



# Early Printing Presses in Palestine: A Historical Note

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Palestine was part of the Ottoman sultanate and the development of the printing press cannot be separated from similar contexts elsewhere in the empire. The special status attributed to Palestine was related to its position as the Holy Land and its economy and social organization was heavily influenced by this religious association. Pilgrims, arriving from Europe and the Islamic world, often brought with them their customs and personal possessions. Books, in particular religious books, were among such possessions. It is in this context that printing presses emerged, in an effort to widen the religious public.

The first Arabic printing press, was manufactured in Brasov in Romania around 1700, and opened for business in Aleppo in 1706. This press produced religious books for local consumption in the Arab regions of the sultanate. The first Hebrew printing press, on

*Al-Quds*, published between 1908-1914.  
*Suria al-Junubieh*, published between 1918-1922.  
*Esh Shoura* Newspaper, Cairo.

the other hand, was established in Istanbul by Rabbi Isaac Garcon and published its first book in 1490. Its main purpose was also the publications of religious books.<sup>1</sup>

According to Fr. Ibrahim Ayad, the tradition of copying sacred script by hand continued to be one of the tasks of Christian monks in monasteries and churches even after the printing press arrived. In fact, Ayad pointed out, copying texts was not limited to the hand-written transcripts, but also copying from printed books. For the most part the libraries of the patriarchs, the archbishops or head of the monasteries, contained the most beautiful and important original transcripts and rare books, including those printed in Arabic. Christian spiritual activity points to the arrival of printed religious books in Arabic over 400 years ago. Often the books were acquired as part of a personal or an official introduction from one of the European churches. These printed books served as references for the material that was transcribed by the monks and a depository of information for missionaries of the rudiments of their religion and the state of the world they inhabited.<sup>2</sup>

Jews in Palestine also played a role in the history of the printed book. The first printed book to arrive in Jerusalem was the Torah and possibly was followed by a series of pamphlets and booklets for prayer printed at the first Hebrew printing press in Istanbul. This points to the extensive networks of communication between Jerusalem and Istanbul. One can also say that the printed books that were used by Palestinian Jews during this period were predominantly religious in nature. This was due to the fact that the Palestinian Jews, much like other followers of their faith living in the various Arab districts within the Ottoman Empire, knew only verses of the Torah and prayers in the Hebrew language. What they knew of the Hebrew vocabulary was confined to religious vocabulary, which did not fulfill the requirements for daily conversation. Their spoken language therefore was Arabic.<sup>3</sup>

Ibrahim 'Ayad suggests that the system of pastoral services that operated in the Eastern churches meant that clerics were often transferred from one town to another, as well as from one Arab country to another, for the purpose of performing pastoral services for the congregations and improving their conditions. For the higher-ranking clerics who were re-located, it was common for them to take their belongings with them that included their personal books or those they saw vital to their pastoral work. This scenario supports the conclusion that the church afforded some Palestinians the opportunity of exposure to printed books before printing entered Palestine. This was in addition to the broad educational responsibilities held by the churches and monasteries from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. This followed the example set by other monasteries in Syria which also provided Palestinians with an early introduction to the printed book<sup>4</sup>, This new knowledge facilitated the speedy emergence of printing in Palestine.<sup>5</sup>

## Ambiguous Beginnings

Palestine held an important religious place in the world, which enabled the country to have a significant role in the world culture of the time, although it is not considered the seat of printing. This in spite of some reports that printing entered Palestine in the mid-sixteenth century. The death of Nicola Ziadah al-Jalabi in 1789, popularly known by the name of “Abu ‘Askr”, resulted in the closure of his Beirut printing press “Saint Jaour Jious Roman Orthodox Printing Press”, the only printing press that existed in the Syrian monasteries at that time. The result of this closure was that the Syrian provinces remained without publishing facilities and the acquisition of books was limited to the import of books and foreign printed material. The situation continued at the Syrian monasteries up until 1830 when the first printing press was established in Jerusalem, by Nesim Beyk, a Jew, who was authorized to publish religious books.

