

Stacy Fahrenthold

TRANSNATIONAL MODES AND MEDIA: THE SYRIAN PRESS IN THE MAHJAR AND EMIGRANT ACTIVISM DURING WORLD WAR I

Abstract

This article argues that during World War I, the Syrian and Lebanese periodical press in the American *mahjar* created new space for transnational political activism. In São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and New York City, diasporic journalists and political activists nurtured a new nationalist narrative and political culture in the press. In a public sphere linking *mahjar* to *mashriq*, what began with discussions about Ottoman political reform transformed into nationalist debate during the war. Intellectuals constructed and defined the “Syrian” and “Lebanese” national communities in the diaspora's newspapers, but the press also played an important practical role in promoting and shaping patterns of charity, remittances, and political activism towards the homeland. Using materials from this press, the article concludes that the newspaper industry's infrastructure enabled new patterns of political activism across the *mahjar*, but also channeled Syrian efforts into a complex alliance with France by the eve of the Mandate.



“The sentiments of honor and loyalty... are incompatible with these individuals who sold their profession... to the highest bidder. Hirelings of the foreigners, they tried to inculcate the inexperienced youth with the same subversive ideas that they had entertained.”

- Jamal Pasha on Syria's Journalists, 1916.¹

On 6 May 1916, the military government of Jamal Pasha, “the bloodletter,” convicted some forty Arab journalists and intellectuals of treason. Using documents seized from the abandoned French Consular Office in Beirut, the Ottoman government demonstrated that prominent members of Syria's Decentralization movement had colluded with France to end Turkish rule in Syria and Lebanon. The condemned shared several attributes: they were reformers who had called for greater Arab participation in imperial

Stacy Fahrenthold is a Ph.D. candidate at Northeastern University; e-mail: fahrenthold.s@gmail.com

administration; they were journalists and newspaper editors who participated in the *nahda*; and lastly, they each had connections to the Syrian diaspora. Such links to Syrian communities in Cairo, Paris, and the Americas spared some of the condemned their lives. Many fled during the first months of World War I, and could only be convicted in absentia.²

Jamal Pasha hanged twenty-one “traitors” in Beirut and Damascus, in a public demonstration. Also paying the price of talking reform, the presses at Ahmed Tabbarra's *al-Ittihad al-'Uthmani*, 'Abd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi's *al-Hadara*, and the Khazin brothers' *al-Arz* closed quietly. Only Muhammad Kurd Ali's pro-Ottoman *al-Muqtabas* remained.³ The following month, a disastrous famine visited Mount Lebanon, depleting entire villages of their populations. Death warrants remained on the books for many of Syria's intellectuals, who continued to combat the Ottoman state from New York City, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Paris, and Cairo.

The greatest irony of this moment is that although Jamal Pasha had correctly identified the Syrian press as a political force connected to the diaspora, he failed to consider the Reform movement's largely Ottomanist outlook. The 1913 Syrian Congress in Paris brought together reformers from *Hizb al-Lamarkaziyya*, the Beirut Reform Society, *al-Fatat*, and other parties comprised chiefly of journalists from Damascus, Beirut, Cairo, Alexandria, and New York City. Having used the diaspora's press to reach consensus, the Congress laid out its platform: immediate administrative reform, greater Arab participation in local affairs, and the protection of political rights (including those in the diaspora) within the Ottoman Empire.⁴ Istanbul sent its own delegate, who reported that these resolutions would assist in negotiations between the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (hereafter C.U.P.) and Arab reformers.

Instead of reform, the following months brought war. The empire entered World War I, and Jamal Pasha arrived in Syria, placing it under military occupation by 1915. He immediately stepped up censorship over Syria's press, instituting bans on diasporic periodicals, closing printing houses, harassing and even executing journalists.⁵ The clampdown alienated the C.U.P.'s former partners in the *mahjar*. Activists once associated with the Reform movement mourned their dying homeland, and called for its emancipation from the “Turkish yoke” (*nir al-atrāk*) for the first time. In the struggle for Independence, the *mahjar* became a critical front where activists waged battles in the press. This essay outlines the story of transnational political activism in the Syrian *mahjar*, paying special attention to the myriad ways that the Arabic language press in Brazil, Argentina, and the United States served the Independence project.

TRANSNATIONAL MEDIA: THE MAHJARI PRESS AS STRUCTURE

Ever since Jürgen Habermas first linked the periodical press to the rise of the liberal middle classes, historians have analyzed the connection between the private newspaper press and public civil discourse.⁶ Benedict Anderson illustrated the press's capacity to generate patriotic "imagined communities:" political identities that a middle-class readership expressed in relation to the modern nation-state.⁷ In the *mahjar*, the emigrant bourgeoisie literally constructed the nation through the press: they organized politically, developed financial and educational structures, and nurtured a nationalist culture and narrative in its pages. With the Ottoman government's hostility to Syrian journalism during the war, emigrants living "behind the sea" (*warā' al-baḥr*) gained increasing control over the Syrian press, gaining power to define what it meant to be "Syrian" or "Lebanese" in a post-Ottoman context.

As the diaspora's major print capitals, Syrian publishing houses in São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and New York City comprised critical sites for public opinion and nationalist activism during the War. Beyond newspapers, publishers produced nationalist propaganda for the Syrian reading public.⁸ Political parties used such media to disseminate open letters, pamphlets, and books. These texts were printed in Arabic, French, English, Portuguese, and Spanish for both Arab and foreign audiences. Their content evolved during the conflict, and the *mahjar's* political culture resembled an ongoing discussion between the activists around the world.

Publishing houses also provided new social spaces oriented towards patriotic politics and middle-class activism. They had their own subscription-based libraries, printing dime novels, translations of European literature, biographies, political poetry, and language primers.⁹ They often featured reading rooms for the oration and performance of texts; this mirrored similar institutions in Beirut, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Cairo.¹⁰ Some engaged in everyday printing, producing stationary and letterhead for local Syrian businesses. Such measures offset the cost of producing a newspaper.¹¹ Most importantly, the *mahjar's* publishing houses founded their own literary societies and book clubs. Meeting weekly to discuss poetry, history, and politics, these fraternities offered young men a social outlet as well as a worldview that carried patriotic and even nationalist content. Many such groups discussed in this essay—*Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani*, *Jama'iyyat al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya*, and *Hizb al-Dimuqrati al-Watani*—began as fraternities attached to publishing houses.

During World War I, political, intellectual, and activist networks cohered around their respective newspaper presses. In such a setting, the journalism industry itself became a space where an emerging Syrian and Lebanese middle class abroad asserted its primacy in political debates. Newspapers

were simultaneously sites of contest and patronage: in New York City, Na‘um Mukarzil subsidized Lebanese writers in his Arabic daily *al-Huda*, a paper officially linked to his own political committee *Jama‘iyyat al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya*. For aspiring young writers, membership in a club like the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* and access to the press came hand in hand; participating in the politics of patriotism hinged on both aspects. In the end, newspapers were greater than the output of their individual presses; they created their own intellectual gravity and governed both political discourse and nationalist activism.

The *mahjar's* press was an important political institution that fostered transnational networks across the diaspora. As such, it facilitated the continuous circulation of intellectuals, activists, and professionals. Readers across continents could order issues of *al-Huda*, *al-Sa‘ih*, or *Abu al-Hawl* remotely through mail-order subscription, and party activists brought copies with them as they moved across the *mahjar*. Their peripatetic movements established a circuit that enabled activism across the *mahjar*. The transnational nature of this press also reflected in the *mahjar's* economy: newspapers like Sallum Mukarzil's *al-Majalla al-Tijariyya al-Suriyya al-Amirkiyya* in New York combined political commentary with descriptions of employment markets, economic conditions, and prices for items like cotton, coffee, cloth, tobacco, and ‘araq.¹²

As transient activists and journalists imagined Syrian and Lebanese communities into existence, the diaspora's newspapers transformed them into epicenters for nationalist politics. But, unlike Anderson's imagined communities, the process by which the periodical press enabled patriotic nationalism was anything but consensual. Rather, in the *mahjar* the press was a place of semiotic contest, a place where the diaspora's activists variously became “Syrian” or “Lebanese” by engaging in discursive warfare for the right to define and represent the community abroad. National symbols, historical narratives, and language became rhetorical munitions within a “political and cultural minefield” where Syrians in Brazil, Argentina, and the United States competed for access to the diaspora's collective voice.¹³

If the press created new political spaces, it also constrained emigrant agency, channeling it towards specific a political praxis.¹⁴ Newspapers empowered a transnational Syrian middle class that then pressed its claims to representative legitimacy in international fora. At the same time, the press provided structures that governed Syrian activism in important ways. First, as continued out-migration dispersed the Syrian reading public, periodicals and political parties needed to maintain active networks of support and information across a widening transnational space. Second, this reading public's middle-class identity influenced how politics functioned: committee-based activism, complete with a faith in “public opinion” and the power of

petition took center stage over ideological or mass party activism. Emigrant activists relied on newspapers to popularize political viewpoints and enervate the diasporic public into supporting new visions of the homeland as a matter of patriotic duty. Whereas the periodical press created the Syrian and Lebanese diasporic “public,” the objectives of the *mahjar's* transnational activists were also governed by their trade, prompting them to seek to shape and deploy Syrian public opinion (itself a new political force) towards a nationalist vision of the Levant.

