Khalil al-Sakakini (1878-1953), a Rum Orthodox Christian, was born in Old Jerusalem in 1878. His father served as the mukhtar of the local Rum Orthodox community. Khalil al-Sakakini was one of the most influential and prominent Palestinian intellectuals of the first half of the twentieth century. A very versatile person, he was at various stages of his career active as an editor, poet, essayist, writer, teacher, reformer of the educational system, civil servant, inspector of education, as well as in other roles. He was also a fervent political activist who before World War I became one of the leaders of the Orthodox Renaissance [al-nahda al-urthudhuksiyya]. His life is very well documented, particularly because he left behind diaries that contain almost three and a half thousand pages. Khalil al-Sakakini received his education at several institutions. First, he attended a Rum Orthodox school and then the Anglican Bishop Blyth School in Jerusalem. Finally, he concluded his studies at the Zion English College. He started writing his diaries in autumn 1907 at the time when he left Palestine for the United States. During his stay there he spent most of the time in Arab neighbourhoods in New York, where he earned some money giving private lessons in Arabic. Furthermore, he worked as an editor and proofreader for Farah Antun’s al-Jami’a and as a translator for the Columbia University professor Richard Gottheil. Towards the end of his stay he moved to Rumford Falls in the New England state of Maine where he worked in a paper mill for around four weeks extending between June and July 1908. He was not very keen on American culture and was even upset by some of its aspects. During his stay he noticed many differences between the Middle Eastern and American ways of life. One of the examples he mentions is the attitude to work. Whereas people in the Middle East enjoy doing their work, the situation in
America is very dissimilar and the only joy the workmen derive is from earning money. Moreover, he disliked the fast tempo of American daily life. During a trip to the seaside his conservative feelings were offended at seeing men and women swimming together, holding hands and flirting openly on the beaches. Originally, Khalil al-Sakakini planned to move permanently to the United States, however the economic recession, lack of success in finding a rewarding job and also his longing for the homeland and his beloved Sultana made him change his mind.

After his return from the United States he made a living mostly by teaching Arabic, but he also worked intermittently as an editor of the magazine al-Asma’i, owned by Hanna ‘Abdallah al-‘Isa and for the newspaper al-Quds published by Jurji Habib (1857-1920). In September 1908 he agreed with the latter that he will “write the editorial and correct the rest of the articles of the newspaper for a salary of five liras a month.” The entries that Khalil al-Sakakini recorded in the diary relate to his discussions with Jurji Habib, his regular visits to the printing office and writing and proofreading of articles. However, after a few days he decided not to take the job. In the following months he mentions now and then his work for al-Asma’i. Furthermore he supervised the editorial process during the absence of Hanna al-‘Isa in mid-November.

In October 1908 he took an oath and became a member of the Committee for Union and Progress. He describes the admission ceremonial with the following words: “[al-shaykh Tawfiq Tanbagha] put my right hand on the Bible and the left hand on a revolver and said: ‘this is to take an oath on and this is to defend with’ … I swore that I will protect the constitution and endeavor to elevate the homeland …”. Shortly after this event Khalil al-Sakakini became a member of another organization, Jam‘iyyat al-ikha’ al-ʻArabi [The Society of Arab Brotherhood]. Furthermore, he was a founding member of Jam‘iyyat al-ikha’ al-urthudhuksi [The Society of Orthodox Brotherhood].

**Orthodox Renaissance and anti-Hellenism**

In the late Ottoman period the Rum Orthodox community comprised almost half of Palestinian Christians and constituted by far the largest Christian church in Palestine. It was traditionally dominated by a Greek ecclesiastical hierarchy (which was the case in the whole of the Ottoman Empire until the second half of the nineteenth century) and there was a close and strong relationship of mutual interest between the state administration and the church leadership. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem was in the hands of a monastic order – the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre – and Arabs were not admitted to its ranks. Following several successful struggles in the previous decades in the Balkans and in the Patriarchate of Antioch (1899) between the Greek hierarchy on the one hand and lay members and lower clergy on the other to “nationalize” their churches, Arab Orthodox Christians in Palestine also tried to gain influence over their church in the years following the Young Turk Revolution. The most important issue at stake was the control over the enormous church properties and how to spend the revenues that stemmed from them and from the steady flow of Russian pilgrims. The primary objective of the rebels was to
direct much more financial support to education and the social needs of the community. After his return from the United States Khalil al-Sakakini became one of the leaders of this revolt, and in the following years he dedicated much time to activities in the Orthodox Renaissance movement. In October 1908 he proclaimed to the gathered protesters: “The despotism of the government has fallen, but the despotism of the spiritual leadership remains and we shall endeavor to overthrow it. Do not be afraid of this at all. Do not fear Heaven, because their authority does not come from Heaven, and do not fear the government, because the government does not support this authority …”.

