

Portrait Paths: Studio Photography in Ottoman Palestine

Stephen Sheehi



A Locality: Wasif Jawhariyyeh's Album

In his personal chronicle, *The Storyteller of Jerusalem*, Wasif Jawhariyyeh (1897–1972) opens his account by calling attention to a cherished portrait that was presented as a gift to his father by his own namesake Wasif Bey ‘Azim (‘Adhim). Wasif Bey was a close friend of the senior Jawhariyyeh. ‘Azim came from a prominent Damascene family and was a jurist appointed by Istanbul to the Ottoman criminal court of Jerusalem but also sent to establish the civil *nizamiye* court in which Jawhariyyeh and his father worked.¹ Musician, polyglot, libertine, litterateur, and municipal bureaucrat, Jawhariyyeh came from a well-connected middle-class family in Jerusalem. His father was a well-respected lawyer and civil servant, who also became the *mukhtar* for the city’s Greek Orthodox (Rum) community and maintained close connections with the Husayni family, Jerusalem’s most powerful family of notables. Wasif himself was a municipal bureaucrat, who worked in the same legal system as his father and Wasif al-‘Azim. Despite this, he stands apart from what Peter

American Colony Photo Department, Husayn Salim al-Husayni, glass, stereoscope, dry plate, Jerusalem, 5 x 7 inches, Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Gran might call the “new men” or, better, “new men and women” of Palestine and the Ottoman Empire, “a group of people across the planet more attuned to the laws of the market and less so to the traditional laws and moralities of nation-states.”²

Thanks to the masterful work of Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar, we know much about Jawhariyyeh. He left us an extensive chronicle of his life, starting at the turn of the century until the 1960s, detailing the massive changes and challenges in Palestine that culminated in mass dispossession of Palestinians in 1948.³ Yet, adjacent to his autobiography, his unpublished photography albums, entitled *Tarikh Filastin al-musawwar* (The Illustrated History of Palestine), have received less attention.⁴ These photography albums are a visual narrative of Jawhariyyeh’s Palestine, opening not with an intimate account of his family members and the Jerusalem quarter but with a litany of portraits of the Ottoman officials, Palestinian notables, civil servants, and municipal functionaries. The preamble of this visual narrative of the modern history of Palestine meanders from portraits of Ottoman *mutasarrifs* (district officers) of the *sanjak* of Jerusalem and city notables to the municipality civil servants and mayors (*ru’us al-baladiyya*). Annotated with the names, posts, and dates (in *hijri* years), the litany includes ‘Izzat Pasha (governor of Damascus before Jerusalem was made a *sanjak* in 1872); *mutassarifs* of Jerusalem Fa’iq Bey, Nasim Bey, Subhi Bey, and ‘Azmi Bey (the latter three governors of the city after the Committee of Union and Progress revolt of 1908); the accomplished Ottoman diplomat Ibrahim Haqqi Pasha; an older Rashad Pasha; and Ra’uf Bey, along with an image of Ra’uf with his son in an Ottoman maritime outfit for children.

The portraits of local officials, notables, and dignitaries come along with the *cartes* of Ottoman officials. ‘Arif Pasha al-Dajani, a Jerusalem notable, Arab nationalist politician, and the mayor of Jerusalem during the final years of the First World War, poses bespectacled in a suit at a table, hand on cheek, over papers. Dajani, like so many others in Jawhariyyeh’s written and visual narrative, was a central figure in Palestinian politics and in the heady politics following the Arab Revolt and the Mandate period. The image is nested in an array of images of political figures such as Husayn Salim al-Husayni, the son of Jawhariyyeh’s patron and friend Salim al-Husayni. Hailing from Jerusalem’s most powerful political families, he was, along with the council of notables, given power over Jerusalem upon the Ottoman withdrawal from the city. Moreover, he is the central figure in the iconic photograph and painting of the surrender of Jerusalem to the British during World War I.

This article looks at the “portrait paths” of the *carte de visite* mark, what I will call “networks of sociability” of the “new men and women” of Ottoman Palestine and the empire itself.⁵ The *carte de visite* as the first global phenomenon of mass visual culture speaks to this “rise of the rich,” representing, in the words of Deborah Poole, “the shared desire and sentiments of what was rapidly becoming a global class.”⁶ The constellation of *cartes de visite* in an album such as Jawhariyyeh’s did not only instantiate a vision of modern Palestine or enact a Palestinian national narrative. Rather, this article will explore how the photographic portrait served as a valuable material and ideological object that connected, verified, and defined social and political networks at a time of “interactive emergence” of new classes and subjects who form the bedrock of Ottoman and Mandate



Garabed Krikorian, 'Ali Akram Bey (1906–1908), twelfth *mutassarif* of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Wasif Jawhariyah Album, J 1/6-16. Courtesy of the Library of the Institute for Palestine Studies.

Palestinian society.⁷ In other words, the portraits in Jawhariyyeh's albums are unintelligible when separated from the changes in land tenure, the standardization of currencies, the proliferation of print-media, or the opening of new types of schools and education during the late Ottoman era, as well as the later Zionist settlement and British occupation of Palestine. We understand the *carte de visite* as a particular material object that imprinted and contained the morality, ethics, and ideology of the new *effendiyya* classes found throughout the Ottoman Empire, connecting them socially but also reifying the *Osmanlilik* and capitalist ideology of the reform and proto-nationalist eras. Therefore, this article reads the history of portraits in Ottoman Palestine through the photography album of Jawhariyyeh and the photographic production of Jerusalem studios of Garabed Krikorian and Khalil Raad. We will find, in doing so, that the portrait's exchange tied new Ottoman and Palestinian subjects to new collective

formations as well as institutions and a particularly ideological vision of society.