THE PRESS IN THE MAHJAR AS TRANSNATIONAL ARCHIVE

As a body of sources, the *mahjari* press gets short shrift in historiographies of interwar Syria and Lebanon in favor of colonial documents. A practical reason for this stems from how historians frame Middle Eastern history. Within the Area Studies framework popularized by the postwar American academy, studies of the region have focused on the relationship between territorially defined nation-states and the societies they produce. Mobile peoples: nomads, migrant laborers, or emigrants, fit only problematically within such a perspective, not least because as migrants, they undermine the “methodological nationalism” which presumes the immutability and inviolability of the homogenous nation-state.¹⁵ The states of Syria and Lebanon emerged only after World War I, on maps drawn by European powers seeking an amiable colonial solution for the post-Ottoman Levant. The *mahjar* and its activists played a complicated role in the construction of this geography, but “landlocked” methodological lenses typical of Area Studies presume salt water to be more boundary than conduit for political change.¹⁶ This essay takes the opposite tack, arguing that there is no place better suited to explore the utility of transnational modes of inquiry than in the history of nationalism. Emigrants participated in drawing the borders, building the states, and defining the nations of Syria and Lebanon. Like other nations with sizable diasporas, patriotic politics and nationalist ideas from the *mahjar* figured among the most consequential of remittances during the War.¹⁷

This article draws on the *mahjar's* periodical press to revise Albert Hourani's classical thesis that linked Arab nationalism directly to the nineteenth-century *nahda*,¹⁸ work already begun by C. Ernest Dawn, Rashid Khalidi, Hasan Kayali, and James Gelvin, who describe Eastern Mediterranean nationalism as a creature of World War I.¹⁹ Important explanations for why Syrians made recourse to nationalist politics, who did so first, and how Arab politics worked during the interwar years exist in the *mahjar*, but historians are just beginning to seek them there.²⁰ They do so within an emerging historiography that challenges reigning notions of

Middle Eastern social geography. Bringing the *mahjar* into conversation with Syrian and Lebanese social history, however, requires identifying new archival sources. The press presents one such archive: it is indigenous, readily accessible, and intrinsically transnational.

Because political parties, charitable organizations, and intellectual clubs printed their minutiae in the press, these periodicals provide an inside look into the values, culture, and politics of the *mahjar*. The meeting minutes, election results, propaganda, and local news printed in the press provide a story of Syrian life abroad that is simply not accounted for in either Ottoman and French records. Activist groups are particularly obscured because they operated clandestinely and escaped government detection.²¹ The press delivers empirically by recording political goings-on, transnational communications, and intellectual discourses. At the same time, the press presents its own blind spots that need accounting for. The *mahjar*'s newspapers were widely distributed and poorly preserved, creating an issue of survivability that requires a creative methodology. Although New York papers *al-Huda*, *Mirat al-Gharb*, *al-Bayan*, and *al-Sa'ih* maintained complete archives, other titles: *al-Fara'id* (Buenos Aires), *al-Zaman* (Buenos Aires), and *Abu al-Hawl* (São Paulo) have left only a few issues scattered around the world. However, the emergence of transnational Syrian press syndicates during the War allowed for the reproduction of important news stories, making it possible to read editorials by Syrians in Egypt, Argentina, or Brazil by reading the New York papers. Similarly, even where newspapers have not survived, supplemental materials produced by these publishing houses have. Propaganda, poetry, and personal narratives remain and are more successfully preserved in research libraries.

In this spirit, the following pages explore the press's imbrication with Syrian and Lebanese nationalist activism during World War I. Following on the heels of a familiar story: the emergence of the Syrian Reform movement, its transformation into distinct and competing Arab, Syrian, and Lebanese nationalisms, and subsequent splintering of activist groups in 1919, a fresh look at this history from the diaspora's perspective reveals how the collaborations and competitions of Syrian and Lebanese activists abroad influenced politics at home. Intellectual, financial, and political networks between São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and New York City proved fertile to a new mode of politics hinging on the power of public opinion. However, as these networks took on ideological content, new fissures emerged between activists who fundamentally disagreed over Syria's future and the place of Lebanon within (or apart from) it. In the end, the French Foreign Ministry exploited these new political divisions, and in doing so harnessed the diaspora as a critical political constituency for its own ends in the Levant.

THE SYRIAN PRESS ABROAD: FROM REFORM TO NATIONALISM

From its inception in 1909, the Syrian Reform movement had close ties to the diaspora, and nearly all of its early leaders were newspapermen. The printing profession reflected the values of a new middle class in Syria. Raised on the principles of the nineteenth century *nahda*, these men were educated, urban, and liberal in their attitudes concerning political participation. They were well read in the Arabic classics as well as in European sociology, political philosophy, and history. In the Syrian press in Egypt, for example, the editors of *al-Hilal*, *al-Funun*, *al-Muqtataf*, and *al-Muqattam* enthusiastically translated pieces by Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky, and T. S. Carlyle into Arabic, and encouraged their readers to purchase full-length copies from their respective publishing houses.²² Reading such materials provided more than recreation; it became a marker of class identity, and a prerequisite to participating in Syrian and Lebanese social discourse in the late Ottoman context. In Cairo (Syria's oldest "colony"), young Syrian and Lebanese members of reading rooms and publishing houses supported Ottoman constitutionalism under the banner of the Young Turks. In June 1908, Syrians in Cairo held a street festival in honor of the C.U.P, and touting the revolution as the beginning of an awaited Ottoman constitutional flowering and a realization of the ethos of *al-nahda*.²³ The heady feeling would not last, and in 1909 a second coup within the C.U.P. brought a centralist faction to power under Enver, Talat, and Jamal Pasha and changing the ruling regime's focus. This alienated Syrian intellectuals, and in Cairo, Beirut, and Damascus, new questions about whether the new Ottoman government would protect Arab local interests and autonomy emerged.

The diaspora's first reform party, Cairo's *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani*, emerged from a falling out between the Syrians of Cairo and Lebanese *mutasarrif* Yusuf Franco Pasha. In 1909, Syrian emigrant publishers Yusuf Sawda and Antun al-Jumayyil (who wrote for Beirut's *al-Bashir*, and Cairo's *al-Ahram* and *al-Zuhur*)²⁴ arrived in Mount Lebanon to investigate recent rumblings that the C.U.P. planned to alter Lebanon's administrative status. Rumors that 1864's *Règlemente Organique* would be discarded in favor of direct imperial control caused controversy among Syrians living in Cairo and Alexandria, who advocated for the extension of administrative autonomy for their homeland. Arriving at Franco Pasha's office, al-Jumayyil and Sawda presented their case for autonomy. They were told, "you must understand that we are an Ottoman *wilaya*, and that the Lebanese must also assume this status."²⁵ Yusuf Sawda recalled storming out of the *mutasarrif's* office, leaving al-Jumayyil to awkwardly take his leave with grace. The pair returned to Cairo, and in December 1909 convened with the colony's most prominent intellectuals, newspaper editors, and professionals. The *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani* emerged with two headquarters: in Cairo under Iskandar 'Ammun,

Daud Barakat (*al-Ahram*), and Antun al-Jumayyil, and in Alexandria under Yusuf Sawda.²⁶ This was not an ideological political party, but instead a pragmatic political committee that represented a Syrian and Lebanese urban professional class abroad. Because the *Ittihad Lubnani* was essentially a syndicate representing fluid, sometimes inchoate political interests, the organization never became a mass political party. The Egyptian branch's membership peaked at 2,000 by 1919; more common for the *mahjar* were smaller pockets of several dozen professionals, writers, and functionaries representing *Ittihad Lubnani* locally.²⁷ The organization's agenda was to protect Mount Lebanon's administrative privileges (*imtiyāzāt idārīyya*) as outlined by the *Règlemente Organique* of 1864, to support the extension of local rights and home-rule, and to establish Arabic as the administrative language.²⁸ As such, the *Ittihad Lubnani* was the first emigrant party to articulate a reformist, decentralization platform; two years later, it seeded the *Hizb al-Lamarkaziyya* in 1911.

Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani set the tone for organizing across the *mahjar*, and parties that came after mirrored its organizational structure. First, the *Ittihad Lubnani*'s leadership valued and nurtured links with the press, which it saw as the pathway for developing and domesticating Syrian public opinion. The party's executive committee was itself made up of journalists: Antun al-Jumayyil (*al-Ahram*), Daud Barakat (*al-Ahram*), Khayrallah Khayrallah (*al-Hurriyya*), Iskandar and Daud 'Ammun (*al-Mahrusa*), Yusuf Sawda, and Auguste Adib Pasha. These men commanded editorial opinion in the *mahjar*, and they used this hold over the press to publicize the Decentralization question from 1909 until the First Syrian Congress of 1913. Additionally, the *Ittihad Lubnani*'s leadership was itself transnational: Syrian writer Khayrallah Khayrallah founded a chapter in Paris in 1909, while Na'um Mukarzil (*al-Huda*) was a close affiliate in New York.²⁹ By 1912, the *Ittihad Lubnani* also had client branches operating in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Mendoza (Argentina), New York City, and Boston.

Because the *Ittihad Lubnani* commanded the *mahjar*'s intellectual space, the group easily publicized its agenda without taking on additional financial burdens. It maintained no regular treasury, and rather than fundraising, the executive committee simply reached out to partners in the Americas and their publishing houses. Professional and political partnerships emerged simultaneously in this context, and in more remote places in the *mahjar*, publishers and journalists had everything to gain from joining *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani*: fodder from Cairo's most respected newspaper and access to party structures and activist networks. In effect, the *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani* created the *mahjar*'s first informal media syndicate, a network that crossed continents but was exclusive to *Ittihad* members.³⁰

In New York City, *al-Huda* owner Na‘um Mukarzil served as *Ittihad Lubnani*’s closest American partner. Freike-born and Jesuit-educated, Mukarzil had lived in Cairo before emigrating to the United States with his brother Sallum in 1890.³¹ In New York City’s “little Syria,” Na‘um and Sallum Mukarzil founded several publications which drew heavily on material written in Cairo: *al-‘Asr*, *al-‘Alam al-Jadid*, and *al-Huda*, which became one of New York’s most successful Arabic-language dailies by 1905.³² In 1910, Sallum Mukarzil developed the first Arabic wax linotype machine which made small-scale printing inexpensive and widely available in the *mahjar*.³³ *Al-Huda* adopted the technology and expanded its operations beyond newspapers, printing books, translations, stationary and propaganda, which were featured in its own library in Brooklyn.³⁴ By 1911, Mukarzil established his own political party with colleagues at *al-Huda*. Called *Jama‘iyyat al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya*, the organization began as a reform party linked to the *Ittihad Lubnani*. And like the *Ittihad Lubnani*, it would later champion Lebanese independence from the Ottoman Empire.³⁵

The *Jama‘iyyat al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya* espoused a political outlook Mukarzil had already popularized in the press. Inspired by the nineteenth-century *nahda* and closely affiliated with the Decentralization movement,³⁶ the *Nahda Lubnaniyya*’s original purpose was the retention of Lebanon’s administrative privileges within an Ottoman context.³⁷ Mukarzil’s approach mirrored that of the *Ittihad Lubnani*, save one major exception: the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* lobbied Ottoman authorities but also sought Western partners to leverage claims against Istanbul. Mukarzil cultivated alliances with French policymakers in particular, and he saw France as the Lebanon’s natural guarantor for autonomy and independence.³⁸ This distinguished Mukarzil from his compatriots in the *Ittihad Lubnani*, who avoided direct collusion with the French, British, or other foreign powers. Mukarzil had no such scruples; he was amused when the Ottoman government denounced his group as “French spies, who have penetrated everywhere and have mingled with all (political) currents as informers to the Government in Paris.”³⁹

Despite important differences in perspective, Mukarzil’s *Nahda Lubnaniyya* remained an important partner to the *Ittihad Lubnani*, and this closeness is reflected in the party’s organizational structure. Like the *Ittihad*, the *Nahda Lubnaniyya*’s leadership was transnational and made up largely of journalists. As a political organization, the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* operated in several places at once, bringing together Syrians and Lebanese across a transnational, diasporic space. Mukarzil depended on his own professional contacts in establishing satellite chapters across the Americas. He leaned especially on *al-Huda*’s Istanbul correspondent, Ibrahim al-Najjar, who spent most of his time on steamships shuttling between Istanbul, Paris, Cairo, and New York between 1908 and 1913. al-Najjar’s work as *al-Huda*’s correspondent brought him in touch with prominent Ottoman figures like

Yusuf Franco Pasha and prominent Syrian emigrés like Khayrallah Khayrallah and Shukri Ghanim, who introduced him to French diplomats like Raymond Poincarre and Jean Gout.⁴⁰ In 1912, al-Najjar and Shukri Ghanim founded *Nahda Lubnaniyya's* Paris chapter. He simultaneously corresponded with São Paulo journalists As'ad Bishara, Antun Jabbara, As'ad Bitar, and Shukri al-Khuri (the controversial editor of the Francophile daily *Abu al-Hawl*) who opened a Brazilian chapter.⁴¹ By 1914, the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* had twenty-nine active satellites operating across the United States, Canada, Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, and Costa Rica.⁴² Ibrahim al-Najjar's movements traced the lines of an emerging Syrian newspaper circuit; his status as a journalist gained him access to the *mahjar's* most important personalities and supplied him with a ready route along the *mahjar's* intellectual geography.

The *Nahda Lubnaniyya* also mirrored the *Ittihad Lubnani* in the way it collected and distributed funding. The membership's modest annual dues were maintained in the Faour Bank in Brooklyn, where Doumit and Daniel Faour (both *Nahda* members) maintained the books. But the party only collected larger sources of revenue when a project was identified, a strategy that lent the organization the flexibility to raise money across international borders informally, making them less vulnerable to foreign interference.⁴³ Such flexibility brought the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* vitality, but it also brought conflict. Sometimes satellite chapters opposed Na'um Mukarzil's political designs, and Mukarzil himself was not known for compromise. Disagreements over Mount Lebanon's future bubbled over during the War, most dramatically in Paris where a serious disagreement between Mukarzil and Shukri Ghanim led the latter to break ties with the *Nahda* completely. However, the *Nahda Lubnaniyya's* early efforts were directed against C.U.P. centralism and towards French assistance, positions flexible enough to bring disparate personalities like Mukarzil and Ghanim into close collaboration.

The start of World War I in 1914 changed everything in the Syrian colonies, and the *Ittihad Lubnani's* concerns shifted as well. As the Ottoman government abrogated and concluded capitulations treaties with Western Powers, Mount Lebanon's 1864 *Règlement Organique* was among those left on the cutting room floor. In response, the *Ittihad Lubnani* altered its official stance towards the Ottoman state, changing its Constitution to state that the party would "solicit the absolute Independence of Lebanon, within its natural boundaries (*ḥudūd ṭabī'īyya*), under the Protection of the Powers."⁴⁴ The *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani* transformed from a reform party to a separatist group. Soon after declarations of independence rang out from Lebanese, Syrian, and Arab nationalist groups in the *mahjar's* newspapers. In Brazil, *Nahda Lubnaniyya* leader Shukri al-Khuri's image appeared on a party circular. Declaring war on the Ottoman state, al-Khuri hoisted a new Lebanese flag: a green Cedar on a white background that quickly became the

South American *mahjar's* standard. al-Khuri urged Brazil's Lebanese to join both the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* and the Allied Powers in overthrowing the Turks. al-Khuri concluded that by partnering with the Entente (*duwal al-tafāhum*), that “with their victory, we will see the betterment of our homeland.”⁴⁵

TRANSNATIONAL MODES: ACTIVISM IN THE MAHJAR

Shortly after arriving in Syria in 1915, Jamal Pasha introduced martial law and placed new limits on the press, closing local opposition newspapers and banning many periodicals from the *mahjar*. At times his regime enforced an even harder line, hiring local thugs to ensure compliance: neither the fire that burned down *al-Nasir's* press nor the beating of *al-Barq's* editor in Beirut was formally investigated.⁴⁶ During the War's early months, Syrian journalists abroad equated the loss of press freedom with the loss of their homeland.⁴⁷ Similarly, Jamal Pasha's unpopular conscription policy led many to assist draft dodgers and their families in hiding from Turkish soldiers.⁴⁸ In both cases, the press was presented as a national forum and the place where Syrians and Lebanese could act out in political ways; the circumscription of this space was therefore seen as an act of war. By 1916, the *mahjar's* activists turned to another mode of national service: deploying its own sons militarily through the French-led *Légion d'Orient*.

