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**Zionism and the Politics of Coalitions
in the Ottoman Jewish Communities
in the Early Twentieth Century**

In the second half of the nineteenth century, new partners in leadership appeared in the Jewish Ottoman communities. Zionism was one of these new partners.

The Palestine issue was incontestably the principal reason for the official entry of Zionism into the Turkish Jewish community beginning in 1908 (which is not to say that there had been no prior contact with Jewish nationalism by the Ottoman Jews). Neither in Turkey nor in other large Jewish centers, however, was the function of Zionism within the community always directly linked to this issue. In the case of the Turkish Jewish community, it would be more accurate to speak of Zionisms, in the plural, and to make a particular distinction between currents brought in from the outside and local nationalist variants.¹ Zionism or nationalism, according to the conjuncture, was the new political partner from Europe. Its goal was to prepare the way for negotiations over Palestine with the Ottoman authorities. To achieve this aim, it relied on support from the community, from both within the institutional structure and among the various strata of local Jewish society. Places on the political scene had already been marked out by other, previously established, interest groups, such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle (hereafter, the Alliance).²

Communal institutions were administered by an autocratic system which depended in part on a *hahambası* (holding the title of Chief Rabbi) or on a *kaymakam* (*locum tenens* of the Chief Rabbi), and in part on an oligarchy of

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dilettante community leaders. The positioning of forces along the peripheries of the communal institutions was a common practice in the nineteenth century. This practice fostered the absorption and control of groups of malcontents or of those whose aspirations simply could not be met within the existing institutional structure. In this way the peripheral force would ready its troops for the exercise of power and, in so doing, become structured, or re-structured, as a political force. Both the Alliance and the Zionists, groups from abroad, followed this "political tradition" in their own way.

There was nothing original about this political tradition. It constituted an option for survival (or for biding time) for a group excluded from power or for an oppositional force in an oligarchic system. The interest lies in the refinements brought to this strategy by the concerned parties and in the evolution of the relation between each of these parties and the center—namely with the central forces holding power within the community.

THE ALLIANCE MOVES TO THE CENTER

From the beginning the Alliance functioned both as an alternative power and as a locus of alternative power by taking over certain prerogatives of the community's institutions, the administration of education for example, without cutting itself off definitively from the communal authorities.

The classic stakes of political struggle in the community again came into play with the arrival of the Alliance as a foreign partner and the position it began to occupy in communal life, in spite of its definition as a philanthropic organization. In the nineteenth century this struggle primarily involved the confrontation between the laity and the clergy, although there was also internal friction within each of these groups. The Alliance acted within the community through the intermediary of members of the local elite who, although this was the most natural locus for the practice of their power, had not been successful in operating within the institutional establishment. Some members of the local leadership who held positions of authority in the community were, in fact, unable to exercise the privileges of their position.

The absence of democracy in the communal institutions, which was further reinforced in the last decades of the nineteenth century by the authoritarian regime of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909), and the concentration of power in the hands of a political clique which took place during this period, led to the further limitation of an already restricted mobility. The field of political action

for the Jew, as a *dhimmi*, was restricted to the community arena. This limitation rendered the struggle for power all the more fierce and explains, perhaps, the intensity of conflict, sometimes disproportionate to the issues at stake, of the political debates within the community. Accession to a position of responsibility within communal institutions represented the pinnacle of social and economic ascent. Community leaders, those anxious to set innovative projects in motion as well as those motivated simply by the desire for power, did not hesitate to turn to those alternative forces which might, in the long run, help them reach their goal.

The Alliance was one such potential force. A new force whose base was abroad it was less vulnerable than others. The Alliance, however, precisely because it was a philanthropic society, lacked both the perspectives and the dynamics of a political party. Its troops reached power solely as the result of socio-economic conditions. The Alliance did not practice mass politics. The active participation of the population in the political life of the community had already been limited by the *hahamhane nizamnamesi* (Organic Statute)³ and suffrage based on property qualifications.⁴ Moreover, no communal elections had been held in Istanbul since 1865.⁵ In fact, the first universal suffrage elections (women excepted) were not held there until 1910-1911. It was rather through the intermediary of local leaders supportive of its work and through the intermediary of its trusted Haim Nahum, the elected *kaymakam*,⁶ that the Alliance began to assert itself into strategic positions. This was due especially to the support which Haim Nahum was given by the new regime coming out of the "Young Turk" revolution (23-24 July 1908).⁷

ZIONISTS AND THEIR OPPOSITION PARTY STRATEGY

The official Zionism which began in 1908 to function locally in the guise of a banking company, the Anglo Levantine Banking Company, was wholly the movement of a political organization. Here lies the critical difference between the Alliance and the Zionists. The Zionist "party", as a party, had a political program which was adapted to current conditions, both outside of and within the community. Certainly the community was second among the political priorities of the Zionists. Nevertheless, the community served as a point of departure for negotiations with the government. Distinctions should be made between local projects according to their direction by the Zionist Organization abroad, by leaders sent to the community, and by Zionists recruited locally.

In any case, Zionism was faced with making a place for itself on the political scene of the community alongside other special interest groups. In particular, Zionism had to confront the political center, now occupied by the "Alliancists" (friends of the Alliance) who were opposed to Zionism. In order to do this, Zionism had not only to employ the time-honored strategies of the local community, but also to innovate. The Zionists had little hope of recruiting among the local notables who had been won over by the Alliance even if, for a time, they did continue working in this direction. Only those milieux into which the Alliance had not gained entry—and the groups cut off from the center—remained open to them.

Although it had been assumed that the majority of those who would go through the educational system would espouse the ideology of the Alliance, this ideology had not had a great impact on the general population. Thus, the public represented a potential source of real support in the conquest of communal institutions, when the right moment arrived. As for those groups which had been excluded from the center of the political scene, they hoped only to reach it. Zionism, by defining itself from the outset as an opposition party, was bound to attract those excluded from and discontented with the community regime in place. These groups were capable in turn, with the help of the populace, of pushing the Zionists into a position of power.

While the Alliance recruited those excluded from the center on an individual basis, Zionism, as an opposition party, had the privilege of negotiating with political interest groups or "ethnic" groups, and of contracting coalitions. This policy of consolidation was part of the Zionists' local strategy and there was no lack of prospective partners falling into this category. Zionists did not accord equal importance to all of the peripheral interest groups. The former status of their relations with the group, the reasons for the coalition, the potential of the ally, and the particular conjuncture constituted the decisive parameters.

The Zionists also tried to associate themselves with groups still in power who had been weakened by the success of the "progressives" and who thereby found themselves on the periphery of the inner circle of power. The rabbis and a certain conservative core still holding communal authority fell into this category. They represented an easy group of supporters to attract and a valuable one, for they could potentially play a role both as an opposition force and as a new power base.

FIRST OFFENSIVES AS A UNITED FRONT

The Zionists had begun to use the tactic of a united front against the Chief Rabbinate in Istanbul, seat of the central authority of Ottoman Judaism, from the moment the "Alliancist" camp reached power. This tactic had been employed both in the capital and in the provinces. The first objective was to prevent the reinforcement of power of the "Alliancists" and, in so doing, to keep the right-hand man of the local "Alliancists", Haim Nahum, from obtaining the post of *hahambaşı* in the upcoming elections. The second objective was to undermine any initiatives emanating from the center which were destined for the communities in the provinces, in order to impede any centralization of power which might endanger the small clusters of power formed by the different communities dispersed throughout the Empire. These clusters of power represented the available political loci within which peripheral forces could take action.