Shahin Makarios notes, in an article entitled “Encyclopedias in Syria” published in *Muqtataf* magazine (G 8, Seventh Year, March 1883), that Nessim Beyk Press publications enjoyed wide circulation and great success in spite of powerful competition from other transcribers who rejected the notion of using the printing press, and publicly denouncing him and criticized every word he published. His critics continued their unwavering opposition to printing in Jerusalem for a long time, but in the end submitted when another printing press was established.

Printing in Palestine remained confined to Palestinian Jews up until 1846. By the end of the century, however, Jews appeared to have owned five out of the total thirty presses in the country. Most of those new presses existed in, or were attached to Syrian monasteries in the early years of the last half of the nineteenth century. This ownership provided Palestinian Jews with the opportunity to take a leading role in journalism in Palestine. The first newspaper published in Jerusalem in 1862 was a Hebrew newspaper owned by Yael Broueil known as *Ha-Levanon* which included religious topics along with other themes.<sup>6</sup>

Father Louis Sheikho notes in his article entitled, “The History of Printing in the East”, published in *Al-Sharq magazine* (Beirut 2/15/1900), that printers in the Syrian monasteries were established according to Sheikh al-Islam ‘Abdullah Effendi’s legal declaration released in 1716, but they existed prior to this in either an official or non-official capacity due to their limited production and limited circulation of books they published. This distanced printers from the attention of the ruling censors and their concern as to whether they were lawful or not.

If the above points to the lack of accurate detail as to the actual birth of printing in the region, it is even more compounded when it comes to the case of Palestine. Especially since one can assume that Palestinian Jews recounted their concerns to their brothers, the Turkish Jews in Istanbul, and proceeded to establish a religious printing press before

the one established by Nessim Beyk. This is supported by the decree of Sultan Bayzeid II in 1485 allowing those of the Jewish faith under the protection of the Ottomans to establish printing presses for themselves. However, the lack of substantive evidence that surrounds this issue regarding the specific historical moment of when printing actually began in Palestine, and the possibility that it began before 1830, may be viewed from another angle. There are positive aspects that show the lack of any hindrance to the rise of the printing presses at the time, afforded publishing and those involved in it, the tools to confront conservatives represented by transcribers, thus making the printing press and publishing a reality in Palestine.

## The First Printers

The appearance of the printing press in Palestine took almost four decades. Its use was not wide-spread, as in surrounding areas (with the exception of Damascus where printing existed but at a slower pace than in the *Mutassarflik* of Jerusalem). The reasons that prevented the Ottoman authorities from responding to the discovery of printing was probably due to Islamic objections, among religious scholars to technological innovations in printing religious texts, yet the reasons which supported the flourishing of printing in Palestine as noted were religious, primarily Jewish and Christian. The Hebrew presses were established due to demands from Jews for the practice of their religion. Eventually Arabic and Turkish printing presses did appear and prospered as a result of government intervention, which promoted the importance of publishing in the second half of the nineteenth century.

This undertaking gave rise also to sectarian (religious) printing societies, and encouraged the rise of competition between presses alongside those which were privately owned. This is noticeable from the historical references tracing the rise of printing presses and the increase in their numbers. The references neglect to mention the existence of other printing presses in other towns and cities in spite of the fact that the numbers indicate this was the case. In this respect, in the first volume of the encyclopedic *The History of Palestinian Journalism*, (*hijra* year 1316 AH, 1314 *mali*), we can find the list of printers in Jerusalem that included, in addition to the missionary and monastery printers, the exclusively Arabic printing presses found in the Old City of Jerusalem, in Haifa, and in Jaffa. However, there is no evidence to corroborate these lists in other sources. This minimal information however plays an important role in confirming that the early printing presses made it possible for the establishment and rise of printing and publishing in Palestine. The establishment of these printers and their ability to flourish was accompanied by the growth of the missionary movement in Palestine and other areas of greater northern Syria and the involvement of various European churches in the missionary activity of the different Christian denominations.