The procession of portraits in Jawhariyyeh's photographic albums invites the viewer to enter an ambulatory of Palestinian history rooted in the late Ottoman Empire. Formalistically, these portraits offer nothing new. They reproduce, to borrow from Paul De Man, the "genetic patterns" repeated in the formalism of portraits taken by native and European photographers throughout the empire.⁸ They are frontal and side portraits of officials of the new Ottoman military and bureaucratic classes, of officials in uniforms and fezzes, and adorned with a variety of Ottoman medals. They are interspersed between *cartes de visite* of civilian and local notables, clerics, and officials such as the suave Tawfiq Bey, with his hand on cane; Rashid Bey, whose front head shot looks straight into the camera; and a soft vignette of the twelfth *mutassarif* of Jerusalem, 'Ali Akram Bey.⁹

Jawhariyyeh's photographic album confirms that the *carte de visite* was a common social practice in which every Ottoman official, from the grand vizier to governors, participated since the introduction of commercial photography studios into the empire in the 1850s. Photographers such as Garabed Kerkorian and Khalil Raad produced these portraits as easily in Jerusalem and Jaffa as Abdullah Frères, Sébah, or Jurji Saboungi did in Istanbul and Beirut. The mobility of Ottoman officials, who might be governor or bureaucrat one year, only to be reassigned to another province the next, echoed the



Anonymous, Ahmad ‘Arif Husayni, [s.d.] J 1-18-40-IPS, Courtesy of the Library of the Institute for Palestine Studies.

mobility of the *carte de visite* as a means to shore up relations between provincial capitals, the imperial center, and the locales that they were sent to manage. Ottoman officials disseminated their *cartes* among local *effendiyya*, bureaucrats, and notables only to move to other localities and repeat the practice.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the images of mayors of Jerusalem, notables, clerics and religious scholars, friends, and relatives in Jawhariyyeh’s photographic albums form a male visual gallery that reflect the ruling political and socio-economic spaces of Palestine, particularly Jerusalem. This gallery stretches from portraits of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie, such as Ishaq Abu al-Sa‘ud – the Orthodox Patriarchate’s attorney, sitting on an ornately carved wood chair at a desk with papers – to those of Palestinians with a quite different pedigree, such as al-Shaykh Ahmad ‘Arif al-Husayni,

scion of the prominent Gaza branch of the Husayni family and once a candidate for the Ottoman parliament.¹⁰ That particular portrait’s inscription reminds us of the reason for Husayni’s celebrity: “Executed at the orders of Jamal the Butcher,” the notorious Ottoman governor of Syria noted for hanging Arab nationalists during World War I.¹¹ Simultaneously, portraits of local bureaucrats such as Ahmad Sharif Effendi, the former comptroller of the *mutassarif*, dated 1288 *hijri* (1879), and of imperial officials such as the *mutassarif* Rashad Pasha (pictured sitting on a wicker chair, legs crossed, arm on table) conjoin the Ottoman leadership with the locals who manned their administrative system along a plane of shared representation, ideology, and sociability.

In the words of Christopher Pinney, “what photography makes possible is not the creation of a dramatically new aesthetic *mise-en-scène*, but the mass-production and democratization of such an aesthetic.”¹² This aesthetic of the Ottoman *carte de visite* was not a matter of colonial mimicry, of Ottoman Arab, Turkish, Armenian, and Greek subjects imitating Western forms of dress and portraiture. Rather, the aesthetic of the *carte* was the aesthetic of the ideology of *Osmanlilik* modernity and Nahda discourses and subjectivity. Against the backdrop of the Ottoman Tanzimat, the Arab Nahda, commonly referred to as the Arab Renaissance, was the era in which Arab intellectuals and reformers articulated and instituted discourses of cultural, political, and social reform. These discourses were, simply put, formulated on discourses of “progress and civilization.” Whether the topic was governance, commerce, education, or photography, these discourses articulated new national, class, gender, and individualist subjectivities that mediated the massive

transformations in the political economy of nineteenth century.¹³ What is important for this article is to understand that the photographic portrait of turn-of-the-century Palestine was as bound to these *Osmanlilik* and Nahda discourses as it was to the formation of new *effendiyya*, who themselves were charged with managing and stabilizing the social transformations and economic reorganization instituted by the Tanzimat and increased European penetration.¹⁴

Mary Roberts provides us with titillating examples of how Sultans ‘Abd al-‘Aziz and ‘Abd al-Hamid used “photographic portraiture as a tool of Ottoman statecraft,” which we can then extend to the sultans’ own domestic political programs.¹⁵ With this understanding of photography as a political and social object, Jawhariyyeh’s albums show us the extent to which *cartes de visites* and cabinet cards circulated among Ottoman officials, local bureaucrats, and new middle class individuals – including intellectuals, educators, professionals and merchants – and thus, by extension, the degree to which new forms of *Osmanlilik* ideology and governance saturated localities in the empire. Moreover, the appearance of portraits in albums, homes, and institutions in provincial capitals such as Jerusalem or Beirut also show us the networks of social relations between new and old classes of subjects, between petit-bureaucrats, members of the new military class, rural clients of urban patrons, professionals, and educators of Palestine and Greater Syria.

For this study, Jawhariyyeh’s portrait gallery in the first pages of his illustrated Palestinian history demonstrates that photographic portraiture was a local act of sociability that reached beyond its immediate geography. This act was inseparable from the discourses and practices of social, economic, and political reform in the empire and the radical transformations in political economy and society that produced them. If we approach the photographic portrait as an ideological act of a particular kind of sociability (arranged around particular kinds of political and economic order, a new class order), we therefore recognize photographic studios such as that of Garabed Krikorian not as sources of production of nationalist, class, or subjectivity discourse or representation. Rather, we understand these studios as a site of material production, whose product worked to stabilize the class ideology of the Ottoman Empire through two coterminous and interlocking means. On the level of social practice, the circulation of portraits among individuals, institutions, and communities shored up class relations between them. Simultaneously, the portrait itself was a representational instantiation of class ideology as expressed in the discourses of the Nahda and *Osmanlilik* modernity.