Immediately following the election of Haim Nahum to the position of *kaymakam*, divisions in the community worsened over a series of issues which had already been debated before the election. The toughest opposition came from those who had just been removed from power,⁸ identified as "conservatives" by the new leaders, and who attempted to further destabilize the precarious communal regime which had been set in place with great difficulty.⁹ Although they were not openly active in Istanbul at this time, the Zionists were in a good position to observe the maneuverings of the opponents to the new team. They did not fail to take advantage of this situation on their own turf. Later, when they were in a position to mobilize locally recruited forces, they went into action in the capital itself.

In the first months following the "Young Turk" revolution, the dynamic of change, which also affected a portion of the Jewish population, had worked in favor of the "Alliancist" group and of Nahum, both perceived as "progressives" even though their communal projects were not diametrically opposed to the policies of those whom they had just dethroned. The people thus found themselves animated by an enthusiasm brought by the moment which was favorable to those who were seen as new leaders (who seemed right for the new situation). These new men hadn't been tainted by the "court" intrigues of fallen communal leaders, who had been associated with the overturned Hamidian regime.¹⁰ Some of the "progressives" were even personally linked to the new Ottoman re-

gime, which furthered their merit in the eyes of the Jewish population. In truth, the people did not play a decisive role in the "Alliancists'" rise to power; they approved this rise after the fact in a wave of enthusiasm rather than through deliberate choice.

The nature and the meaning of the coalitions contracted outside of the capital between the Zionists and diverse interest groups against the Chief Rabbinate are well-illustrated by the two episodes analyzed below. Both incidents are representative of the conjunctural strategies employed and of the political climate of the moment. It should be added that the dispute between the Alliance and the Zionists was not a new one (it went back as far as their struggles in Bulgaria at the end of the nineteenth century, for example). Their dispute, in fact, had simply become aggravated the emergence of new stakes in the political arena.

THE PANIGEL AFFAIR

The unrest which characterized the aftermath of the "Young Turk" revolution spread progressively to the Ottoman provinces and their Jewish communities. The "progressives" who had come from the ranks of the "Alliancists" began to demonstrate their desire to take hold of the reins of power in their respective communities. Here too, a distinction must be made between the program of the Alliance in Paris and that of local recruits. The latter went far beyond the prudent recommendations of the conservative Paris headquarters. Furthermore, the Alliance in Paris was distant from the local centers of power and the passion which this power aroused in the local communal leaders.

The communities of Damascus, Saida and Jerusalem raised the issue of the dismissal of their Chief Rabbi. In Jerusalem this was simply a case of re-opening an affair which had been provisionally settled, after many vicissitudes, with the invalidation of the election of Jacob Meir in 1907.¹¹ In the same year, Eliahu Panigel had been appointed *kaymakam*. The irregularity of the appointment and the role which former leaders of the community in Istanbul had played in this affair could serve as a pretext for the "progressives" to demand the dismissal of Panigel, all the more so because Panigel had not carried out the election of a titular *hahambaşı* as was stipulated by the *hahamhane nizamnamesi*.

Against the "progressives" or "Alliancists", Panigel was supported by the conservative forces still in power. The *Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden*¹²

(hereafter the *Hilfsverein*), a rival of the Alliance, had also joined forces with Panigel. The Zionists acted in concert with the conservative groups, including the Orthodox.¹³ In this case, of course, the Zionists sided with those who still held power in the Jerusalem Rabbinate or who were associated with it. We must not lose sight of the fact, however, that "conservatives" had lost their supremacy in the capital. While Jerusalem occupied an important place in the Zionist program, the primary objective, in this instance, was the struggle against the Chief Rabbinate in Istanbul. While the latter could not name the different Chief Rabbis of the provinces, the *hahambaşı* and his entourage carried considerable weight in the elections and in their official ratification by the Ottoman authorities. It was feared that they could name someone close to them and, in that way, control the Jerusalem Rabbinate.

The "progressives" demanded the dismissal of Panigel. The director of the Alliance Trades School in Jerusalem, Abraham Antébi, worked actively in this direction despite the fact that the Alliance had firmly committed him to neutrality.¹⁴ The lack of fervor on the part of the Alliance in its support of the Jerusalem "progressives" was due, in part, to the fear of attracting the wrath of Germany's Orthodox groups and of the Zionists, as had happened during the Meir-Elyashar affair in 1906-1907. The Alliance had demonstrated a similar attitude in regard to the "progressives" and Haim Nahum following the "Young Turk" revolution, even though it had until then given full support to its *protégé*.¹⁵ In the final analysis, the Alliance was undoubtedly less progressive than were its local adherents. The latter rallied under the flag of the Alliance, in spite of the Alliance itself, for lack of an alternative.

In this affair, Antébi defied repeated remonstrances and pressured Isaac Fernandez, president of the Regional Committee of the Alliance in Istanbul, to intervene through Nahum.¹⁶ Once the issue of Jerusalem had been resolved, Antébi planned to tackle the reorganization of the community of Jaffa.

The adversaries of the Alliance criticized the organization for infiltrating Jewish philanthropic works, for taking over, along with Nahum, the Chief Rabbinate of the Empire, for attempting to curry the exclusive favor of the "Young Turks" and for refusing all association with the *Hilfsverein* and the Zionists. In a word, the Alliance was accused of trying to establish a monopoly of power for itself.¹⁷ The interim governor of Jerusalem also supported the "Alliancist" group and was leaning toward the dismissal of Panigel. Even though they did not act in concert and did not adopt the same line of action, all of these partners were identified with the Alliance and so formed a clearly delimited group which had to be fought.

Exterior factors also contributed to the sharpening of divisions. Thus, the intervention of the German ambassador further complicated the affair.¹⁸ For the "Alliancists" there was no question that the Zionists, the Orthodox, Germany and the *Hilfsverein* were working hand in hand.¹⁹ This is what led directly to the "Germano-Zionism" charge so often evoked by Antébi, the Alliance, the "Alliancists" and even the *Quai d'Orsay* in Paris.

In reality, the fact that the Zionists and the *Hilfsverein*—outsiders in a sense—became allies with the "conservative" "insiders" during the Panigel affair, can only be explained by tactical motivations. Both groups opposed the influence of the Alliance and France, which could only increase with the definitive election of Haim Nahum.²⁰ This is how a united front against the Chief Rabbinate in the capital was formed.

THE FRANKFURT LETTERS

In the affair of the Frankfurt letters, the Zionists again took action outside of the capital, but this time they also sought the intervention of partners within the city. Although the "conservatives" had lost their advantage in Istanbul, given the institutional structures they had not been completely ousted from positions in communal administration during the authoritarian takeover of some of these positions. The conservative laity had certainly been forced to yield their positions to the "Alliancists". The rabbis, however, the majority of whom remained tied to the former leaders, still retained a voice within the power structure. The members of the *meclis-i ruhani* (religious council)²¹ in the capital also held seats in the *meclis-i umumi* (general council).²² In this capacity they were to intervene in the designation of the future *hahambaşı* of the Empire.