An incident that took place at the beginning of 1912 very well describes his relationship with the patriarchate. On 11 January he was to marry his longstanding love Sultana ʻAbduh in Jerusalem. However the wedding was beset by considerable complications. The patriarch Damianos wanted to coerce Khalil al-Sakakini into submission and therefore the priests refused to marry him under the pretext of proximity of blood between him and his bride-to-be. With the support of his best friend and best man – ʻIsa al-ʻIsa – the wedding took place in Jaffa two days later. To ensure the success of the wedding the al-ʻIsa cousins arranged the arrest of two priests so that they could not be reached by the Patriarchate and they were released just before the wedding. In the following year, Khalil al-Sakakini authored a pamphlet denouncing the patriarchate for which he was excommunicated.

Khalil al-Sakakini employed radically new teaching methods at the school al-Madrasa al-Dusturiyya [The Constitutional School] which he established in Jerusalem after his return from the United States in 1909. Pupils of all creeds were accepted. Corporal punishment was eliminated, there were no exams, no marks or prizes; instead, both the teachers and pupils had to evaluate themselves. Moreover, if the pupils felt that the lesson was not interesting, they could leave. In lieu of memorizing new vocabulary the teacher taught new words by using them in various contexts. Moreover, Khalil al-Sakakini promoted the usage of a simple and modern language and opposed the artificial manneristic style. He exerted great efforts in order to modernize the teaching of Arabic. For that purpose he wrote a couple of books (al-Jadid fi al-qira’a al-ʻarabiyya, and Wa ʻalayhi qiss). Furthermore, physical exercise, walks in nature and visits to historical monuments were part of the curriculum. Already before the outbreak of WWI Khalil al-Sakakini had started evening courses for adults.

During 1913 (and especially in the first half of the year) Khalil al-Sakakini occasionally contributed to the Filastin newspaper. The situation changed in the following year. In the issues published in 1914 I was able to trace only a couple of articles mentioning his name and even his opinion on Zionism was not directly written for Filastin, but quoted from another newspaper, al-Iqdam.

Articles from 1913 either written by Khalil al-Sakakini or those where his name is mentioned, deal with several issues. Mostly they cover matters pertaining to the Rum Orthodox community, the Mixed Council and the patriarchate. Another major subject of these articles is the al-Dusturiyya school. Furthermore, he wrote on diverse themes like the situation of the Ottoman nation, reforms, his newly born son and, surprisingly, news from Nablus. There is not sufficient material in the newspaper to draw conclusions.
about his shifting perception of identity, but it is noteworthy that whereas in an article published in 1913 Khalil al-Sakakini speaks about the threats that menace the “Ottoman nation” [al-umma al-‘Uthmaniyya],40 one year later, when talking about the Zionist threat, he does not mention the Ottoman nation at all, only the Arab nation [al-umma al-‘Arabiyya].41 Similarly, in his diary in 1914, he repeatedly wrote about the Arab nation, comparing it to the Jewish nation and emphasizing his Arab identity. On 15 March 1914 a Christian delegation lobbying for a Christian deputy in parliament visited him in order to enlist his support. Khalil al-Sakakini refused, stating several arguments among them that it would “serve the interests of the Turkish nation”42 and “… because I am an Arab before anything else.”43

Zionism44

Before the Young Turk Revolution several educated Arabs had already started to be concerned about Zionism, Jewish immigration to and land purchases in Palestine, and had warned against problems and conflicts that the movement would trigger. Among the first were Muhammad Tahir al-Husayni, Muhammad Rashid Rida, Yusuf Diya’addin Basha al-Khalidi and Najib ‘Azuri.45 After the revolution anti-Zionism spread in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire in general and in Palestine in particular. The end of Abdülhamit’s autocracy, restoration of the constitution and the loosening of the press censorship played a crucial role in this regard. Very soon after the revolution many newspapers appeared in Palestine (fifteen during the latter half of the year 1908)46 and Zionism soon became one of the most discussed subjects.47