Photographers: The Krikorians and Raad

Garabed Krikorian (1847–1920) is undoubtedly Palestine’s most prolific and well known photographer. He learned photography at the hands of Yesayi Garabedian (1825–1885), the Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem, who established Palestine’s first native-run educational *atelier* – probably the first in the Arab world – in the Monastery of St. James in 1859.¹⁶ Garabedian studied in Manchester and Paris, writing four technical manuals in Armenian, which remain unpublished. He is credited for training several generations

of leading Armenian photographers, most prominently Krikorian. Krikorian established a studio in the 1870s in Jerusalem. The evidence from early *cartes de visite* suggests that he associated with Beirut's most prominent photographer, Jurji Sabounji, and later trained and partnered with Daoud Sabounji in Jaffa.

Krikorian also trained Khalil Raad (Ra'd), who would become his rival, partner, and in-law. Khalil Raad was born in 1854, in Bhamdoun, Lebanon, where his father was killed in the massacres of 1860. Raad converted to Protestantism and relocated to Jerusalem because his paternal uncle taught in Jerusalem's famous missionary Bishop Gobat School. Much to the displeasure of Krikorian, Raad eventually broke off to open his own studio immediately across the street from his mentor in 1890.¹⁷ After years of acrimony, the two photographers made peace after Krikorian's son Johannes (John) returned from studying in Germany, took over his father's studio, and married Najla, Raad's niece.¹⁸ Issam Nassar's pioneer work on these studios surmises that Najla worked in the Krikorians' studio, making her potentially the Arab world's first native woman studio photographer.¹⁹

The two studios made an agreement to divide the market. Krikorian's studio dedicated its energies to studio portraiture while Raad photographed Palestine's daily life, current events, and archeological sites. Indeed, on the cover of his 1933 "Catalogue for Lantern Slides and Views," Raad advertises that he is a "photographer of sites, scenes, ceremonies, costumes, etc. etc."²⁰ Regardless, just as we find portraits produced by Raad, Krikorian, too, catered to the thirst for biblical and Orientalist imagery by Holy Land tourists and the American and European markets.²¹ Likewise, their photographs illustrate a number of European publications with explicitly colonial underpinnings.²²

The impact of Krikorian's and Raad's studio portraiture, like that of Abdullah Frères, Sébah, and Jurji Sabounji, has been overshadowed by the prominence of their lucrative "biblical" and Orientalist photographs. Even in Jawhariyyeh's albums, the introductory portraits give way to documentary photographs by Jaffa photographer 'Isa Sawabini and Jerusalem photographers such as Khalil Raad and the American Colony's photography studio, depicting current events and Palestinian communal life. The political relevance and ideological impact of the quotidian photograph in Jawhariyyeh's album is a clear riposte to the true claims of Orientalist and tourist photography. Local photographers' Holy Land photography serves to displace Western claims on the representation of Palestine. In addition to their formalistic tourist photographs, these photographers also register Palestinian Arabs, not Western pilgrims, celebrating trademark religious festivities such as the Washing of the Feet in the Jordan River on Maundy Thursday (*'id al-ghitas*) in 1905. Furthermore, their photography of Palestine during World War I offers a keen counter-narrative to Lowell Thomas's vision. Thomas, famed for his portrayal of T. E. Lawrence, crafted a narrative where Arabs were auxiliaries to British forces, which purportedly liberated Palestine from the Ottomans. Jawhariyyeh's albums provide a counterweight where photographs of the mobilization of Palestine, Bedouin irregulars, sabotaged trains, and the surrender of Jerusalem are squarely situated in Arab and Palestinian politics and political participation.

Yet, Krikorian and Raad also produced an archive of portraiture, spanning from Palestinian peasants to high-ranking officials. The Krikorian name in particular is

ubiquitous in the *cartes de visites*, cabinet cards, and portraits of Palestinians from the 1880s until 1948, when the Krikorian and Raad studios were lost behind the Green Line. Their oeuvre and practice, and the circulation, exchange, display, and loss of their portraits, precisely demonstrate photography as expressing a series of social relations that gave it power and necessity.

History as a Photographic Album

Organizing a discussion and excavation of the Krikorians and Raad around Jawhariyyeh's photography albums reveals how photography offered a visual habitus for the complex network of social, political, and economic relations, local and regional, in the Ottoman Arab world. Jawhariyyeh's photographic album is a visual narrative of Jerusalem's modern Ottoman history, rooted in the figures of Ottoman *mutassarifs*, notables, and local functionaries. His photographic album is also a variation of the biographical dictionaries, new histories, and scientific journals produced during the Nahda. Journals such as *al-Hilal* and *al-Muqtataf* broke new ground in popularizing and disseminating portraits of "famous people" (*al-mashahir*) decades before the Krikorian and Raad studios. Initially, they were reproduced as half-tones usually on the first pages of their editions. Over time, technology and financing permitted the number and frequency of portraits in these journals' pages to increase.

Simultaneously, the images of famous men and women were reproduced in a variety of different printed genres. The first volume of Viscount Philippe (Filib) de Tarrazi's monumental *Tarikh al-sahafa al-'Arabiyya* (History of Arabic Journalism), for example, served to codify the portraits of Nahda political and intellectual figures as representational *doxa*.²³ Tarrazi was a scion of a wealthy merchant family in Beirut whose connections with the papacy resulted in the honorific title of viscount. He was an encyclopedist and founder of the Lebanese National Library, whose biographies of Nahda intellectuals, reformers, and "journalists" institutionalized the Arab nationalist narrative of the "Renaissance," even though, ironically, Tarrazi later became a parochial Lebanese nationalist. The portraits in *Tarikh al-sahafa al-'Arabiyya* became a visual compendium to new forms of Arabic fiction, poetry, and social and scientific commentary that were produced by the biographical subjects of Tarrazi's encyclopedia. Tarrazi's photographic compendium, while not necessarily the first, articulates the ideology of the "new men and women" into a visual narrative of progress. His portraits present a set of representational indices that bind private achievement and individuality to the civilizational discourses and national subjectivities of the Nahda. Jawhariyyeh's albums are a reiteration of Tarrazi's historical encyclopedia, moving from the biography of "great men" to the story of venerable institutions of Palestine to understanding all current events as national events.