In order to further its teachings among Christians in Palestine and the neighboring Arab countries, the Franciscan order agreed to import books from abroad and eventually to establish a printing press in Jerusalem dedicated to serving their missionary goals. The Austrian monk Sebastian Frotechner, through the support of Emperor Joseph I, imported the necessary equipment, machinery and ink-printing letters from Austria and established a printing press in Jerusalem in 1846. The very first material published by this printing press was the book *Christian Instruction* released in both the Arabic and Italian. After a period the printer's supervisors observed that the fonts used were of poor quality and decided to replace them with fonts known as "Istanbouli" (meaning "of Istanbul") fonts. These they imported from Beirut, in different sizes for all the letters, which were cast in the Catholic Press in Beirut. They soon stopped importing fonts from Austria. The Franciscan monks upgraded their printing press from time to time with more modern printing equipment, and included a section for stone printing. When the publishing work of the printing press expanded, the printer supervisors saw it fit to create a division specifically for casting font heads in order to be self-sufficient from importing fonts heads from the casting factories of Beirut. Simultaneously, they provided printing presses within Palestine with whatever was needed in the way of font heads from their printing press that existed in Jerusalem. At a later stage, a leather-binding department was added to the printing press containing the most contemporary equipment. The printing press itself was eventually mechanized in its operation thus ending manual hand and foot operation. In turn that equipment was also modernized and later operated on gasoline followed by electricity.

When the administration of the printing press was taken over by Father Henry Kurtzman from Germany in 1900, an additional 14 new pieces of equipment were imported from Europe, which allowed him to introduce a new way of casting fonts. The printing press published books in Arabic, Turkish, Armenian, Hebrew, Greek, French, and Italian. Beginning in 1900 it became one of the largest printing presses for publishing in the East, comparable to those in Europe in all aspects, from the instruments of printing letters, stone and casting to its mechanized operation, bronzing, burnishing, gilding and binding. As was mentioned earlier, the printing press was first run by Austrian monks, followed by three Italian monks, then administered by the Belgian Father Dominique and finally the reins were handed over to Father Henry Kurtzman under whose operation the printer press advanced. By 1883 this particular printing press had published, approximately 103 books, some of them series volumes that covered a variety of subject matter. The majority of the books dealt with religious issues pertaining to proselytizing, education, linguistics, and literary subject matter.<sup>7</sup>

A number of other printing presses were also established during this period:

- The British missionary group, The London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews, created its own printing press in Jerusalem in 1868, named the "London Printing Press." This press was dedicated to publishing religious books and specifically

publishing the Bible in order to proselytize among Palestinian Jews. It had monthly religious publications in addition to a number of religious declarations. One of the most important books it published in 1848 was *The History of the Church*.

- In 1848 Gregorian Armenians established an Armenian printing press in the Armenian monastery located near Mount Zion. The press published prayer books and pamphlets in Armenian, using Armenian fonts and Turkish, using ink letters. This press survived for over 40 years and published close to 115 books in different quantities and languages.

- Towards the end of 1849 the Orthodox Patriarch Kerilous II recommended that the “Society of the Holy Sepulchre” establish a printing press for the church on the grounds of the Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem. The Beirut newspaper *Al-Mashriq* noted in 1903 (Issue 2, No. 5) in an article titled “The History of Publishing in the East” that the orthodox printing press survived well into the 20th century and published a number of instructional and church books in both Arabic and Greek. The press published approximately 36 books in Arabic and 29 books in Greek from its establishment to 1883 alone.

- The Protestant Church Missionary Society, established a small printing press in the second half of the 19th century that published religious booklets and declarations.

- In 1879 the Society of British Church Missionaries created a printing press in Jerusalem which published religious books. Historical references indicate this printing press published approximately 22 books from the time it was established until 1883.<sup>8</sup>

- Palestinian Jews also competed in the field of publishing as it was a new commercial field. So in addition to Nessim Beyk’s printing press which had been established in the 1830s and considered the first press in Palestine, David Sassoon started a printing press in Jerusalem in the year 1850. It was a small printing press but was noted for the quality of its publications.