These clerical members of the *meclis-i umumi* had received registered letters from Frankfurt, signed by a number of rabbis officiating in different European cities.²³ "The signatories requested them, in the name of the *Torah*, of *Judaic interests* and of *Palestine* to vote without partiality to either the man or the great and powerful Society."²⁴ The "society" in question was none other than the Alliance. Haim Nahum, the man most implicated by these missives, attributed them to the workings of the Orthodox, the *Hilfsverein* and the Zionists, who were accusing him of being in the service of the so-called "society."²⁵ The "progressives" developed the same analysis.

One might think that the analysis of the "Alliancist" camp was the result of a subjective bias. This was not the case since the Zionists, on the

local level, were not at all hiding their intentions. The Salonican Zionist press explained that if the Alliance was working for Nahum, there was no reason that others could not fight in favor of their own candidates.²⁶ In fact, the adversaries of the Alliance proposed the candidacy of the Chief Rabbi of Egypt, R. Shimeon, of Orthodox tendency. Indeed, for the Zionists, Nahum was under the thumb of the Alliance which was credited (wrongly) with having a great influence on the "Young Turk" government, an influence which had allowed it to place its men in the key positions within Ottoman Jewry after the revolution.²⁷ German Jewry was no less fearful of the nomination of Nahum to the post of *hahambaşı* as this nomination might lead to an increase in French influence in the East.²⁸ The intervention on the part of the *Hilfsverein* with the German Foreign Ministry had not remained without effect. The Minister was notified at the German embassy in Istanbul that the naming of Nahum to the post of *hahambaşı* was not desirable since the candidate was a francophile and openly supported the "Young Turks".²⁹

Once again, as in the Panigel affair, the Orthodox, the Zionists, and the *Hilfsverein* found themselves united with the blessing of Germany. Later, in the capital, this association, with slight variations, was to reoccur with the participation of new interest groups such as the Ashkenazim or the *B'nai B'rith* (locally called the *Béné Bérit*).³⁰

ZIONISTS AND RABBIS: THE HISTADRUT HA-RABANIM

Zionists also contracted alliances with conservatives, including the rabbis, not only in Istanbul, but also in Salonica.³¹ As was the case with the mobilization of the rabbis against Haim Nahum and the oligarchy in Istanbul, the role played by the Zionists in Salonica is incontestable. The very initiator of the mobilization of the rabbis against Haim Nahum and the oligarchy in Istanbul was David Markus,³² a representative of the *Hilfsverein*, and a rabbi of the Ashkenazic community known for his favorable position towards the Zionists.

When the *meclis-i umumi* was dissolved in 1910, opening the way for new elections, Nahum did not ask its clerical members to resign as he did the lay members. Although the *hahamhane nizamnamesi* stipulated that the clerical members were to be elected by the lay members,³³ there was no indication that they were to be elected members for life; only the seven rabbis who comprised the *meclis-i ruhani* held that privilege.³⁴ Nahum, however, extended this privilege of permanent membership to all the cleri-

cal members of the *meclis-i umumi*, thus taking advantage of the habitual imprecision of the *nizamname*. This concession was intended to avoid arousing any discontent among the rabbis, longtime opponents of the "progressives", which, if expressed, might be taken up by the Zionists in order to bring that part of the population still attached to tradition to rise against a visibly weakened Chief Rabbinate.

After the elections, the Zionist press began to evoke and to support the awakening of the orthodox religious movement.³⁵ Among the plans discussed there figured the creation of a *beit ha-midrash* (House of Study) and a *Histadrut ha-rabanim* (Union of Rabbis).³⁶ The desired goal, presented as the result of a decision coming from the clergy themselves, was to have the rabbis now play an active role.³⁷ The reality looked somewhat different. Actually, this *Histadrut ha-rabanim* was to bring together the twenty clerical members of the *meclis-i umumi*.³⁸

The grouping of all the clergy under one banner would have led to a sort of collective dialogue about attitudes to adopt within the *meclis-i umumi*.³⁹ The rabbis in question potentially constituted a strong opposition force (if only by their number, one quarter of the *meclis-i umumi*) which diverse opinion groups would have an interest in winning over.

In spite of the efforts deployed by Nahum and the "Alliancists" to assure that the elections to the *meclis-i umumi* went according to their wishes so that their sympathizers would form the majority,⁴⁰ there were Zionist infiltrations which were inevitable given the context of the moment. As for the clergy, they had no reason to support the group in power.⁴¹ Indeed, at the meeting of the new *meclis-i umumi*, at which gathered the eighteen clerical and forty-four lay members⁴² (of the eighty required), Nissim Russo, a local Zionist militant, was elected to the *meclis-i cismani* with fifty-one votes,⁴³ that is 82.25% of the total suffrage. Abraham Farhi, a member of the "progressive camp" and close collaborator of Nahum, had been president of the *meclis-i cismani* formed in the wake of the "Young Turk" revolution and was president of the retiring *meclis*. He received only 46.77% of the vote (that is 29 votes).⁴⁴ This difference, between the results obtained by a recent adherent to Zionism and a local leader long known for his communal activities, was a reflection of the political choices of the new *meclis-i umumi*. Furthermore, Russo was not the only member of the *meclis-i cismani* who was favorable to Zionism. Haim Reisner, the president of the Ashkenazi community, was also elected. It is possible that the new *meclis-i umumi* simply wished to promote new, more effective people into positions

of executive power. Nonetheless, the fact that all but two of the clerical members of the *meclis-i umumi* were present, while nearly a quarter of the lay members were absent, must not be overlooked. Even though it is difficult to evaluate the exact role played by the clerical members in this election, their concern for a massive representation remains evident.

From that moment on the Zionists, who called for the democratization of communal institutions, allied themselves with the conservatives. These same conservatives, however, heads of communal institutions under the rabbinate of Moshe Halevi, Nahum's predecessor, had not particularly distinguished themselves by their application of democratic methods. This was an alliance developed in response to the particular conditions of the time and one which lent itself to the accelerated infiltration of the Zionists into communal institutions. It should be added that the *Hilfsverein* was included in this coalition, for the strongest proponent of the reorganization of the clergy, D. Markus, had close ties with this organization.

The attempt at a reorganization of the clerical milieu was to provoke a crisis whose first destabilizing effects became manifest with the strike of the rabbis. This strike was accompanied by the closing of the rabbinical tribunals and the interruption of the rabbis' activities in communal worship.⁴⁵ Partisans of the Chief Rabbi sought to dissolve the *Histadrut* under the pretext of certain stipulations of the *hahamhane nizamnamesi*.⁴⁶ One year later, during the conflict over the agreement signed with the Ashkenazim, the clergy would pronounce itself unanimously against Nahum and his friends and, in so doing, played into the hands of the Zionists.⁴⁷ Following this, the movement became so marginalized that no more was heard about it.

THE ASHKENAZI PARAMETER: A SPRINGBOARD TO POWER

From the end of the nineteenth century, the disagreement between the Sephardi and the Ashkenazi communities in Istanbul was regularly revived. This conflict was not unique to the capital, for one finds it also in Jerusalem.⁴⁸ In Istanbul, an agreement had been passed between the two groups in 1890. This agreement established the rights and the duties of the Ashkenazi community without distinction between nationalities (there were, in fact, several Ashkenazi communities).⁴⁹ This did not succeed, however, in ironing out the difficulties between them which resurfaced on several occasions.

