced on 24 November 1913,⁶⁸ but no decision was taken before World War I.⁶⁹ The otherwise hardened Catholic consul Gueyraud had to continue to live in a house belonging to the Assumptionists, where he remained until he had to leave Jerusalem in November 1914, after the declaration of war between Turkey and France.⁷⁰

Following the war, despite great ambitions, France faced a difficult new beginning in Palestine. On several occasions, France expressed its desire to get "back" the Holy Land, as a logical continuation of the disrupted history of the Latin Kingdoms.⁷¹ France, however, had no success in its aspiration to see Palestine back within a French sphere of influence. Palestine was from then on British, and the British did everything possible to prevent too quick a return of the French religious communities expelled by the Ottomans. The difficult new beginning of French religious activity mirrored a cruel reality: London confirmed the end of capitulations, the French protectorate, and thus, logically, the privileged position of the French consul general in Palestine (a loss reduced thanks to the 1926 agreement between France and the Holy See on liturgical honors). Even the limited French military presence in Palestine came quickly to an end.

France, conscious of its ongoing loss of prestige, fought against this development. In August 1918, for example, the French Jewish Orientalist Sylvain Lévi reported on his stay in Palestine, describing France in bad shape, the *parent pauvre* among the victorious



Figure 3. The French consulate general, with its *jardin à la française*, from the east, 1931. © G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (online at www.loc.gov/item/mpc2010007765/PP/).

powers.⁷² Though at that time France enjoyed, in the context of the British military regime, representation through the person of a high commissioner, the pompous title did not reflect the reality of his status. This was made particularly clear through the high commissioner's housing: "a ruins-like hovel, deep, of a miserable appearance exiguous. In this Oriental country, where a mirage is worth reality, the impact is shameful."⁷³ This contrasted with the British headquarters in Jerusalem, located in the huge (previously German) Auguste Victoria building, from which the administration imposed itself on the local populations. In the new, post-Balfour Palestine, Lévi noted that, worse still, the French were hosted next to Notre Dame de France, alienating both Jews and Muslims.⁷⁴ The French clerics, traditionally close to the French officers, themselves typically conservative and close to Catholicism, felt the situation, too.⁷⁵ While a mass was organized at the Holy Sepulchre on the occasion of 14 July 1920, the showing of the French flag was authorized again only after the installation of the British civil high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel.⁷⁶ By this time, there were two simultaneous embodiments of French representation: the consulate general and the high commissioner. But as Consul Rais, who fulfilled both functions, pointed out, this was not to last.

What was felt, once again, as humiliation prompted movement. As mentioned above, in 1921, the consul general became the only French representative in Jerusalem, and the title of a high commissioner was done away with. While the British established their institutions in buildings next to the Old City,⁷⁷ France prepared anew to launch its diplomatic mission, seeking to reaffirm its role as a power worthy of prestige and respect, though adapting



Figure 4. The brand new French consulate general (center-left) from the west, mid-1930s. © G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (online at www.loc.gov/item/mpc2004004912/PP/).

progressively to the new Palestinian circumstances.⁷⁸ The idea of constructing a proper consular building was examined anew in 1925.⁷⁹ Since between 1910 and 1925 the cost of lands had exploded, France contemplated selling the plot already acquired and using the profits to purchase an already existing building. Ultimately, however, the previously acquired plot was deemed preferable. Maurice Favier, a noted French architect was chosen to establish a project for the new building. His plan, with an estimated cost of 900,000 francs, was rejected in 1928, but accepted in 1929, and a new credit of 1,040,000 francs was approved in 1930. Work could begin on concretizing the wish to reestablish France's prestige in Jerusalem on a solid base.

The new plan was now integrated with the development of a new neighborhood, west of the city walls. Several buildings had appeared in the vicinity in the years surrounding the French decision, becoming landmarks of the new Jerusalem panorama: the Pontifical Biblical Institute (1927), the King David Hotel (1931), and the YMCA (1933). France was thus part of the modernization of Jerusalem after the end of the Ottoman Empire. The motto was: go outside the walls to find better living and working conditions. But France was also attached to its status in the holy city, though attenuated by British policy and the difficult political environment. It was important for France to have its consulate general open at the same time the British high commissioner entered his new offices, on the Hill of Evil Counsel, south of the Old City (currently housing the United Nations headquarters).