The *Légion d'Orient* was an irregular regiment comprised of Syrian, Lebanese, and Armenian volunteers from across the diaspora. Syrian and Lebanese leaders abroad worked with French Foreign Consuls in New York, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo to drum up volunteers for this force in Summer 1916. The *Légion d'Orient* was primarily the brainchild of Shukri Ghanim, who coordinated the recruitment drive from his home in Paris. The effort brought together political parties from across the ideological spectrum: Na'um Mukarzil's *Nahda Lubnaniyya* and the *Ittihad Lubnani* participated with enthusiasm. There were, however, some groups that refused to participate: Salomon Busader, the president of *Ittihad Lubnani's* Buenos Aires chapter, defected from his party because he refused to work with Shukri Ghanim or his local agent, the Emir Emin Arslan.⁴⁹

The Syrian press reported on the *Légion d'Orient's* movements from France in 1916 to Cyprus, and finally its disembarkation to Palestine in 1917. Newspaper editors played a critical role in publicizing the recruitment drive, but also in sponsoring individual volunteers. In March 1916, a young Homsí named Hafiz Khizam traveled from his adopted home in São Paulo to the French Consul in Buenos Aires to enlist in the French military. Najib Trad, editor of *al-Jadid* and officer in Argentina's *Ittihad Lubnani* paid Khizam's passage.⁵⁰ In return, Khizam sent Trad regular letters as he fought alongside

French soldiers, and his letters appeared in a syndicated series in *al-Jadid* (Buenos Aires), *al-Sa'ih* (New York), and *Correspondence d'Orient* (Paris).⁵¹

On the other hand, the recruitment drive caused considerable disagreements among Syrians abroad. Weeks into the French Consul's campaign in Buenos Aires, Najib Trad sought to expand the drive to Rosario, in the Argentinian interior. On 4 April 1916 the arrival of Trad's mission sparked an ugly confrontation between pro-Ottoman Syrians and *Légion d'Orient* supporters. In Rosario as elsewhere, support for the project often fell along sectarian lines: Maronites and Greek Orthodox Christians largely supported the French-led regiment; Muslims typically opposed it. Sunni leaders accused the *Légion's* boosters (and by extension the French) of harboring sectarian motivations; a noontime confrontation outside a Rosario Church devolved into a riot involving hundreds.⁵² One Ottoman supporter, a Muslim, was killed, another sixteen were hospitalized and dozens more arrested by Argentine authorities.⁵³ The Argentine government then accused the French of inciting violence in its territory; a street fight with transnational dimensions threatened Argentina's diplomatic equilibrium with France.

While Syrians abroad coordinated, and sometimes combated, a growing alliance with France through the *Légion d'Orient*, events at home took a sharp turn for the worse. Jamal Pasha's 1916 executions of journalists were quickly followed by a food rationing policy that left Syria's civilian population facing shortages. By June 1916, the shortage produced a famine that ultimately killed between 350,000 and 500,000 in Mount Lebanon and western Syria.⁵⁴ The diaspora's newspapers collected letters from compatriots in Beirut, Homs, Zahle, and the Mountain describing mortality rates that often reached fifty or sixty percent.⁵⁵ Town-based mutual aid societies began raising relief; groups like the Homs Fraternity (*al-Ikha' al-Homsi*), the Tripoli Society (*al-Jama'iyya al-Trabulsi*), or Maronite Priest Habib Estefan's group Lebanese Youth (*Jama'iyyat al-Shabiba al-Lubnaniyya*) collected relief for their home cities.⁵⁶

As more about the disaster's extent became known, it became clear that famine relief required broader organization across the *mahjar's* many colonies. Both the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* and the *Ittihad Lubnani* jumped into the breach, relying on their established networks to remit both money and aid to the homeland. A case in point is the *Jama'iyya Lajna A'anat al-Mankubin al-Suriyya wa-Lubnan* (hereafter called the *Lajnat al-Mankubin*), headquartered in New York City. This committee was formally linked to a political party called the *Ittihad Suri*, but in 1916 it collected monetary relief from committees in Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico and printed its progress in *al-Sa'ih*, a political daily edited by 'Abd al-Masih Haddad.⁵⁷ Haddad was skeptical of the village-based approach to charity, owing to the unequal distribution in aid,⁵⁸ and the corruption of local distributors.⁵⁹ His group, the

Lajnat Mankubin, worked with the Red Cross and U.S. Department of State transfer money to Syria.⁶⁰ In Buenos Aires, Khalil Sa'adeh arranged for his group, *al-Jama'iyya al-Suriyya*, to fund-raise for the *Lajnat Mankubin*; his own newspaper, *al-Majalla*, reported the Committee's progress.⁶¹ In the summer of 1916, the committee raised over \$13,000 across the Americas.⁶²

Meanwhile, in Paris, Shukri Ghanim raised some 50,000 Francs, entrusting it to French intermediaries for delivery to Syria. Most of these funds were collected from Syrian colonies in South America under the auspices of Ghanim's new group, the *Comité Central Syrien (al-Lajna al-Suriyya al-Markaziyya)*. In June 1917, two delegates, Jamil Mardam Bey and Dr. Qaysar Lakah toured Syrian colonies in South America, raising funds for both relief and the *Légion d'Orient*.⁶³ They did so with Ghanim's blessing and the fiscal support of the French Government, and apparently this pair was so successful in inspiring Syrian solidarity that even the German Embassy sent an envoy to rendezvous with them in Buenos Aires (where they were loathsomely rebuked).⁶⁴ Although the Lakah-Mardam delegation drew opposition from some emigrant leaders who resented Ghanim's growing influence (especially from his estranged partner Na'um Mukarzil),⁶⁵ Ghanim's efforts placed him on the French Foreign Ministry's radar and laid the basis for future cooperation. Jean Gout and Stephen Pichon, for example, both saw Ghanim as a valuable Syrian partner, and as a barometer for Syrian public opinion.⁶⁶

The press served the relief effort with an organizational space to appeal directly to the public, a public that in many ways had only come to consciousness just years before. The *Lajnat Mankubin* drafted weekly letters to the Syrian *mahjar* as a whole: appeals for aid, volunteers, or for information from Syria obtained through the paper's readership. Letters from home were rare, but when they arrived in Brazil, Argentina, or New York, they were often published.⁶⁷ Of course, these letters were subject to a tightening Ottoman censorship policy.⁶⁸ That the news of Jamal Pasha's executions did not make headlines for weeks—but the famine did so immediately—reminds the historian that Ottoman censors were acutely aware of the power of public opinion.⁶⁹

If the relief drive brought together activists across the *mahjar*, emigrant leaders also made choices that sowed the seeds for future discord. 1916 proved a major turning point between the parties and the public: the tone of reportage on the calamity became decidedly political. This happened in two stages. First, the recruitment campaign for the French-led *Légion d'Orient* and the famine relief drive prompted many Syrian leaders abroad to partner with the French Foreign Ministry in unprecedented, and controversial, ways. Second, alliances emerging between the *mahjar's* political parties and the Great Powers shook loose unresolved questions about Syria's post-Ottoman

future, and the place of Lebanon within (or apart from) it. Na‘um Mukarzil's *Nahda Lubnaniyya* described a pressing need for Lebanese independence and autonomy from Syria; Ghanim's *Comité Central Syrien* instead referred to Lebanon as “Syria's heart.”