- During this time Moses Schulman set up a printing press to publish a Hebrew religious newspaper called *Bitsal*. In addition to the newspaper, religious booklets and pamphlets were published. The printing press continued in operation until 1885. In addition Isaac Kusheina established a Hebrew newspaper in 1865 called *Tsyon’s Slogan*. Kusheina imported a private printing press and established it in Jerusalem to publish his newspaper until he closed its operation in 1902. Also at some point during the second half of the 19th century, year unknown, a Russian Jew, Linkner, created a printing press in Jerusalem to publish Jewish religious books and also published the magazine *Yerushalaym* there.

- In 1870 Fromken opened a small printing press in Jerusalem to publish the *Habilitas* newspaper. It is noted that this printing press did not last long, as was the case for one

started by Jay Gagin in Jerusalem in 1882, for publishing Hebrew books.

- The Ben Yehuda Printing Press established in 1890 in Jerusalem to publish his newspaper *Ha Or*, which was considered at the time the most prominent Hebrew press and the most important among the early printing presses established in Palestine. The importance of the printer's craftsmanship, production capabilities, and the role it played in publishing was equal in importance to that of the Franciscan Fathers Arabic printing press. In publishing his newspaper Ben Yehuda desired to educate and inform members of his own religious community of his scheme for reviving and modernizing Hebrew. Because of his liberal position, Jewish men of religion feared him and attempted to undermine him by pressuring the Turkish government to shut down the newspaper. Ben Yehuda did not give up and persisted in gaining a license to release another newspaper replacing the one closed by the authorities. He called his new newspaper *Ta'ufot*. His printing press published numerous instructional books in Hebrew to educate Jewish children in reading, history and geography. Ben Yehuda also authored a new lexicon in Hebrew published through his press.<sup>9</sup>

The Ottoman Government, by comparison was not assiduous in establishing an official printing press in Palestine, as they did in other Arab cities that were under their rule.<sup>10</sup> However, a printing press known as "Al-Maamouniya Printing" existed in Jerusalem in 1876. The official gazette, *Al-Quds Al-Sharif*, created by the government in 1876, was published there in both Arabic and Turkish.<sup>11</sup>

- References also indicate that in addition to all these printers in Jerusalem there was also the Mubarak Lasfou Press established by Martin Lasfou in 1892 utilizing Arabic, Turkish and French fonts.
- In 1892 a member of the Doumani family established the Doumani Press in Jerusalem also utilizing Arabic, Turkish and French fonts. In the period between 1892 and 1894 Alphonse Antoine Alonzo established a printing press known as Al-Wataniyyah using Arabic, Turkish, French and Russian fonts.
- The Hananiyya Press was established in 1894, owned by Jurji Habib Hananiya. He began its operation prior to gaining an official license knowing that the government had no desire to grant him a license. His printing press was relatively modern and published in different languages using Arabic, Turkish and Russian fonts. He produced *Al-Quds* newspaper in 1908, probably the first private Arabic newspaper in Palestine.<sup>12</sup>

Historians attribute the reason for the increase in the number of printing presses owned by Jews was due to the migration of Jews from Europe to Palestine, and the desire of the Zionist movement to revive Hebrew as a language for the Jews through printing in Hebrew. Christian printing presses flourished as a result of churches of printing religious books, which the Turkish government did not perceive as a threat.