After three years of construction, the new building was inaugurated on 26 March 1932, at Easter time, marking a kind of a resurrection of French ambitions in Palestine.⁸⁰ The French colony was present, as were two groups of French pilgrims. If the mostly Catholic audience was traditionally, however, the architecture was definitely not traditional. Although Jerusalem stone was used (or rather, stone from Bethlehem in keeping with British Mandatory laws on Palestinian heritage protection), the new building's appearance differed radically from previous French consular premises, illustrating so-called "international architecture." In this case, the architect Maurice Favier offered the visage of a new, more modern France at a time when it was necessary to adapt to a fast-changing Palestine.

After many decades from the upgrading of its representation to the opening of its new consulate general in Jerusalem, France saw its prestige restored. After many difficulties, a plot had been purchased in 1910, and an impressive building established on it, inaugurated in 1932. In a way, the hope was to make out of it a symbol of France's renewed prevalence, or future French domination, in Palestine – a territory whose status awaited definite settlement. Construction of the consulate building ended after World War II, with some improvements on the terrace. Generally well situated at the edge between both parts of the holy city, enjoying a wonderful view of the Old City walls, and seen well from there, the building was located within firing range of both Jewish-Israeli and Arab soldiers in the street battles of 1948. Though protected by sandbags, it was damaged during the war, and the impact of the fighting was repaired in 1950. In 1952, a second French representation opened in a rented house in Shaykh Jarrah in East Jerusalem, reflecting the new situation of the divided holy city. In 1953, the history of the reestablishment of French prestige in Jerusalem was brought to a close: a plaque was installed in the staircase of the building, expressing the perpetual gratitude of the French Republic for the generosity of Count Thierry Michel de Pierredon.

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Endnotes

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- 2 The U.S., British, and Austrian consulates have had their histories written, especially through respective collections of documents produced therein.
- 3 René Neuville, "Heurs et malheurs des consuls de France à Jérusalem," *Journal of the Middle East Society* 1, no. 2 (1947): 3–34; René Neuville, *Heurs et malheurs des consuls de France à Jérusalem aux XVII^e, XVIII^e, et XIX^e siècles* (Jerusalem: Ariel Printing Works, 1948).
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- 6 Jean-Philippe Mochon, “Le Consul Général de France à Jérusalem; aspects historiques, juridiques et politiques de ses fonctions,” *Annuaire français de droit international* 42, no. 1 (1996): 929–945.
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 - 8 See Dominique Trimbur, “Les Croisades dans la perception catholique française du Levant, 1880–1940: entre mémoire et actualité,” *Cristianesimo nella storia* 27 (2006): 909–934.
 - 9 On banks, see Jacques Thobie’s work on Credit Lyonnais in Jerusalem: Jacques Thobie, “Les embarras du Crédit Lyonnais en Palestine au début du XXème siècle,” in *De Bonaparte à Balfour*, ed. Trimbur and Aaronsohn, 167–202.
 - 10 According to the capitulations (beginning in 1535), a French protectorate prevailed, meaning that the French consul not only enjoyed a preeminent positions among his peers (for instance in the formal protocols regulating the holy places, particularly the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem), but was also in charge of the defense of Westerners within the Ottoman justice system.
 - 11 See, for instance, Archives of the French Foreign Ministry [MAE], Paris, Archives diverses politiques, Turquie, 1890.
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 - 13 Note for the minister, organization of the service of a *valise* between the ministry of foreign affairs and the Jerusalem consulate general, 23 November 1891, MAE, Paris, Archives diverses politiques, Turquie.
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 - 15 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 14 (January 1892): 10–12.
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 - 19 Letter from Auzépy, French Consulate General, Jerusalem (8), to French Foreign Ministry, 26 February 1900, MAE, Paris, Nouvelle série Turquie Palestine, 131 Palestine 1898–1907.
 - 20 Regarding the impact of the sensitivity in the matter of the post office, see Michel Melo, “Le bureau français de Jérusalem créé par raison d’Etat,” *Timbres magazine* (June 2002): 32–39.
 - 21 Letter from Auzépy, French Consulate General, Jerusalem (62), to French Foreign Ministry, 15 November 1898, MAE, Paris, Nouvelle série Turquie Palestine.
 - 22 Regarding French sensitivity to any German move in Palestine, see Dominique Trimbur, “Intrusion of the ‘Erbfeind’ – French Views on Germans in Palestine, 1898–1910,” in *Patterns of the Past, Prospects for the Future: The Christian Heritage in the Holy Land*, ed. Thomas Hummel, Kevork Hintlian, and Ulf Carmesund (London: Melisende Press, 1999), 238–256.
 - 23 Report on a mission in Palestine (Beirut High Commissariat General Secretary Robert de Caix), 28 October 1920; letter from French Foreign Ministry to French Embassy, London, 5 May 1920, MAE, Paris, Levant 1918–1940, Palestine, 3, dossier général, June 1920–June 1921.
 - 24 Letter from French Foreign Ministry (25) to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 16 April 1921, MAE, Paris, Levant 1918–1940, Palestine, 7, Consulats.
 - 25 On the topic, see my forthcoming paper: “Le patrimoine national et religieux français de Jérusalem – Enjeux passés et présents,” in *La Terre sainte en héritage*, ed. Sossie Andézian and Christian Décobert (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2017).
 - 26 *Palaestina und Syrien: Handbuch für Reisende* (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1875).
 - 27 Liévin de Hamme, *Guide-indicateur de sanctuaires et lieux historique de la Terre-Sainte* (Louvain: P. et J. Lefever, 1876).
 - 28 Albert Socin, Immanuel Benzinger, and John P. Peters, *Palestine and Syria, with Routes through Mesopotamia and Babylonia and the Island of Cyprus: Handbook for Travellers*, 5th ed. (Leipzig: Baedeker, 1912); Theodor Gsell Fels, *Meyers Reisebücher: Palästina und Syrien*, 5th ed. (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1913).
 - 29 Eustace A. Reynolds-Ball, *Jerusalem: A Practical Guide to Jerusalem and Its Environs*, 2d ed. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912); Barnabé Meistermann, *Guide de Terre Sainte*, 3d ed. (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1936). The location appears also on the map in *Karte zur Palästina-Fahrt des deutschen Kaisers* (Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1898), and on a British map of Jerusalem, dated 1927, available on the homepage of the Albright Institute, Jerusalem, online at www.aiar.org/wp-content/