Toward schism

Under the rabbinate of Haim Nahum, the conflict was exacerbated by the divergence in views between the *hahambaşı* (a Sephardi) and both the president and the *baş haham* (Principal Rabbi) of the Ashkenazim, known for their Zionist sympathies. Although they had been reconciled by the 1890 Agreement, the argument which opposed the Ottoman Ashkenazi communities (*Aschkenasische Kultusgemeinde*) and the foreign or Austro-Hungarian Ashkenazi communities (*Oesterreichisch-ungarisch-israelitische Kultusgemeinde*), relative to the sharing of revenues of the tax on meat which they received from the Chief Rabbinate,⁵⁰ resurfaced in 1910 and disrupted the fragile *status quo* which had governed relations between the Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities. The most alarmist among them even predicted a schism, basing their prediction on certain endeavors undertaken by the Ashkenazi community toward becoming a religious group separate from the Chief Rabbinate, following the example of the Karaites and the *Francos*.⁵¹ In this period of communal tension, when any issue was potentially a volatile one, this disagreement was not long in turning into a polemic.⁵² The direction which this affair was to take was indicated by the apparent support which the Ashkenazi community leaders were receiving from the Zionists. Another indication could be seen in the intervention of the *Osmanischer Lloyd*, a paper associated with the German embassy in Istanbul, which published articles by the Ashkenazim aimed at, and considered insulting by, Nahum and the Chief Rabbinate.⁵³ This scission could but open a new field of action for the Zionists. The nationalist Ottoman paper financed by the Zionists, *Le Jeune Turc*, supported the claims of the Ashkenazim, or more accurately, of the Ashkenazi leaders.⁵⁴ At a higher level, pressure to move in this direction had also been placed on the Ottoman authorities. When the bill on military service was submitted to the Military Commission of the Chamber, there had been a discussion of Jews, Karaites and Ashkenazim.⁵⁵ But the schism was not complete.

The 1912 Agreement

The issue was invoked again on the occasion of the signing of an agreement between the *meclis-i cismani* (of Zionist tendencies) and the Ashkenazi community. The agreement was signed without the knowledge of the *hahambaşı* on 26 January 1912.⁵⁶ This event provoked a new crisis which concluded with the resignation of Haim Nahum⁵⁷ and which paralyzed communal institutions for a period of six months.

A comparison of the agreement which had already been signed with the Ashkenazim in 1890 and the one signed in 1912 does not yield many striking differences. On a certain number of points, however, the latter agreement represented a considerable setback in many of the gains made in 1890.

The reaction of Nahum to the signing of this agreement was out of proportion. His reaction appears almost surprising if we keep in mind the composition of the *meclis-i cismani* which signed the agreement and the political convictions of some of the Ashkenazi officials. The "progressives" were no longer the only ones running the community, as had been the case from the time of the "Young Turk" revolution until the election of the new *meclis-i cismani* in April of 1911. The tense relations between Nahum and this *meclis* leads one to think that the crisis concerned more a question of principle⁵⁸ than the signing of the agreement itself or the content of this agreement. This event potentially presented the occasion for the dissolution of this *meclis*, or at least for the undermining of its authority through the annulment of the agreement. Considering the fragility of his own power and of the communal institutions, Nahum could ill afford to allow the *meclis-i cismani* to freely exercise its supremacy. Refusing to share power with the Zionists, he either had to leave or to oust them.

In the episode of the 1912 Agreement, there had been a testing of power. This was only the beginning. With their appropriation of new loci of power and by attracting new partners who were still outside the power structure, the Zionists threatened to quickly gain the upper hand. It is in this context that the aggravation of the conflict and the determination on the part of Nahum and his friends not to go along with the 1912 Agreement can be understood. This event demonstrated the exceptional nature of a situation where the *meclis-i cismani* and the *hahambaşı* were no longer on the same side. Such a situation was unmanageable in an autocratic system with an imprecise "constitution," especially when that constitution had rarely been enforced. Hence the period of politics among friends came to an end.

THE WAR OF ATTRITION

Haim Nahum opted to resign, convinced that the government would refuse to accept it. As he had anticipated, the Minister of Justice and Religion, followed by the Council of Ministers, refused to accept his resignation, and also disapproved of the conduct of the *meclis-i cismani*.⁵⁹

However, even as the government proclaimed its rejection of the resignation, the *meclis-i cismani* continued to consider it valid.⁶⁰ Normal functioning of communal institutions remained suspended. Thus the *meclis* acted against the decision of the government, which further complicated the situation.

After many vicissitudes, in March 1912, the *meclis-i umumi* was convoked to make a resolution. The debate was stormy, at times violent.⁶¹ Of the sixty-five members present, two abstained and thirty-three voted in favor of maintaining the Agreement, results which represented both a censure of Nahum and the support for the accused *meclis-i cismani*. A solution to the conflict had not been the main preoccupation of the voters; instead, they were more concerned with evaluating the respective strengths of the different interest groups.

The evolution of the situation attested to the fact that the strategy of the "Alliancist-Nahumist" group, especially that of their leader, was not working. Nahum had sinned by lack of maturity⁶², but his friends had been unable to adapt themselves to new conditions, unable to pass from dilettantism to the stage of politicking which the Zionists had adopted.

As a final recourse, Nahum asked the government's aid in invalidating the vote.⁶³ By legitimizing the annulment of the 1912 Agreement, the Ottoman authorities would indirectly strengthen his power. The outcome of the vote had proven that Nahum could no longer count on the *meclis-i umumi*. The Zionists, their sympathizers, as well as the clergy, by tightening their ranks had gained the advantage. On the other hand, Nahum seemed to have maintained solid support in the government.

The opinion of the State Council was long in coming. Tired of fighting, the *meclis-i cismani* had submitted its resignation.⁶⁴ The latter had counted on the degeneration of the situation to save its position. The State Council finally decided in favor of the *hahambaşı*.⁶⁵

Nahum had managed to get out of a situation manifestly unfavorable to him by assuring himself of a personal victory with the help of the government. The latter was clearly indispensable to the consolidation of his power which was being seriously threatened by the Zionists.⁶⁶ Even the official medium of the Zionist workers in Palestine, *Ha-Poel Ha-Zair* (Journal of the Second *Aliyah*), recognized this.⁶⁷ The new *meclis-i cismani* had lost all of its Zionist character and its new president was described as "a fervent admirer of the civilizing work of the Alliance."⁶⁸

The argument over the Agreement of 1912 was also settled; it was to be considered null and void.⁶⁹ The Ashkenazim did not definitively renounce its claims, but Nahum was once again the master of the situation.

CONTINUITY IN COALITIONS

The collaboration between the Zionists and the Ashkenazim was to continue after World War I. They appeared as partners in the new developments which were to take place both in the community and in local Zionism. The Ashkenazim's claims were met in the proposed regulation elaborated by the Jewish National Council, a kind of unitary communal structure set in place after the Allied occupation of Istanbul in November 1918 to compensate for the absence of Haim Nahum. At issue was the internal autonomy of the Ashkenazi community and its proportional representation in communal government.⁷⁰ The Zionists had been the artisans of the institution of a Jewish National Council, a development closer in nature to a *coup d'état*. Zionist allies such as the *B'nai B'rith*, the *Makabi* (Society of Nationalist Gymnastics) and the *Hilfsverein*, through the intermediary of its local representative Israel Auerbach (appointed Secretary General of the Council), shared seats on the Council. The Zionist camp thus bore witness to the fidelity in its coalitions.