On the other hand, Jawhariyyeh's photographic albums are a narrative version of the montage portraits that were popular by World War I. Montage portraits were an assemblage of multiple images from throughout a distinguished notable's life, combining images of family with military, governmental, educational, or religious institutions. As explicitly



Portrait montage of Amir Faysal bin Husayn and leaders of the Arab Kingdom of Syria. Courtesy of and permission granted by al-Mukhtar Kamal Rebeiz, Ra's Beirut.

patriarchal, these montages are usually organized around hierarchy, placing the patriarch or leader in the middle. One example of a popular montage found in many homes and institutions in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine, and reproduced in many publications, is that of Amir Faysal bin Husayn in military uniform surrounded by a host of other portraits of political and military figures from the heady days of the Arab nationalist uprising and the Arab Kingdom of Syria. The picture assembles all the leading figures of the Arab Kingdom of Syria, crushed by the French in 1920. This montage assemblage can be found in numerous Ottoman institutional photographs and offers, quite literally, the after-image and imprint of the social networks birthed by the interactive emergence of a new social group that reached to photography as one way to instantiate its ideological program.²⁴

Arabic literary-scientific journals, encyclopedias, photographic albums, and portrait montages testify to the predominance of a photographic practice by which turn-of-the-century Ottoman Arab, in this case Palestinian, subjects not only were looking at themselves but had organized that vision based on particular class formations and civilizational *nahdawi* discourses. Walid Khalidi's *Before Their Diaspora* is a testimony to how Raad's and Krikorian's studios, for example, contributed so intimately to

interpellating Palestinians into national and class subjects.²⁵ Naseeb Shaheen's two-volume *Pictorial History of Ramallah*, likewise, is a photographic mass of generations of men, women, and children from Ramallah's native families.²⁶ The overwhelming presence of Krikorian and Raad portraits shows that their pull was not limited to Jerusalem's *effendiyya* class, merchant families, municipal civil servants, and Ottoman *fonctionnaires*. Shaheen's publications are awash with portraits of families and individuals from rural areas, small towns, and villages surrounding Jerusalem and Ramallah.²⁷ Many oral accounts told to me while in Palestine relayed how going to Jerusalem to have one's portrait taken by Krikorian was a celebrated event and practiced by people from the villages surrounding the city. Edward Said describes his interactions with the Krikorian and Raad studios in the 1940s. He personally witnessed Raad laboriously photograph a wedding rehearsal, alluding to the photographer's "finickiness," if not boorishness.²⁸

The literary-scientific journal, the illustrated encyclopedia, and the photograph album naturalized a practice of nesting national and local histories in a vestibule of portraits. The photographic album and the montage followed journals and encyclopedias in that they interpellated subjects into national, class, and personal histories and narratives. But photography albums also interpellated the social relations and the "portrait paths" between Palestine's national figures, new classes, and new national and imperial subjects.

Portrait Paths

The predominance of the Krikorian and Raad portraits in such a variety of social spaces confirms to us that photographic practices were a regular enactment of sociability that connected individuals, classes, institutions, and leaders, locally and throughout the empire. This is precisely what Jawhariyyeh's diaries give us when read against his photographic album. On the most localized level, people from every class, including working and peasant classes, are likely to have had their portrait produced at least once in their lifetime. Such conjecture is based not only on the prevalence of portraits of new effendi-types, students, military cadets, low-level bureaucrats, brides, grooms, fathers, mothers, and children but also on the frequency of images of peasants found scattered in peoples homes. Shaheen compiled such images, for example, to write a local history of Ramallah. What is important about this anecdotal observation is that their production, like that of middle- and upper-class portraits, should be seen as a valued social act that produced a *social object*, an object of exchange and display imbued with considerable social currency, especially in a society that was so demonstratively defined by clan and personal ties. In reading Krikorian and Raad's photography against Jawhariyyeh's visual and written narratives, this article provides a case study in how the portrait's exchange tethered individuals to collectives, collectives to other collectives, and individuals and collectives to institutions and the state. The pairing provides us with an explicit demonstration of the interactive emergence provided by the habitus of photography.

The "portrait paths" of these subjects', collectives', and institutions' sociability are the common denominator to the work of Khalidi, Shaheen, and Jawhariyyeh, each of whom



Garabed Krikorian, Jawad Husayni, *carte de visite*, Jerusalem, Album, 9 (also found also at the World War I Collection, Jaffet Library, American University of Beirut). Courtesy of John D. Whiting Papers, Library of Congress.

cluster portraits of officials, notables, and remarkable figures as the narrative bedrock of national narration and local history. Indeed, these shared portrait paths come to fuller attention when we find the same *cartes de visites* in collections across territories, as the presence of Jawad al-Husayni's portrait in the American Colony albums (now in the Library of Congress) and the American University of Beirut's archives demonstrates. Detailing how Palestinian political life functioned upon complex sets of connections between notables, leading families, local functionaries, peasants, clans, and the Ottoman center, the visual archive is more than a historical documentation. It is more than a reified vestige of the social *enactments* of forms of Nahda, *Osmanlilik*, and national sociability.

The visual archive contains the map of a dynamic sociability that operated on levels of representation and materiality.

Cooperating on these two levels, this map shows us how the portrait ideologically and socially facilitated networks of power, politics, economy, and indeed intimacy by connecting the empire's "new men and women" to one another, to institutions, and to ideological formations. Rather than show the history of Palestine built on "great men," Ottoman secularizing order, and Palestinian sociability, Jawhariyyeh's portraits show how subjects, who were both viewers and sitters, recipients and givers of the image, found identifications within the new configurations of social relations that were facilitated by the national and class ideals, and their concomitant economic order.