With regard to privately owned printing presses, it was the opposite case. Approaching government circles with requests to obtain private printing presses for individual citizens or companies was in itself viewed as suspicious behavior by the government offices responsible for issuing licenses. Jurji Habib Hananiya, in the first issue of his newspaper *Al-Quds* (issued September 18, 1908) has an in-depth testimony of his experience of attempting to gain a license from government authorities in Jerusalem in 1894. In his testimony Habib says:

*All of Jerusalem's printing presses were predominantly for religious purposes, each one operating for the benefit of their own denomination. So there was a need for the establishment of a printing press to sow the seeds of brotherhood equality and cooperation between us, for the purpose of serving the homeland. However, this was difficult given the obstacles and stumbling blocks I encountered from a despotic autocracy whose purpose was my humiliation. I attempted to realize this endeavor despite the obstacles. But my demand fell on deaf ears and remained imprisoned in the desk drawers of government civil servants gaining dust day after day.*

*While awaiting a license to be issued, I obtained Latin and Greek fonts in preparation for establishing a printing press and I began utilizing them for printing tourist-related material, executing my publishing clandestinely. This occupied my efforts for three months. Someone informed the authorities of my activities and I was placed under strict supervision (press censorship) and my work came to a halt. I did not lose hope in spite of all these constraints because I felt relaxed and gained strength in the midst of being pursued and hindered. I obtained Arabic fonts and began working with printing presses whose owners were not versed in the Arabic language. This news reached the authorities and soon they tried to end my work again. I was fortunate, however, that this occurred at a time when I was publishing a book for one of those men of distinction and influence who supported me with his power and influence. In addition I was also providing services to various government offices, this enabled me to continue my work for three more years. During those years I worked at one of the printing presses during the day, and at my own printing press at home at night. This is how I began and how I continued until I was granted my official license for my printing press in February 1906.*

Katrina Georgi Siksik, the daughter of Jurji Hananiya, said that the reason the authorities prevented him from gaining his license for his printing press was that they feared the printing press was a machine for making bombs.<sup>13</sup>

Finally the most important printing press was probably the 'Syrian Orphanage Press.' It excelled in providing knowledge and literature and published the magazine *Modern Gems* edited by the author Khalil Beidis.<sup>14</sup> The printing press was furnished with the best



equipment, equal in quality to the finest printing presses in Beirut with its equipment and utilities; Arabic and foreign fonts, threading and binding, pressing and cutting instruments. There were two large printers and three small ones all that operated with steam. It became known for its superior printing, accuracy and creativity. This was evident from the number of orders placed from various foreign sources in Egypt, Aleppo, Beirut, Damascus, and Tripoli (Syria) in addition to various cities within Palestine like Haifa, Nazareth, Jaffa, and throughout Jerusalem. The printing press published a number of German magazines and newspapers and countless books and commercial papers, and was rivaled only by one or two presses in Beirut.<sup>15</sup>

Historians all agree on the importance of the printing presses during this period, in the evolution and advancement of publishing and society in Palestine. It suffices to note that, the number of printing presses established in Jerusalem during the last quarter of the nineteenth century reached eleven as evidence of the high demand for books and other periodicals. The variety of books published and the amount distributed, points to the beginning of new horizons in education and culture in the nationalist movement in Palestine. It also points to the importance of printing presses in building the movement for reform and modernization in all the Ottoman provinces.

## **Indicators of a Cultural and Educational Renaissance**

The first era of printing in Palestine after the establishment of the early presses in Jerusalem was dominated by religious publications, as Jerusalem was the centre of the three monotheistic faiths. People's literacy and their relationship to books was virtually non-existent. Therefore publishing did not expand beyond its existing circles until the second half of the nineteenth century. This was in response to the various commissions demanding reform. Their vision and the reforms they advocated were crystallized in the political, economic, cultural and social magazines of the time. The hope was to force the government to accept their views of modernization and systems for governing society. The reforms were also a reaction to the development of the Arab nationalist movement and its increasingly clear goals and obvious social and cultural appeal.