Khalil al-Sakakini formulated a very interesting perspective regarding Zionism and its consequences in case of successful accomplishment of its endeavors (which will be discussed later). In addition to local and Ottoman patriotism that were usual at the time, he perceived Zionist expansionist ambitions through the interests of the Arab nation. This is obvious not only from his diaries, but his notion was also published in the Arabic press. At the same time, however, he was not hostile to the Jews. Quite the contrary, he had several close Jewish friends who included Zionists.48

An event that occurred during the WWI can serve as evidence that Khalil al-Sakakini did not carry his enmity against Zionism over to Jews in general, not even to the Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. At the end of November 1917 he offered shelter in his house to Alter Levine, a Russian Zionist Jew who held U.S. citizenship. Levine was wanted during the war by the Ottoman authorities on suspicion of espionage. Al-Sakakini did this despite the fact that in case of exposure he would face capital punishment for treason. His guest acted irresponsibly and attracted to himself and his host the attention of the police which a few days before the fall of Jerusalem into British hands raided the house and arrested both Khalil al-Sakakini and Alter Levine.49 Before Jerusalem was occupied by the British, both were transported to Damascus, where Khalil al-Sakakini spent more than a month in prison and was forced to live in exile until the end of the war.50 When Alter Levine committed suicide in 1933, Khalil al-Sakakini wrote a letter to
his son Sari, who was studying at that time in the United States. In it he recalls the fateful moments, describes in a very positive manner Levine’s education and culture and adds: “Always when he met me, he bent his head in reverence because I had risked my life and received him into my house at the time when he was knocking on the houses of his people [buyut qawmihi] and they did not receive him. … If the English were delayed a little in entering Jerusalem, then my and his fate would have been the gallows. This man who was saved from the gallows of the Turks hanged himself with his own hands ….”51

From the diaries of Khalil al-Sakakini it seems that he began to concern himself with Zionism in earnest only at the beginning of 1914. At this time he temporarily withdrew from the Orthodox Renaissance movement because he was deeply disillusioned with the results of the long and bitter struggle. He was very depressed and even stopped writing in his diaries for one month between 15 January and 15 February 1914.52 Khalil al-Sakakini was a person who devoted all his energies to the struggles he was engaged in. Therefore it is possible that at the moment when he scaled down his activities within the Orthodox community, he began to consider Zionism as another worthy cause that deserved his attention. Furthermore, it is likely that his interest in Zionism was aroused by his new student, Benjamin Ivri [al-khawaja Ibri], who had recently come to Jerusalem, and Khalil al-Sakakini started to teach him Arabic.53

On 16 February Khalil al-Sakakini was supposed to meet with Ivri, however he did not find him in the Hotel Fast, as his student had gone to Jaffa to welcome Baron Rothschild. This is the first entry in which Khalil al-Sakakini discusses Zionism (although he does not use the word in this instance) in the diary.54 It seems from this entry that at this moment he was not very familiar with Zionism and did not have sufficient information about it: “However, I will study this issue [and devote] to it the attention it deserves and state my opinion at another place, God willing.”55 At this point he considered the “Arab nation” [al-umma al-‘Arabiyya] to be in a much better position than the “Jewish nation” [al-umma al-Yahudiyya] and regarded the “nationalistic feeling” [shu‘uruha al-watani] as the only thing the Arabs lack in order to advance.56

On the next day Khalil al-Sakakini witnessed Jewish crowds waiting in the streets for Rothschild’s arrival in Jerusalem. Even though the pupils were holding Zionist flags he did not consider it “frightening or deserving of attention.”58 His attitude was markedly different from several other Arab critics of Zionism who pointed out this habit and regarded it as one of the many expressions of disloyalty to the Ottoman state.59 Similarly like several other Arab thinkers, he also suggested that Arabs should follow the example set by the Jews. In this case he observes that “[t]he Arab nation needs a man like Rothschild who would spend his money for the sake of its revival…”60

It seems that Khalil al-Sakakini had done some research on Zionism since already on 17 February he openly formulates his attitude towards the Zionist movement and clearly specifies the reasons which led him to loathe it. It is not the endeavor to revive their nation [umma] and become independent, but the approach that the Zionists have chosen in order to achieve this goal. They are seeking it to the detriment of another nation that has to be destroyed, since it stands in their way.