In examining the self-presentation of the "new lady" in Republican China, particularly in women's journals, Joan Judge observes that the portrait functions on the seam of the tension between "representation and materiality," the "evocative and repeatable photographic image," "photographic metonymy and photographic exigency," between "an image that gestures beyond itself" and "an image that interpolates us as viewers."²⁹ Krikorian's and Raad's representation of a local Palestinian-Ottoman vernacular functions along this seam. Their portraits are objects with social currency, objects of exchange, texts with ideological weight, and opportunities of enactment of social relations and performativity of the class and national identities that were organized and envisioned in Nahda writing. Krikorian and Raad were consummate local photographers with a regional impact; they were close to the power elite, Ottoman functionaries, the new middle class, Palestinian nationalists, and colonial administrators. Their biographies fit Nahda ideals; they were masters of a particular form of modern knowledge, patriotic Jerusalemites, and successful entrepreneurs. Their

portraits participated in larger Ottoman discourses of photography, modernity, and social reorganization, while at the same time articulating local politics that involved the self, family, notables, education, governance, and a whole slew of other factors and figures to maintain and expand the social relations of Palestine's new political economy. In other words, portrait production operated within "portrait paths" that were concurrently ideological and social, national and local, semiological and material. Portraits activated identifications between individuals, collectives, and institutions that drew on the authority of sets of representation, signification, and ideology that were integral to networks of sociability that lay at the heart of Palestine's and the Ottoman Empire's modernity.

Sartorial Palestinian Vernacular

Edward Said relates in the opening pages of his memoir that the reason for his father's immigration to the United States was due to the threat of being conscripted into the Ottoman army.³⁰ Such an anecdote finds meaning in the preponderance in pre-war portraiture of officials, officers, and rank and file soldiers, not to mention children in maritime and military uniforms and boy scouts. While images of uniformed men are found in Egyptian and Syro-Lebanese collections, the prevalence of uniformed officers, soldiers, professionals, and civil servants are particularly evocative in the family albums and archives of Palestinians as Jawhariyyeh, Shaheen, and Khalidi's collections show. This representational category of portraits so powerfully narrating the first pages of Jawhariyyeh's "illustrated history" reminds us of the words of Vincent Rafael, that photographs "awaken in us, the unknown viewer from the future, a flood of associations that can barely find expression. Conceived from fantasies about identity, they propel their recipient to follow further identifications."³¹ With this in mind, it is not surprising that the images conjure anachronistically a prescient story of a people in the dawn of settler colonialism.

Costume and dress tell us little, but their enigma parrots the nature of photography itself. They are indices that highlight the technical and semiotic mechanisms at work in the portrait, most notably ideological and subjective identification and repetition. Sartorial codes are not determinative of the social relations of the portrait or the sitter but they offer "genetic patterns" – within systems of ideology, within and across class identifications and affiliations, and within systems of sociability. After all, uniforms were not always military. More often, they were official "honorary" Ottoman costumes, awarded by the Sublime Porte and granted through accomplishment on intercession by high-ranking and well-positioned friends, connections, and superiors. Clothes, formal dress, and traditional costume convey political and social choices but should not be overvalued as a definitive designator of photographic meaning or subject position of the photograph. These choices are not deterministic, even if they are not innocent, inherited, or coincidental. They are opportunities to cathect material and semiotic objects as ideological acts. Sartorial codes are opportunities for enactments.

For example, in Shaheen's *Pictorial History of Ramallah*, Palestinian families are photographed in "traditional" costume, worn by the peasant and middle classes alike



Garabed Krikorian, Hasan 'Arif al-Husayni (extreme left), Jerusalem, 1914; Musa al-Husseini Collection, Courtesy of Foundation for the Arab Image.

on a daily basis, but especially during ceremonial occasions. The portraits contrast the secularizing ubiquity of the standardized portrait of the Ottoman Palestinian uniformed subject. These images contrast the sub-genre of self-Orientalizing portrait that was prevalent throughout the Arab provinces but particularly noteworthy in the Krikorian and Raad studio. Middle class urban Palestinians frequently posed for studio portraits dressed in “Bedouin” costume or village attire. This phenomenon was especially popular with urban women,

who would pose in skillfully embroidered *thiyab* for which Palestinians are well known.

Sartorial codes are statements of ideology that are far too easily confused with empirical truths. The repetition of genetic sartorial patterns direct us precisely to the forces at play on the “seam” of the portrait: the meeting between the materiality of history, the production of the image, the semiotic system at play that makes the image ideologically trenchant and intelligible, and the circuits of exchange that constitute its value and sociability. These patterns alert us to the degree to which the Ottoman and Nahda discourses of reform, its languages, priorities, nomenclature, and concerns were interwoven into all segments of Palestinian life and insisted on being enacted visually.

The portraits of uniformed Palestinians were indexically circumscribed by the portraits of the empire’s highest officials, such as Abdullah Frères’s portraits of Fu’ad Pasha, Dawud Pasha, or Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz himself. These high ranking figures did not define such representation but they imbued this formal uniformed representation of the new Ottoman subject with political and social currency. The uniforms that appear in early twentieth-century Palestinian portraiture are *signs* – both material and semiotic – of the social and economic relations in which the sitter and society were imbricated. The repetition of uniforms in portraits underscores *Ottomanlilik* ideology but also its sociability. In the case of Palestine, this is represented in the “portrait path” of *mutassarifs*, mayors, jurists, and Palestinian functionaries in the first half of Jawhariyyeh’s first volume, just as the portrait paths of those villagers in Ramallah circulated among newly educated villagers who immigrated to urban centers as well as abroad.