During this period men of religion were the main source of education. Very few public schools existed and there was little to prepare people for the education they needed to be part of a modern world. Even foreign schools that had been established employed clerics from overseas. They had no real understanding of the needs of the people and had primarily missionary ambitions to establish schools based on their educational models. The matter of education was in the hands of the government and sectarian schools.<sup>16</sup>

Gradually, modern schools began to appear, and this forced the Turkish government to keep pace with these schools. At the government schools there was an elementary

level (three years), intermediate level (three years) and the secondary level (five-to-seven years). The Ottoman government established technical and agricultural schools. Schools for higher learning were established for medicine and law, a school ordained by the Sultan for the study of administration and politics, judicial school, upper schools of commerce and agriculture and teacher training colleges,<sup>17</sup> veterinarian schools, engineering schools, beaux-arts school, among others. By the year 1900 education had reached a high level of advancement and progress in missionary and government schools. This had a naturally positive affect on society. Illiteracy diminished compared to what it had been, the number of teachers movements in along with the number of qualified educated people. This transformed the cultural and educational activity in the country and political, social and cultural newspapers appeared in all of the cities. There was a significant interest and responsiveness to writing and translation from foreign languages to Arabic. This fortified the nationalistic renaissance movement in a similar fashion to the rise of other intellectual movement Arab countries. This was assisted by the advancement of publishing and the printing presses that fulfilled the needs of schools for books and writing paper along with the re-printing of older books e.g, literary and science books. In this way, the production of intellectual work entered a new chapter in the life of Palestinian society.<sup>18</sup> This materialized literally, when the constitution was declared in 1908 and was received by the people with enthusiastic support. It included numerous laws and texts guaranteeing Ottoman citizens with equality in the areas of ethnicity, religions, and gender equality and freedom and participation in enacting laws. The reforms included the right to oversee the affairs of state, expand the scope of education, the possibility for social and political activity, and the elimination of despotic high-handedness, cruelty, national oppression and Turkification. It also prohibited attacks on personal freedom, personal finance and personal property. In other words, the people began to live in a new era, a time of reform, renaissance and progress. Khalil Sakakini summarized this new period: "Now I can serve my country. Now I can start a school, a newspaper, and a youth organization. Now we can raise our voices without abashment."<sup>19</sup>

Palestinian intellectuals backed the movement and became immersed in its development. Journalism was one of their primary, and most effective, tools that they employed immediately after the proclamation of the constitution on July 24th, 1908. It was as though the Palestinians, desired to test the credibility and earnestness of the Ottoman government and its willingness to operate based on the constitution.

The people of Palestine considered the constitution as the beginning of a new era where freedom of speech and criticism were allowed. The new constitution allowed for an ordinary citizen to publish a newspaper and to inform the public prosecutor of this only a day prior to publishing and then was subsequently granted permission automatically.<sup>20</sup>

Within weeks of the proclamation of the constitution in Palestine, nine newspapers were published in Jerusalem, two newspapers and a magazine in Haifa, and a magazine

in Jaffa. These newspapers attracted the important writers, poets and intellectuals who began to contribute to these local newspapers as well as continuing their writing for newspapers and magazines in Egypt and Lebanon. In turn Arab writers from neighbouring provinces began publishing on the pages of Palestinian newspapers and magazines political articles, poetry, intellectual and literary topics that dealt with the call for reform and change. This stimulated the literary movement and brought a resurgence of the language of writing and a development of literary images after prose was liberated from formal rhyme.

Printing production capabilities present at the time were not sufficient to meet the demand for publications particularly in the area of culture and education and in the case of newspapers. Many of those who applied for licenses to publish newspapers also gained licenses to establish printing presses. The main purpose would be to print and publish the newspaper by the owner of the printing press, in addition to printing whatever the owner deemed necessary. As much as this enriched the printing and publishing sector and furthered its development, a trait of many of the printing presses was that they all became publishers of newspapers carrying the name of the press.

## **Establishing an Education of Enlightenment**

Printing and publishing was late in developing in Palestine and other areas of the Ottoman state, in relation to the discovery of the printing press. Religious circles justified their opposition by fears of the way in which printing made writing easier and the possibilities of “forging the Quran,” or “distorting the Quran’s verses.”