The spirit of the times favoring union, the two Ashkenazi communities, the Ottoman and the foreign, merged on 1 January 1919,⁷¹ and formed a Provisional Executive Committee of Ashkenazi Jews.⁷² The president of this committee just happened to be the Zionist, D. Markus,⁷³ who was equally involved in the affairs of the *Histadrut ha-rabanim* and of the 1912 Agreement, and who was also linked to the *B'nai B'rith*. The manifesto⁷⁴ published in Yiddish and French on this occasion expressed an unreserved support for the Jewish cause in Palestine as well as for full support of the Jewish National Council. The newly established organization wished to remain resolutely autonomous. In any case, it was in the interest of the Zionists, amid the struggles over the Ashkenazi issue which had continued since 1910, that the Ashkenazi community free itself of Sephardi guardianship. In this way the Ashkenazi community would be able to choose an autonomous Chief Rabbi within its own denomination. Such a choice would in turn contribute to the weakening of Haim Nahum's function and to the diversification of the loci of decision making. This fusion of the two Ashkenazi communities and the affirmation of Ashkenazi autonomy which followed, were the products of a skillful maneuver made in preparation for the return of the *hahambaşı*, who had been sent on assignment by the Ottoman authorities at the end of 1918.

In the program for the *Organizational Statutes of the Turkish Jewish Communities*, which was elaborated by the Zionists after the definitive

resignation of Nahum in 1920, the Ashkenazi community, thereafter termed as the *Aschkenazim Kultusgemeinde für Konstantinopel und Umgegend* (Community of Ashkenazim of Constantinople and its Environs), benefitted from a series of privileges, among them interior autonomy within the framework of the larger Sephardi community, all recorded in writing in the appendices.⁷⁵

The coalition between the Zionists and the post-war Ashkenazim was not a fortuitous one. On the one hand, after the Russian Revolution of October 1917 and the pogroms which followed it, Istanbul served as a refuge for thousands of Russian Jews. The latter had already been in contact with Jewish nationalist movements, as well as with revolutionary trends, in their country of origin. Thus, they were open to the Zionist movement. In addition, during the same period, the Zionists developed a new line aimed at both the Russian Jews and the Sephardi populations which had been left battered by the war. This had socialist overtones and invoked the theme of class struggle. The time had come to take advantage of the overwhelming pro-Zionist movement which had spread throughout the capital and in the provinces. Communal institutions still remained in the hands of the "Nahumists" who feigned siding with Zionism in order to tap into the "undecided" vote.

From that time on, the local Zionists represented a real force, as opposed to the official Zionism (represented by the World Zionist Organization) which was all but absent in the capital, inasmuch as it no longer had need of the Ottomans in order to settle the question of Palestine. The coalition with the Ashkenazim continued to function as it had in the past; divisions would only have weakened the movement. Furthermore, considering the respected role which the Ashkenazim occupied in the local Zionist leadership, to alienate the Ashkenazi community would have been a serious blunder. This alliance was indispensable to the local Zionists (mostly Sephardim) who were anxious to take over communal institutions. Moreover, there was some discussion of Jews of foreign origin participating in community elections.⁷⁶ Refugees from Eastern Europe, all Ashkenazim, fell into this category. In fact, the Ashkenazim represented a potential electorate. The Zionists, by allying themselves with them, foresaw the possibility, with the aid of their increasingly numerous Sephardi supporters, of occupying the majority of seats in the future *meclis-i umumi* and of defeating Haim Nahum and those associated with him.

The coalition between the Zionists and the Ashkenazim as an "ethnic" group fell into the larger framework of a regrouping which could schemati-

cally be termed "German"—even if the customary denouncement of a Germano-Zionist plot was not always well-founded. The origin of the majority of the Zionist leaders, the geographical implantation of the Zionist Organization, as well as the language spoken within the Organization and by the most active elements in the movement pointed in this direction.⁷⁷ It goes without saying that conditions in the Empire fostered this association, in reaction to the "French" camp which was little attracted to Zionism. The *Hilfsverein* was a German Jewish organization.⁷⁸ The *B'nai B'rith* lodges were composed of Jews who had German roots. The first *Makabi* Society of Istanbul had been founded by young German Jews, and it was I. Auerbach, German Zionist leader and representative of the *Hilfsverein* in the capital, who had directed it after the "Young Turk" revolution.⁷⁹ The Zionist leaders sent to Istanbul by the Zionist Organization were, if not all Germans, at least all Ashkenazim (except for the last, Israel Caleb).⁸⁰ The Zionists widely publicized, in cities like Istanbul and Salonica, the work of the *Hilfsverein*, the rival of the Alliance.⁸¹ The support accorded this Organization by the Ashkenazi population, especially in Istanbul, due in part to the fact that the language of instruction in the schools was German, must also be taken into account. Thus, although it had first been only the result of circumstance and conditions, the alliance within the German camp eventually became a natural one.

TOWARD A POLITICIZED JEWISH PUBLIC LIFE

The conjunctural coalitions established by the Zionists in Istanbul and in the provinces did not all demonstrate consistency. One need only consider the relations between the Zionists and the *Hilfsverein*. In Istanbul and in Salonica, they were maintained alive within the framework of the struggle against the Alliance. In Palestine they were tending toward decline. This disintegration in the Zionist/*Hilfsverein* relations in Palestine began in 1913 with the *Tekhnion* affair (the Institute of Technology in Haifa) which arose over the choice of language to be used in teaching in this establishment.

In Istanbul the maintenance of this relationship was a strategic necessity. There was no avenue for the Zionists to change camps, for the other camp was that of the "Alliancist" Chief Rabbinate. The clear dichotomy between the two blocks did not prevent defections within the group in power. At least, this is how the vicissitudes experienced by the communal institutions in 1911-1912 may be explained. Furthermore, after the war,

there was an increase in the lack of firmness shown by the group in power which had been observed before the war.

One of the major differences between the Zionists and the "Alliancists" is explained by the type of support from which each group benefitted from the exterior and from within.

For its part, the Alliance refused to provide the aid necessary to combat Zionism locally and to keep from losing ground.⁸² The most it offered was its moral support to Haim Nahum, who was trying desperately to organize his troops against the Zionists. The Alliance, distant, paralyzed by the Zionist specter, and the secretary of the Alliance, rigid, ill-versed in the affairs of the Ottoman community and incompetent in political policy, offered little help to the *hahambaşı*. At best Jacques Bigart, left behind by new developments, took recourse in the outdated method of the *bahşiş* and proposed to Haim Nahum that he bribe the members of the Ottoman parliament to provoke an anti-Zionist debate in the Chamber or, further, that he use his influence in high places to put an end to the Zionist landslide.⁸³

The Zionists, on the other hand, put the complete arsenal of a modern political party into place in order to achieve their objectives. The essential elements of this arsenal included representatives of the Zionist Organization, seasoned political leaders, a press system,⁸⁴ diversified partnerships,⁸⁵ local militancy, and the reinforcement from the Organization itself. To this was added a political program. The status and structures of the Alliance itself prevented the elaboration or diffusion of such a political strategy and program.