| 44 | Khalil al-Sakakini and Zionism before WWI |
If I hate the Zionist movement, I hate it because it endeavors to build its independent existence on the ruins of others .... And I am surprised by the Ottoman government, which sees that and does not put it right and by the European governments that are trying to get rid of Jews at the expense of others. I do not detest [the fact] that the Jewish nation [al-umma al-Yahudiyya] strives for independent existence, but [on the contrary], I wish that every dispersed and deprived nation would advance, stick together and live independently. However, what I hate is the principle on which its movement is based. This is that it humiliates others in order to feel strong and kills a whole nation in order to live. As if in this manner it endeavored to steal its freedom and to filch it from the hand of time. No wonder, indeed, it is its nature in every matter. This is what makes it detested and despised by all nations .... What pride does it have in acquiring independence in this manner? But this independence that is gained with the dirham and for which a convenient moment of lethargy of other nations, their weakness and apathy are exploitied, is a weak independence built on sand. What will Jews do if the nationalistic feeling of the Arab nation awakens? Will they be able, in spite of it, to persevere?61

Khalil al-Sakakini discussed Zionism at the school with his students. It is another sign of the intensity of his preoccupation with this issue during this period that on the same day when he formulated the above-quoted position on Zionism, he also employed for this purpose a few verses from a qasida authored by the famous Arab poet al-Mutanabbi.62 The poem, “An Unabashed Guest Has Visited My Head” [Dayfun alamma bi-ra' si ghayra muhtashimin] is one of al-Mutanabbi’s early poems in which he praises his own skills and courage. Khalil al-Sakakini considered this poem suitable for the description of a situation in which the Arabs were set against the Zionists. Again, as before, the verses he chose show clearly that he was convinced that the Arab nation was in a much stronger position in comparison to the Jewish people.63 Moreover, he even thought about the possibility of using this text for the national anthem.64

Can a lump of flesh on a butcher’s board rule the kingdom, with swords thirsting and the birds hungry, One who, if he saw me as water, would die of thirst, and if I appeared to him in sleep, he would not sleep? The trysting-time for every fine-edged sword is tomorrow, as also for every king of the Arabs and non-Arabs who disobeys me; If they respond, my purpose with those blades is not them, and if they turn their backs, I shall not confine their service to them alone.65
“These verses by al-Mutanabbi were today’s lesson with the pupils of the Third Grade. And I talked to them about Zionism, its goals and methods.” Khalil al-Sakakini then proceeded to describe the strong impact of these verses and the context in which he placed them on the students. One German student likened al-Mutanabbi to Schiller.

On the next day the same subject – the state of the Arab nation and the greater likelihood that it would achieve its goals in comparison to the Jewish nation – was again on his mind. Khalil al-Sakakini lists several reasons as to why this is the case. The most important one is the existence of a common language. He thinks that with the spread of education the major problems pertaining to it – the existence of a multitude of dialects and diglossia – will be solved. He gives the demographic plurality of the Arab nation, geographical contiguity of its lands and the support of Muslims as other important reasons. The closing set of his arguments refers to the history of the Arabs and their cultural heritage.

In those days Khalil al-Sakakini was permanently engrossed with the relationship between the Arab and Jewish nations and discussed this issue very intensively with those around him. On 20 February, when he met Is‘af al-Nashashibi, he talked to him about this topic and disclosed to him his plan to write an article on it. In the evening he again discussed this issue with a Russian student. Afterwards he debated Zionism with Faydi Efendi al-'Alami (former mayor of Jerusalem) and the military commander ʻAbdalhamid Basha.

During this period giving private lessons constituted an important source of income for Khalil al-Sakakini. Among his students were two Zionist Jews – an advocate for cultural Zionism Benjamin Ivri [al-khawaja Ibri] and a lawyer Iliyas Efendi Faraji, who worked for the Jewish Colonization Association. Both were active in the Zionist movement and were learning Arabic primarily in order to be able to better communicate with the Arabs who were selling land. Ivri, was a highly educated and erudite man and he and Khalil al-Sakakini became good friends. The most interesting and comprehensive passages concerning Zionism in the diaries are those pertaining to their conversations. Their several discussions on Zionism and other subjects at the end of February and the beginning of March 1914 are recorded in the diaries. In the interlocution on 23 February Khalil al-Sakakini justified his hatred towards the Zionist movement in words similar to those he had confided to his journal earlier (on 17 February). In addition to this, however, he added another crucial argument, which was the threat of dividing the Arab nation into two segments:

With its [Zionism’s] occupation of Palestine it is as if it occupied the heart of the Arab nation, because Palestine is the link that connects the Arabian Peninsula with Egypt and Africa. If Jews occupy it, they will prevent the union of the Arab nation, they will even split it into two parts with no connection between them. This will weaken the standing of the Arab [nation], prevent its solidarity and unity as a nation ....