Long-standing transnational connections between emigrant leaders and the press broke apart, and over the course of 1916 and 1917 reconstituted themselves along ideological, nationalist lines. To illustrate, Na‘um Mukarzil and Shukri Ghanim both supported an alliance with France, and the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* promoted a Francophile perspective. In 1916, however, the two men quarreled over the prospect of an independent Lebanon separate from Syria, and Ghanim closed the Paris chapter, taking his local partners with him. The following year he established the *Comité Central Syrien*; Mukarzil became his most vocal opponent.⁷⁰ Around the diaspora, Ghanim's supporters followed suit, forming a new coalition: the New York *Lajnat Mankubin* was reborn as the *Lajna Tahrir Suriyya wa-l-Lubnan* under the leadership of Ayyub Tabet, Amin Rihani, and Jubran Khalil Jubran. Amin Rihani traveled to Mérida, Mexico, and founded a local branch of the *Lajna Tahrir* in late 1917 to counter Mukarzil's long-standing influence there.⁷¹ In São Paulo, Nami Jafet founded the *Comité Patriotico Syro-Libanenze*.⁷² In Egypt, Haqqi bey al-‘Azm established the *Lajnat al-Suriyya al-Lubnaniyya fi-Misr*.⁷³ In 1918, Ghanim collected telegrams from each of these parties proclaiming their support for a greater Syrian state, “federated and integral.. from the Taurus Mountains... to the Mediterranean Sea,” under French protection. Ghanim remitted the letters to the French Foreign Ministry as proof of the *mahjar's* political voice.⁷⁴

The *Ittihad Lubnani* saw similar seismic shifts. Disagreements over whether to cultivate Western support led President Iskandar ‘Ammun to resign his post in 1917.⁷⁵ After ‘Ammun's defection, the *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani* narrowed its political vision, calling for a Lebanese state independent from Syria under a Lebanese Republican administration, a position which put it at loggerheads with Shukri Ghanim, the *Comité Central Syrien*, and the French government.⁷⁶ By the time British, French, and Hashemite troops expelled the Ottomans from Syria in October 1918, the *mahjar's* politics realigned along the, at times contradictory, questions of French support and the nature of Lebanon's relationship to Syria. This new state of affairs gave the French government its choice of Syrian partners, empowering it to interfere in the *mahjar's* politics more than ever. And although the French closely aligned with Shukri Ghanim during the War, they made a dramatic about-face during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

During the War, the French Foreign Ministry looked at the Lebanese independence movement with suspicion, and it regularly collected intelligence on activists operating in the *mahjar*.⁷⁷ French intelligence officers

in Egypt suspected the *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani* of being puppets to British (or Hijazi) interests.⁷⁸ French Minister to Egypt LeFevre-Pontalis, for instance, described *Ittihad Lubnani* leader Yusuf Sawda as a Lebanese emigrant “sans notoriété” in a letter to Stephen Pichon, concluding that his claims that “France will grant Lebanon its absolute independence” should not be taken seriously.⁷⁹ France preferred to work its influence through Shukri Ghanim and his U.S. American clients, a policy which sparked occasional confrontations activists who resented Ghanim's Syrian unionist sympathies. In Buenos Aires, for instance, the local *Ittihad Lubnani* branch (*Union Libanense*) threatened to end their endorsement of the *Légion d'Orient* unless France moved to support a national *Grand Liban* “within its historical, geographic, and natural boundaries” and agreed to take the Lebanese independence movement more seriously.⁸⁰ During the War, such protests fell on deaf ears in Paris.

Continued confrontations with the *Ittihad Lubnani* prompted the Foreign Ministry to launch an investigation in January 1919. The resulting report reproduced the language of the party's charter, particularly their aim for “the complete independence of Lebanon, under protectorate of the Powers, within its natural, historical, and geographical boundaries.”⁸¹ In a significant reversal of former French policy, the report opined that the *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani's* goals more closely resembled France's own interests in the Levant than those of France's current partner, Shukri Ghanim. It advised cultivating the *Ittihad Lubnani* as a more pliable French ally, and cited the party's control over the press as contributing to its status as “the largest, most influential, and most capable of all Lebanese societies.”⁸²

Meanwhile, Shukri Ghanim's Syrian unionist bloc that had seemed so strong in 1917 began to shake apart. That Ghanim stood firm in his faith in France as Syria's protector gave his partners pause, especially with the additional revelation that France had committed to plans to partition Syria into “spheres of influence” (the Sykes-Picot Agreements). In 1919, the unionist movement splintered: a “New Syria Party” (*Hizb al-Suriyya al-Jadida*) seeking complete Syrian independence emerged under Faris Nimr in Cairo,⁸³ and Philip Hitti, George Khayrallah, and Abraham Rihbany in New York.⁸⁴ Made up largely of Syrian Protestant College graduates, the *Hizb al-Suriyya al-Jadida* advocated for a “Syrian homeland, federated and independent,” with “no tutelage, no protection” from foreign powers.⁸⁵ If any assistance would be necessary, the *Hizb al-Suriyya al-Jadida* held that the Syrian people should seek help from the United States. In a party manifesto, Abraham Rihbany argued that United States of America's supposed status as the only “anti-colonial” world power should inspire sympathy for Syrian independence; after all, it was in keeping with Wilsonian principles.⁸⁶ Ayyub Tabet elaborated on this notion, arguing that as a young nation “in its childhood,” the U.S. was putatively best positioned to give Syria what it

needed: technical assistance (*musā'ida*) without imperial tutelage (*wiṣāya*).⁸⁷ Tabet styled himself as the United States' Syrian partner, even proposing to conduct a formal treaty of friendship between a united Syrian federation and the United States of America. Tabet's public statements incensed French diplomats; French Minister LeFevre-Pontalis scoffed at the irony of asking an allegedly "anti-colonial" America to take mandate over the East before dismissing the *Hizb al-Suriyya al-Jadida* as British agents.⁸⁸

Around the same time, in Buenos Aires, Syrian journalist Khalil Sa'adeh founded a South American branch called *al-Hizb al-Dimuqrati al-Watani*. Sa'adeh had been a colleague of Faris Nimr's at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut. Like Nimr, Sa'adeh had socialist leanings and spent the War developing an anti-colonial reading of events back home. In January 1919, Sa'adeh issued a public call for a reassessment of the diaspora's political goals, and he announced his intention to host a General Syrian Congress in Buenos Aires.⁸⁹ The Conference reflected Sa'adeh's desire to form a secular patriotic coalition against French domination: "we are no longer Muslim, nor Christian, Druze, nor Jew," Sa'adeh wrote, "for the gallows are erected for all of us together; the famine killed all indiscriminately. We must now form... a single coalition. We are now Syrians, Lebanese, and Palestinians, without factions, religions, or sects."⁹⁰

Sa'adeh's Syrian Congress occurred on 25 February 1919, and was timed as a *mahjari* repudiation of Daud 'Ammun's first Lebanese Delegation then in Paris. Its resolutions-- that Syria be granted complete independence (*al-istiqlāl al-tām*), without French "protection" (*himāya*), and that it be given a seat at the League of Nations-- laid the basis for Sa'adeh's *Hizb al-Dimuqrati al-Watani*. The Party's slogan, "A bedouin's independence is better than civilized bondage" (*al-istiqlāl ma'a al-badāwa khayr min-l-'abūda ma'a al-ḥidāra*), played off of the Shukri Ghanim's frequently invoked idea that Syria was not yet ready for independence and needed development first.⁹¹ Sa'adeh's emphasis on "the rights of barbarians" (*ḥuqūq al-barābara*) to national independence, and his argument that sovereignty precedes progress (*tamaddun*) set him apart from other Syrian activists in 1919.