It is true that each of the two groups had its own ideology. Zionism, after the Hamburg Congress of 1909, had provisionally shifted its policy on Palestine and had subscribed to the principle of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. It had also developed a progressive local political program. The Alliance had only its ideology to diffuse, and this ideology did not prove itself to be adaptable to local context, in spite of the success of its schools. In the beginning the Zionist ideology had been no better adapted to the local communal context, but it was later modified and shaped to meet the current and local conditions.

It would be erroneous to think that the Zionist party was united at a local level. In spite of divisions, however, it manifested a unity of action, at least *vis-à-vis* the exterior.

In order to reach their objectives, the Zionists developed a populist discourse, a discourse heard but rarely before that time, and especially not from the local leaders who had always kept their distance from the people, and had been used to adopting a paternalistic attitude, and maintaining a

benefactor/debtor relation with those out of power. The Zionists succeeded in presenting in clear terms the problem of the lack of democracy in Jewish institutional life and especially in putting the oligarchic regime into question. Progressively they exploited the antagonism among the classes in their discourse. They revelled in opposing the oligarchy, the rich, and their assistants, and encouraged the lower middle class and the poor to struggle. They planned to chase these "oppressors" from positions of power in the community, replacing them with Zionists who were close to the people and to the people's concerns. This discourse, related through channels which were open to the people, was equal to the task of seducing them. The Zionists went to the people and, by according a calculated importance to them, were able to render them responsible. In so doing, they transformed the people into an additional source of power favorable to the Zionists. In addition, through their support of the Zionists, the middle classes were given some opportunity for representation in the positions of leadership held by the upper bourgeoisie.

The strategy of an opposition party formed against the Chief Rabbinate and the Alliance functioned by focusing in particular on Haim Nahum. In effect, the Zionists had openly declared war on the Alliance in the capital and in the provinces. Certainly the struggle was the most violent in Istanbul.⁸⁶ The position occupied by the *hahambaşı* within the "Alliancist" group explains, in part, the intensity of the struggle waged against him. But this explanation is perhaps not sufficient.

Nahum did not possess the means to form his troops into a party. His entourage was composed of ineffective businessmen who busied themselves with communal affairs during the little free time which they had available. They were not equipped to confront the Zionists. The period of local dignitaries had given way to the politicization of the local arena, with new stakes and an unprecedented pluralism. The strategies which had been employed in the past by the "progressive" communal leaders against the clergy and the "conservatives" were no longer effective. The Zionists had allied themselves with the clergy but, according to their program, they had taken a more democratic and a more innovative position in comparison to the leadership in place. Between their discourse and reality, there was certainly a real gap.

The Alliance did not actively support its local leaders, nor did it concretely support Nahum. During this period, moral support was no longer sufficient. For their part, the local leaders were no longer prepared to make either financial or personal sacrifices to oppose Zionism. They proceeded to undertake certain moves toward reorganization, especially in 1919, when

they realized that even Nahum was going to definitively abandon the struggle.⁸⁷ Both the Alliance and the local leaders counted on Nahum to redeem the situation. He was the guarantor of their interests and of communal order. Nahum was, in fact, alone. The coalitions which he had tried to form, for example with the *B'nai B'rith* at the time of its implantation in Istanbul, did not produce the expected results. The *B'nai B'rith* allied itself with Zionism. A newspaper such as *El Tiempo*, faithful as it was to the *hahambaşı* and to the Alliance, was not enough to confront Zionism, even if it performed this task with relative success. The power of the *hahambaşı* was thus propped up by the authority of the government. The "Young Turk" leaders, in turn, did not hesitate to support Nahum, guarantor of order in the Jewish community.

The "Young Turk" regime, however, was characterized by great instability. The repercussions of this instability extended to the authority of Nahum who, gradually, had lost the popular support of his early days. Had the government been strong, he too would have been stronger. Alone and therefore vulnerable, but also relatively well-fixed in a high position and considered capable of influencing government policies with regard to Zionism, Nahum became a favorite target of Zionist party attacks. Once again, the Zionists exaggerated what they saw as the supernatural powers of Haim Nahum.

The fierceness of the attack against the *hahambaşı* was deplored, even at the level of the World Zionist Organization.⁸⁸ Nor did the European Powers fail to oppose Nahum, as a function of their designs on Palestine.⁸⁹ This tendency was strengthened after the war, with the Allied occupation of the capital. The local Zionists and the British united in stirring up propaganda campaigns hostile to the *hahambaşı*.⁹⁰ The latter was supported by France, whose local action was no match to that of the opposing group. The intensity of this meddling increased due to issues at stake locally.⁹¹

The strategies elaborated by those Zionists who had been delegated by the World Zionist Organization were soon taken up by the local Zionists, who tended to be nationalists. Since before the war, it had been difficult to separate the contributions of the two groups. After the war, the local Zionists took the upper hand, but the interferences between the two components, nationalism and local Zionism, did not really cease. In any case, it was the local Zionists who benefitted concretely from Zionist policy, for they began to climb sporadically to strategic points in the community. By 1920, they won the communal elections by universal suffrage. A certain opportunism on the part of those locals, relatively numerous, who fulfilled their own ambitions in this way, with

no adhesion to the Zionist ideology, cannot be excluded. Once in power, they acted no differently than those who they replaced.

In the final analysis, the Zionists' policies only furthered the disorganization of the already sufficiently rattled communal leadership. Their program was not executed, for in the local context it was rather utopian. More time was needed to plan a new organization of the community. In 1923, the advent of the Republic was to drive all forms of nationalism and all impulses toward reform underground.

The fact remains that the Zionist opposition party strategy politicized communal life—both within the institutions of the community and among the people—by introducing new factors and issues. This strategy demonstrated that alternative means of communal administration existed, if only in theory. Certainly we can not limit Zionism in this local context to this single aspect of its action. Nevertheless, in this case, it took precedence over the others. Zionism brought a new dimension of Westernization to Ottoman Judaism and, in so doing, brought a new dimension of modernization: a politicized Jewish public sphere.

Abbreviations

AAA	Auswärtiges Amt Akten (Bonn)
AAIU	Archives de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle (Paris)
AU	<i>L'Aurore</i> (Istanbul)
CAHJP	Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (Jerusalem)
CZA	Central Zionist Archives (Jerusalem)
EA	<i>El Avenir</i> (Salonica)
EJ	<i>El Judio</i> (Istanbul)
ET	<i>El Tiempo</i> (Istanbul)
HH	<i>Ha-Herut</i> (Jerusalem)
HM	<i>Ha-Mevaser</i> (Istanbul)
JC	<i>Jewish Chronicle</i> (London)
LO	<i>Lloyd Ottoman</i> (Istanbul)
MAE	Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (Paris)
MO	<i>Le Moniteur Oriental</i> (Istanbul)
PRO	Public Records Office (London)
ST	<i>Stamboul</i> (Istanbul)
UI	<i>Univers Israélite</i> (Paris)