Khalil al-Sakakini also published this observation in the Arabic press, in al-Iqdam, from which it was taken over by Filastin.
The Zionists want to take over Palestine, which is the heart of the Arab lands and the central link between the Arabian Peninsula and Africa. As if they wanted in this manner to cut this chain and split the Arab nation into two parts for which unity and solidarity will be difficult. Let the inhabitants of the homeland watch out for these bad intentions and let the Arab nation know that it has its place and tongue. If you want to kill a nation, cut off its tongue and seize its place and this is what the Zionists want [to do] with the Arab nation.75

Conversely, Ivri at first emphasized what he considered the harmlessness of Jewish endeavors and baselessness of Arab apprehensions about a fundamental change in the demographic situation in Palestine. “There is no reason to fear for the Arab nation because of that, since not more than two or three hundred thousand Jews of the Jewish nation at most will immigrate to Palestine, as the idea of forming the Jewish nation in Palestine has died, since the Jews understood that the country has not enough room for them.”76 The reasons for the arrival of several hundred thousand Jews are “moral and spiritual, because the world needs a new Torah.”77 However, during one of their subsequent meetings, on 28 February, Ivri changed his mind and counter-attacked. Palestine is sufficiently large and fertile and Jews have the same right as Arabs to live there, he insisted. He accused Arabs that even though they have lived in Palestine for a long time, in contrast to its previous inhabitants they have not left any positive mark on this country. On the contrary, during their presence Palestine went into decline. “Since this country fell to the Arabs, the hands of destruction played with it and the shadow of death settled over it. [Palestine] became desolate and dry …. [Nevertheless] [t]he Jews do not want to dislodge you from it, but they wish to live together with you, they are even in need to mix with you, they need your blood.”78 The present isolationism of Jews is not sustainable and soon they will adapt to their Arab environment. In the end a bi-lingual state similar to Switzerland will be formed.79

Khalil al-Sakakini points out to his interlocutor that Palestine is “an organic part of Arab land.” The Arabs have lived here for ages and the monuments on the Noble Sanctuary esplanade witness to it. Furthermore, Arabic language and culture became dominant in the country. Khalil al-Sakakini ended his oration with the following words: “Your right has died with the passing of time, but our right is alive and strong.”80

In the last conversation with Ivri on Zionism that he noted in his diary, Khalil al-Sakakini describes the most important reasons of the continuously worsening relationships between Jews and Arabs. In the first place is the Zionist boycott of Arab goods, services and workers for which he gives several examples (oranges, carriages, banks, construction workers). It is only Jews who do that, the Arabs do not act in this manner. Furthermore, he alludes to ignorance of the local language and customs, and emphasizes the poor hygiene of Jewish immigrants, which – according to al-Sakakni – was repelling to Arabs. Khalil al-Sakakini says that the locals are convinced that Zionists act intentionally in this manner in order to discourage Arabs from living in their vicinity. Another reason is the Zionist effort to sow mutual distrust between Arab Christians and Muslims by
means of defamation. On the one hand, they depict Muslims as unprincipled, barbaric and uncivilized when talking to Christians. On the other hand, they describe Christians as the fifth column of the European powers and not indigenous Easterners in contrast to the Muslims and the Jews.81

When the owner of Filastin came to Jerusalem for a court session at the beginning of March, Khalil al-Sakakini told him about his student Ivri and their discussions. ‘Isa al-‘Isa suggested publishing the content of these conversations under the title “Discussions with an Important Zionist.”82 However, this idea was not carried into execution. It might have been caused by the fact that the publishing of the newspaper was suspended a month later and Filastin reappeared after two months in early June. Since Khalil al-Sakakini stopped writing his diary for several months during the summer, it is not possible to determine what his concerns were at that time.

It should be emphasized that in the period before WWI, Khalil al-Sakakini, concerned himself with Zionism for only a relatively short period of time as his primary interest lay in the Orthodox Renaissance. In spite of that he expressed some interesting and relevant observations. The conversations, contemplations and remarks noted in his diaries allow us to see his real convictions, feelings, longings and fears without embellishment or the need to guard his tongue. Notwithstanding his hostility to Zionism, he strictly differentiated between this ideology on the one hand and Jews on the other hand. His humanist approach enabled him to befriend Jews and even Zionists regardless of his position towards Zionism. The most important thoughts that are obvious in the diary are his fears that the Zionist movement will break the Arab nation into two discontiguous parts at the point where its Asian and African segments are connected. He considered geographic contiguity as one of the main sources of national strength. At the same time he was convinced that the Arab nation is in a much better position to consolidate itself.