Those “traditionally” dressed and uniformed Palestinians were the mediating classes between prominent indigenous families, old modes of distribution of political offices, the Ottoman central bureaucracy, and the new classes and subjective consciousness emanating from Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Bayt Jala, Nablus, Nazareth, Haifa, and Jaffa, not to mention Beirut, Alexandria, and Cairo. This administrative rationalization of society and economy came packaged in the same discourses seen in the Arab print media regarding photography. Photography is not formative of these discourses. It did not create them; it did, however, manifest them. As such, photography stabilized *Osmanlilik* and Nahda discourses that were involved in the reorganization of land, wealth, social organization, and power. Just as the *carte de visite* circulated among the tarbush-wearing *effendiyya* in Egypt and among the new urban bourgeoisie in Beirut, the photographic portrait functioned similarly in Jerusalem. It tied new functionaries to the Ottoman bureaucracy in Palestine and other provincial cities (such as Beirut) just as it brought together individuals from ascending local families and traditional elites.

Portraits’ Currency

“The photographic portraiture,” Vincent Rafael tells us in regard to photography in the Philippines, “was meant not only to convey the person’s likeness but to situate it in relation to the viewer. Such was the function of the dedications . . . addressed to specific recipients, evoking a sense of intimacy between sender and receiver.”³² The dedications and signatures



Garabed Kirkorian, Portrait of 'Asim Effendi, *mudir al-tahrira*, 1308 *hijri* [1890]; gifted to Bishara Effendi Habib in 1305 *hijri* [1887]; *carte de visite*, J-1/ 21-54, Courtesy of the Library of the Institute for Palestine Studies.



Garabed Kirkorian & Georges Sabounji, Portrait of 'Asim Effendi, *mudir al-tahrira*, 1308 *hijri* [1890], Jerusalem and Jaffa; gifted to Bishara Effendi Habib; *carte de visite*, Courtesy of the Library of the Institute for Palestine Studies.

on the *cartes* of Jawhariyyeh's first album bear the stain of sentiment, intimacy, and social history. They trace vectors and connections essential to Palestinian social and political relations.

Among the first pages of Jawhariyyah's *Tarikh* are three images of the enigmatic 'Asim Effendi, "director of the registry" (*mudir al-tahrira*). The first image is a close head shot vignette taken by Garabed Krikorian. It is dated 1305 *hijri* (1887), the end of the administration of Ra'uf Pasha, *mutassarif* of Jerusalem. Adjacent to this portrait, there is a second *carte de visite* of 'Asim Effendi, this time produced by Krikorian and Jurji Sabounji, who co-owned a studio in Jaffa.

While the Krikorian and Sabounji portrait is more groomed, compositionally and in content, the soft head vignette formalistically conveys a subjective depth that precisely illustrates the subjectivity of 'Asim Effendi, an indication of his humanity as a characteristic that enriched his position as Palestinian-Ottoman notable. Yet, in the end, little is known about 'Asim Effendi. He could be the same 'Asim Effendi who served as lieutenant governor of Jerusalem in the early 1890s. If this is the case, his dedication to Bishara Habib on the photograph is telling of both his position and his relationship with other lesser functionaries. Bishara Effendi Habib was a high-ranking functionary in Ra'uf Pasha's office and mainstay in the office of the *mutassarif*, outlasting an assortment of subsequent governors in the Jerusalem administration. 'Asim's expression of loyalty and appreciation to Habib is better understood when one remembers that Ra'uf Pasha attempted to dislodge both of Jerusalem's rival leading families, the Husaynis and the Khalidis, from municipal



Anonymous, [Jacob] Sarabian Murad, "To Ibrahim Kalis," *carte de visite*, J-1 44, Courtesy of the Library of the Institute for Palestine Studies.

and judicial positions that they dominated for centuries, calling them "parasites" on the peasantry.³³ Perhaps this might be the evidence that the image is certainly not 'Asim Effendi al-Husayni. In the narrative of Arab nationalism, this attempt was spun anachronistically as an attempt to Turkify the administration of the *sanjak*. More accurately, however, Ra'uf Pasha was implementing governmental policies to curb notables' power in rationalizing principles of Ottoman governance. Simply put, he was attempting to implement the same forms of *Osmanlilik* governmentality that were being extended throughout the empire.³⁴ 'Asim Effendi shared a social network with Bishara Effendi Habib, who as secretary and interpreter to successive governors was an established functionary, with a degree of influence, if not power.³⁵

If the story of 'Asim Effendi suggests the political and social relations around men who were sent to rationalize Palestine,

another portrait suggests how those relations reach into Palestinian society. On the verso of Jacob Sarabian Murad's portrait, the American vice-consul writes, "With warm regards to Ibrahim Effendi Kayin." While Ibrahim Effendi may have disappeared in history, we do know that Murad – who served as a consular agent to the United States' consulate – maintained an expansive network of close relationships with notables, officials, missionaries, landowners, peasants, and foreign diplomats. These relations allowed him to secure his brother Simeon a position as the German vice-consular in Palestine.³⁶ However, a complaint from a disgruntled American resident of Jaffa claims that Jacob was "destitute of education and totally ignorant of English and any other European language."³⁷ Another account similarly criticized Simeon, stating "beyond a slight acquaintance of our language [English], his culture was limited."³⁸ In fact, Jacob and his brother were the sons of an Armenian rosary peddler in Jerusalem, all of whom were enfranchised by the eldest brother's considerable network of professional acquaintances.³⁹

Jacob Murad had come into his position through his own close relationship with the previous native consular representative for the United States, named Arutin Murad, who effectively adopted him and eventually married him to his niece.⁴⁰ No doubt, Jacob's relationship with Arutin allowed him in 1846 to secure such a well-connected post, which required not only the approval of American officials in Washington and Istanbul but also an endorsement from the Sublime Porte.⁴¹ Jacob's and Simeon's lavish homes and "beautiful garden" in Jaffa gained quite a reputation, but this is not the only evidence of

their financial success and connections.⁴² The brothers were involved in lending money and land dealings, and each, at some point, faced accusations of misusing their considerable connections for graft or favor. It is uncertain whether these accusations were true or the protestations of a slighted and disgruntled foreign diplomat. However, Jacob and his brother argued that their position as consular agents actually hurt them financially, because they often advocated for American citizens in the affairs of Palestine and consequently were targeted vindictive locals and a vengeful peasantry.⁴³