NOTES

- 1 See Esther Benbassa, "Le Sionisme dans l'Empire ottoman à l'aube du 20^e siècle," *Vingtième Siècle*, no. 24 (October-December 1989): 69-80.
- 2 The Alliance was an organization founded in Paris in 1860 for the emancipation of the Jews and their "moral and material restoration." Between 1862 and 1914, this organization instituted, in the Mediterranean Basin, a considerable educational system (for boys and girls) which included trade schools and agricultural schools. On the Alliance in Turkey, see Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860-1925* (Bloomington, Ind., 1990).
- 3 For the original text of the *hahamhane nizamnamesi*, see *La konstitusion para la nasyon israelita de Turkia* [Constitution of the Israelite Nation of Turkey] (s.l.: Estamparia del Jurnal Israelit, 5625 [1865]).
- 4 In principle, only those who paid the *kizba* (community tax, *petcha* in Salonica) participated in community elections. See the review of communal elections in ET, 21 October 1910.
- 5 Date of the first elections conforming to the stipulations of the *nizamname* promulgated during the same period. Careful study of the functioning of "democracy" in community life, at least in Istanbul, reveals that the principle of elections was not always observed.
- 6 On Haim Nahum and the beginning of Zionism in Turkey, see Esther Benbassa, "Haim Nahum Effendi, dernier Grand Rabbin de l'Empire ottoman (1908-1920). Son rôle politique et diplomatique," 2 vols. (Thèse de doctorat d'état ès lettres, Université de Paris III, 1987); idem, *Un Grand Rabbin sépharade en politique* (Paris, 1990).
- 7 The current state of our research does not allow us to evaluate accurately the role played by the "Young Turks" in the nomination of Haim Nahum. It is known, however, that during his stay in Paris toward the end of the nineteenth century, Nahum frequented certain of the "Young Turks" in exile who subsequently came to power. These personal relations could only have been favorable to his nomination. Jacob M. Landau is stronger in his affirmation of the role played by the new leaders in this nomination. See Jacob M. Landau, "The 'Young Turks' and Zionism: Some Comments," in *Studies in Honor of Raphael Patai*, ed. Victor D. Sanua (Rutherford, N.J., 1983), 203.
- 8 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 8 October 1908; ET, 14, 16 and 28 October 1908.
- 9 See the succession of strikes by Jewish butchers. One of the most considerable community revenues was the meat tax, the *gabala*. By refusing

to pay this tax to the Chief Rabbinate, the butchers were trying to paralyze the administration: ET, 9 and 11 September 1908; ET, 5 and 11 November 1908; AAIU, Turkey II. C. 8, Haim Nahum to Paris, 15 September 1908; JC, 2 October 1908; *El Burlon*, 21 January 1909.

10 The supporters of Haim Nahum had succeeded in gathering a crowd of 15,000 in a popular section of Hasköy (a quarter on the Golden Horn) in October 1908: ET, 21 October 1908; AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 24 December 1908. We must determine how much truth there is in these figures, exaggerated at will by pro-Nahumist propaganda. During this period, large press organizations such as *El Tiempo* supported the "Alliancists," while others like *El Telegrafo*, linked to the former community regime, fearing for their future (especially their financial future) preferred to keep quiet. It was some time later that the Zionists created their own opposition press.

11 On the rabbinical question in Jerusalem, see among others: Rachel Sharaby, "The Grand Rabbinate of Jerusalem, Conflicts and Personalities, 1906-1914" (in Hebrew), *Cathedra* 37 (1985): 95-121. The Porte had vetoed the nomination of Jacob Meir (under the influence of the Chief Rabbinate in Istanbul), on the pretext of his ties with foreign societies, one of which was the Alliance.

12 The *Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden* was a German Jewish organization founded in 1901 for the improvement of the social and political conditions of the Jews of Eastern Europe and the East, which developed a small educational system in the Ottoman Empire.

13 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 7 December 1908.

14 AAIU, Secretarial Register 218, 26 August 1908; 30 September 1908; 23 October 1908.

15 On this subject see Esther Benbassa, "L'Alliance Israélite Universelle et l'élection de Haim Nahum au Grand Rabbinat de l'Empire ottoman (1908-1909)," in World Union of Jewish Studies, *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division B (Jerusalem, 1986), 3:84-85.

16 AAIU, Israël I. G. 2, A. Antébi to I. Fernandez, 2 September 1908.

17 AAIU, Israël I. G. 2, A. Antébi to Paris, 18 October 1908.

18 ET, 19 November 1908; AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 7 December 1908.

19 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 7 December 1908; AAIU, Secretarial Register 219, Jacques Bigart to Haim Nahum, 11 December 1908.

20 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 15 January 1909.

21 It was composed of seven members.

22 It was composed of sixty lay members and twenty clerical members. There was also the *meclis-i cismani* (lay council), composed of nine

members, which represented the executive authority and which had been quickly taken over by the "Alliancists."

23 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 24 December 1908; ET, 1 January 1909; UI (18), 16 January 1909: 568-69; JC, 22 January 1909.

24 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 24 December 1908. Underlined in the text: "bli nesiat kapayim la-ish o la-hevra ha-gedola ve-ha-kabirat koah."

25 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Paris, 15 January 1909.

26 EA, 12 January 1909.

27 *Ha-Yehudi*, 8 October 1908; *Der Israelit*, 17 September 1908; cited by Lucien Lazare, "L'Alliance Israélite Universelle en Palestine à l'époque de la révolution des 'Jeunes Turcs' et sa mission en Orient du 29 octobre 1908 au 19 janvier 1909," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 138 (1979): 329-30.

28 Isaiiah [Yešayah] Friedman, "The *Hilfsverein*, the German Foreign Affairs Minister and the Polemic with the Zionists, 1908-1911" (in Hebrew), *Cathedra* 20 (Tamuz 5741 [July 1981]): 103.

29 Friedman, "The *Hilfsverein*," 101.

30 The *B'nai B'rith* is a Jewish organization structured on the model of the Masonic Order in lodges and chapters, founded in the United States by German Jews in 1843.

31 AAIU, France IV. D. 16, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Office of Political and Commercial Affairs to N. Leven, 14 December 1910, report of M. Choublier, marked "confidential".

32 HM, Passover 5671 (13-20 April 1911).

33 *Konstitution*, Art. 16, p. 8.

34 *Konstitution*, Art. 20, p. 11.

35 ET, 17 April 1911.

36 HM, 5 Sivan 5671 (1 June 1911).

37 ET, 17 April 1911 (information drawn from *Die Welt*, official medium of the World Zionist Organization, and from the *Jewish Chronicle*).

38 HM, 5 Sivan 5671 (1 June 1911).

39 ET, 17 April 1911.

40 On this subject, see Benbassa, "Haim Nahum," 1:361-81.

41 EJ, 20 March 1912.

42 ET, 3 April 1911.

43 HM, 7 April 1911.

44 HM, 7 April 1911.

45 ET, 22 May 1911.

46 On this subject, see in particular *Konstitution* Art. 9, p. 6. On the vicissitudes of this affair, see ET, 22 and 26 May 1911.

47 EJ, 20 March 1912.

48 On this subject, see Mordechai Eliav, *Intercommunal Relations within the Yishuv at the End of the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem, n.d. [brochure]); idem, *Palestine and the Yishuv in the 19th Century, 1777-1917* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1978), 156-61.

49 For the text of the Agreement see ET, 30 June 1890. It was reproduced in AU, 17 March 1912.

50 AU, 24 June 1910; AU, 6 January 1911; ET, 26 December 1910.

51 ET, 26 December 1910. The question of the *Francos* (Jews of foreign nationality, in particular of Italian origin) is different from that of the Karaites whose multi-secular schism went beyond the limits of the Ottoman communities. The administrative separation of the *Francos* in Istanbul from the Sephardi community goes back to 1862. See *Archives de la communauté italienne* (Istanbul), letter (in Italian) from the Legation of the Kingdom of Italy to the foreign Israelite community of Spanish and Portuguese rites in Constantinople, signed by M. Cerruti, 2 May 1862.