- uploads/2015/02/25-27-6-E.jpg (accessed 12 July 2017).
- 30 *Guide bleu Syrie-Palestine* (Paris: Hachette, 1932).
 - 31 The costs and technical difficulties can of course explain the impossibility to update maps that at the time were drawn by hand.
 - 32 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 1 (July 1888).
 - 33 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 4 (August 1889). Afterward, the French Assumptionists acquired the plot, on which stood the house of the banker Johannes Frutiger. See Hans Hermann Frutiger and Jakob Eisler, *Johannes Frutiger: Ein Schweizer Bankier in Jerusalem, 1836–1899* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2008).
 - 34 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 13 (November 1891): 153–54: “The house of the Russian consulate is finished, above us; it has only one story and does not hide the view.” Russia had already owned a proper building for its consulate, built in 1860.
 - 35 Letter about constructing a home for the German consulate in Jaffa, in a quarter home to “German houses and installations,” from Potier, French Consulate, Jaffa (4), to French Foreign Ministry, 28 July 1913; letter about upgrading the German vice consulate to a consulate and the construction of the Deutsche Palästina Bank in Jaffa, from French Consulate, Jaffa (1), to French Foreign Ministry, 7 March 1914, MAE, Paris, NS Turquie Palestine.
 - 36 Gueyraud wrote regarding the purchase of a plot for the Italian consulate, “I would tend to think that its purpose is the creation of an Italian center (somewhat like the Russian establishments).” According to Gueyraud, “we above all have to fear the moral impact of massive construction, the Orientals tending to appreciate based on appearances.” Letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (43) to French Foreign Ministry, 19 November 1910, MAE, Paris, NS Protectorat Catholique. On the Italian encroachments, the plot seems to have been dedicated for the construction of a children’s hospital, the first of its kind in Jerusalem; Banco di Roma also announced the opening of a branch in Jerusalem, which prompted predictable competition from the French Crédit Lyonnais. Letter from Gueyraud, French Consulate General, Jerusalem (9), to French Foreign Ministry, 14 February 1911, MAE, Paris, NS Protectorat Catholique.
 - 37 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 16 (May–August 1892): 77.
 - 38 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 104 (April 1902). Diary of the Assumptionists, Jerusalem, Thursday, 8 April 1902: “The French Consul leaves today Notre Dame de France, and recuperates for good his new residence, the former one of the pasha.”
 - 39 See Ruth Harris, “The Assumptionists and the Dreyfus Affair,” *Past & Present* 194, no. 1 (Feb. 2007): 175–211.
 - 40 *Échos de Notre-Dame de France* 105 (May 1902): 77–78.
 - 41 Diary of the Assumptionists, Jerusalem, Sunday, 12 December 1909: “Mr. Consul General, forced to move, asks for hospitality at N. D. de France. He lives at Sainte Monique [a small dependence of Notre Dame de France], expecting to leave for France for some months of vacation.” Saturday, 7 May 1910: returning to Jerusalem, “Mr. Gueyraud lives provisionally at our place, at Ste Monique.”
 - 42 Diary of the Assumptionists, Jerusalem, Wednesday, 13 July 1910 : “The Consul prepares the pavilion Ste. Monique in the perspective of the receptions.” Thursday, 14 July 1910: “We celebrate the Republic, taking part in the mass at the Holy Sepulcher at 5 PM,” followed by a reception at Ste. Monique.
 - 43 Letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (5), to the Accountability Department, 3 November 1908, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 44 List of the plots that could be purchased, 18 November 1908, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 45 Letter from French Foreign Ministry (9) to the Consulate General, Jerusalem, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 46 Letter from the Jerusalem Orthodox Patriarch to Gueyraud, 30 October 1909; letter from Gueyraud to the Jerusalem Orthodox Patriarch, 11 November 1909, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 47 Letter from Gueyraud, Consulate General, Jerusalem (14), to French Foreign Ministry, 27 December 1909, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire. According to some sources, the Sabbatarians, a protestant sect of German obedience who had hosted the consulate, then expelled it. See Comte Michel de Pierredon, *Le protectorat de la France en Palestine et l’affaire du Consulat Général de France à Jérusalem* (Paris: n.p., 1926), 57.
 - 48 Note by Gueyraud, Paris, 26 January 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire. Gueyraud directly contacted Pierredon, a relative, while the latter was staying in Jerusalem. Pierredon acted on behalf of “the prestige of France,” wanting to avoid an “errant consulate, without fireplace and home, [which] could harm our country’s prestige.” A solution was found