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Endnotes
1 The research underlying this paper was supported by the grant agency VEGA (project number 2/107/2015).
2 We have used the term “Rum Orthodox” in place of the more conventional “Greek Orthodox” as a more accurate reflection of the local name of the church and its constituency, and in deference to the local (Arabic and Greek) usages for the Byzantine church.
3 Since 2003 the Markaz Khalil al-Sakakini al-thaqafi (Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre) in cooperation with the Institute of Palestine Studies have published Khalil al-Sakakini’s diaries in eight volumes. Apart from the first and second parts of the diaries, we have also drawn from Kadha ana ya dunya (Oh World, Such am I) a selection from his diaries chosen and published by his daughter Hala al-Sakakini two years after his death. The diaries of Khalil al-Sakakini are unique in the Palestinian context, because there is no other such work written on a daily basis by an important intellectual and politically active personality over a prolonged period of almost half a century (1907-1952). In the diaries, Khalil al-Sakakini does not glamorize himself and others. Furthermore, he vividly describes his feelings, inner doubts and alienation, his moments of weakness, personal and family problems, and the weak character of


8 Salim Tamari, “A Miserable Year in Brooklyn,” 36.

9 This magazine was published twice a month since September 1908 and printed in the press owned by Jurji Habib Hananiya in Jerusalem. *Al-Asma‘i* was very short-lived, since only eleven issues appeared. Ya‘qub Yehoshua, *Tarikh as-sahafa al-arabiyya fi Filastin, 11, 40-49* (Jerusalem: Mu‘assasat al-dirasat al-qudsiyya, 2003), 278. His preoccupation with the delegation sent to Istanbul to negotiate the rights of the community. His preoccupation with the Orthodox Renaissance was what prevented him from continuing the publication of *al-Asma‘i* at the end of 1908. He died following surgery on 12 September 1909 in Jerusalem. Yehoshua, *Tarikh as-sahafa al-arabiyya fi Filastin, 86-88*.

10 Jurji Habib Hananiya was a member of a distinguished Rum Orthodox family from the old city of Jerusalem. He started a printing venture in Jerusalem in 1894. During the first few years he did not possess a printing press and instead used presses that belonged to others. He only bought a printing machine after getting an official permit to print in Arabic in 1898. Before the revolution he printed 281 books (83 in Arabic). Since 1899 he had been trying to establish an Arabic newspaper, but he only received official sanction for this after the Young Turk Revolution. Since 1903 his press had been printing the official Turkish-Arabic gazette which was published weekly. In September 1908 he commenced publication of his bi-weekly newspaper *al-Quds* (later, in the year 1912-1913 the frequency of publication dropped to one issue a week). In 1914 he emigrated to Egypt and died in Alexandria in 1920. Mary Hanani, “Jurji Habib Hanania: History of the Earliest Press in Palestine, 1908-1914,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 32 (2007): 51-64; Yehoshua, *Tarikh as-sahafa al-arabiyya fi Filastin, 11*, 40-49. It seems that the relationship between Jurji Habib Hanania and al-Sakakini soon became strained, chiefly because of their disagreement over the Orthodox Renaissance. In 1913 al-Sakakini criticized him in an article for providing space in his newspaper *al-Quds* to the Rum Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem for a personal attack against him. Furthermore he mentioned ironically that Hanania “claims that angels twice a week perfume his house with perfume [*tubakkhir*] and that he once prayed with fervor in front of the icon of saint Basil, his patron saint, and the saint popped his head out of the frame of the icon and saluted him for what he had recognized of his honesty, virtuousness and his vigilant care for Orthodoxy.” Khalil al-Sakakini, “Sh‘u‘un urthudhuksiyya: Risala min al-Quds” [Orthodox Matters: A Letter from Jerusalem] *Filastin*, 11 November 1913, 4; Musallam, *Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, 299-300, 304, 310, 327, 344, 345*.

11 According to Yehoshua he was born in 1857, however his granddaughter Mary Hanania writes that he died at the age of 56 years. In that case he would have been born in 1863-64. Yehoshua, *Tarikh as-sahafa al-arabiyya fi Filastin, 47*, Hanania, “Jurji Habib Hanania,” 57.