Meanwhile, activists in Ghanim's coalition argued bitterly in the press over their troubled reliance on France. In January 1919, Shukri Ghanim made public statements authorizing France to speak on Syria's behalf at the Paris Peace Conference, and in doing so, he ignited a firestorm among activists abroad.⁹² Najib Diab wrote a furious article in *Mirat al-Gharb* proclaiming that Shukri Ghanim held no authority to claim the *mahjar*'s voice and acted in bad faith.⁹³ In return, *Mirat al-Gharb* sustained a barrage of angry letters from Ghanim's many supporters.⁹⁴ Undeterred, Diab then published a mock proclamation thanking the *Comité Central Syrien* for making partition and imperialism Syria's inescapable fate.⁹⁵ Diab then

mocked Ghanim's partners in the Americas as traitors (*khā'inīn*) who would sell their homeland to the highest bidder.⁹⁶

Content with its new partners in the *Ittihad Lubnani*, the French Foreign Ministry simply stopped taking Shukri Ghanim's calls. Relations between the *Comité Central Syrien* and the French Government cooled dramatically in 1919. Shukri Ghanim submitted numerous letters of protest, especially against the First Lebanese Delegation headed by *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani* member Daud 'Ammun and its proposed "mutilation of Syria" which would "excite religious sentiments" between Christians and Muslims.⁹⁷ The First Lebanese Delegation presented a case for a French-mandated *Grand Liban*, within its "natural, historical, and geographical borders" as defined by the *Ittihad Lubnani*.⁹⁸ Daud 'Ammun also connected Lebanon's territorial integrity to emigration question, concluding, "The territories that these borders encompass are a condition of our existence; without them, we have no commerce, no agriculture, and our people are forced into emigration."⁹⁹ In response, Shukri Ghanim denied that 'Ammun's delegation had spoken the true feelings of the *mahjar*. He implored that France reject 'Ammun's plan and instead "hasten the fulfillment of her Mandate (over Syria) so that the damage caused by these regrettable rivalries, competitions, and unjustifiable claims may be swiftly repaired."¹⁰⁰

In a French Foreign Ministry memo, Jean Gout applauded Ghanim's zeal and his work with the *Légion d'Orient*, but advised that the Ministry distance itself from the *Comité Central Syrien* and pursue plans for a French-mandated *Grand Liban*.¹⁰¹ France then denied Shukri Ghanim his request for travel documents to enter Syria to organize political forces there. During the War, Ghanim pressed the advantages that his distance from Syria afforded him, but in 1919, distance became a means by which the French government contained his political influence. Realizing his wings were clipped, Ghanim bewailed Syria's "dismemberment by powerful hands," accusing the French of harboring sectarian interests. "We would like to add," Ghanim concluded, that the *Comité* would support "a renewal of our fidelity to our secular friend" should France return to its senses.¹⁰²

Meanwhile, France sponsored a second Lebanese Delegation under Maronite Patriarch Ilyas Huwayyik. In advance of the Delegation's October 1919 arrival, the Church and the French Foreign Ministry solicited letters from each of the *mahjar*'s communities in the Americas. Petitions and statements of support poured into the Maronite Patriarchate in Bkerke from Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, and the United States, where they were bound together for presentation to the Paris Peace Conference as proof of the diaspora's endorsement for an independent Lebanon.¹⁰³ The *Ittihad Lubnani* and the *Nahda Lubnaniyya* both assisted with this effort, and

Na'um Mukarzil actually arrived in Paris and requested to accompany Patriarch Huwayyik on the diaspora's behalf.¹⁰⁴

The Maronite Patriarch's entry into the politics of the Peace Conference was far from undisputed, though. While Syrian unionists from Shukri Ghanim to Khalil Sa'adeh fretted about Syria's dismemberment along the lines proposed by *Ittihad Lubnani*, even within the Lebanese Independence movement there existed conflicts over the Church's place in politics. In South America, many of the *Ittihad Lubnani*'s chapters strongly opposed the clergy's involvement; in Chile, the party's leadership refused to endorse Huwayyik altogether, saying that they favored Daud 'Ammun's delegation and saw no reason for a second. When given the ultimatum to either support the Patriarch or lose their vote, they drafted a telegram to the French, saying that left "without a true delegate," the Lebanese of Chile "unanimously resolve to entrust defense of their interests to (Stephen) Pichon."¹⁰⁵ The question of the Church's role consumed the diaspora and its press from 1919 until the proclamation of the *Grand Liban* in September 1920.

CONCLUSION

The *mahjar*'s wartime activism left important legacies for the Levant into the French Mandatory period, inaugurating lasting political connections between the emerging Syrian and Lebanese states and their emigrant populations. As this article has argued, emigrant activists participated in defining the Syrian and Lebanese national communities, using the press to work out a new geography, a new national narrative for the "Lebanese" or "Syrian" people. But the *mahjar*'s influence did not stop there; many activists later returned to the Levant to fill important administrative posts. Daud and Iskandar 'Ammun, for instance, waited out the war in Cairo, but in 1919 Daud returned to Lebanon to head the Lebanese Administrative Council in Baabda. Meanwhile, Iskandar relocated to Damascus and joined Emir Faysal's short-lived Arab Nationalist government. Those who remained abroad also continued their activism. Na'um Mukarzil pushed vigorously for the extension of Lebanese citizenship to emigrants living abroad.¹⁰⁶ In 1921, he collaborated with the Maronite Church in conducting Lebanon's first official census, which enumerated emigrants alongside residents.¹⁰⁷ The census set important precedents in the Lebanese state's project to assert a coherent national identity, and the inclusion of emigrants transformed them into stakeholders in Lebanese politics.¹⁰⁸

As a *mahjari* institution, the press presented this diaspora with a network which crisscrossed continents and which had its own political structures and gravity. Activists (themselves frequently journalists) found in the press an instrument for the creation of new national communities, and during the War, the Ottoman reading public became "Syrians" and "Lebanese," armed

with new notions about the nation, its history, and its destiny.¹⁰⁹ As the *mahjar's* printing capitals, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and New York City shaped an entire generation of educated Syrian and Lebanese professionals with visions of the nation which, while competing, rested on certain parallels: a deeply historical (even irredentist) character, and faith in the culture of patriotism and the power of petitioning as politically progressive forces. The national political communities that emerged had significant transnational dimensions, and indeed the *mahjar's* involvement in mandate-era politics confirms this logic. Historians who work on political identity, nationalist culture, or citizenship issues in the modern *mashriq* must therefore move beyond its geographic boundaries and into its human geography, extending into pockets of Syrian and Lebanese culture in the Americas, Africa, and elsewhere.¹¹⁰

NOTES

¹ Jamal Pasha, *La Verité sur la question syrien* (Istanbul: Imprimerie Tanine, 1916), 40.

² *La Verité sur la question syrien*, 158-168; Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Turquie (henceforth MAE, T), LeFevre-Pontalis to Briand, Cairo, 12 April 1916. Antoine Hokayem, Daad Bou Malhab 'Atallah, and Jean Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques Français Relatifs à l'histoire du Liban et de la Syrie à l'époque du Mandat, Vol. 1: Le Démantèlement de l'Empire Ottoman et les Préludes du Mandat* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 2003), 132-133.

³ Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: a History* (New York: Oxford University Press), 71-3.

⁴ *Watha'iq al-Mu'tamar al-'Arabi al-Awwal 1913* (Beirut: Dar al-Ḥadatha, 1980), 46-8, 113-4.

⁵ Henry Melki, *al-Sihafa al-'Arabiyya fi-l-Mahjar: wa-'Alaqaṭiha bi-l-Adab al-Mahjari* (Beirut: Dar al-Sharq al-Awsat li-l-Taba' wa-l-Nashr, 1998), 37.

⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989).

⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991).

⁸ See Comité Central Syrien's *La Syrie devant la Conference*, (Paris: s.p., 1919); Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani, *Lubnan Ba'd al-Harb* (Cairo: Matba'at al-Ma'ruf, 1919).

⁹ See, for example, "Maktabat Mirat al-Gharb," *Mirat al-Gharb*, 3 January 1919, 6; "Maktabat al-Huda," *al-Huda*, 6 January 1916, 6.

¹⁰ Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 99-102; Ami Ayalon, "Accessing without Buying: Libraries, Clubs, Reading Rooms," *Reading Palestine: Printing and Literacy, 1900-1948* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 87-92.

¹¹ Sallum Mukarzil, "Jaridat al-Huda al-Yawmiyya wa-Matba'atiha," in Ya'cub Rafa'il, *al-Shawā'ir al-Sharifa*, (New York: Matba'at al-Huda, 1924), 86-106.

¹² On Syrian and Lebanese ethnic economies, see John Tofik Karam, *Another Arabesque: Syrian-Lebanese Ethnicity in Newliberal Brazil* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 23-45.

¹³ Ted Swedenburg and Smadar Lavie, *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 12-4.

¹⁴ See Andrew Arsan, "'This is the Age of Associations': Committees, Petitions, and the Roots of Interwar Middle Eastern Internationalism," *Journal of Global History* 7, no. 2 (2012): 181.

¹⁵ Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences," *Global Networks* 2, no. 4 (2002): 301-3.

¹⁶ Akram Fouad Khater, "Becoming 'Syrian' in America: a Global Geography of Ethnicity and Nation," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 14, no. 2 (2005): 299-301; I would also like to credit my colleague Simon Jackson for his witty rumination on salt water's theoretical import.

¹⁷ For similar trends in the Italian and Chinese diasporas, see Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas: Elites, Exiles, and Workers of the World* (New York: Tyler & Frandis Group, 2000); Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, and Hawai'i, 1900-1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

¹⁸ Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962).