The portraits of characters like Jacob Murad and ‘Asim Effendi operate on a series of *feuilles*, the crossing vectors of social relations, political culture, and economic systems in Palestine. Beneath the surface of the image, we learn how foreign interests were embroiled with discontented peasants, who were angered by the rearrangement of property rights and patron-client relations, while imperial policies relied on the mediation of a local functionary class that used those portraits adeptly. The portrait of the slightly cross-eyed Murad and the two *cartes* of ‘Asim Effendi do not disclose this history per se. They do not tell of their own histories as children of peddlers and notables, respectively. But they do interpellate discourses and practices that they instrumentalized. Through photographic enactments, exchange, and circulation, the portrait bound Ottoman elites along with Palestinian notables to lower and mid-tier *petit-fonctionnaires*, new patrons with clients, and individuals to systems. It hid discontent and projected ideological continuity. Neither Jacob Murad nor ‘Asim Effendi occupy enormous historical consequence. That is precisely the point. One need not look at the biographies and portraits of political and intellectual colossi in order to search for evidence for the portrait’s social currency. Rather, one only has to look to the scattered portraits among the array of social groups within Palestine, who were collectively transforming the political economy and local and communal governance. The social currency of a photographic portrait came from its ability not only to circulate within networks of relations, but also to traverse them. This sociability of the portrait was as public as it was private but also was intended to go between these two spheres. Its circulation then tracked new social relations between citizens and institutions as easily as between men and women.

Conclusion

Jawharriyeh’s visual narrative is staged as a constellation of portraits of Palestine’s “new men and women” whose rise, in Peter Gran’s words, “in politics and diplomacy . . . led to a new form of relations among elements from around the world,” including the Eastern Mediterranean and the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁴ The bricolage of Jawharriyeh’s portraits exhibit how the social currency of the *carte de visite* emerge from the portrait paths binding men and women within the interactive emergence of new individuals, institutions, and social groups. As a material object, the portrait was a currency exchanged as means of shoring up new networks of sociability. It was the object of a specific social practice with a concrete role in establishing new social relations between actors and classes. But as an ideological object, the portrait instantiated discourses that naturalized the very existence

and necessity of those class formations and social relations.

Ottoman portraits dovetail with Jawhariyyeh's national narrative because they took value from the same ideological systems that were at play within Palestine's social relations at the beginning of the century. The portrait stabilized that ideology by reproducing it repetitiously and drawing subjects into its networks of sociability. The portraits in Jawhariyyeh's albums could not be imagined without changes in land tenure, the standardization of currencies, the proliferation of print media, or the opening of new types of schools and education. The portrait was the surface where these transformations, institutions, and social relations appeared natural but also acted as a mediating object to gauge and make sense of the changes underway in Palestine.

The studio practice of Krikorian and Raad as seen in Jawhariyyeh's illustrated history cogently stands as representative of how the portrait was a visual condensation of a modern subjective ideal to which the composite new citizen, new class subject, new gendered subject, new national subject, and new individual could ideologically identify. Therefore, Jawhariyyeh's album evinces that portraits were the *after-image* of social and economic shifts that had already inaugurated changes in what constituted selfhood itself, changes in what structured identification, and indeed subjective-social desire.

Stephen Sheehi is the Sultan Qaboos bin Said Professor of Middle East Studies at the College of William and Mary.

Endnotes

- 1 See Wasif Jawhariyyeh, *The Storyteller of Jerusalem: The Life and Times of Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1904–1948*, ed. Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar, trans. by Nada Elzeer (North Hampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2014).
- 2 Peter Gran, *Rise of the Rich: A New View of Modern History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 60.
- 3 For more information, see *Tarikh Filastin al-musawwar fi al-'ahd al-'Uthmani* [The Illustrated History of Palestine in the Ottoman Era], 2 vols., found in the collection of the Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut. The photographs in the album correspond with annotated notes in Jawhariyyeh's memoir, which has been published in full in Arabic in two volumes: Wasif Jawhariyyeh, *al-Quds al-'Uthmaniyya fi al-mudhakkirat al-Jawhariyyeh: al-Kitab al-awal min al-musiqi Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1904–1917* [Ottoman Jerusalem in the Jawhariyyeh Memoirs: The First Book of the Musician Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1904–1917], ed. Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-dirasat al-Filastiniyya, 2003) and Wasif Jawhariyyeh, *al-Quds al-intidabiyya fi al-mudhakkirat al-Jawhariyyeh: al-Kitab al-thani min al-musiqi Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1918–1948* [Mandate Jerusalem in the Jawhariyyeh Memoirs: The Second Book of the Musician Wasif Jawhariyyeh, 1918–1948], ed. Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-dirasat al-Filastiniyya, 2005). Also, for an introduction to Jawhariyyeh, see Salim Tamari, "Jerusalem's Ottoman Modernity: The Time and Lives of Wasif Jawhariyyeh," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 1 (Summer 2000): 1–34.
- 4 See Jawhariyyeh, *Tarikh Filastin al-musawwar*. The first volume of the album ends at 1918.
- 5 I am elaborating and playing with the phrase "portrait path" as offered by Sarvos and Frohich. I use it here to mean the paths in which the portrait is produced and exchanged rather than the path society took in choosing a medium for photographic portraiture alone. For more on the idea of "portrait paths," see Risto Sarvos and David Frohich, *From Snapshot to Social Media – The Changing Picture of Domestic Photography* (London: Springer, 2011), 23–44.
- 6 Deborah Poole, *Vision, Race, and Modernity*, 112.
- 7 John E. Willis, Jr., "Maritime Asia 1500–1899: The Interactive Emergence of European Domination," *American Historical Review* 98