13 Musallam, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini*, 287-293.
16 Tanbaqa – according to Musallam, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini*, 321.
17 al-Sakakini, *Kadha ana ya dunya*, 43.
20 In the first census after WWI, which took place in 1922, the Orthodox community represented 45.69 percent of all Christians in Palestine. J.B. Barron, *Palestine: Report and General Abstracts of the Census of 1922* (Jerusalem: Greek Convent Press, 1922), 43.
21 The Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre remains in control of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem to this very day.
22 The cases of the Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem were different for several reasons. First, the affair took place at a later time under changed historical circumstances. One of the major dissimilarities was the fact that the higher clergy in Antioch included many Arabs in its ranks, while there were no Arabs in the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. Furthermore, the prominent place of Palestine in international diplomacy and both Ottoman and European interest in maintaining the status quo were other factors that differentiated the course of the affair in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem from its counterpart in Syria. Moreover, the Patriarchate of Antioch did not own vast estates and was considered very poor. On the other hand, at the beginning of the Mandate period, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem possessed about 631 estates in Palestine and many more in other parts of the former Ottoman Empire. Konstantinos Papastathis and Ruth Kark, “Orthodox Communal Politics in Palestine after the Young Turk Revolution (1908-1910),” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 56 & 57 (2013/2014): 125,129-130; Salim Tamari, “Issa al Issa’s Unorthodox Orthodoxy,” *Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem responded to al-Sakakini’s pamphlet with writing that contained ad hominem attacks and was criticized for that on the pages of Filastin by several authors: “Shu’un urthudhusiyya” [Orthodox Matters], *Filastin*, 12 November 1913, 4.
23 Robson, “Colonialism and Nationalism in the Mandate: The Greek Orthodox Controversy and the National Movement,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 41 (2011): 15. The Rum Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem responded to al-Sakakini’s pamphlet with writing that contained ad hominem attacks and was criticized for that on the pages of Filastin by several authors: “Shu’un urthudhusiyya” [Orthodox Matters], *Filastin*, 12 November 1913, 4.
24 Already in the 1880s a struggle had broken out in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem over the language of the liturgy, however at that time it could not be considered a nationalist conflict between the Greeks and the Arabs. Tamari, “Issa al Issa’s Unorthodox Orthodoxy,” 20-21.
26 al-Sakakini, *Kadha ana ya dunya*, 41.
28 Robson, “Colonialism and Nationalism in the Mandate: The Greek Orthodox Controversy and the National Movement,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 41 (2011): 15. The Rum Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem responded to al-Sakakini’s pamphlet with writing that contained ad hominem attacks and was criticized for that on the pages of Filastin by several authors: “Shu’un urthudhusiyya” [Orthodox Matters], *Filastin*, 12 November 1913, 4.
32 “al-Haraka al-sahyuniyya (wa aqwal ba’d kibarina fiha)” [The Zionist Movement (and the Statements of Some of Our Influential Personalities about It)] *Filastin*, 4 April 1914, 1.
33 Unfortunately, I had only the 1913 and 1914 issues of *Filastin* at my disposal.


36 Khalil al-Sakakini, “Kayyisa wa akyas minha wa ‘ajza” [A Smart [Fish], One Smarter than It and an Incapable One] Filastin, 23 April 1913, 1.


39 Khalil [al-]Sakakini, “Min Nabulus – li sahib at-tawqi”’ [From Nabulus – By the Author of the Signature] Filastin, 3 May 1913, 2-3. In this case, however, we are not entirely sure if the author is “our” Khalil al-Sakakini. One of the reasons is that the name of the author is written without the definite article. On the other hand, in the case of a short column “Rejection of Assistance,” mentioned above, it is certain that it was written by al-Sakakini, even though the definite article is also missing. Another reason for doubt is the fact that the article deals with Nablus, but, it is possible that Khalil al-Sakakini went to this town and described his observations (it appears to be written by an outsider). Moreover, the language of the article seems to be less refined than other pieces by Khalil al-Sakakini. However, it seems unlikely that there would be another person of the same name, contributing to the newspaper and even if this was the case, the newspaper would have called the attention of its readers to this fact.

40 al-Sakakini, “Kayyisa wa akyas minha wa ‘ajza” [A Smart [Fish], One Smarter than It and an Incapable One], 1.

41 “al-Haraka as-sahyuniyya (wa aqwal ba’d kibarina fiha),” 1.

42 “al-milla at-Turkiyya”


45 For more information on this subject, see Mandel, The Arabs and Zionism before World War I; and Emanuel Beška, “Responses of Prominent Arabs towards Zionist Aspirations and Colonization prior to 1908,” Asian and African Studies 16, no. 1 (2007), 22-44.