- to allow the acceptance of such a gift, since it was not possible to have the ministry receive the funds directly. It was decided to transfer the money directly to the benefit of the Jerusalem consulate via the Accountability Department of the ministry. Pierredon, *Le protectorat de la France*, 58–59.
- 49 Letter by Count Thierry Michel de Pierredon, with details regarding the financing by himself for the purchase of a plot and the construction of a building, undated (1919), Archives Nationales d’Outre-mer [APOM], Aix-en-Provence, 102, dossier 36.
 - 50 Letter from French Foreign Ministry to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 5 April 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire. The cleric was in too great a hurry and the consul had to stop him. Regarding the activities of Father Etienne, see Dominique Trimbur, “A French Presence in Palestine – Notre-Dame de France,” *Bulletin du Centre de Recherche Français de Jérusalem* 3 (Autumn 1998): 117–140.
 - 51 Letter from French Foreign Ministry (3) to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 22 April 1910; letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem, to French Foreign Ministry, 24 April 1910; letter from Gueyraud to the Orthodox Patriarch, 12 May 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 52 Letter from Boppe, Constantinople, to French Foreign Ministry, 22 May 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 53 Letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem, to French Foreign Ministry, 23 May 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 54 Telegram from French Consulate General, Jerusalem to French Embassy, Constantinople, 25 May 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 55 Letter from Bompard, French Embassy, Constantinople (37), to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 31 May 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 56 Telegram from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (6), to French Foreign Ministry, 20 July 1910; letter from French Foreign Ministry (6) to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 26 July 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 57 Telegram from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (7), to French Foreign Ministry, 3 August 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 58 Letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (3), to French Foreign Ministry–Accountability Department, 3 August 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 59 Letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (58), to French Embassy, Constantinople, 16 August 1910, marked very urgent; letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (10), to French Foreign Ministry, 9 October 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 60 Letter from Pinchon, French Foreign Ministry, to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 18 October 1910; letter from Gueyraud to the Greek Patriarch, 29 October 1910; telegram from Gueyraud, French Consulate General, Jerusalem (12), to French Foreign Ministry, 2 November 1910; telegram from French Foreign Ministry (11) to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 4 November 1910; telegram from Gueyraud, French Consulate General, Jerusalem (13), to French Foreign Ministry, 5 November 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 61 Letter from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (8), to French Foreign Ministry–Accountability Department, 5 November 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 62 Telegram from French Foreign Ministry (12) to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 7 November 1910; Telegram from French Consulate General, Jerusalem (14), to French Foreign Ministry, 8 November 1910; telegram from French Foreign Ministry (13) to French Consulate General, Jerusalem, 10 November 1910, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 63 Telegram from Gueyraud, French Consulate General, Jerusalem, to French Foreign Ministry, 10 January 1911, MAE, Nantes, Archives of the French Consulate General Jerusalem 140, Immeuble consulaire.
 - 64 Pierredon, *Le protectorat de la France*. The matter is part of the greater financial misconduct of the ministry, as shown through a long debate at the French Senate, in May 1911 (*Sénat, Année 1911, Session ordinaire, no. 165*, “Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances chargée d’examiner le projet de loi, adopté par la Chambre des députés, portant fixation du budget général de l’exercice 1911 [Ministère des Affaires étrangères], par M. Raymond Poincaré, Sénateur, 80–81). See also Hort, *Architektur der Diplomatie*, 474.
 - 65 *Sénat, Année 1911, Session ordinaire, no. 246*,