52 ET, 6 January 1911; 1 June 1911; 5 June 1911; 9 August 1911.

53 ET, 6 January 1911.

54 ET, 26 December 1910. The article in question was apparently published on 25 December 1910. This issue could not be located in the existing collections of this paper.

55 ET, 26 December 1910.

56 For the text of this Agreement, see MO, 1 February 1912; AU, 17 March 1912 (in Judeo-Spanish and in French).

57 ET, 31 January 1912; ST, 1 February 1912; MO, 1 February 1912; EA, 2 February 1912; LO, 3 February 1912; JC, 9 February 1912; EJ, 20 March 1912.

58 On this question of principle, see MO, 1 February 1912. Having been informed of his resignation, the Secretary of the Alliance in Paris responded: "There must be motives, motives which the public is not in a position to appreciate behind this serious decision of Mr. Nahum, motives which must not be inspired solely by the resolutions of the Consistory [*meclis-i cismani*]." See AAIU, School Register 232, Jacques Bigart to A. Benveniste, 7 February 1912.

59 ST, 2 February 1912; EA, 9 February 1912; MO, 6 February 1912; MO, 19 February 1912; ET, 19 February 1912; JC, 23 February 1912.

60 ET, 5 February 1912, minutes of the meeting of the *meclis-i cismani* of 5 February 1912, in which it was decided that the *hahambaşı* was to be considered as having resigned by one vote less than an unanimous margin; ET, 12 February 1912; EA, 16 February 1912; AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., A. Benveniste to the President, 27 February 1912.

61 ET, 15 March 1912.

- 62 AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., A. Benveniste to the President, 28 March 1912.
- 63 EA, 25 March 1912; ET, 8 May 1912.
- 64 AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., A. Benveniste to the President, 4 June 1912.
- 65 ET, 7 June 1912, taken from the newspaper, *Le Jeune Turc*.
- 66 CZA Z3/44, from I. Auerbach to the EAC (*Engeres Aktions-Comitee*), 25 March 1912; AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., A. Benveniste to J. Bigart, 23 July 1912.
- 67 *Ha-Poel Ha-Zair*, 12 July 1912.
- 68 AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., A. Benveniste to J. Bigart, 23 July 1912.
- 69 CAHJP, HMB/819 (microfilm), letter signed by L. Schoenmann and H. Reisner, 21 July 1912; ET, 31 July 1912. It would be appropriate to add that the Agreement was not put into practice, contrary to what A. Galanté seems to suggest in his *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul* (Istanbul, 1942), 2:209.
- 70 For the projected regulations, see: PRO, 371/4171/47289, R. Webb to the Foreign Office, received 26 March 1919.
- 71 ET, 25 February 1919; AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., A. Benveniste to J. Bigart, 28 February 1919. See also in the same bundle: *Appel/Oyfruf* (in French and Yiddish).
- 72 AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., *Appel*.
- 73 For the regular correspondence between D. Markus and the Zionist Organization, see CZA, Z3/44. An entire series of letters attesting to the relations between this militant and Zionism is to be found in this bundle.
- 74 AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., *Appel*.
- 75 See AAIU, Turkey XLI. E., received 17 February 1911.
- 76 In the most recent prior elections of 1910-1911, only Jews who were Ottoman subjects had participated: Gran Rabinato de Turkia, *Las eleksiones para el meclis umumi* [The Elections for the *Meclis-i Umumi*] (Istanbul, 5671 [1910]), 4. The *Commission de contrôle électoral*, established to define the methods of the vote in 1920, stipulated that any Jew twenty years or older, without restriction of nationality, was eligible to vote. For the complete text of the plan dated 26 January 1920, see ET, 30 January 1920.
- 77 CZA, Z2/11, V. Jacobson to David Wolffsohn, 14 December 1911.
- 78 Jacques Bigart, secretary of the Alliance, fearing, among other things, that the lodges in the East were serving German interests, had tried in 1911 to persuade Haim Nahum to forbid their establishment in Istanbul and in other Eastern centers. See AAIU, Secretarial Register 225, J. Bigart to Haim Nahum, 14 February 1911.
- 79 David Ramon, *The Makabi in the Balkans* (in Hebrew) (Tel-Aviv, 1945), 95-96.

- 80 He was a Bulgarian of Sephardi origins. His nomination was not ratified by the British until 1919. See PRO, 371/4176/56952, H. Weizmann to the Foreign Office, 10 April 1919.
- 81 HM, 15 Heshvan 5671 (17 November 1911). The Zionists also exploited the tension between the Alliance and its German committee which developed over the rapprochement between the latter and the *Hilfsverein*.
- 82 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Jacques Bigart, 19 December 1910; AAIU, Turkey I. G. 1. E., J. Loria to Paris, 16 November 1910; J. Bigart to J. Loria, 22 November 1910; E. Nathan to Paris, 21 March 1912; J. Bigart to E. Nathan, [28] March 1912, rough-draft of letter no. 1917.
- 83 AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Jacques Bigart to Haim Nahum, 26 November 1909; 22 November 1910.
- 84 For the press, see Esther Benbassa, "Presse d'Istanbul et de Salonique au service du Sionisme (1908-1914). Les motifs d'une alléance," *Revue historique* 276 (October-December 1986): 337-65.
- 85 See Esther Benbassa, "Associational Strategies in Ottoman Jewish Society in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in Avigdor Levi ed., *The Jews in the Ottoman Empire* (forthcoming).
- 86 See the correspondence between David Wolffsohn and Narcisse Leven: CZA, Z2/32, D. Wolffsohn to N. Leven, 21 February 1911; J. Bigart and N. Leven to D. Wolffsohn, 3 March 1911; D. Wolffsohn to N. Leven, 10 April 1911. The originals of these letters are in German; these are English translations. The original of the last letter is dated 9 April 1911.
- 87 AAIU, Turkey I. G. 1, A. Benveniste to Paris, 13 April 1919.
- 88 CZA, Z2/9, D. Wolffsohn to V. Jacobson, 20 June 1910; V. Jacobson to D. Wolffsohn, 23 June 1910; CZA, Z4/888, M. Dizengoff to M. Ussischkine, T. Zlatopolski, and I. A. Naiditch, 26 August 1919.
- 89 See for example the ambiguous relations of Germany in this regard: AAA, Türkei 195, K.178268-178271, R. von Kuhlmann to B. Hollweg, 15 February 1917; AAIU, Turkey XXX. E., Haim Nahum to Jacques Bigart, 27 April 1919.
- 90 PRO, 371/4167/59630, A. Calthorpe to the Foreign Office, 15 April 1919; 371/4168/68621, A. Calthorpe to the Foreign Office, 16 April 1919; 371/4168/68621, rough-draft of response to the letter of 16 April 1919, carries the signatures of O. A. Scott, G. Kidston, M. D. Peterson.
- 91 MAE, Levant 1918-1929, Sub-series Turkey, vol. 112, A. Defrance to S. Pichon, 31 July 1919; 16 August 1919.