¹⁹ C. Ernest Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism: Essays on the Origins of Arab Nationalism* (Carbondale: University of Illinois Press, 1973); Rashid Khalidi, et al. *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Second Constitutional Period of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); James Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

²⁰ Sarah Gualtieri poses this challenge in *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Syrian American Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); 81-113. See also Carol Hakim-Dowek, *The Origins of the Lebanese National Idea, 1840-1914* (PhD Thesis, Oxford University, 1997), 335-346.

²¹ Tanyss Carol Ludescher, *"The Orient is Ill": Kahlil Gibran and the Politics of Nationalism in the New York Syrian Colony, 1908-1920* (PhD Thesis, University of Connecticut, 2010).

²² Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean*, 31.

²³ Birjis Faris Jumayyil, *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani wa-Lubnan al-Kabir* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Istishari li-l-'Alam wa-l-Tawthiq al-Madrasi, 1996), 100; Sallum Mukarzil's discussion of the C.U.P. mirrors this initial enthusiasm, Sallum Mukarzil, *al-Kitab al-Lubnani: li-tidhkar yubil al-Nahḍa al-Lubnaniyya al-Faḍi, 1911-1936* (New York: Matba'at al-Huda, 1936), 21-4. Tawfik Duoun's history of Syrians in Brazil says same, "Os Turcos," *A Emigração Sirio-Libanesa as Terras de Promissão* (São Paulo: Confissões Indiscricões, 1944), 62-8.

²⁴ Jumayyil, *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani wa-Lubnan al-Kabir*, 111.

²⁵ Yusuf Sawda, *Fi-Sabil al-Istiqlal*, (Beirut: Dar al-Rihani, 1967), 23-4.

²⁶ Jumayyil, *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani wa-Lubnan al-Kabir*, 107.

²⁷ Archives Diplomatiques, Nantes, Mandat, Syrie-Liban (henceforth AD, SL), Report on l'Alliance Libanaise, Cairo, 12 January 1919. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 463.

²⁸ Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani, "Ta'sis al-Ittihad al-Lubnani," in *al-Ittihad al-Lubnani fi-l-Qatar al-Masri wa-l-Mas'ila al-Lubnaniyya*, (Cairo: Matba'at al-Ma'ruf, s.d.), 3-5.

²⁹ Jumayyil, *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani wa-Lubnan al-Kabir*, 109-115.

³⁰ 'Ali Hamiya, *al-'Allama wa-l-Duktur Khalil Sa'adeh: Siratuhu wa-a'maluh, 1857-1934* (Beirut: al-Furat li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi', 2007), 129.

³¹ Mary Mukarzil, *Al-Hoda 1898-1968: The Story of Lebanon and its Emigrants as Taken from the Newspaper al-Hoda* (New York: al-Hoda Press, 1968), 1-5.

³² Rafa'il, *al-Shawa'ir al-Sharifa*, 95-7.

³³ Mukarzil, *al-Hoda 1898-1968*, 2.

³⁴ Sallum Mukarzil, "Jaridat al-Huda al-Yawmiyya wa-Matba'atiha," in Rafa'il, *al-Shawa'ir al-Sharifa*, 86-106.

³⁵ The Khazin brothers (*al-Arz* newspaper) founded the *Jama'iyyat al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya*'s Beirut branch in 1912. Both were executed for their involvement in May 1916; "al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya," *Al-Tahalluf al-Lubnani* (Buenos Aires), 23 January 1920, 21-23.

³⁶ Links between Mukarzil's *Nahda Lubnaniyya* and the Cairo *Ittihad Lubnani* were so dense that many struggled to distinguish between them. Jamal Pasha mistook Mukarzil for an *Ittihad* agent in 1916's *La Verité sur la question syrien*, 41. The two groups considered themselves two factions within a single movement; the *Ittihad Lubnani* refers to Mukarzil as its man in New York in its WWI pamphlet *al-Ittihad al-Lubnani fi-l-Qatar al-Masri*, 5.

³⁷ Na'um Mukarzil, "Bayan al-Qasad," *al-Huda*, 14 August 1911, 3.

³⁸ Mukarzil, *Kitab al-Lubnani*, 47.

³⁹ Jamal Pasha, *La Verité sur la question syrien*, 43. Founder Na'um Mukarzil himself escaped sentencing.

⁴⁰ Mukarzil, *Kitab al-Lubnani*, 45-6, 55.

⁴¹ Maria Narbona, *The Development of Nationalist Ideologies in French Syria and Lebanon* (PhD Dissertation: University of California Santa Barbara, 2007), 109. The executive committee (in 1914) included Mansur al-Khuri, Shukri al-Bakhkhas, Wadi' Abboud, Wadi' Abi Samra, Na'um Farhat, Ayyub al-Khuri, and Salim 'Aql, *al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya* pamphlet, September 29, 1914, 2-3.

⁴² Mukarzil, *Kitab al-Lubnani*, 44-5.

⁴³ Mukarzil, *Kitab al-Lubnani*, 35-37.

⁴⁴ Yusuf Sawda, *Istiqlal Lubnan wa-l-Ittihad al-Lubnani fi-l-Iskandariyya* (Cairo: Matba'at al-Hilal, 1922), 19-20.

⁴⁵ "Lubnan wa-l-Harb al-Haliyya," *al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya* Pamphlet, 29 September 1914, 1.

⁴⁶ AD, SL, Report on l'Alliance Libanaise, Cairo, 12 January 1919. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 462.

⁴⁷ Khalil Sa'adeh, "'Athar Sihafiyya," *al-Majalla*, August 1915, 143-6.

⁴⁸ Mukarzil, *Kitab al-Lubnani*, 46.

⁴⁹ Gildas Brégain, *Syriens et Libanais d'Amerique du Sud* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 2008), 143-4.

⁵⁰ Hamiya, *Khalil Sa'adeh*, 114-5.

⁵¹ Hafiz Khizam al-Homsî, "Barid min Mutataw'i al-Homsî al-Suri fi-l-Jaysh al-Fransî," *al-Sa'ih*, 10 April 1916, 1. See also Khizam, "Fi-Sahat al-Qital," *al-Sa'ih*, 20 July 1916, 1.

⁵² Reportage reveals divisions on what the riot was about. *Al-Huda* draws upon the Argentine Maronite paper *al-'Adl* described the riot as Muslim violence against Christians. *Al-Huda*'s version does not mention the *Légion d'Orient* recruiters present, "Bayna al-Suriyin: bi-Isim al-Massih wa-l-Muhammad," 5 April 1916, 6. 'Abd al-Massih Haddad's *al-Sa'ih*, by contrast, draws upon Buenos Aires paper *al-*

Zaman. It mentions the recruiters, but omits that the riot occurred on a Sunday outside of a Church, "Qatil bayna al-Suriyin," 6 April 1916, 1-2.

⁵³ 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "Qatil bayna al-Suriyin," *al-Sa'ih*, 6 April 1916, 1-2.

⁵⁴ Mortality figures from contemporary sources vary considerably. See Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 15-23 for her discussion. She estimates WWI's mortality was around 18 percent of the total population, 23.

⁵⁵ 'Asbab al-Jaw' fi-Suriya," *al-Sa'ih*, 24 August 1916, 1-2.

⁵⁶ 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "Suriya wa-Jama'iyyatina," *al-Sa'ih*, 4 May 1916, 1-2; Farid Istifan, *Habib Istifan: Ra'id min Lubnan, 'arrafa al-Amirikiyatayn Ruhaniyat al-Sharq al-Hadari* (Beirut: s.p., 1983), 54-5.

⁵⁷ 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "Ila al-Dahaya," *al-Sa'ih*, 3 August 1916, 2.

⁵⁸ 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "al-Jaw' fi-Bayrut wa-fi-Ghayriha Aydan: Laysa fi-Lubnan Wahdih," *al-Sa'ih*, 6 July 1916, 1.

⁵⁹ 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "al-Jaw' fi-Suriyya," *al-Sa'ih*, 3 July 1916, 1-2.

⁶⁰ "Ta'lif Lajna 'Amm li-A'ana Mankubi Suriyya wa-Lubnan," *al-Huda*, 3 June 1916, 3.

⁶¹ Hamiya, *Khalil Sa'adeh*, 128-30.

⁶² 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "Akhbar Mahaliya," *al-Sa'ih*, 24 August 1916, 2.