46 Ami Ayalon, Reading Palestine: Printing and Literacy, 1900 – 1948 (Austin: University of Texas Press 2004), 60.

47 Rashid Khalidi examined seventeen Arabic newspapers and magazines from the period between the Young Turk Revolution and the outbreak of the First World War and found more than six hundred articles that dealt with Zionism. The total number of articles on Zionism that were published during this time span was much higher, but Rashid Khalidi did not have access to all newspaper issues. For example his survey does not include the 1914 issues of the newspapers al-karmil and Filastin, both of which during that year dealt with Zionism, Jewish land purchases and other activities more intensively than in any of the previous years. Rashid Khalidi, “The Role of the Press in the Early Arab Raction to Zionism,” Peuples Méditerranéens 20 (July – September, 1982): 106-107; Rashid Khalidi, Palestinian Identity: The Construction of...
Modern National Consciousness (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 122-127; and Emanuel Beška, “Political Opposition to Zionism in Palestine and Greater Syria: 1910–1911 as a Turning Point,” Jerusalem Quarterly 59 (2014): 60; see also 54-67 for more information on the crucial period of 1910-1911, when political opposition to Zionism became prevalent in Palestine and Greater Syria.


Manna’, “Mihnat as-Sakakini wa yawmiyyatuhu fatrat al-harb al-‘alamiyya al-ula (1914-1918),” 22.

Manna’, “Mihnat as-Sakakini wa yawmiyyatuhu fatrat al-harb al-‘alamiyya al-ula (1914-1918),” 23.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 47-53.


He uses the phrase “[...] revival of the Jewish nation and awakening of its racial [national] feeling and its desire for the restoration of independent life in Palestine [...] nuhad al-umma al-yahudiyya wa tanabbuh shu’urihal-jinisi wa nuzu’uhu ila i’adat hayatiha al-istiqlaliyya fi Filastin”.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 55.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 55.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 55.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 55.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 55.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 55.


Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 56.


Once more, on 19 February students of Khalil al-Sakakini’s evening class were asked to write an essay on “The Arab nation and the Jewish [al-Isra’iliyah] nation and whose revival is easier to attain and more likely?” Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 59.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 56.


Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 56.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 56-57.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 57-58.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 59-60.

His original name was Benjamin Ben Israel Bärstein (1870-1933). He was born in Russia, and later studied and lived in Western Europe. Before he came to Palestine in March 1913 he had lived in London for several years. He participated in the purchase of the land for Hebrew University on Mount Scopus from Sir John Grey Hill. After WWI he became a member of the First Elected Assembly of the Yishuv. Manna’, “Mihnat as-Sakakini wa yawmiyyatuhu fatrat al-harb al-‘alamiyya al-ula (1914-1918),” 20; Mordechai Eliav, Britain and the Holy Land, 1838-1914: Selected Documents from the British Consulate in Jerusalem (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Press, 1997), 352; Gideon Shilo, “A Lesson in Zionism: The Mysterious Disappearance of ‘Hawaja Ibray’,” Cathedra: For the History of Eretz Israel and its Yishuv 50 (1990): 84-110, Abstract.


Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 73.

Khalil al-Sakakini lists two more conversations with Ivri on the previous days, however, he does not mention Zionism. The subject of the later one was Torah and its authors. Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 60.

A similar opinion was expressed by two Muslims at a meeting with Sami Hochberg, a pro-Zionist publisher of the newspaper Le Jeune-Tour, during his stay in Cairo in the spring of 1913. Neville
Mandel, “Attempts at an Arab-Zionist Entente: 1913-1914,” Middle Eastern Studies 1 (1965): 245. On the other hand, some Syrian (likely Lebanese Maronite) Christians communicated a different variation of this attitude to Hochberg. They did not see the situation through the prism of national affinity, but rather through sectarian affinity, and they were not fearful of such an eventuality; on the contrary, it was the outcome they desired. “We even wish that the Jews would form the majority in Palestine and succeed in establishing there a Jewish autonomy properly speaking which would split in two that compact Muslim mass which peoples such vast contiguous regions as Iraq, Syria, Egypt, the Hijaz and Yemen.” Mandel, The Arabs and Zionism, 155.

Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 61.

74 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 61.

75 “al-Haraka as-sahyuniyya (wa aqwal ba’d kibarina fiha),” 1.

76 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 61.

77 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 61.

78 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 66.

79 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 66.

80 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 66.

81 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 68-71.

82 Musallam, Yawmiyyat Khalil as-Sakakini, al-Kitab ath-thani, 67-68.