A close examination of the factors affecting the development of printing and publishing in Palestine between the years 1908–1914, reveals it to be the result of efforts and activity towards reform and modernization. There was a rise in the number of newspapers, the production capability of the printing presses which helped meet the demands of schools, their increasing numbers and expansion. These factors assisted the earlier awakening and nationalist movement in Palestine. This nurturing was also the result of trial and error and experimentation occurring in neighbouring Arab countries and contributed to the experience in Palestine. The result was that education gradually became generally accepted and took a prominent place among the concerns of Palestinians. Along with the change in conception of education was a change in the role of religious schools, from schools graduating proselytizers and Islamic reformers, preaching theology and sectarianism to those preaching patriotism, science and contemporary nationalism. The “English Missionary School” in Jerusalem, was an example of this change, when their administration was entrusted to the venerable instructor Nakhla Zariq, from Lebanon. With his influence and charisma he created a patriotic school from which teachers graduated who espoused patriotism and nationalism above religion. The writer Khalil Sakakini in his book *Ma*

*Tayasara* said that Nakhla Zuraiq nurtured a higher spirit among his students “that was beneficial in confronting feudal education which was of a religious nature.” The primary cornerstone of education during this period was embodied in the form of the president for educational development the literary writer Georgy ‘Atiyeh, professor at the Russian Science Seminar in Beit Jala, the literary writer Priest Elias Marmourah, Louis ‘Abdouh al-Sam’any, the literary writer Sheikh ‘Aly al-Rimawi, the literary writer Sheikh Youssef al-Nabhani Sheikh Abi Hassan Halawa al-Ghazi, Sheikh Abbas al-Khamash from Nablus, Sheikh and poet Youssef Ass’ad son of Jerusalem who had corresponded letters and poems with Ahmad Faris Alshadyaq and Sheikh Selim Abu al-Iqbal al-Y’aqubi.

These contributions represented stimulus for printing presses to publish intellectual books during the reform and awakening stage (1908-1914) and these publications expressed the new ideas, most prominent of them were those of Khalil al-Sakakini, Ro’hi al-Khalidi, Bandali al-Jouzi, Kalthoum ‘Oudeh, Iskandar al-Khoury al-Beitjali, ‘Adel Jabr, Bandali Mashgour, Youssef al-‘Issa, Augustine Marmaji al-Dominiki, Khalil Beidis, Antoine Bilan, Gibran Matar, Faris Mudawwar, Ibrahim ‘Hana, and many others. These intellectuals are considered the foundational pillars of the new education system in Palestine who and affected the consciousness of society.

This intellectual connection with the outside previously world had an impact on Palestinian journalism, as journalism had been defined by the “decorum of the article” and the “decorum of the story.” Newspapers and magazines began to use the “story,” the “short story,” the “narrative” and the “rhyme,” as new styles of journalism. In addition to news and news analysis, the interview, the investigative report, and other styles of writing. Authors began to understand the power of using these new tools in delivering the news to their public. Professor Khalil Beidas was one of the first prominent leaders in this area and used these journalistic tools and writing styles in *Nafa’is* magazine which he began publishing in November 1908. Beidas believed that by merely using these styles it was possible to shed light on the new values of society. And by utilizing these new methods it was possible to make the new meanings and terminology take hold in spite of social divisions in society.

Modernization of language usage was not an easy process. Khalil al-Sakakini, Khalil Beidas, Rashid al-Dajani, Youhana Dakrit one of the owners of *Bethlehem* magazine were in direct and constant confrontation with the symbols of economic feudalism and the men of religion. As an example of this we can take the experience of Youhanna Dakrit whose novel *The Roots of Misery* (“Asl al-Shaqaa”) was received with widespread public outcry within religious circles because the novel attributed social hardships to men of religion. This campaign increased in voracity when he proclaimed in his magazine that the novel would be sent as a gift to all subscribers of *Bethlehem* magazine. When this news reached some of the clergy they began calling for its confiscation. The Patriarch filed a lawsuit against the author in court and the lower

court ordered him to pay a monetary fine. After Youhana Dakrit resumed his work and the lawsuit was transferred to the higher court.