⁶³ "Fi-Amirka al-Janubiyya: al-Wafd al-Fransawi fi-l-Barazil," *Al-Huda*, 3 August 1917, 5.

⁶⁴ Georges Samné, "Les minoritaires syrien," *Correspondence d'Orient*, 10 March 1918, 129-134.

⁶⁵ "Fi-Amirka al-Janubiyya: al-Wafd al-Fransawi fi-l-Barazil," *Al-Huda*, 3 August 1917, 5.

⁶⁶ MAE, A-Pais, Ghanim to Ribot, Paris, 23 May 1917. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 225-227.

⁶⁷ 'Abd al-Masih Haddad, "Asbab al-Jaw' fi-Suriyya," *al-Sa'ih*, 24 August 24 1916, 1-2. Syrian papers also depended on partners in Cairo; see Habib Karam al-Bustani, "al-Hala al-Hadira fi-Suriyya wa-Lubnan," *al-Huda*, 7 June 1916, 4.

⁶⁸ Philip di Tarrazi, *Tarikh al-Sihafa al-'Arabiyya*, (Beirut: al-Matba'at al-Adabiyya, 1933), 406.

⁶⁹ The first stories on the executions appeared only after Jemal Pasha's book *La Verité* reached Syrian audiences abroad in March 1917. Ali Nabati, "Nazarat fi-Kitab Jamal Pasha," *al-Fatat*, 1 March 1917, 5. The French Foreign Ministry was also belated in its response, calling France's role in the cases "regrettable." MAE, Guerre, T, Pontalis to Ribot, Cairo, 23 March 1917. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 211.

⁷⁰ George Samné, *l'Effort Syrien pendant la guerre, Cartes* (Paris: n.p., 1919), 5-6.

⁷¹ Amin al-Rihani, "Chronicle Syrien," *Correspondence d'Orient*, 10 March 1918, 154.

⁷² Comité Central Syrien, *La Question syrien exposée par les syriens* (Paris: n.p., 1919), 42.

⁷³ Kais Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State Under the Mandate*, (I. B. Taurus, 2003), 20-1.

⁷⁴ MAE, SL, Ghanim to Clemenceau, Paris, 18 March 1919. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 498-9.

⁷⁵ Lyne Lohéac, *Daoud Ammoun et la création de l'état libanais* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1978), 73-4.

⁷⁶ Sawda, *al-Ittihad al-Lubnani fi-l-Qatar al-Masri*, 19-27.

⁷⁷ Narbona, "French Intelligence Gathering in a Transnational Mandate," in *Nationalist Identities*, 36-54.

⁷⁸ MAE, Guerre, T, LeFevre-Pontalis to Briand, Cairo, 8 February 1918. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 306-8.

⁷⁹ MAE, Guerre, T, LeFevre-Pontalis to Pichon, Cairo, 27 December 1917. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 286-7.

⁸⁰ MAE, Guerre, T, Cherchali to Couse, Mecca, 23 February 1918. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 313.

⁸¹ Auguste Adib Pasha, *Lubnan ba 'd al-Harb* (Cairo: Matba'at al-Ma'ruf, 1919), 108-112.

⁸² AD, SL, Report on l'Alliance Libanaise, Cairo, 12 January 1919. In Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 463. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 462-467.

⁸³ MAE, SL, Nimr to Pichon, Cairo, 5 March 1919. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 491.

⁸⁴ M.A.E., SL, La Nouvelle Ligue Nationale Syrien de New York, New York, February 1919. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 481.

⁸⁵ Abraham Rihbany, "Amirka fi-Suriya," *Mirat al-Gharb*, 19 February 1919, 2.

⁸⁶ Abraham Rihbany, *America Save the Near East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1918).

⁸⁷ Ayyub Tabet, "Suriyya fi-l-Mu'tamar al-Silmi," *al-Sa'ih*, 12 May 1919, 1.

⁸⁸ AD, Mandat, SL, 1er Versement, Papiers Georges-Picot, LeFevre-Pontalis to Georges-Picot, Paris, 26 February 1919. Hokayem, 'Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 485-486.

⁸⁹ Khalil Sa'adeh, "Kitab Maftuh 'ila al-Suriyyin wa-l-Lubnaniyyin wa-l-Filistiniyyin," *al-Majalla*, 15 November 1918.

⁹⁰ Khalil Sa'adeh, "Kitab Maftuh 'ila al-Suriyyin wa-l-Lubnaniyyin wa-l-Filistiniyyin," *al-Majalla*, 15 November 1918.

⁹¹ Badr el-Hage, *Khalil Sa'adeh: Silsilat al-'A'mal al-Majhula* (London: Riad el-Rayyes, 1987), 18-20.

⁹² "Mu'tamar Suri Fransawi fi-Marseilles," *Mirat al-Gharb*, 4 January 1919, 1-2.

⁹³ Najib Diab, "Hadith al-Yawm: al-Zu'ama' al-Kadhiba," *Mirat al-Gharb*, 16 January 1919, 7.

⁹⁴ William Kataflis, "Kitab Maftuh min William Kataflis 'ila Mirat al-Gharb," *Mirat al-Gharb*, 17 January 1919, 4-5. See also Najib Diab, "Hadith al-Yawm: 'ila Sahib al-Sha'b," *Mirat al-Gharb*, 18 January 1919, 3.

⁹⁵ Najib Diab, "Wisaya Fransa 'ala-Suriyya 'Asbasat 'Amr Mutiqin," *al-Sa'ih*, 1 May 1919, 1-2.

⁹⁶ Najib Diab, “Wisaya Fransa ‘ala-Suriyya ‘Asbasat ‘Amr Mutiqin,” *al-Sa‘ih*, May 1, 1919, 1.

⁹⁷ MAE, SL, Ghanim to Clemenceau, Paris, 18 March 1919. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 498-9.

⁹⁸ MAE, SL, Statement on the Borders of the *Grand Liban*, Paris, March 1919. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 492-3.

⁹⁹ MAE, SL, First Lebanese Delegation Statement to Conference de la Paix, Paris, 13 February 1919. In Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 479-481.

¹⁰⁰ MAE, SL, Ghanim to Clemenceau, Paris, 18 March 1919. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 498-9.

¹⁰¹ MAE, SL, Gout to Pichon, Paris, 12 October 1918. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 387-8.

¹⁰² MAE, SL, Ghanim to Pichon, Paris, 8 October 1918. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 380-1.

¹⁰³ 10 June 1919 Letter from *Sociedade La Union Libanense* of Mendoza to Maronite Patriarch Ilyas Huwayyik; Huwayyik Collection, Folder 89, Document 162; Maronite Patriarchate, Bkerke, Lebanon.

¹⁰⁴ MAE, SL, Cambon to Georges-Picot, Paris, 30 May 1919. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 593.

¹⁰⁵ MAE, SL, Gilbert to Pichon, Valparaiso, 2 September 1919. Hokayem, ‘Atallah, and Charaf, *Documents Diplomatiques*, 474.

¹⁰⁶ 22 June 1920 letter from Na‘um Mukarzil to Patriarch Ilyas Huwayyik, Bkerke Letters, Huwayyik Collection, Folder 096, Documents 0017-0018B.

¹⁰⁷ Draft of May 1, 1921 Letter from Maronite Archbishop Shukrallah Khuri to French Consul in New York, Bkerke Letters, Huwayyik Collection, Folder 096, Document 0163.

¹⁰⁸ Rania Maktabi, “The Lebanese Census of 1932 Revisited: Who Are the Lebanese?” in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 26, no. 2 (1999): 224.

¹⁰⁹ Khater, “Becoming ‘Syrian’ in America,” 299-33; Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White*, 81-113; Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

¹¹⁰ I would like to thank Guita Hourani, Liliane Haddad, Elie Nabhan, and Walid Mrad at the Lebanese Emigration Research Center for their guidance during my 2011 visit. This research was possible because of LERC’s collection of newspapers from Lebanon’s diaspora. Additional thanks go to Ibrahim ‘Assi at Beirut’s *Mahfuzat Wataniyya*, and Sami Salameh at the Maronite Patriarchate in Bkerke for their assistance with these collections. This article began as a paper at the April 2012 *Mahjar & Mashriq* Conference at North Carolina State University, and I would like to thank Akram Khater, John Karam, and Andrew Arsan for organizing the conference, and the conference participants for their valuable comments. Finally, I owe a debt to lham Khuri-Makdisi, Ross Newton, and the reviewers of *Mashriq & Mahjar*, who all contributed to improving this article in preparation for its publication.