- (February 1993): 83–105.
- 8 Paul De Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 79.
 - 9 The images are found in the first pages of Jawhariyyeh, *Tarikh Filastin al-musawwar*.
 - 10 Ilan Pappe, *The Rise and Fall of a Palestinian Dynasty: The Husaynis, 1700–1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 156.
 - 11 Jawhariyyeh, *Tarikh Filastin al-musawwar*, J-1, 18/47.
 - 12 Christopher Pinney, *The Coming of Photography to India* (London: British Library, 2008), 134–35.
 - 13 For a critical examination of these discourses of the Nahda, in particular their relationship to subjective formation, see Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004).
 - 14 For some recent studies about the rise of the effendi class, see Wilson Chacko Jacobs, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity 1870–1940* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2011) and Lucie Ryzova, *The Age of the Efenidiyya: Passage to Modernity in National-Colonial Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford Historical Monographs, 2014).
 - 15 Mary Roberts, “The Limits of Circumscription,” in *Photography’s Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representation*, ed. Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 54.
 - 16 Badr el-Hage, *L’Orient des photographes Arméniens* (Paris: Institut du Monde Arabe, 2007), 42–43.
 - 17 Badr al-Hajj (Badr el-Hage), “Khalil Raad – Jerusalem Photographer,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* (Winter 2001): 39.
 - 18 Hajj, “Khalil Raad,” 11–12, 39.
 - 19 Issam Nassar, *Laqatat Mughayira: al-taswir al-futughrafi al-mubakkir fi Filastin* [Different Snapshots: Early Local Photography in Palestine] (Ramallah: Kutub and Qattan Foundation, 2005), 23.
 - 20 Nassar provides an image and brief comment on this catalogue in *Laqatat Mughayira*, 26.
 - 21 Annelies Moors, “Presenting Palestine’s Population Premonitions of the Nakba,” *MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 1 (May 2001): 1–12. Also, see Annelies Moors, “Presenting People: The Politics of Picture Postcards of Palestine/Israel,” in *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity*, ed. David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 93–105.
 - 22 Raad’s and Krikorian’s images of monuments, construction projects, and holy sites in Palestine and Transjordan appeared alongside photographs by the Zangaki Brothers, Bonfils, photographers of the American Colony, the famous James Robertson, and Beato in publications such as Gaunt’s *Touring the Ancient World with a Camera* and Edwin Sherman Wallace’s *Jerusalem the Holy* as well as publications and archives of the Palestine Exploration Committee. See Colin Osman, *Jerusalem: Caught in Time* (Reading, UK: Garnet, 1999) and Eyal Onne, *Photographic Heritage of the Holy Land 1839–1914* (Manchester: Institute of Advanced Studies, Manchester Polytechnic, 1980).
 - 23 Phillippe Tarrazi, *Tarikh al-sahafa al-‘Arabiyya* [History of Arab Journalism] (Beirut: al-Matba‘a al-adabiyya, 1913), vols. 1–3.
 - 24 Willis, “Maritime Asia.”
 - 25 Walid Khalidi, *Before Their Diaspora: A Photographic History of the Palestinians, 1876–1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1984).
 - 26 Naseeb Shaheen, *A Pictorial History of Ramallah* (Beirut: Arab Institute for Research and Publishing, 1992); Naseeb Shaheen, *A Pictorial History of Ramallah, Part II* (Birzeit: Birzeit University Press and the Naseeb Shaheen Charitable Foundation, 2006).
 - 27 A large amount of these photographic family (immediate family, extended, and clan), individual, school, and group portraits, especially those *en plein air*, were the product of the very mobile *atelier* of the American Colony, which deserves closer attention beyond the scope of this study.
 - 28 Edward Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (New York: Vintage, 1999), 76–77.
 - 29 Joan Judge, “Portraits of Republican Ladies: Materiality and Representation in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Photographs,” in *Visualising China, 1845–1964: Moving and Still Image in Historical Narratives*, ed. Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 131.
 - 30 Said, *Out of Place*, 8. For corroborating studies about the threat of conscription, particularly after the Ottomans changed conscription laws in 1908 to include all men over twenty years of age, see Sarah Graham Brown, *Palestinians and Their Society, 1880–1946* (London: Quartet, 1980), 158–59. See also: E. J. Zucher, “The Ottoman Conscription System in Theory and Practice,” *International Review of Social History* 43, no. 3 (1998): 437–449.
 - 31 Vincent Rafael, “The Undead: Notes on Photography in the Philippines, 1898–1920s,” in *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 101.

- 32 Vincent Rafael, "The Undead," 92.
- 33 Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Jerusalem: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 2011), 381.
- 34 For one exemplary micro-study of the negotiation of these local versus imperial forces and projects, see Alexander Schölch, "An Ottoman Bismarck from Jerusalem: Yusuf al-Diya' al-Khalidi (1842–1906)," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 24 (2005): 65–76.
- 35 Little is known about Bishara Habib and less about 'Asim Effendi, save scattered mention of him in studies about the period. For an example, see Neville Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism before World War One* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 42, 49.
- 36 See some of his correspondence to Berlin as vice-consul in Johann Büssow, *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem, 1872–1908* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 373.
- 37 Mr. Wigley, who had been rejected as the American vice-consul in favor of Murad, as quoted in Ruth Kark, *American Consuls in the Holy Land, 1932–1914* (Detroit: Magnes and Wayne State University Press, 1994), 105.
- 38 Edwin Leon, "An American in Palestine," *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine* 13 (January–June 1883): 179. For how Jacob Serabian Murad quickly accumulated his wealth (through marriage and/or "subterfuge") see Kark, *American Consuls*, 103.
- 39 As cited in Kark, *American Consuls*, 102.
- 40 Kark, *American Consuls*, 102–3.
- 41 Kark, *American Consuls*, 103.
- 42 Karl Baedeker, *Palestine and Syria: Handbook for Travellers* (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker Publisher, 1876), 128; Kark, *American Consuls*, 105.
- 43 Kark, *American Consuls*, 105–6.
- 44 Gran, *Rise of the Rich*, 61.