The appearance and spread of newspapers and the increase in the number of printing presses, as mentioned previously, was one of the significant expressions of the rise of a new middle class. Through publishing they shaped the words, expressions and meaning of their new culture and the content of daily newspapers. People became knowledgeable via the press of notions about work, labour rights, manufacturing, social classes and class struggle, revolution, war, peace, politics, the relation of language and peoples' lives, traditions, illusions, social values, research in social sciences, research on evolution, and scientific theories.

The sparks of World War I flared in 1914 and the newspapers came to a halt. Printing presses stopped running and were gradually transformed to warehouses as the presses rusted and reams of paper slowly gathered dust. The only operational printing presses were those that existed in the churches, monasteries and Christian associations. With the end of the war and the defeat of the Ottomans, Palestine was transported into a new era that saw the return of journalistic life as a Palestinian cultural awakening was reborn.

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#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> *Personal interview at Latin Monastery with Father Ibrahim 'Ayaad, House of Jala Jarit 1/23/99.*
- <sup>2</sup> *History of the Jewish-Israeli Press, Mohammed Suleiman, handwritten manuscript.*
- <sup>3</sup> *Evolution of Zionist Tunisian Press for the Jewish State, Kalioum al-S'aefty, Eastern Press, Nicosia/Cyprus 1989. p31*
- <sup>4</sup> *Personal interview at Latin Monastery with Father Ibrahim 'Ayaad, Ibid.*
- <sup>5</sup> *Palestinian Encyclopedia, Volume Three, Palestinian Encyclopedia Association, First Printing, Damascus 1984. pp7-20.*
- <sup>6</sup> *History of Writing, Mohamed Suleiman, Ibid. pp327-328.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Contemporary Palestinian Literary Life, Dr. Abd El-Rahman Yaghi, Dar El-Afaq Al-Jadidah, Beirut, Second Printing 1981. p77-78.*
- <sup>8</sup> *The History of Printing in the Arabic East, Dr. Khalil Sabaat, Dar Al Ma'arif Egypt, Cairo, Second Printing 1966. p321.*
- <sup>9</sup> *Contemporary Palestinian Literary Life, Dr. Abd El-Rahman Yaghi, Ibid. P78, copied from "Al-Mashriq Magazine," Beirut, Vol. 2, Year 5, 1903.*
- <sup>10</sup> *The History of Printing in the Arabic East, Dr. Khalil Sabaat, Ibid. p321-322.*
- <sup>11</sup> *History of Writing, Mohamed Suleiman, Ibid. p332.*
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid. p332.*
- <sup>13</sup> *History of Arabic Journalism in Palestine during the Ottoman Era 1908-1918, Ya'qoub Yoush'a, Al Ma'arif Press, Jerusalem, 1974. pp7-9.*
- <sup>14</sup> *History of Arabic Journalism in Palestine during the Ottoman Era 1908-1918, Ya'qoub Yoush'a, Ibid. p15.*
- <sup>15</sup> *History of Arabic Journalism in Palestine during the Ottoman Era 1908-1918, Ya'qoub Yoush'a, Ibid. p32, p93.*
- <sup>16</sup> *Contemporary Palestinian Literary Life, Dr. Abd El-Rahman Yaghi, Ibid. p79.*
- <sup>17</sup> *Contemporary Palestinian Literary Life, Dr. Abd El-Rahman Yaghi, Ibid. pp122-123.*
- <sup>18</sup> *Contemporary Palestinian Literary Life, Dr. Abd El-Rahman Yaghi, Ibid. pp62-73.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Literary Trends and Criticism in Palestine, Dr. Qustandi Shoumli, Dar Al-Awda Lil Dirasat wa Al-Nashir, Jerusalem, 1993. p18.*
- <sup>20</sup> *Kadtha Ana Ya Dunia, Khalil Al Sakakini, Dar Al-Kitab, Beirut, 1980. p73.*