- “Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances chargée d’examiner le projet de loi, adopté par la Chambre des députés, adopté avec modifications par le Sénat, modifié par la Chambre des députés, portant fixation du budget général des dépenses et recettes de l’exercice 1911, par M. Gauthier, Sénateur, 7.
- 66 On the creation of a Jesuit Biblical Institute, to be built on a plot owned by the Italian Salesians, “not far from the place where our new consulate of France will be built, following a very beautiful plan,” see: Paul Parsy, “La création de l’Institut Biblique de Jérusalem et les Allemands,” *L’Écho de Paris*, 29 August 1913.
- 67 Letter from the German Foreign Ministry (III d 10798) to the German Consulate, Jerusalem, 29 September 1913, record group 67 (Archives of the German Consulates in Palestine), Israel State Archives.
- 68 *Chambre des députés, 2ème séance du 24 Novembre 1913*, 3547, 3564; *Chambre des députés*, no. 3240, session extraordinaire, *Projet de loi relatif à la construction d’un immeuble consulaire à Jérusalem*.
- 69 *Chambre des députés, 1ère séance du 11 mars 1914*, 1483–84; *1ère séance du 11 mars 1914*, 2139, 2135.
- 70 Diary of the Assumptionists, Jerusalem, Monday, 16 November 1914. Some days later, the very same house was requisitioned by the Turkish army, in order to host the Damascus general staff. See also Paul Gueyraud, *La chronique des Gueyraud – Contribution à l’histoire économique et sociale du XIXe siècle* (Marseille: n.p., 1976), 210–11.
- 71 Public events, like a Congrès français de la Syrie, were organized; some official missions (mission Huvelin, mission Dubois) were sent to the Middle East; some alternatives were searched for (Commission of the Holy Places) in order to settle French claims.
- 72 Note by S. Lévi on Palestine, August 1918, Levant 1918–1940, Palestine, 1, dossier général, May 1918–April 1919, MAE, Paris.
- 73 Note by S. Lévi on Palestine, August 1918, Levant 1918–1940, Palestine, 1, dossier général, May 1918–April 1919, MAE, Paris.
- 74 “Traditional protector of the Catholics in the Orient, France seems so to bond herself with them, and, doing so, to take sides against everyone else.”
- 75 Diary of the Jerusalem French Dominicans, 14 July 1919, Archives of the St. Etienne Convent (École Biblique) [ASEC], Jerusalem.
- 76 Diary of the Jerusalem French Dominicans, 14 July 1920, reception at the Consulate, in the new building, ASEC. Letter from Rais, Commissioner of the French Republic in the Occupied Territories of Palestine and Syria (59), to French Foreign Ministry, 27 July 1920, MAE, Paris, Levant 1918–1940.
- 77 Diary of the Assumptionists, 9 April 1924: “This week, the [British] high commissioner was transferred from William II’s German sanatorium to the German hospice next to Damascus Gate, where the governorate is already located.”
- 78 This is to be seen within a renewed French cultural policy toward Palestine, inaugurated shortly before. See Dominique Trimbur, “L’ambition culturelle de la France en Palestine dans l’entre-deux-guerres,” in Laurent Jeanpierre, Alain Dubosclard, Laurent Grison, Pierre Journoud, Christine Okret, and Dominique Trimbur, *Entre rayonnement et réciprocité: Contributions à l’histoire de la diplomatie culturelle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2002), 41–72.
- 79 Note on the Consulate General of France in Jerusalem, 21 October 1925, MAE, Paris, Levant 1918–1940, 18, consulats de France, July 1922–November 1929.
- 80 Diary of the Jerusalem French Dominicans, 26 March 1932.